



# **JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF A MENTORING SCHEME FOR ENERGY COMMUNITIES IN SLOVAKIA, PP12-NEK**

**Spoločný rozvoj mentorskej schémy pre  
energetické komunity na Slovensku, PP12-  
NEK**

**A.T.3.1 Joint development of a mentoring scheme for  
the creation of energy communities**

**Final version**

**Project NRGCOM:  
Creating appropriate operational conditions for renewable energy  
communities in the Danube Region**

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# 1. Baseline data on the implementation of the activity



**Organizer and guarantor of activity processing:** PP 11 – DIT, Germany

**Project manager for Slovakia:** PP 12 – NEK

**SO3:** Enhancing production and use of renewables through pilot testing in potential and existing RECs

**A.T.3.1:** Joint development of a mentoring scheme for the creation of energy communities

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**Activity objective:** The submitted and solved activity falls under the SO3 working group in the NRGCOM project for the 2nd period from 01.07.2024 to 31.12.2024 and the goal of the PP12 – NEK partner was to create a currently suitable and successfully applicable domestic mentoring scheme for creating energy communities in the regions of Slovakia.

Such a proposed scheme will be used in conjunction with the schemes of other NRGCOM project solvers in other connected activities from the already obtained results A.T.1.1, A.T.1.3 and T.3.2.

**The submitted document is a contribution of PP12-NEK to the fulfillment of activity A.T.3.1 in the 2nd period of the NRGCOM project for the guarantor PP11 - DIT within the framework of the preparation and implementation of a joint implementation plan for a successful mentoring pilot action.**

# **2. Concept and methodology of the mentoring scheme PP12-NEK**



## 2.1 Defining the mentoring approach

Based on good practices, the results of A.T.1.1 and A.T.1.3, policy recommendations triggering changes in current legislation (D.3.5.1), REC creation strategy (O1.1), engagement strategy (O.2.1) and awareness-raising toolkit (O.2.3), a mentoring system will be developed by the PPs through online partner meetings to help create well-functioning energy communities in the Danube region.

An implementation plan will also be developed, including the steps to be taken to create RECs, and then tested in operation.

During the mentoring process, the participating partners will encourage the population to use the available resources efficiently.

The PPs will be externally supported by REC ambassadors to achieve a successful launch.

These partners will contribute to the development of a mentoring scheme where the establishment of energy communities is feasible in practice and in the social and economic environment, and therefore the mentoring scheme to be developed will be applicable. The activity leader is PP11- DIT, as he already has experience with energy communities and will use the mentoring scheme in implementing the pilot testing of the energy community creation method (A.T.3.2) at the newly established REC.

This input information, in conjunction with PP12 - NEK's own long-term research in this activity and experience with industrial energy clusters and RES-based enterprises, is followed by a developed domestic mentoring scheme for Slovakia.

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When solving and setting up your own home mentoring scheme, it is necessary to clarify the basic and crucial knowledge and terminology for creating a mentoring scheme in practice.

Mentoring is a process in which one person (mentor) shares their knowledge, experience and advice with another person (mentee). A mentor is essentially a guide

who draws on their professional and life experiences to support an individual who is developing.

Mentoring is one of the oldest models of human development. It is the key to personal and professional development. It was used by Plato, but also by Harry Potter and Luke Skywalker. But let's find out why it is important for us. It is one of the keys to personal and professional development.

When the researcher reflects on the success of others, he often comes to the conclusion that individual human factors are behind it. However, it is rarely an individual's independent effort. It is precisely relationships with other people that help in achieving goals.

Nowadays, more and more individuals and organizations are focusing on personal and professional development. Two popular and quite effective organizational, psychological and at the same time personnel methods that contribute to achieving set goals are able to help in this: mentoring and coaching. Although they may seem very similar, for some even identical, both approaches have unique characteristics and bring various different benefits.

