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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hradecký venkov Action Plan builds on the results of the HERCULES-CE project and sets out the pathway for the further development of community energy in the Hradecký venkov area over the five years following the end of the project. Its main starting points are the establishment of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, the creation of a network of cooperating municipalities, expert partners and other local stakeholders, and the preparation of a technical, organisational and economic framework for practical electricity sharing.

The HERCULES-CE project confirmed that the development of energy communities is not merely a technical matter. Their successful operation requires the simultaneous involvement of members and local stakeholders, access to high-quality energy data, the establishment of an economic and operational model, environmental benefits, the social dimension of community energy, and long-term institutional arrangements. The Action Plan therefore links technical, economic, organisational, social and partnership activities and translates the experience gained through the project into concrete steps reflecting the needs of Hradecký venkov.

The proposed activities are divided into three consecutive periods. The short-term phase, covering the first year after the end of the project, will focus on ensuring continuity of the HERCULES-CE results, activating the established network, and putting the energy cooperative into practical operation. Priorities will include expanding the membership base, preparing new members and energy sites, and launching the first real electricity-sharing scheme. The pilot operation will make it possible to test allocation keys, contractual and pricing rules, administrative procedures, and the basic economic benefits of sharing.

The medium-term phase, covering one to three years, will focus on expanding, optimising and stabilising the cooperative's operations. Based on actual data, additional members, generation sources and consumption points will gradually be involved, sharing groups will be created or expanded, and operational, contractual and economic rules will be adjusted. This phase will also include the introduction of regular monitoring, a unified record-keeping system, and a financially sustainable model for the long-term administration of the cooperative.

The social dimension of community energy will also be developed during the medium-term period through a local energy advisory system for households at risk of energy poverty. The activity will connect energy advisers, municipalities, community and social workers, and other local organisations. Households will receive assistance in understanding their energy consumption, bills, contracts, energy-saving measures, and available forms of support. Where appropriate, the possibility of future participation in electricity sharing will also be assessed.

The long-term phase, covering the fourth and fifth years, will aim at the institutionalisation and long-term economic sustainability of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative. Based on operational experience and evaluated energy data, joint investment projects will be prepared, particularly in new or expanded renewable energy sources, energy storage, demand management, flexibility and clean mobility. At the same time, a unified framework will be established for submitting, assessing, financing, approving and managing joint investments.

Long-term development will not be based on an obligation to implement a predetermined number of investments, but on the preparation of high-quality and economically viable projects. Only projects with

proven technical feasibility, reasonable economic benefits, secured financing, and clearly defined ownership and operational arrangements will be recommended for implementation. This will ensure that new investments do not jeopardise the cooperative's normal operations and that they respond to the actual needs of its members.

Cooperation is a cross-cutting principle of the entire Action Plan. At local level, the partnership between the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, Hradecký venkov o.p.s., member municipalities, public organisations, businesses, agricultural entities, households and expert partners will continue. Cooperation with ENVIROS, s.r.o., the Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI and the EKIM project, the Hradec Králové Region, energy specialists, and entities responsible for the data and technical operation of electricity sharing will be particularly important.

The activities will also be linked to the Hradecký venkov Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP, municipal energy management, local and regional energy strategies, and social and community projects implemented in the Hradecký venkov area. These links will enable the energy cooperative to serve not only as an instrument for electricity sharing, but gradually also as a platform for preparing energy savings, renewable energy projects, joint investments, and support for energy-vulnerable households.

Maintaining European cooperation will also be an important component. Experience and results will be shared with HERCULES-CE partners and other energy communities. Subject to available opportunities, Hradecký venkov will continue to exchange good practices, use tools and methodologies developed within the project, including the REC Manager or follow-up solutions, and participate in new European networks and project partnerships.

The implementation of the Action Plan is expected to result in a stable and gradually developing Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative capable of operating and expanding electricity sharing, providing its members with transparent and economically sustainable services, supporting local energy projects, and preparing joint investments. At the same time, it will contribute to greater use of local renewable energy sources, lower energy costs and environmental impacts, increased energy self-sufficiency of the area, and the fair involvement of municipalities, businesses, public institutions and residents in the energy transition.

