NEWS LETTER

Rural Europe for the Clean Energy Transition - Annual Newsletter

Energy Transition Starts With People

Across Europe, rural communities are proving that the path to sustainability begins with local voices, local ownership and local action. RECET is proud to support these efforts, helping local authorities to take concrete steps toward cleaner energy and stronger communities.

This second edition of the RECET newsletter highlights how rural and island communities across Europe are turning clean energy ambitions into concrete action. From strategic energy planning and data driven decision making to energy communities and citizen engagement, the stories in this issue show that the energy transition is already underway, grounded in local realities and strengthened through European cooperation.

In the pages that follow, you'll find lessons learned from RECET partners in Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Slovenia and Spain. We share insights from municipal workshops, regional energy planning processes, and international conferences, as well as practical tools such as action banks, digital climate accounting systems, and community-led energy initiatives. Several articles explore how clean energy can support local development, resilience, and affordability, especially in remote and rural regions facing depopulation, high energy costs, and limited capacity.

This edition also highlights RECET's growing presence at the European level, including engagement with policymakers and peers at major EU forums, where the demand for practical, people centered approaches to the clean energy transition is clear.

Together, these stories reflect RECET's core belief: that successful energy transitions are not only technical solutions, but social processes, built on trust, participation, and local ownership.

Read an online version!
recetproject.eu

Project Timeline **Overall Progress 75%**

Start - oct 2023 End - sept 2026

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LIFE project no. 101120588

Project background

General objective

Reduce dependence on fossil fuels and accelerate the clean energy transition (CET) in five European regions and their municipalities.

Specific objectives

Building capacity in the administrations of municipalities and regions to accelerate local climate action

Establish vertical and horizontal cooperation across sectors for CET planning

Facilitate the development of realistic regional CET plans

Disseminate best practices for successful local stakeholder and community engagement and CET implementation

While energy transition policies are being implemented across the EU, national policies typically focus on accelerating Clean Energy Transition in densely populated areas. The role and importance of rural areas is often overlooked, despite their crucial contribution to electricity production, food production, and cultural and historical heritage.

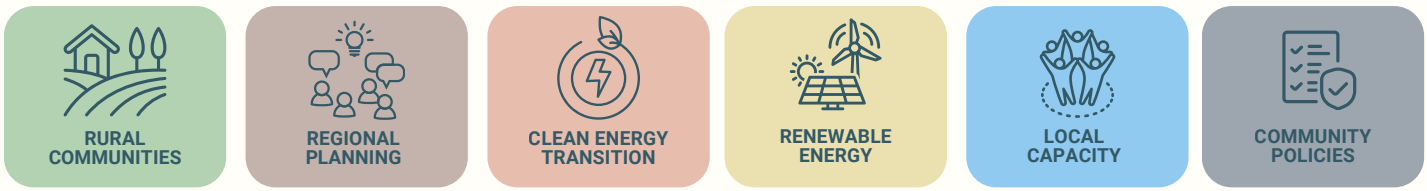
Rural communities face the greatest impact from climate change while having the least resources to develop and implement their legally required Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs). These legal requirements apply equally to urban and rural municipalities, but the traditional top-down approach exacerbates the difference in available resources and the local capacity. Rural municipalities struggle not only to meet legal requirements for developing and implementing SECAPs, but also miss the opportunity to use them effectively as strategic tools for local development.

The RECET project addresses this challenge by developing a practical methodology to accelerate Clean Energy Transition policy and Action Plans through a bottom-up approach involving both municipal staff as well as local stakeholders. This methodology encourages municipal staff to take ownership of policies and builds acceptance among external stakeholders.

The project applies a 10-step ladder methodology, developed for the SECAP planning process. Throughout the project, regional partners also benefit from the Samsø Energy Academy, a grass-root organisation spawned from the islands process of developing clean energy infrastructure.

The project brings together partners with diverse geographical locations spanning from southern Europe (Menorca) to the Arctic (North Iceland), different economic foundations ranging from forestry-based to tourism-oriented economies, and varying energy profiles from regions relying on coal for electricity production to areas with 100% renewable energy.

The RECET partners are: Samsø Energy Academy - DENMARK, Icelandic New Energy - ICELAND, Eimur - ICELAND, Association of Municipalities in Northeast Iceland (SSNE) - ICELAND, Westfjords Regional Development Office (WRDO) - ICELAND, Energy Agency of Southeast Sweden - SWEDEN, Zavod Iskriva - SLOVENIA, Občina Postojna - SLOVENIA and Consell Insular de Menorca - SPAIN.



Showcasing RECET at one of Europe's Biggest Policy Forums

In October 2025, we took RECET international! Icelandic New Energy and Energy Agency Southern Sweden headed to Brussels for the ***European Week of Regions and Cities*** 2025. This year, more than 6500 participants joined from all over Europe and beyond. Among them were politicians, public officials at all levels (EU, national, regional and local), private sector representatives, policymakers, journalists and civil society and citizens.

Think Local, Act Together

The event featured an exhibition area at The Square, alongside high-level lectures and panels at the conference center, all of the highest quality. We were proud to showcase our work among sister LIFE-CET projects **(REGIO1st, IN-PLAN and PLAN4CET)** in this prestigious setting, where policymakers, regional leaders, private sector representatives and journalists from across Europe came together to exchange ideas, share real-world experiences and find inspiration for tackling the challenges they face back home.