In this article, we will discuss the key characteristics of mentoring and coaching, including their goals and benefits. We will also examine the return on investment (ROI) of both approaches and analyze in more detail the situations in which it may be more appropriate to prefer mentoring or coaching.

Mentoring aims to maximize the potential of individuals by developing their personality, self-knowledge, self-confidence and performance.

The goal is to provide specific advice, knowledge and recommendations that can be used in various spheres of the mentee's life, whether in the work environment, personal life, in the academic sphere or in the implementation of their own projects. It is a relationship based on mutual trust where the mentor provides guidance, support and motivation.

Coaching is a method of personal or professional development where an individual is given the opportunity to receive real-time feedback and guidance while working towards achieving specific goals.

This process can cover a wide range of topics, from personal development and skill building to improving performance in specific areas.

Coaching is characterized by a collaboration between the coach and the individual, which helps in recognizing strengths and weaknesses, identifying areas for growth, and creating action plans to achieve set goals.

Coaching is particularly useful in situations where individuals are looking for ways to improve their skills, increase their performance, or overcome personal or professional challenges.

It can also be beneficial when an organizer is trying to adapt to new professional roles or when they want to better understand their strengths and weaknesses.

Coaching is often preferred in areas where quick feedback and valuable advice are needed to achieve specific short- or medium-term goals.

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## 2.2 Proposal for a Mentoring Scheme NEK for Slovakia

At this point, the author collective of ambassadors, experts and stakeholders for PP12-NEK presents the basic concept of the Mentoring Scheme for the Slovak business environment of energy communities in the form of clear descriptive tables.

The entire proposal created during the 2nd Period of the NRGCOM project will be further consulted with the expert guarantor of activity A.T.3.1, namely PP11 - DIT, and with other cooperating project partners, and is a contribution and a case of good practice.

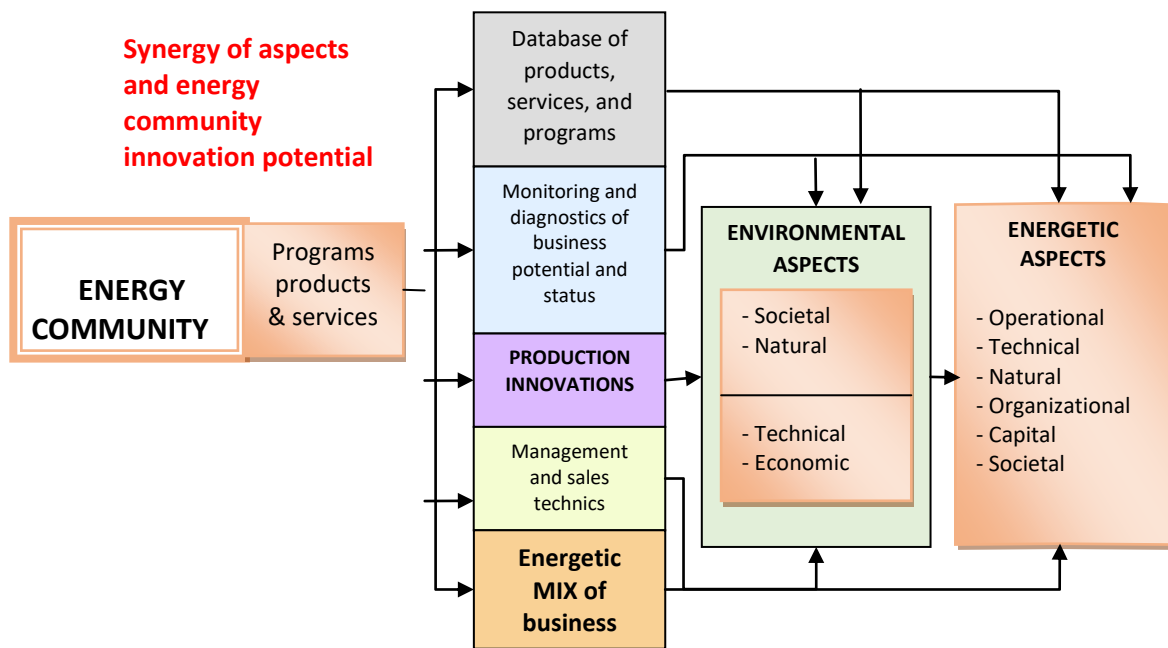
The result can be expected in the form of a working tool for energy communities in activity A.T.3.1 in the form of output D3.1.1 Mentoring scheme and implementation plan for creating an energy community. It is thus a practical guide to organizing and managing mentoring in the energy community in the future.