ACTIONS

1. Short-Term Actions (0–12 months after project closure)

The short-term phase focuses on:

- *Continuity of project results*
- *Institutional commitment*
- *Activation of the network*

Action: Expanding the Membership Base and Local Partnership of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
Name and Description of the Action *The activity focuses on gradually expanding the membership base of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative and building a stable network of local and regional partners for the development of community energy.* *The activity will include informing and approaching potential members, organising information and consultation meetings, and holding individual discussions with municipalities, public institutions, businesses, agricultural entities, households and owners of renewable energy sources. For municipalities, the activity will build on the basic information already obtained and will further specify their concrete needs, opportunities and expectations once they decide to join the established cooperative. For other new interested parties, the activity will also include an initial assessment of their current needs, the collection of basic production and consumption data, an assessment of the most suitable form of participation, and administrative support during accession to the cooperative.* *The activity will build on the stakeholder network established through the HERCULES-CE project and open the cooperative to additional interested parties from the Hradecký venkov area. The objective is to create a balanced membership base comprising both producers and consumers and to prepare new members for participation in energy sharing.*
Responsible: *Hradecký venkov o.p.s.* *The organisation will coordinate the activity, communicate with interested parties, provide information and consultation services, collect supporting information, and cooperate with the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative and expert partners.*
Implementation Timeline *Start date: 1 December 2026* *End date: 30 November 2027*

Actors Involved / Roles

- *Hradecký venkov o.p.s.*

  Sector: non-profit sector / local action group

  Role: coordination of the activity, information activities, consultations and administrative support for interested parties.

- *Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative*

  Sector: energy community / cooperative

  Role: setting membership conditions, admitting new members, and communicating members' rights and obligations.

- *Municipalities, their contributory organisations, schools and other public institutions*

  Sector: public administration and public services

  Role: potential members, owners of generation and consumption points, and providers of energy data.

- *Local businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises, agricultural entities, households and owners of renewable energy sources*

  Sector: private and civil sectors

  Role: potential members, producers or consumers of shared electricity, and potential investment partners.

- *Voluntary associations of municipalities, micro-regions and the Hradec Králové Region*

  Sector: public administration and inter-municipal cooperation

  Role: dissemination of information, outreach to municipalities, coordination of common interests, and links to regional initiatives.

- *Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI / EKIM project*

  Sector: regional expert organisation / energy advisory services

  Role: expert support for municipalities, links to the work of shared energy managers, and coordination of advisory and educational activities.

- *ENVIROS, s.r.o. and other energy experts*

  Sector: expert and advisory services
  Role: assessment of generation and consumption profiles and consultation on the technical and economic conditions of participation.

Expected Results

- *implementation of at least 4 information or consultation events;*
- *outreach to at least 20 potential members or partners and at least 10 individual consultations;*
- *admission of at least 5 new members to the energy cooperative;*
- *processing basic data for at least 10 potential generation or consumption points;*
- *updating the information package and establishing a pipeline of additional interested parties.*

The result will be an expanded and informed membership base prepared for practical participation in energy sharing.

Monitoring Indicators

- *number of information and consultation events;*
- *number of entities approached and individually consulted;*
- *number of newly admitted members of the energy cooperative;*
- *number of registered and preliminarily assessed generation and consumption points;*
- *number of entities prepared to participate in energy sharing.*

Connections with other initiatives or EU projects

The activity directly builds on the HERCULES-CE project, particularly the establishment of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, the stakeholder network created and the technical and organisational model prepared. The experience gained through the project, the participatory methodology, the REC Manager tool and examples from international energy communities will be used when involving new members.

A significant link is the EKIM project implemented by the Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI. Cooperation will connect local work with interested parties to municipal energy management, expert advisory services and the preparation of energy investments.

The activity will also build on:

- *the Hradecký venkov Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP;*
- *energy advisory services provided by Hradecký venkov to municipalities and households;*
- *regional and national support for community energy, energy savings and renewable energy sources.*

Experience will be continuously shared with HERCULES-CE partners and other energy communities.

Possible Risks and Mitigation Measures

Low interest among potential members or lengthy municipal decision-making processes

Mitigation measure: clear communication of benefits and obligations, individual consultations, timely preparation of supporting documents, model resolutions and presentations for municipal councils.

Insufficient or incomplete production and consumption data, technical unpreparedness of generation or consumption points, or unclear benefits of participation

Mitigation measure: use of a standardised data collection form, methodological support in obtaining the data, verification of the technical readiness of generation and consumption points for sharing, and a preliminary technical and economic assessment of the benefits of their participation.