Over the two-day exhibition, more than 100 visitors stopped by our booth, predominantly local government representatives eager to learn from our experience. Our display featured comprehensive documentation and an eye-catching presentation, poster and portfolio made by our RECET partner Eimur, which sparked exactly the kind of conversations we were hoping for.

Marianne Ribes from Icelandic New Energy and Anna Mansson from the Energy Agency Southern Sweden represented RECET at the event.

What They Really Wanted to Know

Our booth showcased four LIFE-CET projects, creating a rich display of complementary approaches to CET challenges. While all four projects drew interest, visitors were particularly curious about our methodology for stakeholder engagement, asking detailed questions about our practical approach and our experience of involving local communities in policy making. Local government representatives were particularly hungry for our methodology and practical insights. They peppered us with questions about our first findings and lessons learned, clearly looking for approaches they could adapt in their own regions. It was incredibly validating to see how our on-the-ground experience resonated with decision-makers facing similar challenges in both rural and urban areas.

Why This Matters

The European Week of Regions and Cities attracts over 6,500 participants from across the EU and beyond, making it the perfect platform to share our progress. But what really struck us was the genuine appetite for actionable stakeholder engagement strategies.

The European Week of Regions and Cities is Brussels' flagship event on Cohesion Policy, co-organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR).

We extend our sincere thanks to our co-organisers and partner LIFE-CET projects for the collaboration, energy and shared commitment that made our joint presence at this flagship event possible.

Community Engagement and Clean Energy in Rural Islands

Alexis Chatzimpiros, Project Manager and International Coordinator, Samsø Energy Academy

What brings rural areas together? Can tourism be managed with clear boundaries to protect the landscape while still allowing enough growth to sustain the local economy? Could clean energy become a driver for local development?

These were some of the topics discussed at the international conference on tourism and infrastructure capacity, held on the rural island of Kythira, Greece, on 16.–17. October 2025.

On Kythira, most of the land is commonage, collectively owned by the island community. Large parts were leased and cultivated in the past but have remained unused for decades. The island faces the same challenges as many other rural areas: depopulation, abandonment of primary sector activities, and summer tourism becoming the main driver of development, placing local infrastructure and resources under strain. Yet, the commonage is primarily managed according to a preservation principle, leaving little room for local development.

At the conference, **Alexis Chatzimpiros** from the **Samsø Energy Academy** presented the example of the island of Samsø, Denmark and discussed the RECET project. He highlighted elements that can foster community engagement around the clean energy transition in rural areas, particularly through inclusive energy planning, public participation, and local benefits. He also held bilateral meetings with stakeholders interested in learning from the experiences of other rural areas on how to support rural communities in integrating renewable energy solutions while boosting local economies. Knowledge exchange, capacity building, and cooperation between islands and remote rural areas as well as practical examples and lessons that can be adapted to different contexts were highlighted as very vaulable. Lessons from the RECET project will be shared with the municipality of Kithira, the scientific committee, the local community and the participants.

From Vision to Action: Clean Energy Planning in Northeast Iceland

Municipal workshops and CET action bank

In the fall 2024 Eimur and SSNE held a series of five workshops with 10 municipalities in Northeast Iceland. The aim was to pinpoint realistic clean energy transition and climate actions with the participants, and to understand barriers for implementation.

In each workshop, participants were asked to describe their society in 5 and 15 years, emphasising clean energy and a climate friendly future, creating a future vision for the municipality. Building on this future vision, participants were to identify actions that would need to be taken in order to realise this future vision. Special emphasis was laid on spatial planning, and how good planning can accelerate the clean energy transition. Guided by the workshop facilitators participants brought their lens closer to the present, discussing which immediate actions could underpin lesser use of fossil fuel and how their municipality could support such a transition.

Having gone through this exercise with multiple participants from various municipalities in the Northeast, we were left with a multitude of different clean energy actions identified by the people working within the municipal sector (both politically elected as well as municipal staff).

In collaboration with SSNE and Vestfjarðastofa, these actions were collected into an accessible action bank for energy and efficiency related actions. Currently the bank totals 49 individual actions co-created by the workshop participants. The actions are categorised into five thematic categories “energy transition”, “municipal operations”, “transport mode shift”, “energy efficiency”, “education”. The objective of each action is described, and a suggestion is given for implementation. In the Icelandic version of the action bank, individual actions are connected to the national climate action plan where applicable.

Akureyri Energy Seminar

On May the 6th, the RECET project and the NetZero Island Network joined forces and held a **joint seminar** in Akureyri, under the title Akureyri Energy Seminar: Sustainable Solutions for Remote areas. RECET partners *Eimur* and *Icelandic New Energy* took on the planning of the event jointly with *Nordic Energy Research* and *the Environment and Energy Agency Iceland.*

During the seminar participants heard success stories from Denmark, Canada, Åland, Sweden, Shetland and more places and gained insights into developing process for societal sustainability strategies in different regions.

RECET

Nordic Energy Research

Icelandic Environment and Energy Agency

This action bank is an essential tool in the creation of a clean energy and climate action plan currently being developed within RECET for the North-East of Iceland.

The action bank will soon be made available freely on the web!