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Any successful implementation of the Mentoring Scheme is built on 4 basic activities, gradually following each other, namely:

1. Setting goals, operating system and legislative, organizational and operational basis of the energy community.
2. Defining the area and scope of application and needs and expectations of both members of the energy community and its customers/subscribers.
3. Understanding the innovation potential, financial and operational input base and product options within the production and subsequent distribution of energy in the area of operation of the energy community.
4. Defining the professional knowledge and personality base of management and personnel and joint mentoring solutions to potential problems of the development of the energy community in the relevant energy market.

The following diagram illustrates the main components and links for understanding the functioning of the energy community - very important for the preparation and implementation of mentoring activities in the organization.



## 2.3 Tabular representation of the main modules and principles of the application of the NEK Mentoring Scheme

**Step 1:** Mentoring should be understood as a tool for using people's intellectual abilities to support a knowledge society and is affected by the following main external and internal influences:

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES	INTERNAL INFLUENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- business environment</li> <li>- globalization symptoms</li> <li>- energy and technological demands</li> <li>- climate and environmental requirements</li> <li>- finance</li> <li>- diversity and environmental changes</li> <li>- social responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- development of energy community capabilities</li> <li>- development of community member base</li> <li>- competition for capable personnel</li> <li>- energy distribution planning</li> <li>- energy product mix</li> <li>- knowledge management</li> </ul>

In the NRGCOM project, the form of mentoring based on personal mentoring is best applied for the Slovak business environment due to the relatively small number of employed and involved persons in the management and production of energy in a given energy community. Typical features of mentoring in practice are: META - reciprocity, encouragement, trust, actions and advice for practice.

**Step 2:** It is up to the management of a given energy community to decide which form of mentoring to choose in practice from the following options:

<b>TYPES OF MENTORING</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>
Formal and Informal Mentoring	It takes place either as part of a targeted program with prescribed rules in the organization, or on the basis of spontaneous communication on specific problems and solutions.
In-person Mentoring	Built on a relationship between two people of unequal levels of education and experience to solve community problems and guide its opinions and attitudes
On – line mentoring	Implementing communication between multiple organizational units in the internet space, as well as promotional tools using guided questions and alternative answers
Peer-to-peer Mentoring	Peer mentoring is a supportive relationship between personnel at the same work and educational level and at the same stage of solving energy community problems. It is mostly informal communication.
Group Mentoring	Built on the ability of staff to have a dedicated mentoring approach and specialist for each cross-cutting problem area, which will ensure more flexible communication and solving common problems of the energy community
Reverse Mentoring	It is common in the field of information and so-called highly progressive technologies, where personnel communicate and are also mentored by various SW tools and expert systems with the possibility of a so-called reverse loop of verifying the truthfulness and topicality of their findings based on model outputs.

