



Nagypáli, the renewable energy village

HUNGARY



HOLISTIC



COLLECTIVE



RURAL

Summary

The Green Road Village Development Program started in 1997 in Nagypáli, the main goal of which was to develop the village into a European-standard, self-sustaining settlement yet preserve the traditions of the villages of Western Hungary. The main directions of development were using renewable energy sources, developing tourism, building a community, environmental protection and awareness raising, and producing local products. In 2007, they opened the Renewable Energy Innovation Eco Centre, which serves as a promotional centre at which temporary exhibitions, conferences and workshops are organised on the use and implementation of biomass, biogas, solar and wind energy, and energy plantations.

Why is it a case of energy citizenship?

The village is an outstanding example in Hungary of how far determination and a strong community can take you regarding the use of renewable energy on a settlement level. It also proves that one does not have to wait for national level decision-makers to make such changes – you can do it for yourself, at the municipal and community level, and become self-sufficient.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101022492.

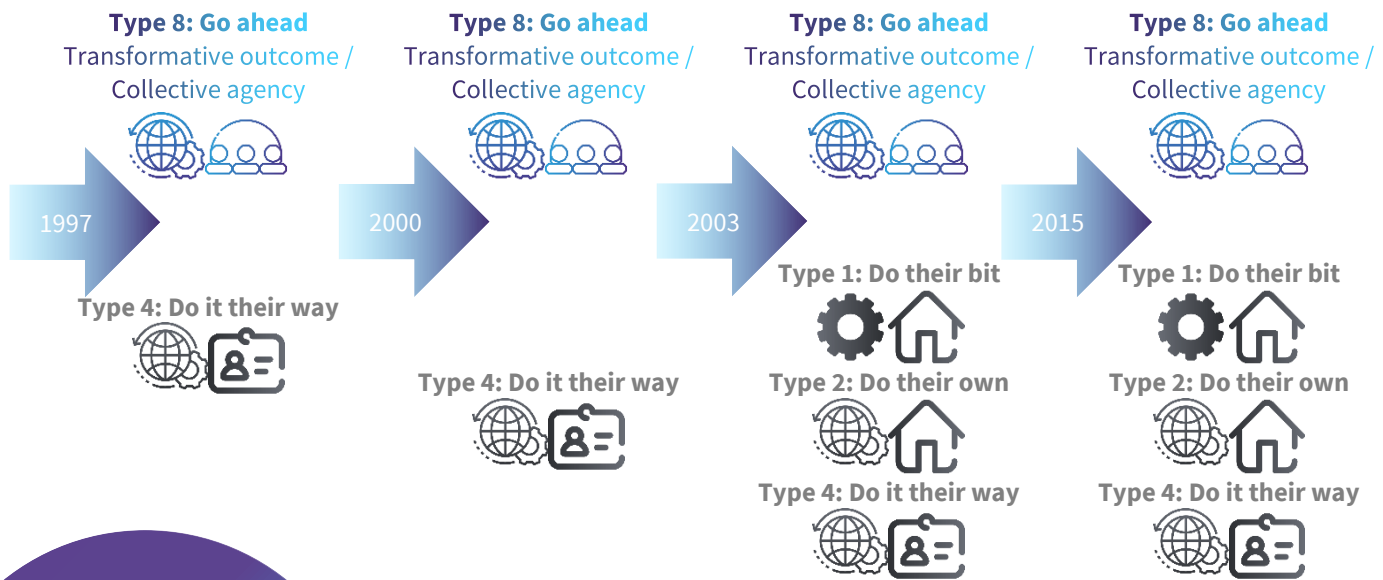


Goals

1. Being self-sustaining (in relation to energy and using renewables);
2. Producing and using renewable energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels (phasing out fossil fuels/reducing carbon footprint/settlement-level energy transition);
3. Supporting, promoting and enabling prosumerism.

The story and the typology

Within two decades, a sustainable, liveable, and well-functioning settlement was established with all kinds of renewable energy use: a biosolar heating plant, solar collectors and solar panel farms (with minimal municipal overhead costs), e-mobility (bikes and cars) powered by solar panels, energy plantations, etc. The main characteristics of the case have not changed much over time. How the initiative operates seems sufficient, and the participants are satisfied. Therefore, no significant changes are planned except for further technological advancement. The energy citizenship ideal type and agency of the case has remained the same throughout its history and reflects the fact that Nagypáli is a pioneer in its region.



Case history summary

For the summary methodology, click [HERE!](#)



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Phase 1: Creation, focus on energy efficiency, 1997 - 2000

This case has quite a long history of ca. 25 years. It started when an innovative and ambitious mayor began work in the village (he was elected mayor in 1996). Back then, Nagypáli was a settlement in the Hungarian countryside in danger of extinction, lacking an attractive profile for residents or businesses. Based on his personal interests and skills, the mayor created a development plan called “Green Road” involving many ideas for development, most of them related to renewable energy.

Phase 2: Planning, 2000 - 2003

The Green Road development plan had three leading solutions (pillars) for addressing existing problems in the village. First, it included increasing the number of residents and building a community among them. Then, the plan suggested focusing on policymaking and different types of economic development (energy, tourism, enterprises, and real estate). Finally, the Green Road plans, together with the mayor and his ideas, gained more and more supporters locally and started to succeed step by step.