Key takeaways from the seminar were:

- Energy transitions are more expensive in rural, remote and islanded communities, and often require skill and capacity which smaller communities often lack.
- In order to drive such energy transitions, society must find mutual benefit. Despite smallness of many rural communities, the size can become a strength and change can happen at a much faster pace as compared to larger urban societies. This is why the social prosperity is no 1 on the sustainability agenda of the Åland Islands.
- The energy transition is a societal transition, rather than a mere technical one. This is a common misconception. Societies must be met where they are.
- Trust is a necessary (and sometimes also a sufficient) ingredient for driving change: "change happens at the speed of trust".
- Community ownership is the gold standard, when it comes to achieving social acceptance for energy production as has been apparent through the development of energy projects in the Shetlands where the local community gets their share of local energy production. This is also a known truth from the Danish Island of Samsø where windmills simply look better if you own a share in them.

Energy related analysis for the energy transition

Eimur has launched two reports analysing energy affairs in the Icelandic context. The first report released in September 2024 covered the foreseen requirements for the electrification of harbours to sustain the electrification of smaller boats and fishing vessels.

Energy transitions in the country's passenger car fleet are progressing reasonably well, but energy transitions in marine-related activities are considerably less advanced, although there is some growth in this regard across the country. One of the factors that needs to be considered is the expected power demand for electricity at the country's ports. Ships and boats have different power requirements, and it is important to understand which energy sources and carriers are likely to suit each user.

One of the most important conclusions of the report is that there is no major infrastructure problem hindering the energy of smaller boats and ships, in the sense that the current transmission grids and production should sustain the foreseen demand. In some smaller towns, some investment is needed to provide more powerful electrical connections that carry a capacity of 1-3 MW, but in other places, e.g. in Akureyri and in larger towns, the electrical system can handle this as it is set up today.

When it comes to larger ships, the picture is different. We need to think holistically about where large boats should dock in the future, because it is not necessarily a given that all ports should build an electricity system that can accommodate trawlers, cargo ships and cruise ships. It would be sensible to formulate a policy for receiving larger ships in the region of NE-Iceland.

In the second report released in December 2024, oil sales in Iceland were analysed for the period 2010-2020, with a geographical breakdown. This is the *first time* that such data are made accessible in Iceland.

The report is based on the database of the Oil Products Transport Equalization Fund (ice. Flutningsjöfnunarsjóður olíuvara), which was operated until 2020. Here, oil sales from 2010-2020 are analyzed by region and municipality, and the use classified by type of fuel. This accounts for oil use in land transport, ships and boats, and then other uses that are mostly due to fuel use in small industry and agriculture.

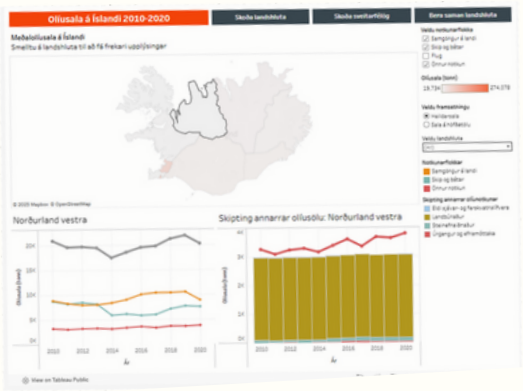
The best measure of the progress of the energy transition is the amount of oil burnt at any given time. After a successful clean energy transition no oil will be burnt. There are no official data on oil consumption in Iceland by region or municipality, and the data that was previously collected are no longer collected.

The main conclusion of the report is that there is considerable variation in oil sales in transport, maritime activities and industry by both regions and municipalities, indicating that oil consumption is generally higher outside the capital region than within it. Government actions supporting the country's energy transition must take this variation into account to ensure that all decision-making within the area applies equally to all residents of the country, regardless of whether they live close to the capital area or not.

This analysis adds a new dimension to the discussion of the energy transition in Iceland and places it in a regional context, where previously data were lacking.

Iceland Fossil Fuel Dashboard

The Iceland Fossil Fuel Dashboard provides insights into fossil fuel sales and consumption in Iceland from 2010–2020. Users can explore the data by region or municipality, fuel type, and quantity, both in total and per capita, and can also save generated graphs.



The dashboard highlights the importance of continuing detailed fossil fuel data collection, which Icelandic authorities no longer conduct. The dashboard was developed following the oil sales report by Eimur and Efla Engineering, with programming by Inbal Armony as part of a final project for the SIT Study Abroad: Climate Change and the Arctic program.

The fossil fuel dashboard is available here

Energy Communities – *Taking Local Power into Local Hands*


Bændablaðið | Fimmtudagur 23. október 2025

Orkusamfélag, hvað er nú það?

Press release about energy communities in the Icelandic Farmers' Newspaper, october 23rd 2025.

An **energy community** is a group of people who join forces to manage their own energy needs, partly or fully. Across Europe, such initiatives have grown rapidly, supported by EU legislation that recognizes them as participants in the electricity market. Residents in a neighborhood or region can collaborate to address local energy challenges, such as heating or solar power generation, through shared solutions.

While this model is still new in Iceland, rising electricity and transmission costs have sparked growing interest, especially in rural areas where energy is significantly more expensive than in urban centers. In some parts of the country without district heating, known as *cold areas*, homes rely on electricity for heating, leading to high energy bills.

One such area is Kelduhverfi in North Iceland, where Eimur, under the RECET project, held a community meeting on energy communities and solar power in early 2025.