**Step 3:** Requirements for persons providing process mentoring in energy communities:

**Krok 3:** Požiadavky kladené na osoby zabezpečujúce process mentoring v energetických komunitách:

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL MENTORING	MENTORING REQUIREMENTS AND CRITERIA
<p>A mentor is a person in a work environment or community of colleagues with whom they experience given problems and have an effort to improve the skills, knowledge and abilities of work teams in energy communities.</p> <p>He is an advisor, educator, friend and co-organizer of activities in one person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- measurable progress should be achieved in the professional activities of the energy community and its staff</li> <li>- built on trustworthiness and mutuality of people</li> <li>- it is a way to gain knowledge and especially inner strength and enthusiasm for creativity, innovation and finding good solutions in the community</li> <li>- demandingness and constructive criticism</li> <li>- active listening to staff problems and correct evaluation of findings based on monitoring of the given state</li> <li>- accuracy, punctuality, adherence to deadlines and requiring discipline in mutual communications</li> </ul>

**Step 4:** In the next step of the Mentoring Scheme, it is necessary to establish the minimum requirements for the tasks in the mentoring scheme for application in the energy community in general as follows:

<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>	
Skills and knowledge	<p>Understanding of the energy sector topic and area.</p> <p>Strong organizational skills.</p> <p>Proficiency in supporting SW and HW tools for energy community management.</p>
Education and experience in the energy sector	<p>Education with personal appreciation.</p> <p>Experience working in the energy and customer service sectors.</p> <p>Deep understanding and insight into expertise in one's own specialization.</p>
<b>VALUES:</b>	
Personal values of the staff	<p>Belief in the power of mentoring.</p> <p>Viewing mentoring as a challenge and a form of social entertainment.</p> <p>Self-study and a commitment to personal development.</p> <p>Ethical behavior and responsibility.</p>
Credibility	<p>Accuracy, punctuality and meeting agreements and deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to gain the trust of customers and colleagues within the energy community and operating environment.</p>
Vision	<p>Understanding your own vision, premise, goals and strategic tasks for the energy community for the future.</p>
<b>SKILLS:</b>	
Interpersonal skills	<p>Good communication skills and abilities.</p> <p>Ability to appropriately and clearly present own proposals and work processes at both</p>

	management and executive levels in the energy community.
Emotional intelligence	Awareness Emotional resilience Sensitivity Motivation Intuition Determination.
Influencing solutions by "pull" and "push"	"Pull" means encouraging mentees to think about problems and come up with their own ideas and solutions.  The mentee is thus responsible for the results.  "Push" means challenging employees to think about a given problem differently and get out of their comfort zone and habitual stereotypes.
Listening and perceiving problems	Active perception, observation, capturing even so-called peripheral information and feelings, and consistent listening and analysis of emerging problems in the energy community.
Inquiring and observing	Asking clear, unambiguous and simple questions to the mentored employees with an effort to focus on the creativity of their answers and openness.
Giving and receiving feedback and critical comments	Offering new technical, economic, operational and technological perspectives on problems in energy communities and outlining a sequence of steps for possible solutions.  The contribution of a different way of thinking.  Evaluating currently available, but also

	<p>imaginary options.</p> <p>Balancing the collection of feedback with one's own evaluative analysis and actions.</p> <p>Self-assessment of mentored workers in practice</p>

**Step 5:** Design and planning of the essential parameters of the mentoring program for energy communities consists in understanding the input needs and expectations of the organization, the needs and motivational ideas of the personnel, and at the same time the goals of mentoring. This is an essential part of the entire Mentoring Scheme in the conditions of the Slovak share in the implementation of the NRGCOM project in the 2-nd period within the framework of activity A.T.3.1 and other follow-up activities in the future.

<b>NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY</b>	<b>PERSONNEL NEEDS AND MOTIVATIONS</b>	<b>MENTORING GOALS</b>
Retaining capable personnel and preventing the outflow of experts also based on adequate personal and financial job evaluation	To be socially valued by the organization and have the prospect of personal growth	Support
Career development and ability to attract experts to the sector	To plan one's own career path and education	Support and Management
Training and skills training for personnel and maintaining personal values and the motivation system	To adapt to the organizational culture and business policy of the energy community	Learning and Confidence