	Individual			Collective	
					
 Reformative	1. Do their bit (in the household)	3. Do their bit (within organizations)	5. Make their voice heard	7. Do their share	9. Do the job
 Transformative	2. Do their own (in the household)	4. Do it their way (within organizations)	6. Make their vote count	8. Go ahead	10. Make their claims

Main type: Go ahead

Transformative outcome / Citizen-based and hybrid agency

Secondary type: Do it their way

Transformative outcome / Organisationally embedded agency

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Phase 3: Realization of the plans, 2003 - 2015

After the planning phase, the mayor remained the village's leading actor, but many people are developing related ideas. The case has achieved a lot since its initiation – e.g., significant investment into renewable energy, booming resident numbers, a stronger community, a blooming business environment and an increase in tourism – and it is still a case in progress with many ambitious plans. Problems are approached as challenges and new opportunities, so innovation is ongoing. As a result, the village is becoming increasingly independent from an energy perspective. The case has achieved the milestones defined in the development plan under the firm control of the mayor as manager, but

locals and their ideas are also incorporated into the plans.

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Secondary types:

Do their bit

Reformative outcome / Private in the household agency

Do their own








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Phase 4: Preservation of results and stability, 2015 -

The village considers itself a pioneer and intends to be on the front line in adopting new technologies. Although many project elements have been successfully implemented, the initiators continuously experiment and plan to pilot new and innovative practices to maintain their leading role. The village has received various prizes and attracts visits to the site. Requests for reports (interviews, documentaries, theses, etc.) are received regularly. The latest plans include building a biogas plant and turning an old water tower into a lookout tower with a wind turbine to generate electricity.

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The aspects of energy citizenship

The municipality tries to involve the public from the very beginning of the development planning process by giving them the opportunity to express their ideas, problems and suggestions on different forums and platforms. They are fully involved in the implementation process and are typically partners in various activities aimed at promoting environmental awareness.

Although the inhabitants' views are listened to, the **mayor's word is ultimately the main factor in making decisions.**

Participants explicitly **aim at creating a self-sustaining village and being prosumers** within it, not being dependent on the regular energy system, thus a more democratic system is clearly envisioned. They (particularly the mayor) always look for innovation, newer technological solutions, and ways of changing old systems.



Democratic energy future

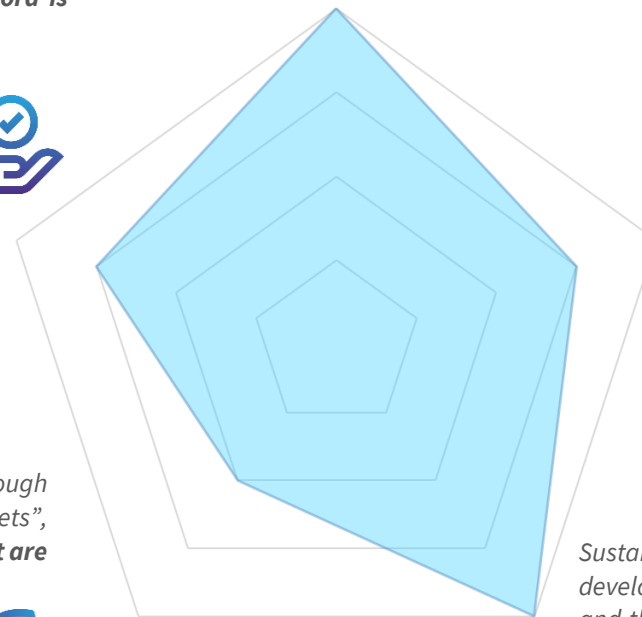
A more democratic energy future is a core concern of the case, and is part of the vision

Citizen power/control
Citizens can express their views, but their views are not necessarily taken into account



Reducing emissions is a main motivator and is addressed through various renewable energy projects, but "limits", "targets", "footprint" and staying within a **specific carbon limit/budget are not explicitly mentioned** in official publications.

Carbon limit
Implicit recognition of the carbon limit



Those living in the settlement can enjoy the advantages of the innovations, and take part in the projects and the community. However, due to the nature of the case, others do not benefit from it other than by being inspired and learning from this example.



Equity and justice

Equal access is granted, but limited by various criteria

Sustainability and environmental protection are the basis for all developments. The mayor personally **sees the future as sustainable living** and the village represents this to its residents. This is not only visible in the **predominant renewable energy practices**, but in many other practices such as forbidding the use of salt on icy/snowy pavements (but instead encouraging residents to use metal-free ash or sawdust) and not allowing open fires, except for on specified days.



Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is a core issue, and is considered in goal setting



Further information



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Source of images

<http://nagypali.hu>



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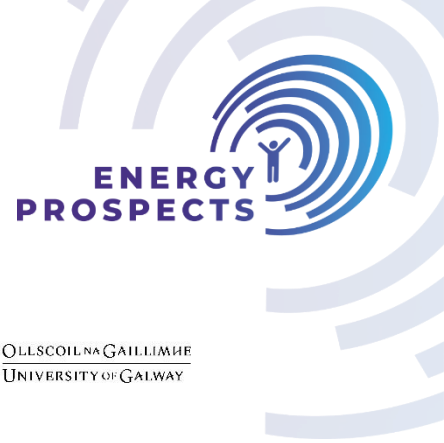
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