The event was well attended and resulted in the creation of the **Kelduhverfi Energy Cooperative**, established to explore ways to reduce local energy costs.

The cooperative plans to promote the installation of heat pumps, which can cut electricity use for heating by up to two-thirds compared to direct electric heating, and to experiment with small-scale solar energy systems on farms.

Beyond local savings, reduced electricity use in such rural areas also lowers the national cost of energy subsidies for electric heating. Inspired by similar models across Europe, energy communities like Kelduhverfi's could eventually enable local energy trading, strengthen energy security, and promote fairer energy distribution across Iceland.

A Regional Climate Policy for Northeast Iceland

In September 2025, work continued for making an action based Climate Policy for Northeast Iceland. All 10 municipalities appointed a representative to take part in this work. The aim was to set focus on few, clear and efficient actions for the municipalities to carry out in the next two years. After that time, all the actions in the Climate Policy will be revised and updated with new actions. All actions are categorised into three groups; energy, landuse and waste. Later the work will also include actions in climate adoption.

The Climate Policy has been created and a set of actions been prioratised. Currently, the Policy is in an approval process amongst the municipalites.

The biggest opportunities for the region to reduce it's climate footprint lie in projects that restore wetlands, close landfills and create a sustainable transportation system.

Iceland's national goal is to reduce climate emissions by 50-55% before 2035 and to reach Climate neutrality by 2040. The Regional Climate Policy for Northeast Iceland has adopted these goals and aims for the same success.

Webinar on the Energy Transition of Small Fishing Vessels

On the 3rd of April 2025, WRDO and Eimur hosted a webinar on the energy transition of small fishing vessels.

The event brought together experts, stakeholders, and fishermen to discuss technical solutions, regulatory frameworks, and the social impacts of electrifying the small-boat fleet. The webinar was opened by the Icelandic minister for the environment, energy and climate, who emphasized the government's willingness to engage in dialogue on supporting energy transitions in the fisheries sector.

Discussions highlighted that viable technical solutions for electrifying small boats already exist, particularly for vessels operating close to shore. However, higher investment costs remain a key barrier, underlining the need for public support, continued innovation, and targeted incentives. Participants also stressed the importance of considering different fishing areas and methods, as well as the parallel development of charging infrastructure in ports.

Beyond technical and economic aspects, the webinar addressed the broader societal impacts of the transition, including opportunities for coastal communities and the need to ensure that more vulnerable regions are not left behind. The event demonstrated that successful energy transitions in the small-boat fleet will require close cooperation between government, municipalities, ports, fishers, and industry.

WRDO and Eimur thank all participants for their contributions. Work within RECET will continue with further stakeholder dialogue and efforts to enable the first electric small fishing vessels to operate in Iceland.

From Data to Decisions: Strengthening Climate Action in the Westfjords

One of the key tasks in creating a functional SECAP, for the small municipalities in the Westfjords, is accounting for the emissions of each municipality (their own operation) through green accounting. Although a legal obligation, this practice has been lacking in routine and quality.

Hence, it has not provided any substantial database to identify the key sources of emissions. Without that data one cannot identify where the opportunities to decrease emissions lie or follow any progress. In this way functional green accounting is a precondition for estimating energy balance and its emissions, setting goals for reduction, and monitor progress.

Early in the RECET project WRDO discovered this lack of data and when asked municipality staff, from different municipalities, blamed it univocally on two things:

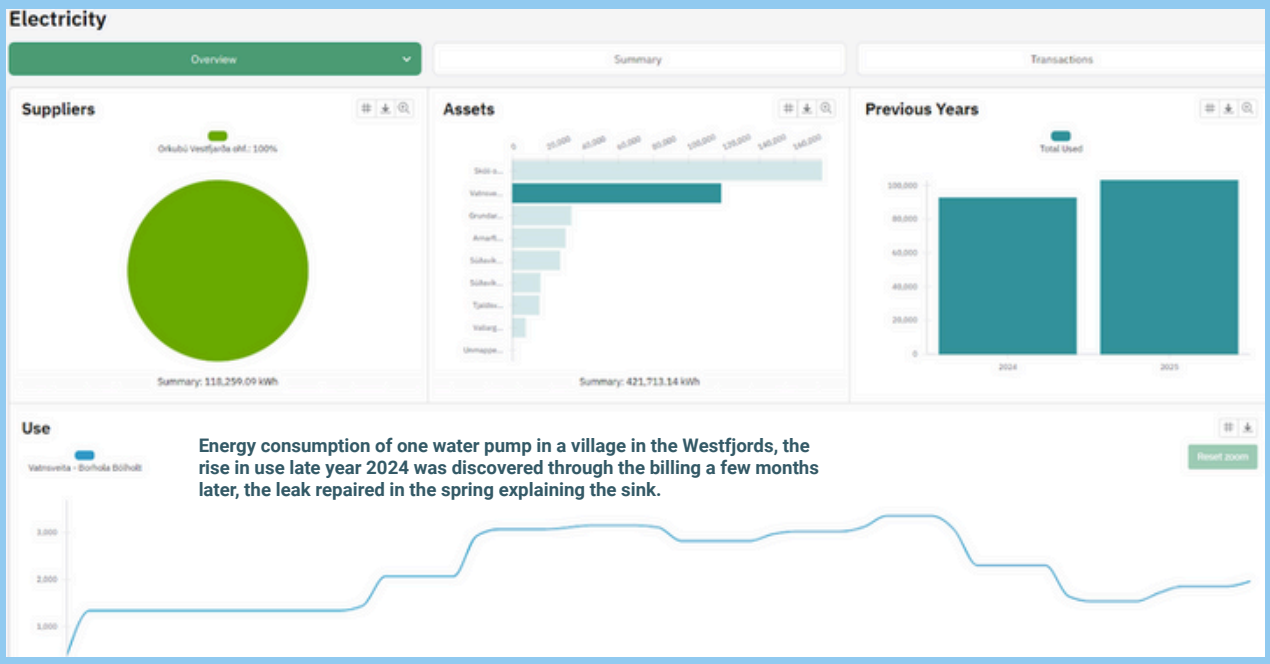
1. The green data had hitherto been dragged out of the financial accounting manually in a very time-consuming manner, without any clear picture for what end the data was collected

