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Danube Region



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'Energy Communities' in Finland

Case: Kangas, urban development area

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Several different types of energy community

Energy communities have been possible in Finland since 2021.

Energy communities encourage electricity users to **invest in renewable energy** and **promote the uptake of new policies**, such as participation in consumption flexibility

Energy community operating on the same property

Energy community over the property boundaries

Virtual energy community

The vision of Kangas

approved of city government in 6.6.2011



Wise Kangas – shared solutions, smart and resource efficient

- Kangas is a major urban development project in Jyväskylä.
- Former paper mill area, now new residential and workplace area.
- More about Kangas: <https://www.jyvaskyla.fi/en/kangas-jyvaskyla>

Specialities

- Areal portal: An online portal has been created for the purpose of disseminating local and housing cooperative news and information to residents, property owners and other stakeholders.
- Common yards and spaces
- Shared waste management
- So far only small-scale solar energy production, maybe more in the future?

To remember on socialization and good governance on energy communities

- Participation as early as possible (in case of Kangas participatory urban planning containing for example internet forum)
- Community needs a builder, a face, somebody who brings different stakeholders together (e.g. project manager, community manager...)
- Common platform, for example online portal where all the relevant information is available.
- Making the economic benefits visible (especially important with the businesses)
- Transparent decision-making. What are the procedures, who have influenced the decisions



Section 2 – Inclusion in Energy Communities

1. What are the primary benefits of promoting inclusivity in energy communities, and how does it contribute to their resilience and success?
 - *Sustainability transition and building a sustainable society requires the involvement of all groups of people.*
 - *Hearing many voices in decision-making process will make decisions better, as the impacts of decisions will be assessed in a more diverse way.*
 - *If the inhabitants of an energy community and/or neighbourhood are very homogeneous, the area will be vulnerable to economic shocks (In Finland we still have neighbourhoods – even municipalities – that rely heavily on one or two factories. The closure of those factories would cause a huge shock to a local community.)*
2. *How do energy communities measure the success of their inclusivity efforts, and what challenges have they faced in becoming more inclusive?*
 - *For the most common energy communities in Finland, success in this starts with urban planning. Already there, we need to ensure that neighbourhoods have the conditions to become diverse. In Kangas, there are privately owned apartments, student housing and rental housing in same neighbourhood.*
 - *To our knowledge, success isn't measured at the moment.*



3. How do communities balance inclusivity with efficient decision-making, and how has inclusivity impacted decision processes?
 - *First of all, the goal can't be efficiency, goal must be good decisions. Inclusivity makes our decisions better*
 - *Despite the inclusivity, decision-making process must be clear. The process involves participation, but it is a goal-oriented, moving towards a decision.*
4. What role does diversity play in the innovation and success of energy communities, and how do they ensure all voices are heard in governance?
 - *Diversity is a key for the innovation. Too homogeneous group thinks too narrowly.*
 - *Clear decision-making processes including participation.*
 - *Regular survey to residents and businesses to gather their views, motivations and worries.*
5. What strategies have been used to overcome barriers to participation for underrepresented groups?
 - *Many times the hardest part is to be understood: It's important to select a target group for participation and define your messages with the vocabulary which is understandable for them.*
 - *New innovative ways for meeting people at the beginning of the planning process of Kangas*
 - *Open internet forum for collecting ideas*
 - *Collecting ideas by interviewing people in the city centre*
 - *Storytelling methods: My day in Kangas, Kangas round the clock, Digital Storytelling, Wikipanning, Graphical Facilitation*