Strengthening the ability of executive management for professional continuous growth	To improve one's own organizational and leadership skills and creative thinking	Learning and Support
Improving the performance of the energy community for the implementation of innovative and creative ideas	Personal growth, task fulfillment and intensive work performance	Learning and Confidence
Planning the potential development and strengthening of personnel, technical and product services of the energy community for the future	Career planning and management in the energy sector on a broader scale, fulfillment of one's own personal potential in professional circles of energy and industry	Guidance
Creating a comprehensive system of business policy and personnel background of the energy community	Stabilization of thinking on one's own and existing knowledge and practices within the energy community in practice	Support and Confidence
Building a "learning" organization with the ability to overcome obstacles and learn from solving critical and problem situations	Support for professionalization in the energy sphere of activity	Learning and Confidence
Managing the diversity and variety of interests and requirements of members of the energy community and its customers and clients	One's own personal visibility within the energy community and its sphere of activity on the market	Support and Self-Reliance

**Step 6:** In conclusion, it is necessary to state the significant differences and approaches to the proposed mentoring scheme in mentoring versus management and coaching in the process of managing energy communities in Slovak conditions within the framework of PP12-NEK.

<b>MENTORING</b>	<b>COACHING</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relationships between participants - mentor and mentee take place outside the relationship of superiority and subordination</li> <li>- can focus either on a substantial work problem or professional personal development</li> <li>- the relationship is personal and the mentor always provides both personal and professional support</li> <li>- the relationship can be only for a short term, but can also become permanent</li> <li>- the creation of mentor pairs can preferably arise on the basis of the organizational system of the energy community, but also spontaneously between the mentoring participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- managers tend to coach their own employees and this is an essential management approach</li> <li>- focuses on developing staff within their given job position</li> <li>- the coach's interest is for the employee to perform at their best</li> <li>- the duration of the coaching relationship is only time-limited</li> <li>- the relationship is usually initiated by the energy community manager or a designated professional coach</li> </ul>

# 3. Plan and achieved outcomes in applying the mentoring scheme



Within the framework of the PP12 project - NEK plans to continuously implement mainly these indicators of the motivation program at the national level, as shown in the following table:

<b>Motivational Programme indicators on the national level</b>			
<b>PP12 – NEK, Slovakia</b>			
<i>General awareness campaign :</i>			
	<b>TARGET VALUE</b>	<b>TOTAL REACH*</b>	
Public event	2	30,	2, 2
Educational video	0	0,	0, 0
Webinar	1	20,	2, 2
Handbook	1	0,	100, 0
Podcast	1	50,	1, 1000
<i>Professional trainings :</i>			
Public event	2	30,	2, 2
Educational video	1	100,	1, 0
Webinar	2	20,	2, 2
Handbook	0	0,	0, 0
Podcast	0	0,	0, 0
<i>* Number of participants, attendees, number of content views, number of content downloads</i>			

During the 2-nd period of the implementation of the PP12-NEK project, its teams of ambassadors, experts and stakeholders, but especially emerging and established associations - energy communities, absorbed partial implementation and outputs from the production of PP12-NEK within the framework of a general awareness campaign and professional training.

## Specifically, these are the results:

1. **Public event:** Presentation of the policy of building energy communities at the international congress SLOVAKIATECH 2024

2. **Public event:** Presentation of energy communities and work methods for their implementation into practice as part of the PP12-NEK presentation at the conference - Development of energy communities in Slovakia 9/2024

### 3. **Webinar:**

Organization of several national workshops with direct participation and also online for participants from Slovakia (published within the joint Google Sharing portal)

4. **Creation** of our own published collection of contributions on energy topics and RES as part of domestic workshop activities entitled: "PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2ND NATIONAL WORKSHOP OF THE SR",

Register: ISBN 978-80-973571-3-9 EAN 9788097357139

5. **Publication** of a professional paper by the PP12-NEK author team with the topic: "SELECTED SLOVAK ASPECTS AND SPECIFICS OF BUILDING A NETWORK OF ENERGY COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF COOPERATION IN THE DANUBE REGION" at the international conference MMK in 12/2024 in Hradec Králové (Czech Republic). ISBN 978-80-87952-41-2

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