Different expectations among producers, consumers and other members

Mitigation measure: transparent membership rules, clear communication of economic and operational conditions, and individual recommendations regarding the most suitable form of participation.

Limited staff capacity to coordinate the activity

Mitigation measure: clear division of responsibilities between Hradecký venkov o.p.s. and the cooperative, standardised documents, and digital records of interested parties.

Action: Launch and Evaluation of Pilot Energy Sharing in the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
Name and Description of the Action *The activity focuses on preparing, launching and evaluating the first real electricity-sharing arrangement among members of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative.* *The pilot operation will be launched with a limited number of appropriately selected generation and consumption points, primarily owned by member municipalities, their contributory organisations and, where relevant, other members of the cooperative. Selection will be based on the compatibility between renewable electricity generation and the consumption profiles of the participating points.* *The activity will include verification of technical and consumption data, registration of the sharing group, establishment of allocation keys, contractual and operational conditions, the pricing model, and the responsibilities of the individual entities.* *Once operation has begun, energy performance, economic benefits and administrative requirements will be monitored. The findings will be used to adjust allocation keys, operational procedures and the cooperative's economic model.* *The objective is to verify the proposed model under real conditions and to create a practical procedure for involving additional members and energy sites. After the pilot period, sharing will continue and will be gradually expanded.*
Responsible: *Hradecký venkov o.p.s.* *The organisation will provide overall coordination, communication among the participating entities, cooperation with expert partners, monitoring and evaluation of the pilot operation.* *The Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative will be the main implementer and operator of the sharing scheme, responsible for creating the sharing group, setting relationships among members and ensuring practical operation.*

Implementation Timeline

Start date: 1 December 2026
End date: 30 November 2027

Actors Involved / Roles

- Hradecký venkov o.p.s.
  Sector: non-profit sector / local action group
  Role: coordination of the activity, administrative support, monitoring and preparation of the evaluation.

- Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
  Sector: energy community / cooperative
  Role: main implementer and operator of the sharing scheme, administrator of membership relationships and operational and economic rules.

- Participating municipalities, contributory organisations, schools, businesses and agricultural entities
  Sector: public and private sectors
  Role: owners or operators of generation and consumption points, producers or consumers of shared electricity, and providers of energy data.

- ENVIROS, s.r.o. and other energy experts
  Sector: expert and advisory services
  Role: support in selecting sites, setting allocation keys and the economic model, and evaluating results.

- Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI / EKIM project
  Sector: regional expert organisation / energy advisory services
  Role: linking pilot sharing with municipal energy management and expert cooperation with shared energy managers.

- Electricity Data Centre, electricity suppliers, distribution system operators and the software solution provider
  Sector: energy infrastructure, energy market and information technology
  Role: registration of the sharing group and energy sites, data processing, technical cooperation, and support for the recording and evaluation of sharing.

Expected Results

- *creation and registration of at least one pilot sharing group;*
- *involvement of at least one renewable energy source, 3 to 5 cooperative members, and approximately 8 to 15 generation and consumption points;*
- *establishment and verification of allocation keys;*
- *creation of a contractual, pricing and operational model for sharing;*
- *introduction of a system for recording members, energy sites and operational results;*
- *collection of at least three months of complete operational data and its energy and economic evaluation;*

- *preparation of a recommended procedure for the further expansion of sharing.*

The result will be a practically verified electricity-sharing model that can be used for the further development of the cooperative in the Hradecký venkov area.

Monitoring Indicators

- *number of sharing groups created and registered;*
- *number of participating members, generation points and consumption points;*
- *installed capacity of the participating generation sources in kWp;*
- *amount of electricity generated and shared in MWh;*
- *share of shared electricity in the output of the participating sources and in the consumption of the participating consumption points;*
- *number of months of evaluated operation;*
- *economic benefits and operating costs of the pilot sharing scheme;*
- *completion of an evaluation report and recommendations for further expansion.*

Connections with other initiatives or EU projects

The activity directly builds on the results of the HERCULES-CE project, within which the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative was established and a basic technical, organisational and economic model for its operation was prepared.

Project analyses, the stakeholder engagement methodology, experience from partner energy communities, and the REC Manager tool for simulating, monitoring and comparing results will be used in the preparation and evaluation of pilot sharing. The pilot operation will verify the cooperative's energy performance, economic sustainability and operational arrangements in practice.

