



COMETS 1^o National Workshops
COLLECTIVE ACTION INITIATIVES IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION
ESTONIA

Friday 19 June, 2020

Estonian national workshop took place on 19. June 2020, duration was approx 2 hours and we had approximately 30 participants (speakers included). Workshop had 2 main topics throughout – Collective Action in energy sector as such and introduction of COMETS project and next activities.

Main keynote speaker was **Marek Strandberg**, who is a well known expert in Estonia and currently working on Energy Agency of Tallinn. As the citizens collective action topic is still relatively unpopular in Estonia, he opened it a little more broadly, starting with important basic knowledges. Marek spoke about the history of collective action, why it has been inherent and important to communities and at the individual level throughout human history. How does collective action relate to modern economic models and the situation. Why is this a very favorable time for this right now? Marek discussed the current crises (economic crisis, environmental crisis, etc.) and collective action as an alternative and appropriate way to overcome and move forward.

Speaking about the situation in Estonia, Marek stated that in fact the conditions are favorable for this, the main issue is the direct involvement and participation of people in renewable energy projects. Municipalities also have different opportunities to support citizens in this.

The advantage of the cooperative as an economic model is that the management is relatively simple and democratic, and the goals are clear (there are no far-reaching business ambitions for the future).

He described one planned energy cooperative in Tallinn, talked about future plans and pointed out 2 main benefits that such an energy project with the direct participation of citizens can bring:

1. Brings capital to carry out a relatively large project (the municipality wants to move towards C neutrality, which means that technological innovation should be done anyway)
2. People are given the opportunity to invest their money (although it not and never can be a very profitable investment scheme, it produces more than some pension funds)

Marek Strandberg also briefly described some examples of cooperatives in other countries and talked about the possibility of Estonian cooperatives (if we will have strong ones) to get involved in them.

Another external speaker was **Toivo Aalja**, who is the representative of NGO Lilleoru. Toivo briefly introduced the nature of the Lilleoru community and their more broad approach to all kind of energies. Lilleoru is planning a solar park on the roof of the main building of the center, and Toivo gave a good overview of this plan.

The second presentation introducing the energy association talks about an apartment building in Tallinn, which is currently being equipped with a solar park and will start producing energy collectively. Several examples from neighboring countries are also presented. Unfortunately, due to technical problems, **Ülo Kask** (TREA) could not make the speaking on seminar, but the presentation will be available on the COMETS website and on the TREA website.

Nele Ivask (TREA) introduced the COMETS project. We talked about the project in general, the results which are already finished and the activities for the future. More detailed overview of the current survey of CAIs and the preliminary results was presented. As a final presentation, we also introduced the platform for CAIs. Nele briefly mentioned all the channels where all information can be found.

The audience asked some questions after the presentations. They asked about the existing cooperatives in Estonia and about the sample size of the survey.