2. This process took place once a year for the previous year. Hence the data did not have any other management value for the municipality, because it was already outdated. For instance, one can identify irregularities in operation through green data stream i.e. when the energy consumption of a water pump rises suddenly. But when you collect these numbers retrospectively the irregularity is discovered earlier through other means, i.e. the billing of the power supplier or a leak is discovered in the waterpipe system.

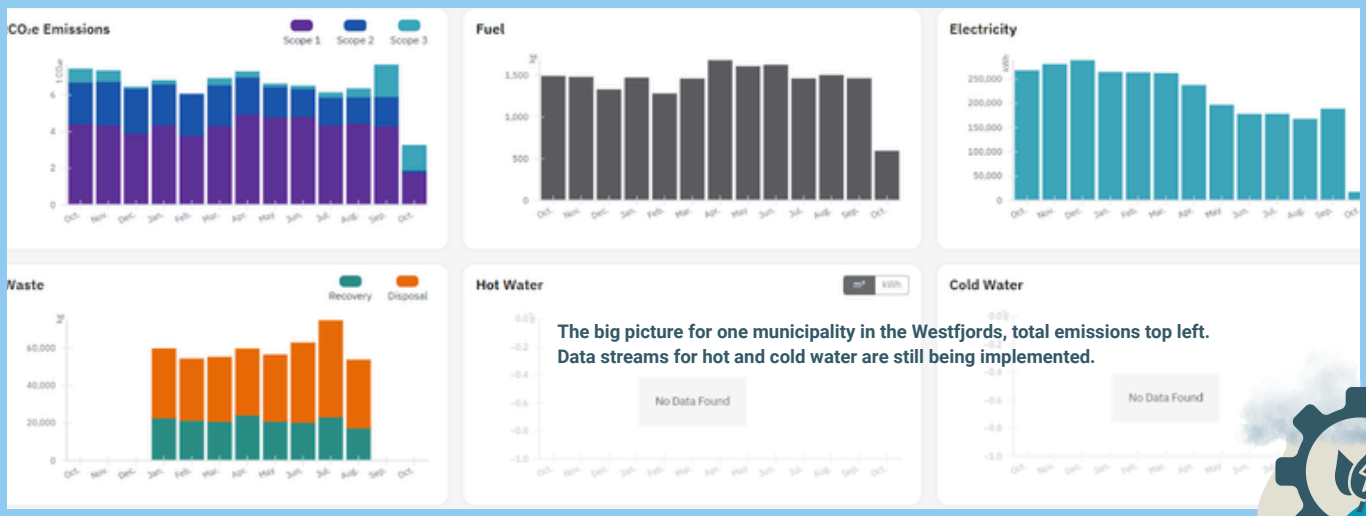
Those facts led WRDO to look for a digital solution for the municipalities that would largely be automatic and deliver reliable relevant data in real time. This WRDO found in Klappir sustainability platform. Simply put, Klappir install a direct data stream from the suppliers of the municipalities to the platform, which is accessible to each municipality and where they can monitor in detail the sources of their emissions. The details go down to individual vehicles or houses, or certain spheres of operations (like education or kindergartens) and give impressive opportunity for data crushing for general management as well as green management.

Klappir
The smart way to sustainability

Examples from the Klappir, sustainability platform:



Of course, it is always useful to have the big picture as well, which is provided through a dashboard:



The implementation of the Klappir systems started early 2025 and WRDO has had to deal with some difficulties on the way. When municipalities are small, and the region rural the suppliers tend to be small as well, and small suppliers often don't have advanced computer systems that are ready to connect to a data platform.

In the autumn months WRDO has been holding workshops with the municipalities individually furthering the implementation of the digital platform. WRDO has also organized meetings between key suppliers, Klappir and the municipalities in order establish the relevant data connections in energy and waste management.

From Sunshine to Shared Power: Menorca's Path to Local Energy Communities.

Photovoltaic self-consumption, the best way to save electricity from the grid

Menorca has many hours of sunshine throughout the year, and that is a source of free energy that cannot be overlooked.

Photovoltaics is a well-known technology that allows users to know almost exactly the amount of energy that can be generated per year and, therefore, the energy savings they can have by using electricity from this source.

The most effective way to save at home or at work is to have a photovoltaic self-consumption facility in our building, so that the energy generated can go directly to the end user without using the electricity grid which is usually owned by a large company.