Cooperation with the EKIM project and CIRI will link the pilot sharing scheme to energy management in member municipalities and to the preparation of further energy measures and investments.

The activity will also build on:

- *the Hradecký venkov Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP;*
- *the national electricity-sharing system and services of the Electricity Data Centre;*
- *regional energy activities of the Hradec Králové Region;*
- *renewable energy projects under preparation or implementation in member municipalities.*

The results will be shared with HERCULES-CE partners and may serve as an example for other energy communities.

Possible Risks and Mitigation Measures

Insufficient availability of suitable sites or an unsuitable match between generation and consumption

Mitigation measure: preliminary assessment of a larger number of sites, analysis of generation and consumption profiles, preparation of a reserve list, and gradual involvement of additional consumption points.

Delays in registration or insufficient quality of energy data

Mitigation measure: timely preparation and verification of supporting documents, a standardised data collection procedure, and continuous communication with the Electricity Data Centre and other technical entities.

Inappropriately configured allocation keys or low and unevenly distributed economic benefits

Mitigation measure: a simple initial setup, preliminary simulations, regular evaluation of actual data, and the possibility of continuously adjusting the rules.

High administrative burden, changes in conditions or limited capacity of the cooperative

Mitigation measure: a limited-scale pilot operation, standardisation of processes, use of suitable software, clear division of responsibilities, and continuous monitoring of legislative and technical changes.

2. Medium-Term Actions (1–3 years)

The medium-term phase focuses on:

- *Implementation*
- *Scaling-up*
- *Integration into regional policies*

Action: Expansion, Optimisation and Stabilisation of Energy Sharing in the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative

Name and Description of the Action

The activity builds on the involvement of the first members and the launch of pilot electricity sharing in the first year after the end of the HERCULES-CE project. During the medium-term period, it will focus on the gradual expansion of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative and the stabilisation of its operations based on experience and actual data from energy sharing.

Additional municipalities, public organisations, businesses, agricultural entities, owners of renewable energy sources and households will be included in the cooperative and sharing groups according to their level of readiness. For each interested party, the most suitable role, generation or consumption profile, and contribution to the balance of the sharing group will be assessed.

Data on electricity generation, consumption and sharing, economic benefits for members, operating costs and administrative requirements will be evaluated regularly. Based on the results, allocation keys, the composition of sharing groups, pricing and contractual rules, and procedures for involving additional members and energy sites will be adjusted.

The activity will also include mapping new renewable energy sources and investment projects, assessing opportunities for storage and demand management, establishing unified records of members and energy sites, and setting up financially sustainable long-term funding for the administration of the cooperative.

The objective is to expand energy sharing and create a stable, transparent and economically sustainable operating model prepared for the further development of community energy in the Hradecký venkov area.

Implementation Timeline

Start date: 1 December 2027
End date: 30 November 2029

Actors Involved / Roles

- Hradecký venkov o.p.s.
  Sector: non-profit sector / local action group
  Role: coordination of the activity, information and administrative support, and links between local and regional partners.

- Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
  Sector: energy community / cooperative
  Role: main implementer, admission of members, administration of sharing groups, and establishment of operational, contractual and economic rules.

- Municipalities, their contributory organisations, schools and other public institutions
  Sector: public administration and public services
  Role: members or applicants for membership, owners of generation and consumption points, providers of energy data, and initiators of local energy projects.

- Businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises, agricultural entities, households and owners of renewable energy sources
  Sector: private and civil sectors
  Role: electricity producers or consumers, potential members and potential investment partners.

- Voluntary associations of municipalities, micro-regions and the Hradec Králové Region
  Sector: local and regional public administration
  Role: dissemination of information, identification of suitable entities, strategic cooperation, and transfer of experience into regional activities.

- Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI / EKIM project
  Sector: regional expert organisation / energy advisory services
  Role: links to municipal energy management, expert work with energy data, and identification of energy-saving and investment measures.

- ENVIROS, s.r.o. and other energy experts
  Sector: expert and advisory services
  Role: technical and economic assessment of energy sites, evaluation of profiles, and proposals for optimisation measures.

- Software solution provider, Electricity Data Centre and other energy market participants
  Sector: information technology, energy infrastructure and data services
  Role: records of members and energy sites, provision and processing of data, and technical support for the administration of sharing groups.

