



iFLEX

Intelligent Assistants for Flexibility Management



**SUSTAINABLE
PLACES 2023**

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Innovative Solutions & Co-Creation for Effective Implementation of Demand Response

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Making it easy and attractive to participate in Demand Response

iFLEX Assistant

The Assistant learns and adapts to household and building consumption behaviour and optimisation goals. It reacts to flexibility signals according to user preferences and helps achieve individual and community benefits

From the perspective of the grid and power system, the Assistant solution helps improve predictability of consumption and consumer behaviour. It increases the overall flexibility volume for balancing purposes and facilitates renewable energy integration and new service opportunities

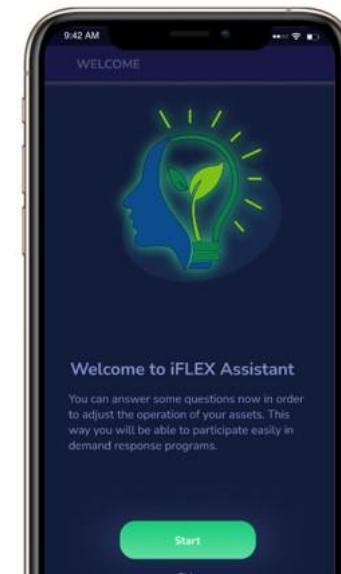
600 users
3 pilot sites

4 EU countries
€6.3 million budget



Importance of User Engagement & Co-Creation

- Framing a good user experience of the iFLEX Assistant & concept
 - User engagement & co-creation are significant for the acceptability and sustainability of the Assistant concept and related DR services in terms of:
 - Usage - is it usable, useful and trusted
 - Attractiveness - is it desirable, does it fulfil my needs, and will I invest in it
- Involving users in the development process means you...
 - Gain fresh insight into motivations, needs and wishes which help shape and adjust the design to achieve a good fit
 - Ensure that you design for the people you want to target
 - Reduce the risk of developing and deploying a solution that cannot be used or does not meet the needs of your target group
- One example of impact: Wizard for easy onboarding



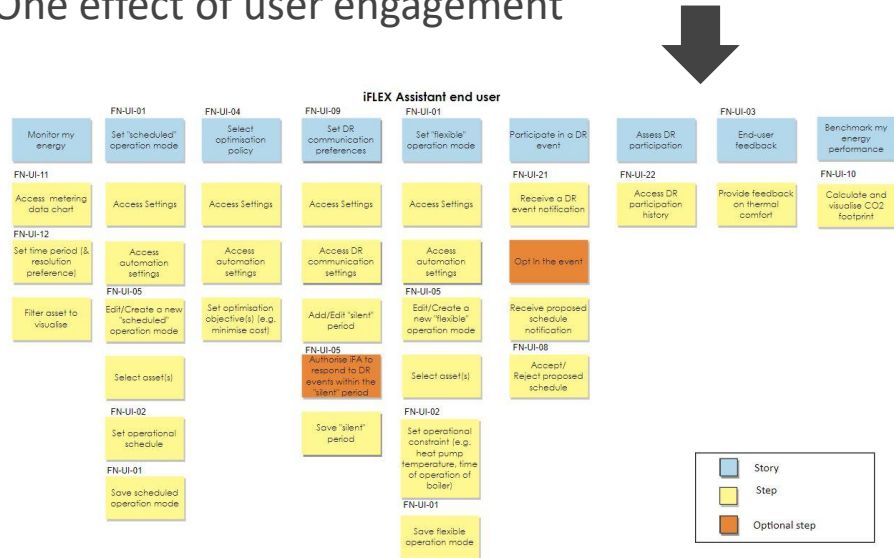
User Involvement at Pilot Sites

- Pilot sites in Finland, Slovenia and Greece
 - Apartment building, households, small enterprises
 - Pre-pilot & small-scale pilot phases now concluded
- Users were engaged through workshops, interviews & questionnaires
 - Assistant usability, look, functionality, content
 - Acceptance of iFLEX concept, use cases and incentives
- Example of user involvement in Slovenia



Results of User Engagement

- The Assistant experience is steadily being improved
 - One effect of user engagement



- Energy awareness and knowledge about demand flexibility have increased
 - Participants are willing to receive more energy related information, also after the project has ended. They have gained new knowledge about demand flexibility and are more aware of how they could participate in it. The willingness to participate in demand flexibility in the future has increased
- Customer relations are being strengthened
 - The experience of the installation process and general support is satisfactory: "All praise to the team"

Key Learnings from Implemented Strategies



- Strategies to foster user engagement and co-creation
 - Deploy a three-stage, user-centric approach: pre-pilot, small-scale to large-scale, steadily enlarging the user group
 - Target and invite existing customer and citizen groups within the consortium to attract participants and respondents, building on known and trusted relations
 - Identify and recruit eligible pilot participants, offering free equipment, lower prices, discounts
- Preliminary learnings
 - The pre-pilot phase has helped the project to identify and solve technical & legal issues while gaining initial feedback and to establish the foundation for recruitment, identifying eligible participants, available technologies and infrastructure
 - The identification and engagement of eligible pilot participants has made it easier to offer the right incentives and make participation attractive. It also ensures a relevant fit with the needs of the system.
- Examples of successful approaches and their impact on the project's outcomes
 - Personalised, face-to-face approaches increase participation rate
 - Customised incentives improve the overall user experience

Tools and Platforms for User Engagement

- Visualisation tools: Video and mock-ups
 - Essential for communicating and discussing the user interface
- World café method & graphic recording
 - Beneficial to get conversations going and merge perspectives
- Survey Monkey & Google forms
 - Customised questions, HEXAD user type survey, Likert Scale
- In-application feedback
 - Thermal comfort, app experience



How do you feel about the building temperature today?
Select smiley and/or write free text feedback and send.



THANKS

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