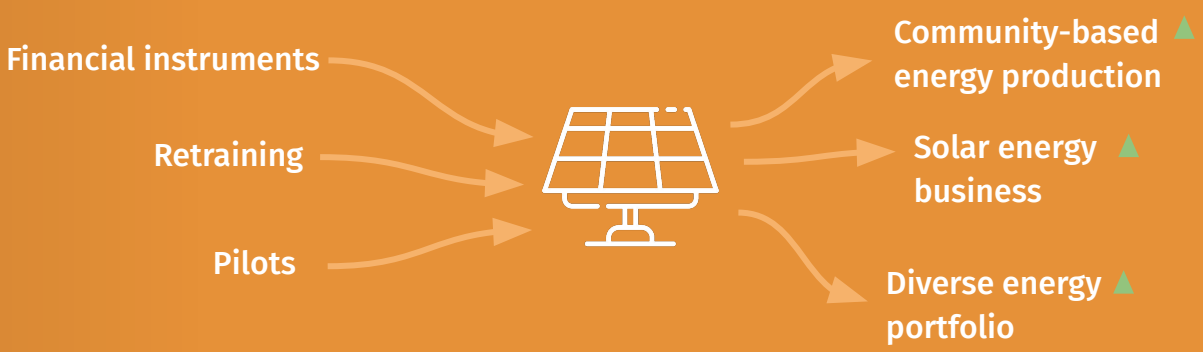
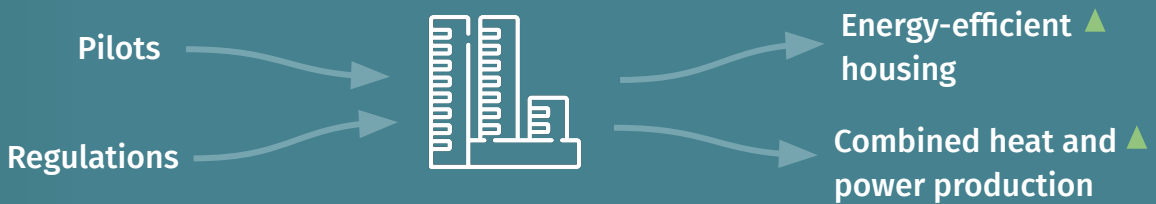
This is a summary of the renewable energy and energy efficiency proposals submitted for the Green Plan for Ida-Viru County. The 18 proposals made were mainly divided between the four categories below; however, the co-creation working groups composed of experts additionally emphasised the need for an **energy democracy** and a local **co-ordinating body**, as well as to make **climate objectives** mandatory on the national level. In addition, Ida-Viru County as a whole needs a new optimistic **narrative** about its living and business environment and future.

WIND ENERGY

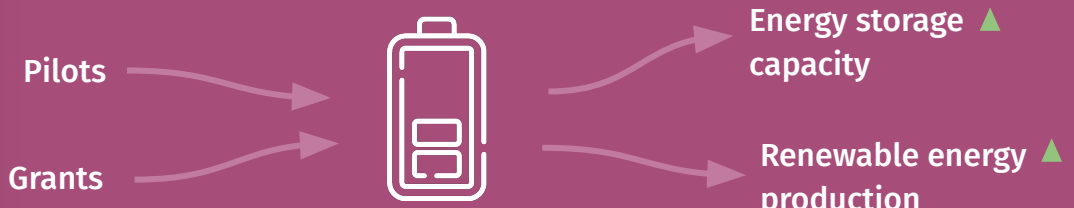
SOLAR ENERGY



ENERGY EFFICIENCY



ENERGY STORAGE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In the course of the co-creation process, 18 proposals have been formulated in this document as an input for the Green Plan for Ida-Viru County, which in turn is one of several inputs for plans for a Just Transition. The proposals are divided between five topics:

In the case of **wind energy**, the focus was placed on removing obstacles: finding opportunities for new wind energy areas in collaboration with the Ministry of Defense, increasing support for the population through a local benefit model, and finding a solution to phantom grid connections.

In the case of **solar energy**, the need for support is greater than for removing obstacles. This should primarily consist in financial instruments, both for private households and enterprises, but also retraining. Additionally, pilot projects for agrovoltaics technologies should be run.