Expected Results

- *expansion of the cooperative by approximately 10 to 20 new members, including at least 5 additional municipalities or public organisations;*
- *expansion of existing groups and creation of 1 to 2 new operational sharing groups;*
- *involvement of approximately 30 to 60 generation and consumption points in total;*
- *an increase in the amount of locally generated electricity used through sharing;*
- *introduction of regular monitoring and preparation of at least two comprehensive annual evaluations;*
- *stabilisation of allocation, pricing, contractual and operational rules;*
- *introduction of unified records of members and energy sites;*
- *establishment of long-term financing for the administration of the cooperative;*
- *creation of a standardised procedure for involving additional members and energy sites;*
- *establishment of a pipeline of new members, renewable energy sources and investment projects.*

The result will be an expanded and operationally stable energy cooperative with a regular system of monitoring, evaluation and further development.

Monitoring Indicators

- *number of members of the energy cooperative, including newly admitted members;*
- *number of active sharing groups;*
- *number of participating generation and consumption points;*
- *total installed capacity of the participating generation sources in kWp;*
- *amount of electricity generated and shared in MWh per year;*
- *share of shared electricity in the output of the participating sources;*
- *number of annual evaluations completed;*
- *economic benefits, revenues and operating costs of the energy cooperative;*
- *number of new sources or investment projects included in the pipeline.*

Connections with other initiatives or EU projects

The activity directly builds on the results of the HERCULES-CE project, particularly the establishment of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, the involvement of local stakeholders and the launch of pilot electricity sharing.

Operational data, technical and economic analyses, participatory approaches, experience from international energy communities, and the REC Manager tool or another suitable solution for simulation, administration and monitoring will be used in the expansion and optimisation process.

Cooperation with the EKIM project and CIRI will link the cooperative's operations with municipal energy management, the work of shared energy managers, and the preparation of investments in renewable energy sources, energy storage and energy savings.

The activity will also build on:

- *the Hradecký venkov Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP;*
- *local energy concepts and municipal energy management;*
- *regional energy and climate activities of the Hradec Králové Region;*
- *national support instruments for community energy, renewable energy sources and energy storage;*
- *cooperation with other energy communities and European projects.*

The results will be used for the further development of the cooperative and for integrating community energy into local and regional strategies.

Possible Risks and Mitigation Measures

Slower expansion of the membership base or insufficient availability of suitable producers

Mitigation measure: targeted outreach to municipalities, businesses, agricultural entities and owners of renewable energy sources, presentation of sharing results, and gradual involvement of interested parties.

*Im**balance between generation and consumption and a low share of actually shared electricity***

Mitigation measure: assessment of generation and consumption profiles, appropriate combination of consumption points, adjustment of allocation keys, and support for demand management.

High administrative burden and limited staff capacity

Mitigation measure: standardisation of processes, use of a software solution, clear division of responsibilities, and expansion of operations in line with available capacity.

Insufficient economic stability or changes in external conditions

Mitigation measure: regular financial planning, transparent pricing and fee rules, monitoring of legislation, and continuous updating of the operating model.

Action: Energy Advisory Services and Support for Energy-Vulnerable Households in the Hradecký venkov Area

Name and Description of the Action

The activity will focus on supporting households at risk of energy poverty that face high energy expenditure, live in energy-inefficient buildings, or have difficulty understanding energy bills, contracts, energy-saving options and available forms of support.

It will build on the social dimension of the HERCULES-CE project and create a practical cooperation system among energy advisers, municipalities, social and community workers, and other local organisations that are in direct contact with vulnerable households.

Support will be provided through information events, individual consultations and, where needed, home visits. Advisory services will focus on energy bills and contracts, a basic assessment of consumption, simple and low-cost energy-saving measures, options for renovating buildings, replacing heat sources and using renewable energy sources.

Households will also receive information on available grant, social and expert services. Where appropriate, the possibility of future participation in community energy or the consumption of shared electricity will also be assessed.

The objective is to create an accessible local energy advisory system that connects energy, technical, community and social support and helps households reduce consumption, costs and the risk of long-term energy vulnerability.

Implementation Timeline

Start date: 1 December 2027
End date: 30 November 2029

Actors Involved / Roles

- Hradecký venkov o.p.s.
  Sector: non-profit sector / local action group
  Role: coordination of the activity, provision of energy advisory services, organisation of information events, and connection of energy and social stakeholders.

- Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
  Sector: energy community / cooperative
  Role: assessment of opportunities for households to participate in electricity sharing and other community energy services.

- Municipalities in the Hradecký venkov area
  Sector: public administration
  Role: informing residents, identifying local needs, referring households to advisory services, and providing venues for consultations.

- Social and community workers, social service providers and local non-profit organisations
  Sector: public, non-profit and community sectors
  Role: contact with target groups, identification of households, referral to advisory services, and ensuring continuity with further assistance.

- Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation - CIRI / EKIM project
  Sector: regional expert organisation / energy advisory services
  Role: methodological and expert cooperation, coordination of advisory services, and exchange of experience.

- Energy specialists and other expert service providers
  Sector: expert and technical services
  Role: consultation on more complex cases, assessment of buildings and heat sources, and identification of energy-saving opportunities.

- Labour Offices, grant advisers and other public institutions
  Sector: public administration and social support
  Role: provision of information on social, financial and grant instruments and ensuring access to follow-up services.

- Households at risk of energy poverty
  Sector: civil sector
  Role: recipients of advisory services and active participants in the implementation of recommended measures.

Expected Results

- *creation of a functional local network of energy, social and community stakeholders;*
- *involvement of at least 10 municipalities or local organisations;*
- *implementation of at least 6 information or group advisory events;*
- *provision of individual advisory services to approximately 30 to 50 households;*
- *provision of on-site advisory services to at least 15 households, subject to their consent to a home visit;*
- *preparation of basic recommendations for energy-saving measures for supported households;*
- *referral of at least 15 households to follow-up social, expert or grant advisory services;*
- *creation of practical information materials and a simple system for recording the support provided;*
- *identification of households that could participate in community energy in the future.*

The activity will help increase household awareness, reduce inappropriate contractual and consumption decisions, and gradually introduce energy-saving measures.

Monitoring Indicators

- *number of participating municipalities and local organisations;*
- *number of information and group events;*
- *number of households provided with individual advisory services;*
- *number of households supported directly at their place of residence;*
- *number of recommendations for energy-saving measures prepared;*
- *number of households referred to follow-up services;*

- *number of households that implemented at least one recommended measure;*
- *number of households for which the possibility of participation in community energy was assessed.*

Connections with other initiatives or EU projects

The activity directly builds on the HERCULES-CE project and its focus on the social benefits of energy communities and the reduction of energy poverty. Experience in engaging local stakeholders, providing energy advisory services, and identifying suitable forms of involving vulnerable households in local energy solutions will be used.

Cooperation with the EKIM project and CIRI will make it possible to coordinate local and regional energy advisory services, use the expert capacity of energy managers, and connect household support with further energy measures.

The activity will also be closely linked to the Community Work of LAG Hradecký venkov II project. Community and social workers can help identify vulnerable households, inform them about the available service, and facilitate contact with an energy adviser. Energy advisory services will focus on consumption, bills, contracts and technical measures, while community and social workers will ensure continuity with support addressing the household's wider social, family or financial situation.

Cooperation will include in particular:

- *mutual sharing of information on available services;*
- *identification and outreach to energy-vulnerable households;*
- *facilitation of individual and on-site advisory services;*
- *joint information or community events;*
- *referral of households to follow-up expert, social and grant advisory services.*

The activity will also build on the Hradecký venkov SECAP, local and regional activities in social inclusion, energy savings and climate protection, and current national and European programmes supporting building renovation and low-income households.

The experience gained will be used in the development of a local energy and social advisory system and in integrating the issue of energy poverty into local and regional strategies.

Possible Risks and Mitigation Measures

Difficulty identifying households and low trust in the support offered

Mitigation measure: cooperation with municipalities and social and community workers, voluntary participation, clear communication and protection of personal data.

Expectations of direct financial assistance or an immediate reduction in costs

Mitigation measure: clear definition of the scope of the service and explanation that the advisory service provides recommendations and facilitates access to support, but does not create an automatic entitlement to financial assistance.

Limited ability of households to finance the recommended measures

Mitigation measure: prioritisation of simple and low-cost steps, information on available support, and referral of households to grant and social advisers.

Limited staff capacity and insufficient coordination among the stakeholders involved

Mitigation measure: gradual introduction of the service, clear allocation of roles, a combination of group and individual advisory services, and regular coordination among energy, social and community workers.

