



## E.2 Estimation of energy consumption and its impact

*Many SMEs only have a superficial idea of how much they spend on energy, and on how deeply this can affect their financial performance. Appropriate monitoring requires time and resources, but even only focusing on the energy bills might be sufficient to have a general sense of this effect. However, often this basic financial information is not processed appropriately.*

To address this need, the Trusted Partner may give support by providing SMEs with proper information on how to estimate the current energy consumption and its impact on the total costs. An energy audit is the most efficient way for a SME to get a clear understanding of its energy consumption, its potential for improvement and promising actions to be taken. The energy audit is often performed by an expert in the field, who reviews the company's past energy bills, equipment and the way the business operates. To increase the accuracy of the assessments within the energy audit, this expert could install (or take advantage of it already being installed) a consumption monitoring system (starting with electrical utilities, which are easier and cheaper to install). Having evidence of measured data, the results within the audit will be more accurate and will provide more precise indications on what energy efficiency measures can be implemented and what energy savings can be achieved.

The output of the energy audit, properly interpreted by the auditor, will show the company where energy can be saved. In fact, an energy auditor can:

- evaluate company's energy use;
- verify where energy is being wasted;
- recommend specific improvements;
- estimate costs and savings;
- help understand energy bills; and
- map out energy efficiency projects.

Full energy audits can, however, be seen as unnecessary expenses to small SMEs, particularly if they are not yet "activated" in terms of awareness of energy efficiency. For this reason, one initial solution can be the provision of [energy scans](#) – a "simplified" version of an energy audit. This scan provides some useful information and helps the SME to get an initial understanding of the energy-related costs in the company.

Whether at individual or collective level, the current energy consumption estimation can be carried out through free tools or by an energy auditor. The tools that can support the Trusted Partner to address this need are mainly tools for Energy Scans or simplified Energy Audits. Such tools are widely available. For these tools, some input data is required (mainly information related to the consumption of energy carriers at least monthly, information related to the production sector of the company, number of



employees, extension of the building(s), etc.). The core topics covered by such tools are related to:

- Understanding the business energy bill.
- Measure and monitor energy use in the business, including equipment.
- Energy efficiency by sector.
- Reduce plant and equipment costs.

Some tools require technical skills to analyze the outputs provided by the various instruments, while others are designed to be used by "non-technical" personnel and require and provide mostly qualitative information.