Achieving **energy efficiency** requires testing and implementing innovative solutions with regard to the electricity grid, heat management, and housing. The slow pace of housing renovation needs to be addressed through a comprehensive policy approach.

In order to increase **energy storage** capacity, technology pilots could be brought to Estonia and the construction of plants utilising mature technologies could be financed on a needs basis. Furthermore, special efforts should be made to accelerate processes for granting authorisations.

Cross-cutting proposals call for the establishment of a regional competence centre, support for community-based energy management, and the integration of climate objectives into other environmental requirements. In addition, it was deemed important to give Ida-Viru County a more positive public image and internal narrative.

These proposals are only one part of a broader Green Plan and an even broader Just Transition process, but hopefully they can serve as useful input for writing a brighter next chapter for Ida-Viru County.

The following is a brief overview of the proposals made in the energy part of the Green Plan, which were developed in the co-creation process for the just transition of Ida-Viru County in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency. For a more detailed report on the proposals together with an impact analysis, please send an e-mail to johanna@elfond.ee.

Wind energy

Proposal 1: Provision of support to promote the establishment of citizens' energy co-operatives

The aim of this proposal is to promote the establishment of energy cooperatives among citizens. With regard to financial support, the experts deemed that support should be directed towards the conducting of preliminary studies necessary for renewable energy projects and towards securing financing for construction projects through investment aid or bank loans. Non-financial support consists of three components. Firstly, general awareness should be raised about energy co-operatives and the possibilities for establishing them. Secondly, expert advice should be provided for carrying out preliminary studies, construction projects, and financial analyses and, where necessary, for preparing tenders for public contracts for renewable energy. Thirdly, suitable plots or buildings should be offered for the operation of energy production co-operatives.

With the help of market mechanisms, energy producers could optimise the efficiency of their operations, which in turn would lead to significant primary energy savings in the production of energy. The experts believe the implementation of this proposal to be necessary due to the fact that one major obstacle to the development of wind energy has been the opposition of local residents and local governments to wind farms, which has also been discussed in the relevant studies. One reason for this is that larger energy companies hold a major share of the business sector of Ida-Viru County. In addition there is a lack of community and collaborative action between micro-enterprises and major energy partners.

This proposal is in line with the general guidelines of the European Union as well as national strategies. Thus, this proposal reflects the general principles of the national climate policy, which aims to promote the emergence of energy co-operatives and increase consumers' options through the emergence of an open energy system and a free market. In general, the transition to distributed generation has been a priority for many countries, and facilitating this transition in Estonia indisputably requires the active participation and involvement of local residents.

Proposal 2: Solution to phantom grid connections

This proposal centres on solving the problem of phantom grid connections. In the coming years, the connection capacity of the transmission grid will be highly limited due to previously reserved network connections. The problem lies in the fact that these

reservations have yet to be made use of, which limits the availability of connections to other parties. In 2012, the capacity reserved by connection contracts and tenders was approximately 5,600 W, while the maximum consumption capacity was 1,600 MW. Similar problems with connections increase the price of connection to the common grid across Estonia and block most of the capacity of the electricity grid.

The proposal revolves around the development of opportunities for collaboration with Elering, market participants, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications to find the most appropriate solution to this problem. The effective implementation of this proposal would not require the spending of budgetary resources, as a solution based on a market mechanism could be implemented through Elering.

The experts find that Elering could offer compensation to developers who have made phantom grid connections for the costs. Eligibility for this compensation could extend to the initial costs (including interest accrued over the period). This would enable lower rates to be offered to other developers.

Solving the problem of phantom grid connections would boost the development of renewable energy in Ida-Viru County, which would benefit both local residents and the local government, as well as Estonia as a whole. This is also in line with the general principles of Estonian climate policy, which envisage the development of transmission, distribution, heating, and other related networks in energy systems at the national level and the connection of all potential actors where this leads to increased efficiency and reduced losses.

Proposal 3: Promotion of collaboration with the Ministry of Defense

This collaboration would result in the introduction of new wind energy areas, such as the areas east of the Jõhvi–Iisaku highway. In addition, improving collaboration would help speed up the approval of plans and reduce the time spent thereon. