



SHERPA
Rural Science-Society-Policy
Interfaces

GOVERNANCE IN RURAL AREAS



MAP VENUS, CZECH REPUBLIC

VENUS is a MAP operating at the regional level in the Moravia and Silesia regions of the Czech Republic.

The MAP is focused on community energy and supporting people of retirement age with subsidies for the insulation of older houses and apartments. There are several examples of community energy in the region, and recent national legislation passed in December 2022 will simplify the bureaucracy and limitations to allow for easier development and operation of community energy sources.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Future rural policy

- EU-level support for regions with funding is important but also complex.
- Funding opportunities need to be accessible to groups in rural areas, so needing to reduce the linguistic and cultural barriers that exist; many people in rural areas are not fluent in English.
- Policies should respect the importance of rural areas as the provider of ecosystem services and the role of farmers and municipalities in influencing the quality of life at the local and global level.

Future rural research

- The uncertainty of energy suppliers and the steep rise in prices, and resulting change in manner by society and individuals.
- Technical research to measure the immediate consumption and production of energy and community energy versus the stability of the energy network for larger territorial units.
- Economic research on the long-term impacts of RES, and then on the societal benefits, such as cost effectiveness, SROI or CBA.

KEY STRENGTHS

- Informing stakeholders in the area about the possibilities of community energy.
- Increased interest of the territory in energy savings and RES.
- Rocket year-on-year growth in renewable energy installations (PV, wind).
- People's interest in learning about new technologies and applicable solutions.
- Strong subsidy support from the EU and national sources.
- The improving ability of the territory to cooperate.
- Joint successful lobbying in the direction of enforcing the new energy law in the Czech Republic.
- Intensive exchange of experience at national and international level (Austria, Germany, Norway).

KEY NEEDS

- Increase awareness and public opinion on the Green Deal in the Czech Republic.
- Increase trust in government measures and the EU's green policy
- Eliminate myths and misinformation.
- Increase the necessary personnel capacities.
- Reduce mistrust of electromobility and wind energy, which is significant in the Czech Republic.
- Improve the state of the distribution network to enable community energy sharing.
- Eliminate the reluctance of distribution companies to discount distribution charges for the transmission of energy within communities (at the low voltage level).
- Increase the weak will of people to cooperate, invest and act together.



EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

First Energy Community Operates in the Opava Region

In response to rising energy prices, a group formed to become the first energy community in the Czech Republic as the Opava region. Their aim is to produce electricity and heat from local renewable sources and consume as much of this energy as possible. Building on existing models of energy communities from across Western Europe, the community seeks to support the local economy and resilience of the territory.

