



Weert Energy



Summary

Weert Energy (Weert Energie) is a local green energy cooperative operating in the municipality of Weert in the Netherlands. Founded in 2013, the cooperative generates and supplies electricity locally at an affordable price to its members and supports citizens' measures to save energy in their living environment. The cooperative members believe they can manage the transition to green energy in Weert themselves because together, they can ensure that green energy is accessible to all Weert citizens. Weert Energy works with its members, Weert municipality, and other regional energy cooperatives to shape the energy goals Weert wants to achieve. To implement their projects, they also collaborate with local businesses.

Why is it a case of energy citizenship?

The cooperative structure of Weert Energy is unique in the Netherlands as it combines a cooperative neighbourhood battery (COOP-Store) with the large-scale local generation of sustainable energy. The battery project is the largest in the Netherlands and the first one. By combining the business models of self-supply, energy trade, and balance maintenance, a profitable concept may be realised.



DIRECT ENERGY
PRODUCTION /
CONSUMPTION



COLLECTIVE



PERI-URBAN



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



Maastricht University

grün independent
Institute

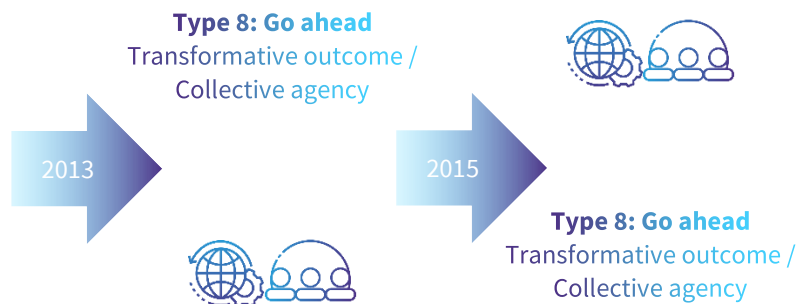


Goals

1. Contributing to, investing in and implementing local energy projects in the municipality of Weert for a more sustainable and affordable energy future;
2. Helping to increase the energy self-sufficiency of the region through renewable energy projects;
3. Providing financial support and advice to members and local residents and guiding them through the energy transition.

The story and the typology

Although the cooperative's business model has developed over the years, the main aims of Weert Energy remain the same. Thus, the ideal types of energy citizenship supported by the case have not changed. As this is a citizen-based initiative with a transformative focus, the main type of energy citizenship is classified as "Type 8: Go ahead".



Case history summary



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



Maastricht University

gr^uIndependent
Institute

Phase 1: From the creation of the case in 2013 until 2015

Weert Energy is an energy cooperative that operates in the municipality of Weert. Since 2013, the goals of this cooperative have been to contribute to sustainable energy in the Weert region, generate and supply electricity locally at an affordable price to residents, and support citizens' measures to save energy in their living environments.

As this is a citizen-based initiative with a transformative focus, the main ideal type of energy citizenship is defined as "Type 8: Go ahead".

Phase 2: Neighbourhood battery project (COOP-Store), since 2015

In 2015, Weert Energy launched its flagship pilot neighbourhood battery project called COOP-Store. This addresses how local energy generation, storage and consumption can work in a more decentralised manner and thus increase energy self-sufficiency. This was the first pilot project in the Netherlands to combine a cooperative neighbourhood battery with the large-scale local generation of sustainable energy. A special feature of this project is that Weert Energy members collectively own both the solar park and the neighbourhood battery.

The background to the pilot project is that energy storage is indispensable for maintaining the reliability of energy supply because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. To achieve a fully sustainable energy supply, it is therefore crucial that green energy can be stored on a sunny or windy day and be used on a grey and windless day.

The project partners demonstrated that energy storage in combination with sustainable production

	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

could be profitable with the aid of the Top Sector Energy Subsidy awarded by the Dutch government (RVO – the Dutch agency responsible for the implementation of innovation policy) for testing and running a "neighbourhood" battery in combination with large-scale power generation. In 2019, Weert Energy's solar park Altweeterheide, associated with a "neighbourhood" battery, became operational. Cyclists can charge their electric bicycles for free using green energy from the solar park.

	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



The aspects of energy citizenship

Creating a democratic energy future is a core concern for Weert Energy, as illustrated in the realisation of its large-scale local projects that aim to benefit members, local organisations and businesses, but also all the local residents of Weert. **The initiative seeks to put energy in the control of local hands, and to generate, store and use electricity at the local level and in a decentralised manner.** This gives control of energy to local residents.