Meetings and workshops in all the municipalities

Within the framework of RECET project, workshops have been held in all the municipalities of Menorca in order to share the path towards the creation of energy communities and their benefits. In total, 9 workshops have been held.

There, the citizens of each municipality have been in touch with new concepts and ways of co-ownership of the electricity generation facilities. That also allows them to not depend solely on the owner of the network and to depend on each other members of the community with the gain in trust it can suppose from the moment they share something with people they know.

Energy communities, the way to share local energy

The problem arises where the user has no space to install the solar panels, perhaps because they do not own any part of the building's roof, or perhaps even owning some roof, it is not large enough for all the solar panels to generate the necessary amount of energy. This is when energy communities come into play.

With an energy community we can mix people with a lack of installation space with people with a lot of usable surface on their roofs, people capable of producing more energy than they need with people who need more energy than they can produce.

The way to make it work is to reach an agreement between the community members who have space to install the photovoltaic facility and the members who consume the energy generated by that facility. This agreement includes everything from the membership rights, to the payment rules and any other aspects considered.

Lessons learned

Of the attempts to create energy communities, the two main difficulties come from the legal barriers and from the distrust on energy supply, as it traditionally comes from large private companies.

Regarding legal barriers, there is a lot of regulation at all levels (country, regional and local) that makes it difficult to create energy communities. To address this, CIMe is preparing a guide with the necessary steps for it.

Regarding distrust, these workshops and meetings must be useful for citizens to understand that they can share something outside of big companies and be part of something that can undoubtedly contribute to the decarbonization and socialization of energy generation. CIMe is also preparing a guide to dynamicize citizenship in the creation of energy communities.

LIFE project no. 101120588

Co-funded by the European Union

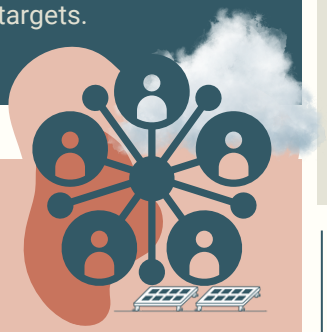
www.recetproject.eu

Major Steps Towards Active Energy Planning

All Municipalities in Blekinge Take Major Steps Towards Active Energy Planning

Energy planning is no longer optional. It's a necessity that affects the climate, the energy system, and municipal finances. Municipalities are expected to take responsibility for a long-term sustainable energy supply, both to meet climate goals and to ensure security and cost-efficiency for residents. With national policy documents and EU directives in place, the role of municipalities in the energy transition is becoming increasingly clear: it's about smart planning, collaboration, and engaging citizens, businesses, and local stakeholders.

Blekinge now stands as a strong example: all municipalities in the county have begun work on local energy planning. With support from the RECET project, through the Energy Agency Southern Sweden, and in collaboration with regional actors, the municipalities have embarked on an important journey toward sustainable energy systems. It's a step that strengthens the county's efforts to meet future climate targets.



Energy Groups Become the Hub of Local Efforts

By the end of 2025, a key milestone was reached: all five municipalities have formed local energy groups. These groups are more than meeting places, they are engines for climate action at the local level. They bring together civil servants from various departments, including urban planning, technology, finance, and environment, and serve as the central hub for municipal energy work. The groups are responsible for driving planning forward, tracking goals, and ensuring diverse perspectives are considered.

"It's a structure that fosters engagement and makes the work more efficient," says Anna Månsson, project manager at the Energy Agency Southern Sweden. *"By gathering expertise and responsibility in one place, it becomes clearer who does what and how the municipality's energy transition can evolve step by step."*

From Starting Point to Dynamic Development

Initially, the municipalities were inspired by a linear process model from the EU Commission's research center JRC. The model was easy to understand and communicate, which helped kickstart the work. But in practice, energy work is rarely linear. The model has now evolved into a circular and dynamic process, where feedback, flexibility, and local conditions are central. It allows for adjusting goals, leveraging experience, and adapting efforts to new needs.

"The circular model reflects reality better, even though it's more complex. The most important thing is that each municipality finds a working method that suits its local context," continues Anna Månsson.

Progress So Far

The municipalities are in different phases, but all are working toward the same goal: a long-term sustainable energy supply.

- **Sölvesborg**: Energy plan adopted by the municipal council and implementation started.
- **Karlshamn**: Proposal out for consultation.
- **Karlskrona**: Working on the first draft.
- **Ronneby and Olofström**: Replication municipalities that already started, inspired by RECET and taking learnings from RECET and other LIFE projects operating in Sweden.

Citizen Dialogues on Sustainability in Karlskrona, Blekinge

In 2025, Karlskrona municipality hosted two citizen dialogue meetings focused on sustainability and the clean energy transition. RECET took part in a broad planning group together with local associations, municipal representatives, and regional actors. Participants discussed how residents can contribute to a more sustainable municipality and shared their views on Karlskrona's role as a forerunner in the shift toward clean energy.

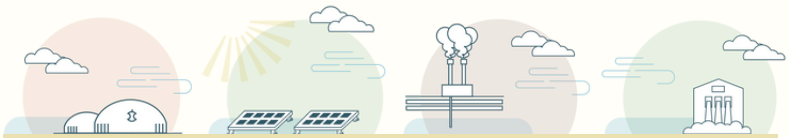
"By linking local efforts to the county's climate and energy strategy, we ensure that municipal actions contribute to Blekinge's shared goals," concludes Anna Månsson.

