



cVPP: community-based Virtual Power Plant Newsletter N°3

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cVPP Partnership meeting in Ghent, Belgium



The 3rd cVPP Partnership Meeting took place on 7-9 November 2018 in the inspiring city of Ghent and was hosted by our Belgian Project Partners EnerGent.

After a successful meeting in April hosted by our Irish partners, it was time to meet and update each other on our progress so far. With several milestones achieved, we were ready now for introspection and re-evaluation.

Important topics on the table were the meaning, characteristics and roles of community and how they can help define the (core) value propositions relevant to the implementing communities and the communication strategies followed. In-depth discussions on the application of the USEF framework were held, informed by the differences encountered in the three countries and future legislative changes.

Particularly instrumental were the context-related workshops, following the story-telling method, where the Implementing partners shared their journey, their initial goals, the challenges faced and decisions taken. For the Replicating partners it was a unique chance to share their own stories, compare and learn more about each other's process in engaging and empowering communities.

What is a cVPP?



To get a good grip on the meaning of a community-based virtual power plant, our project partner ir. Luc van Summeren from the Technical University of Eindhoven made a clear definition.

What is a community-based virtual power plant?

In the Interreg NWE funded cVPP project three communities from Ireland, the Netherlands and Belgium are developing and implementing their own community-based virtual power plant (cVPP). But what do we mean by community? What is a virtual power plant? And is a community-based virtual power plant? These questions were raised at various moments

over the first year of the cVPP project. Based on literature reviews on community energy and virtual power plant, and discussions and interviews with project partners we finally came to a common understanding on what we mean by virtual power plant, community and community-based virtual power plant.

A virtual power plant is an ICT-based control system that coordinates a portfolio of distributed energy generation (e.g. solar panels), energy storage systems and/or controllable loads (e.g. appliances that can shift their electricity usage in time). In contrast to regular virtual power plants, a community-based virtual power plant is adopted by a place and/or interest-based network of people (and organisations) and it operates under a different 'community logic'.

This community logic consists of seven-elements related to the needs and values the cVPP strives for, fair distribution of outcomes, community ownership, collective decision making, community engagement, open membership, and a scale of energy generation and other related technology in line with community (energy) needs and values. A community-based virtual power plant allows a community to play different and new roles in the energy system by becoming involved in the management, distribution and trading of self-generated energy.

Spotlight on EnerGent

EnerGent is a Belgian cooperative of civilians that wants to participate in a sustainable and climate neutral society.

The organisation was founded in 2013 and has reached 800 members in the meantime. Members can buy EnerGent shares which are invested in renewable energy projects, realizing energy savings and the supply of energy services. The organisation focuses on three pillars: investing the money of the participants, stimulating civilians in investing in their own houses for energy savings and renewable energy and innovation via projects.



Energent will implement a cVPP in Sint-Amandsberg, a district in the city centre of Ghent. Currently they are testing the batteries for a cVPP in a pilot. They expect to place the first batteries/solar panels at the homes of families in January 2019. From there on they will begin testing their first cVPP.

The elaboration of the cVPP's in this project, will be different in each of the participating countries given the country specific characteristics such as legislation. For EnerGent the focus will be on the socio-economic part of a cVPP. This means that EnerGent wants to make the project feasible for everyone in society, even for the more vulnerable groups.



One of the most well-known projects of Energent is Buurzame Stroom, a unique project in the quarters Dampoort and Sint-Amandsberg in Ghent, where EnerGent will test the cVPP.

Buurzame stroom, making solar energy widely available

Buurzame Stroom is one of EnerGents biggest projects and is the overarching project that encompasses among others the cVPP project.

Within this project, EnerGent wants to place solar panels on all suitable roofs, so that everyone can enjoy solar energy for a low cost. The idea for the project arose by locals that wondered why solar energy is only available to wealthy people. In 2018 Buurzame Stroom was launched to make Dampoort the greenest energy neighborhood.