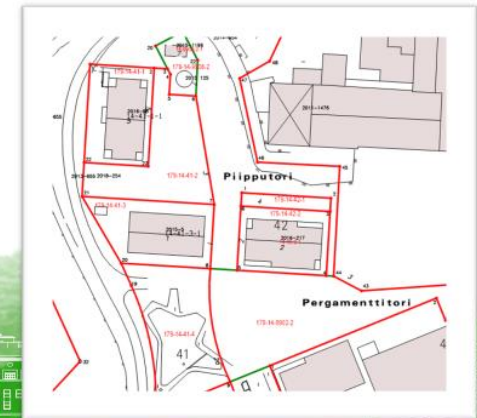
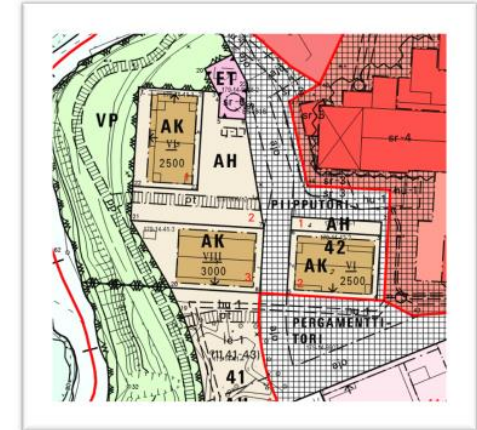
Wise Kangas – shared solutions, smart and resource efficient

- **Fibre optic networks**
 - Mustaverkko
- **Digital accessibility and identity**
 - Centralized electronic locking and access control
 - One Kangas, multiple spaces, one key
 - Easy deployment of new services
 - Needs an identity management system for the background – procurement process on going
- **Areal portal**
 - The Kangas Net
 - An online portal has been created for the purpose of disseminating local and housing cooperative news and information to residents, property owners and other stakeholders.
 - The bulletins can also be viewed on entrance hall display screens. There are plans to add a reservation service, which can be used to book communal areas.
 - Users can access the portal and log-in via kangasverkko.fi.



Local service company – Kankaan Palvelu Oy

- **Provides a range of services to local residents, property owners and people working in Kangas**
 - Founded 2016
 - First owned by YIT, Skanska and the City of Jyväskylä, later on the ownership changes
- **Local property cooperatives contribute additional fees**
 - are calculated on the basis of total building volume.
- **The services are funded through property cooperative share subscriptions and management fees paid by our shareholders.**
- **Runs**
 - Waste management
 - Shared yards
 - % culture
 - Areal portal: www.kangasverkko.fi





Section 3 – Internal Communication

1. What communication tools and platforms do energy communities rely on in your country, and how do they manage the flow of information to keep all members informed?
 - *Areal portal is the main channel of communication*
 - *It's important to have the person in charge, whose job is to keep people on board.*
2. What are the common challenges in maintaining clear internal communication, and how do communities address these issues?
 - *It's a very difficult to make communication to catch as all members in Kangas Region (almost 3000 inhabitants, 2000 workplaces)*
 - *Kangas service center has been made to proceed basic services on this special areas. It's important that community has somebody to whom people can turn with their issues and who acts as a messenger between community members and city/government*
3. How does transparent communication contribute to trust and cohesion among members, and do communities provide regular updates or feedback?
 - *it's essential to make communication within right timing*
 - *all information sharing and timing were the key parameters*
 - *talking with right terminology that all members got your thoughts*



Section 3 – Internal Communication

4. What are the most common sources of conflict in energy communities, and how are they resolved? Is there a formal mediation process in your country?
 - *It's quite common that big investments in housing companies create disputes between shareholders. Usually, bringing an outsider into the discussion helps to defuse the situation.*
 - *Financials interest in private sector; Private companies may aim to maximize their profit. There might also be a competitive situation between the two companies, which can create tensions.*
 - *Discussion between energy communities, decision makers and the private sector can be very fruitful to solve conflicts. It's important that all parties are committed to open and fair co-operation.*
5. What strategies or resources do energy communities use to improve conflict resolution skills and foster a collaborative environment, even during disagreements?
 - *Clear decision-making processes*
 - *Usually, bringing an outsider into the discussion helps to defuse situation*
 - *Open and fair discussion with all parties (community members, energy suppliers, decision-makers in municipalities etc.)*



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