3. Long-Term Actions (3-5 years)

The long-term phase focuses on:

- *Sustainability*
- *Institutionalization*
- *European cooperation*

Action: Preparation and Development of Joint Investments in Energy Generation, Storage and Clean Mobility

Name and Description of the Action

The activity builds on the stabilisation of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, the expansion of its membership base, and experience gained from operating sharing groups. Based on actual data on energy generation, consumption and sharing, joint investment projects supporting the cooperative's further development and long-term economic stability will be identified and prepared.

The activity will include the identification of suitable sites and buildings, technical and economic assessment of projects, preparation of studies and project documentation, establishment of ownership and operating models, obtaining the necessary permits, and identification of suitable financing.

Investment projects may focus in particular on:

- *new or expanded renewable energy sources;*
- *local and community energy storage;*
- *demand management and the use of flexibility;*
- *charging infrastructure and the use of shared electricity for clean mobility;*
- *other solutions responding to members' needs and developments in the energy market.*

Only projects with proven technical feasibility, reasonable economic benefits, secured financing, and clearly defined arrangements for ownership, management and distribution of benefits will be prepared and implemented.

The activity will also support the institutionalisation of the cooperative by establishing rules for submitting, assessing, approving and managing joint investments over the long term. European cooperation will focus on the exchange of experience, transfer of proven models, and possible participation in new partnership networks and projects.

The objective is to create a pipeline of well-prepared investment projects and gradually implement projects that increase the use of local renewable energy, improve the area's energy self-sufficiency, and strengthen the long-term stability of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative.

Implementation Timeline

Start date: 1 December 2029
End date: 30 November 2031

Actors Involved / Roles

- Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative
  Sector: energy community / cooperative
  Role: main owner of the activity, coordinator of members' decision-making, and potential owner or operator of shared infrastructure.

- Hradecký venkov o.p.s.
  Sector: non-profit sector / local action group
  Role: coordination of the partnership, support for project preparation, identification of funding sources, and communication with regional and European partners.

- Member municipalities, their contributory organisations, businesses, agricultural entities, households and other members of the cooperative
  Sector: public, private and civil sectors
  Role: owners of suitable buildings and sites, investors or co-investors, energy producers and consumers, and users of the planned infrastructure.

- Centre for Investment, Development and Innovation Hradec Králové
  Sector: regional expert organisations and public administration
  Role: expert and strategic cooperation, links to municipal energy management, investment preparation, and regional energy and climate priorities.

- Energy specialists, designers, legal advisers and economic advisers
  Sector: expert services
  Role: preparation of technical, economic, legal and project documentation.

- Financial institutions, grant authorities, investment partners and technology suppliers
  Sector: financial, public and technology sectors
  Role: provision of financing, technical solutions, implementation, servicing and potential operation of energy facilities.

- HERCULES-CE partners and other European energy communities
  Sector: public, non-profit, research and energy sectors
  Role: exchange of experience, transfer of good practice, and preparation of joint European initiatives.

Expected Results

- *creation of a pipeline of approximately 3 to 5 joint investment projects;*
- *creation of an ownership, financing and operating model for joint investments;*
- *introduction of rules for submitting, assessing and approving investment projects;*
- *submission of an application for suitable grant, loan or other financial support, if available;*
- *possible launch of the selected project based on the results of the preparatory work and the availability of financing;*
- *strengthening of the cooperative's expert and institutional capacity;*
- *participation in at least one international exchange of experience.*

Monitoring Indicators

- *number of investment projects included in the pipeline;*
- *number of funding applications submitted;*
- *amount of funding secured;*
- *number of investments launched or implemented;*
- *installed capacity of new sources or energy storage capacity;*
- *number of members and investment partners involved;*
- *number of international exchanges of experience.*

Connections with other initiatives or EU projects

The activity directly builds on the results of the HERCULES-CE project, particularly the establishment and stabilisation of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative, the creation of sharing groups, and the collection of practical data on the generation, consumption and use of local energy.

The project experience will be used in preparing the cooperative's investment and business model, assessing the technical, economic and environmental feasibility of projects, selecting ownership and operating models, and involving the public, private and civil sectors.

It will also build on:

- *the Hradecký venkov Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan - SECAP;*
- *local energy concepts of the participating municipalities;*
- *regional energy and climate strategies of the Hradec Králové Region;*
- *national and European programmes supporting renewable energy sources, energy storage, flexibility and clean mobility.*

Contacts with HERCULES-CE partners and other energy communities will be maintained within European cooperation. Subject to available opportunities, the cooperative or Hradecký venkov o.p.s. will seek to participate in European networks, project consortia and exchanges of good practice.

