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

Reporting on Mentored Pilot Operations

Activity 3.2 Pilot testing of the energy community creation method

PP12-NEK, Slovak Republic

May 2025, 3rd period

This project is supported by the Interreg Danube Region Programme, co-financed by the European Union and the Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic

Basic Information

Responsible Partner: PP12-NEK
REC Community Name: / TEEK Energy Community
Location (Municipality/Region): Opatovce nad Nitrou 367, region Trenčín
Country: Slovak Republic

Chapter 1: Mentoring Scheme in Practice – Reflections and Implementation

1.1 Mentoring Setup and Roles

The mentoring process within the NRGCOM project in Slovakia was coordinated by NEK (National Enegy Cluster NEK)), serving as the local project implementation partner. Mentoring was supported by expert guidance from the international project consortium and focused on the development of 1 pilot Renewable Energy Communities (RECs): in within the TEEK Park industrial zone.

The main objectives were:

- To assess the local conditions and potentials for REC establishment.
- To build foundational knowledge among key stakeholders.
- To guide the process of REC design aligned with EU and national frameworks.

Mentoring was delivered through:

- On-site meetings with local stakeholders
- Bilateral consultations on legal and regulatory matter.
- Thematic group exchanges organized through the project events

1.2 Activities and Support Delivered

The mentoring addressed a range of topics relevant to REC formation, including:

- **Legal and regulatory context** – Understanding the current Serbian legal framework and identifying gaps (e.g., missing sub-legal acts).

- **Technical design** – Matching community energy needs with viable renewable energy solutions (solar PV, local grid potential).
- **Stakeholder engagement** – Identifying and initiating discussions with potential members in both pilot sites.
- **Governance models** – Early discussions about appropriate ownership and decision-making structures.

Support was delivered through:

- One-on-one consultations with experts.
- Sharing of international best practices

1.3 Mentoring Checklist – Steps to Build a Renewable Energy Community

Please indicate the status of each step and provide a short comment. For example: "Implemented by external energy consultant", "Postponed until legal framework is updated", "Not applicable due to municipal ownership of infrastructure", etc.

Step	Status	Comments
1. Baseline assessment of energy needs and resources	☑ Ongoing	Industrial techology park contexts assessed through meetings
2. Stakeholder identification and engagement	☑ Completed	Tenant companies (MIND Park) preliminarily identified.
3. Feasibility study (technical, financial, legal)	☑Ongoing	Presentation at conference forums in Slovakia
4. Definition of governance model and roles	☑ Ongoing	Interest association of legal entities created
5. Awareness-raising and community information events	☑ Completed	Information campaign and professional training conducted.
6. Registration of the REC as a legal entity	☑ Ongoing	Waiting for the issuance of a valid SEPS certificate, other establishment agenda fulfilled.
7. Funding application or financial structuring	☐ Not started	Postponed until REC legal certification becomes feasible.
8. Procurement and installation of energy infrastructure	☐ Not started	Not initiated; dependent on prior legal and funding steps.
9. Establishment of energy management and storage strategy	☑ Ongoing	Already developed common EC strategy and management system
10. Regular mentor–mentee follow-up meetings held	☑ Ongoing	Regular meetings were held, primarily in the form of informative and exploratory consultations aimed at clarifying regulatory developments, aligning expectations, and adapting pilot planning to national conditions.

1.4 Reflections on Mentorship

The mentoring proved valuable in aligning local actions with the overarching goals of the NRGCOM project. Key strengths included the responsiveness of the mentor team, accessibility of technical resources, and flexibility in adapting approaches to the Slovakia context. However, the primary challenge was the absence of legally defined pathways for REC registration and operation. This limitation significantly constrained practical progress. In response, the mentoring focus shifted toward groundwork activities—such as stakeholder alignment, public awareness, and draft planning—ensuring that once regulatory conditions improve, both pilot sites can proceed swiftly. Adjustments were made mid-way through the mentoring process, with greater emphasis placed on scenario planning and the development of roadmaps. Both mentors and local actors highlighted the importance of preparedness, even in the absence of formal mechanisms, as a way to sustain momentum and community interest.

Experience with mentoring in Slovakia mainly points to the need for a parallel legal basis and continuous enforcement and overcoming unnecessary bureaucratic obstructions at the stage of establishing and starting the operation of energy communities.

Chapter 2: Pilot Implementation – Outcomes, Gaps, and Outlook

2.1 Results and Milestones Achieved

Pilot : Techology Park – Opatovce nad Nitrou

- Was a REC officially created? Yes.
- Planned Location: Park industrial zone, Opatovce nad Nitrou. Region trenčín
- Legal Form: Interest association of legal entities.
- Number of potential members: 7 organisations operating as tenants within Technology Park: 4 businesses, 1 school, 1 municipality, 1 apartment building (apartment management).

2.2 Barriers and Mitigation

The establishment of the energy community from the point of view of organizational and legislative assumptions and regulations took place without restrictions at the end of 2025. However, a lengthy process began with the formal granting of a license for activity by the competent authority - Slovak Energy and Transmission System (SEPS), which is only being successfully completed these days. The restriction was not the authority itself, but the legislation that has changed several times, with an impact on energy communities as a result of changes in capacity connection options and new requirements for the ongoing energy crisis in the EU. However, the members of the TEEK energy community devoted the aforementioned period to securing technical and operational sources of electricity and thermal energy production in the area of operation, as well as personnel training and establishing relationships with potential future customers.

2.3 Pending Actions and Support Needs

Support Needs:

- Legal: Issuance of enabling bylaws (cerrtification) by national authorities (expected from Ministry of Mining and Energy and Energy Agency).
- Technical: Development of standard connection procedures, assessment templates, and technical feasibility studies.
- Financial: Identification of funding instruments to support initial investments (e.g., for solar PV, inverters, metering systems).

2.4 Sustainability and replicability strategy

Currently, it mainly consists of:

- Roadmaps for REC establishment have been drafted for both residential and industrial pilots, including timelines, stakeholder roles, and preconditions.
- the meantime, engagement and promotional activities will continue to raise awareness and strengthen local capacities.

Replicability:
The pilot approach—targeting industrial contexts—offers transferable models adaptable to other Slovakia municipalities or regional hubs once systemic and technology barriers are removed.

Recommendations:

- Continue under the auspices and professional guarantee of local and regional state and local government bodies in Slovakia with the aim of accelerating the process of establishing and promoting energy communities.
- Support the development of standard REC toolkits and mentoring support for early adopters.
- Utilize pilot designs as templates for replication in other regions in Slovak Republic.