The project is now up and running and EnerGent is trying to reach more vulnerable groups for a pv-installation. To reach these groups, the organization offers an enhanced package including insulation integration and options for third party financing. The package is also available for tenants and landlords and is available in multiple languages given the multi-cultural nature of these neighborhood.

The cVPP project allows EnerGent to make a good design for PV installations of civilians and companies in the neighbourhood.

These installations are connected to an open source EMS platform that will allow a community to create a virtual power plant. This cVPP will help support the grid and will try to maximize auto-consumption within the neighbourhood.



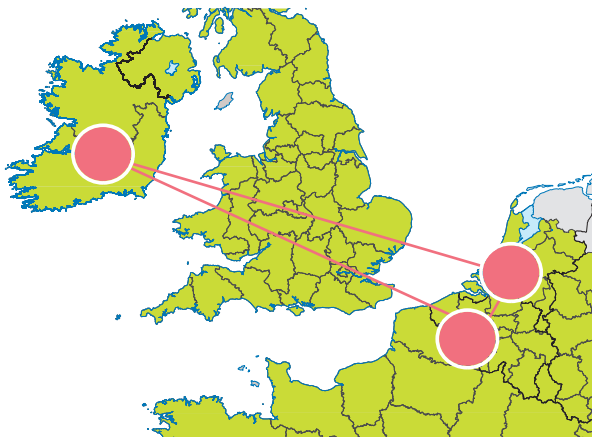
The Wisegrid project

The Buurzame Stroom project is also a pilot site for the Horizon 2020 project Wisegrid where EnerGent, together with Ecopower, Energie-ID and Partago, will test a number of apps to help people understand electricity prices and usage. Participants get an individual and collective overview of their consumption and production of renewable energy. This energy comes from solar panels in the neighborhood. Generated solar energy that is not consumed by households, is used to recharge electric cars from Partago or is stored in batteries. The project wants to create a smarter and more consumer oriented European electricity grid. Read more about this project here.



EnerGent

Want to know more about EnerGent? Watch the full interview with the project coordinator Jeroen Baets on our website!



The cVPP Partnership network

Project facts

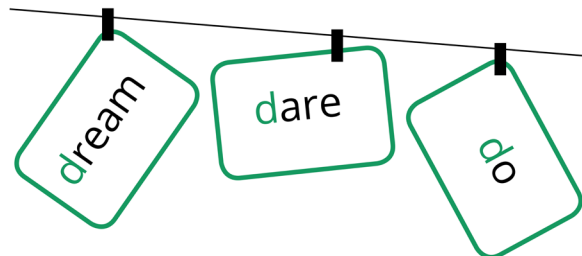
September 2017 to September 2019
€ 6.11 million total project budget
€ 3.66 million funded by ERDF

Upcoming events

• On **12th of February 2019** EnerGent will present at the Solarise event on business models related to solar energy in Ghent.

• Save the (Dream)dates:

Tuesday, 12th March or Saturday, 30th March



In the spring of 2019, Kamp C is organising an inspirational co-creation trajectory:

'Dream - Dare - Do: Community Power for Energy Transition'.

The main goal of these events is to engage, inform, encourage and empower communities to become prosumers and bring them in contact with important actors in the energy transition.

Workshops and lectures will take place, ranging from subjects such as community-building, policy, as well as the financial and technical sides of a cVPP. For more information and to register for the first event, please visit:

[Dreamday on Tuesday, 12th March](#)

[Dreamday on Saturday, 30th March](#)

• The 4th Partnership Meeting will take place in Apeldoorn, The Netherlands from the **8th till the 10th of May 2019.**

The cVPP Partners

Do you want to meet all of our partners?

Visit the cVPP-website and watch all partners interviews <http://www.nweurope.eu/projects/project-search/cvpp-community-based-virtual-power-plant/>

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Linkedin Group:
community-based Virtual Power Plant (cVPP)