Institutionalisation and Long-Term Sustainability

A unified decision-making and investment framework will be established for the preparation of joint investments. It will define:

- *the procedure for submitting and preliminarily selecting investment proposals;*
- *rules for technical, economic and legal assessment;*
- *the procedure for approving projects by the cooperative's governing bodies;*
- *options for members' financial participation;*
- *rules for distributing costs, risks, revenues and other benefits;*
- *the ownership and long-term management of infrastructure;*
- *rules for creating reserves for maintenance, renewal and further development.*

Investments will be prepared in a way that does not jeopardise the cooperative's normal operations and ensures that their operating costs are covered in the long term by project revenues, service fees, membership contributions or other predetermined sources.

Possible Risks and Mitigation Measures

Insufficient availability of technically and economically viable investment projects

Mitigation measure: creation of a broader project pipeline, gradual assessment of projects, and selection only of projects with demonstrable benefits.

Unavailable financing or excessively high investment costs

Mitigation measure: combination of grant, loan, own and partner resources, phased implementation of projects, and preparation of economic scenarios and sensitivity analyses.

Different interests among members or unclear ownership and operating arrangements

Mitigation measure: voluntary participation in individual projects, transparent decision-making rules, and prior legal, tax and economic assessment.

Lengthy permitting processes, limited grid capacity or rapid changes in conditions

Mitigation measure: early verification of connection and permitting options, phased preparation, assessment of storage and power management, and continuous updating of the technical solution.

Insufficient staff and expert capacity of the cooperative

Mitigation measure: preparation of a limited number of priority projects, use of external specialists, and cooperation with CIRI, the Hradec Králové Region and other expert partners.

This final activity is no longer only about further expanding energy sharing. It moves the cooperative towards the role of a long-term institution capable of preparing, financing and managing joint energy investments while maintaining European cooperation.

Final Summary and Recommendations of the Hradecký venkov Partner

The experience of Hradecký venkov confirms that establishing an energy community in a rural area is a long-term process requiring not only technical and economic solutions, but above all continuous work with local stakeholders and the building of trust. The Hradecký venkov area consists of 63 predominantly small municipalities or small towns with limited staff, expert and financial capacities. The number of renewable energy sources suitable for sharing is increasing only gradually, and municipalities currently need most of the electricity generated for their own buildings.

Many municipal photovoltaic power plants have been in operation for only a short time, and municipalities are still gaining experience with their generation and self-consumption. Their involvement in sharing may also be restricted by the conditions of grant programmes. Actual operational data, verification of available surpluses, and an appropriate match between generation sources and consumption points will therefore be decisive for the further development of the energy cooperative.

Membership in an energy cooperative and the joint development of energy assets represent a new model of cooperation for municipalities. Although mayors are often among the main initiators, the final decision requires the support of municipal councils. They need sufficient time, concrete supporting information, and above all the first sharing results from their own area. The recommended approach is therefore to launch operations on a limited and well-prepared scale, transparently evaluate the energy, economic and organisational results, and use them to gradually attract additional members.

Participation in the HERCULES-CE project was essential for the establishment of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative. The project made it possible to finance the necessary staff, expert, analytical and organisational activities, draw on the experience of international partners, and prepare the cooperative's legal, technical and economic model. A significant result was the official registration of the Hradecký venkov Energy Cooperative as an independent legal entity on 11 May 2026.

Cooperation between Hradecký venkov o.p.s. and ENVIROS, s.r.o. was also of fundamental importance. Hradecký venkov provided knowledge of the area, communication with municipalities and coordination of local stakeholders, while ENVIROS provided expert support in processing energy data, preparing technical and economic analyses and energy balances, and designing the future operating model. Combining a strong local coordinator with a qualified expert partner can be considered one of the main prerequisites for the successful preparation of an energy community.

The process does not end with the establishment of the cooperative. The proposed Action Plan sets out how, over the next five years, the membership base will be expanded, electricity sharing launched and stabilised, energy advisory services and the social dimension of community energy developed, and joint investments in renewable energy sources, storage and clean mobility subsequently prepared. The long-term objective is to create a stable and trusted energy community suited to the capacities of small rural municipalities and delivering concrete benefits to municipalities, businesses, public institutions and residents of the area.