With these steps, Blekinge's municipalities are well on their way toward a sustainable energy system, and the next chapter in the journey is just around the corner.

Blekinge Municipalities Strengthen Local Energy Planning Through International Collaboration

Nearly two years ago, three municipalities in Blekinge — Karlshamn, Ronneby, and Sölvesborg embarked on a transformative journey in local energy planning through their participation in the international project RECET. Facilitated by the Energy Agency Southern Sweden, RECET aims to support municipalities in developing strategic energy plans that align with climate goals and local development needs.

Now, Karlskrona is seeing a powerful boost through the complementary project Enercracy, which reinforces and expands the work initiated under RECET. While RECET has focused on capacity-building and structured planning processes, Enercracy brings a citizen-centered approach, encouraging broader participation and democratic engagement in energy-related decisions, especially in rural areas, where local ownership and inclusion are key to long-term success.



Two Projects, One Vision

The synergy between RECET and Enercracy lies in their shared ambition: to empower municipalities with the tools, knowledge, and community support needed to accelerate the energy transition. RECET has provided a framework for energy planning and cross-border learning, while Enercracy strengthens the social dimension and thereby ensuring that energy planning is not only technically sound but also locally anchored.

Together, the projects have enabled:

- Development of tailored energy plans for participating municipalities
- Increased dialogue between local authorities, citizens, and stakeholders
- Integration of European best practices with regional priorities
- Enhanced capacity to meet national and EU climate targets

A Model for Regional Collaboration

Energy Agency Southern Sweden's role as a bridge between international expertise and local implementation has been key to the success of both projects. By combining RECET's strategic planning tools with Enercracy's participatory methods, Blekinge is emerging as a model for how regional collaboration can drive meaningful change in the energy sector.

With continued support from national programs and local initiatives, Blekinge is well-positioned to become a leading region for sustainable, inclusive, and prosumer-driven energy transformation.

LIFE project no. 101120588
Co-funded by the European Union

Strengthening Regional Energy Planning in Blekinge, Sweden

Network meeting in Karlshamn where Helen Gårner is sharing her insights

Lessons from Sölvesborg: A Pioneer in Local Energy Planning

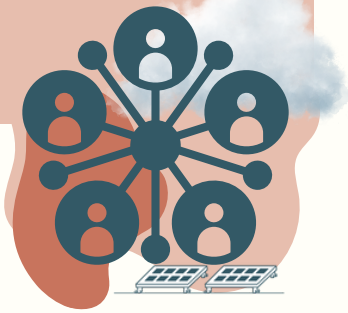
Sölvesborg was the first municipality in Blekinge to adopt a new energy plan, with support from RECET. At the network's inaugural meeting in Karlshamn, Helen Gårner, Environmental Coordinator and Energy Planning Lead in Sölvesborg, shared insights from their journey:

"Start with what you want to do—that's how you get a concrete plan to work with," she emphasized.

Helen highlighted the importance of action over perfection, noting that energy planning is a continuous process that evolves over time. She also credited Energy Agency Southern Sweden's support—facilitating meetings, preparing materials, and leading workshops—as a key success factor.

Following the adoption of the energy plan, the Energy Agency Southern Sweden continued its support through energy coaching for local businesses. This work was closely linked to Energilyftet, a national initiative supporting companies in their energy transition. Together, these efforts have already led to 11 companies signing energy and climate contracts with the municipality, aligning local needs with Energilyftet and other externally funded activities for maximum impact.

In collaboration with Blekinge's five municipalities, Region Blekinge, and the County Administrative Board, the Energy Agency Southern Sweden has launched a new intermunicipal energy planning network. The initiative aims to foster long-term strategic collaboration by sharing experiences and integrating regional and national perspectives into local energy planning.



Ongoing Exchange and Capacity Building

The network will convene 1–2 times annually, featuring guest speakers to enrich discussions and strengthen municipal energy planning. At the Karlshamn meeting, Anders Svedberg from the Swedish Energy Agency presented on the interplay between energy planning and broader municipal strategies.

This initiative is part of the RECET and GK Blekinge projects, co-funded by Life Clean Energy Transition (LIFE CET), Region Blekinge, and the Swedish Energy Agency.

Original article: https://energikontorsyd.se/a/utvecklar-engergiplaneringen-tillsammans

Turning Challenges into Energy Transition Progress

Establishing an Energy Community in Postojna: A Key Step Towards Local Energy Self-Sufficiency

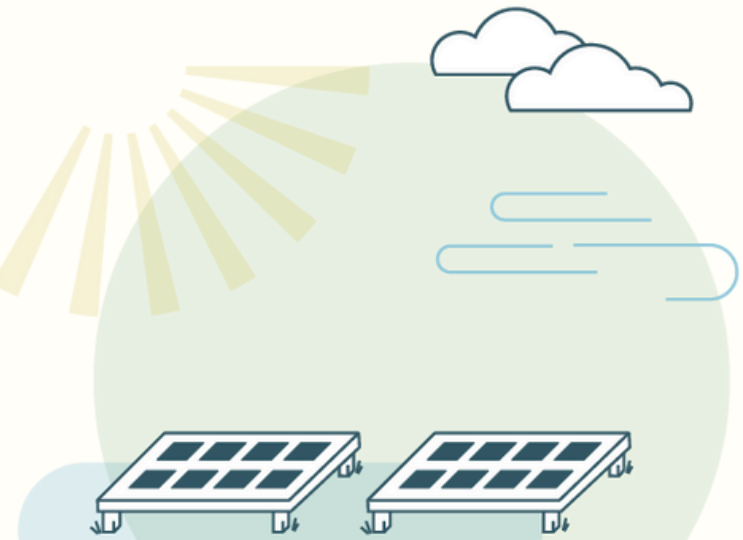
The Municipality of Postojna is moving forward with the establishment of its first energy community, linked to the construction of the new high-efficiency sports hall at SGLZŠ Postojna.