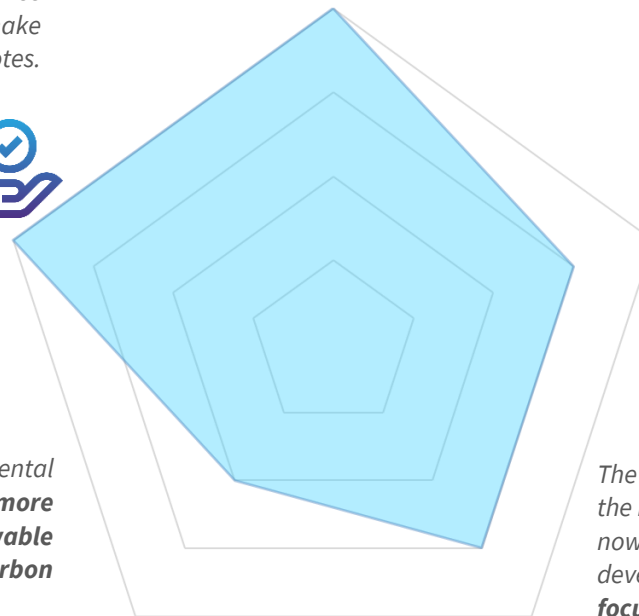
Weert Energy supports a high level of citizen voice and control. **The cooperative operates on the principle 'from members for members' and strives for transparency and openness.** At least twice a year a general members' meeting is held at which members make decisions by casting a vote. Decisions are based on a majority of votes.



Democratic energy future

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

Citizen control
Citizens exert effective control, and their votes have to be taken into account



Anyone from Weert or the surrounding area who wants to (residents, companies and organizations) can invest in the local generation of sustainable energy. Members pay an annual membership fee. **All members can attend member meetings, cast votes, receive publications, newsletters and get a free heat scan of their home and free advice about energy saving.**



Equity and justice

Equal access is granted, but limited by various criteria

There is no mention or recognition of the 1.5C target or environmental limits in general. **However, by focusing on building a more sustainable, decentralised energy system based on renewable sources, the initiative implicitly contributes to reducing carbon emissions and promoting cleaner production.**

The income from various projects is spent on sustainable projects within the municipality (e.g., an environmental fund). The environmental fund is now being deployed to support socially sustainable projects and cover the development costs of projects in the municipality of Weert. **Although the focus is on energy production, the initiative contributes greatly to attempts to promote environmental sustainability.**



Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is part of the process; energy remains the main focus

Carbon limit
Implicit recognition of the carbon limit



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



Maastricht University

grEIndependent
Institute

Further information



[facebook.com/WeertEnergie](https://www.facebook.com/WeertEnergie)



www.weertenergie.nl



info@weertenergie.nl



References

- Information available on various aspects of the case on the case website (Accessed 30.09.2023):
 - <https://www.weertenergie.nl/>
 - <https://weertenergie.nl/over-de-cooperatie>
 - <https://www.weertenergie.nl/onze-missie-en-visie>
 - <https://weertenergie.nl/onze-energie/zonne-energie/sociaal-project-zonnedak-nering-boegel-voor-minima>
 - <https://weertenergie.nl/images/docs/Informatiebrochure-certificaten-WeertEnergie.pdf>
- Enplus (2020). Peakshaving pilot altweeterheide
URL:<https://www.enpuls.nl/media/cjib33nd/eindrapport-peakshaving-pilot-altweeterheide.pdf> (Accessed 30.09.2023)
- Interviews with three people involved in the case
- Vadovics, E., Szöllőssy A., and Vadovics K. (2023). Introduction and Methodology for the EnergyPROSPECTS Detailed Case Summary Reports. EnergyPROSPECTS (PROactive Strategies and Policies for Energy Citizenship Transformation). Zenodo.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10075408>



Source of images

[facebook.com/WeertEnergie](https://www.facebook.com/WeertEnergie)



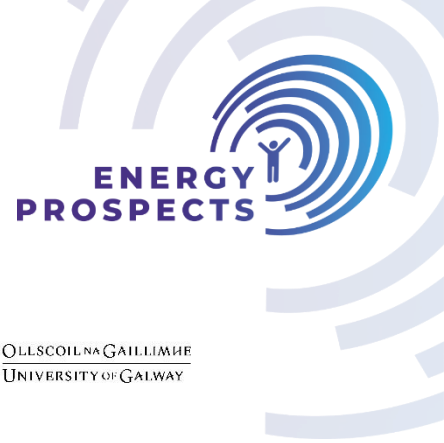
Case study authors

Mapping and detailed case research by:
Marianna Markantoni, Maastricht University

Case study summary prepared by:
Anita Szöllőssy & Edina Vadovics, GreenDependent Institute

Proofreading by Simon Milton





EnergyPROSPECTS partners

University of Galway (GAL)
University Road, H91 TK33, Galway, Ireland



Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB),
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt 50-1050, Bruxelles, Belgium



GreenDependent Institute (GDI),
2100 Gödöllő, Éva u. 4., Hungary



Universiteit Maastricht (UM),
Minderbroedersberg 4-6, 6200 MD, Maastricht, Netherlands



Applied Research and Communications Fund (ARC Fund),
Alexander Zhendov Street 5, 1113, Sofia, Bulgaria



Notre Europe – Institut Jacques Delors (JDI),
18, rue de Londres 75009, Paris, France



University of Latvia (UL),
Raiņa bulvāris 19, LV-1586, Riga, Latvia



Technische Universität Berlin (TUB),
Straße des 17. Juni 135, 10623, Berlin, Germany



Universidade da Coruña (UDC),
Rúa da Maestranza 9, 15001 A Coruña, Spain



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 1011022492.



Maastricht University

green
independent
Institute