The hall will provide 1,330 m² of net usable sports surfaces (total gross area 2,145.57 m²) and is designed as an energy-efficient building. To ensure energy neutrality, the building will host a rooftop solar power plant with a total capacity of 191 kWp, of which 66 kWp will be owned by the Municipality of Postojna.

This municipal share of the photovoltaic installation is the key driver for setting up the energy community, which will bring together:

- SGLZŠ Postojna,
- several public institutions in the municipality,
- and the Municipality of Postojna itself.

The energy community will enable optimised use of locally produced renewable electricity, strengthen cost efficiency and enhance the resilience of public infrastructure.



Strengthening Regional Cooperation: RECET Workshop with RDA Zeleni Kras

In November 2025, the Municipality of Postojna hosted a dedicated RECET workshop, organised in cooperation with the RERURAL project led by the Regional Development Agency Zeleni Kras (RDA Zeleni Kras).

The workshop focused on presenting current status of a CET plan and gathered input and suggestions for:

a) finalisation of the plan
b) input for needs and expectatios for capacity buiding events
c) promoting energy communities
d) advancing knowledge on energy literacy for general public

Delay in the Preparation of the CET plan: Data Collection Challenges

The preparation of the Comprehensive Energy Transition (CET) plan for the Municipality of Postojna has been delayed due to complex data acquisition processes.

The main barriers include:

- inconsistent or incomplete data on local heat supply systems,
- jurisdictional challenges between operators,
- administrative constraints in accessing relevant datasets.

Despite these obstacles, the municipality is actively working to secure all necessary information to ensure a robust and comprehensive CET.

LIFE project no. 101120588
Co-funded by the European Union

Stakeholder Engagement

To address project barriers and drive RECET activities forward, the Municipality of Postojna has conducted extensive engagement with:

- key municipal decision-makers,
- technical staff and sectoral departments,
- local institutions and utility providers,
- RDA Zeleni Kras experts,
- and other relevant stakeholders.

These targeted meetings and consultations have been crucial for overcoming data barriers, preparing the RECET workshop, refining the energy community concept and ensuring coordinated progress on the CET plan.

Denis Kresevič, Project Coordinator at Municipality of Postojna. Consortium Meeting in Iceland, May 2025

Development of Capacity Building Course for Public Officials

As one of main obstacles in CET planning and uptake of Renwable energy sources (RES) and Energy efficiency (EE) measures, is a lack of awareness of benefits on one hand, and on the other, a lack of knowledge on the side of public officials, to integrate RES and EE measures in their daily work routine. Therefore a training course with comprehensive overview ad practical application is under development. We have currently got the first draft, from which we will develop a final version.

Municipality of Postojna faced setback in the CET Plan development. On one hand we faced challenges with data acquisition and the other, a lack of interest from stakeholders.

The approach Postojna applied was to seek broader regional support and seek for complementary projects and initiatives to mobilise and attract more stakeholders to the process. During the process it became clear that the lack of awareness and especially practical knowledge for RES and EE uptake is the key factor for delays we were facing. The next few months were dedicated to individual meetings with various stakeholders in the municipality and project representatives to identify common interest and areas where we could gain input for CET.

We identify a topic or approach that would be of interest to broader stakeholder audience, namely establishment of Energy community or a cooperative, first from the side of public institutions but gradually opening it also to all interested stakeholders. This community would serve as catalyst for CET implementation, offering access to practitioners and RES and EE solutions. To further the uptake a training course for public officials is under development and will be implemented in early 2026.

Connect with our partners!

Icelandic New Energy
ICELAND (co-ordinator)

Contact: Marianne Ribes
ribes@newenergy.is

Samsø Energy Academy
DENMARK

Contact: Alexis Chatzimpiros
ac@energiakademiet.dk

EIMUR
ICELAND

Contact: Ottó Elíasson
ottoel@eimur.is

WRDO
ICELAND

Contact: Hjörleifur Finnson
hjorleifur@vestfirdir.is

SSNE
ICELAND

Contact: Sigurborg Ósk Haraldsdóttir
sigurborg@ssne.is

Energy Agency of Southeast Sweden
SWEDEN

Contact: Anna Månsson
anna.mansson@energikontorsyd.se

Consell Insular de Menorca
SPAIN

Contact: Eduard Escolà
eduard.escola@cime.es

The Municipality of Postojna
SLOVENIA

Contact: Denis Kresevič
denis.kresevic@postojna.si

Zavod Iskriva
SLOVENIA

Contact: Zdravko Kozinc
zdravko.kozinc@iskriva.net

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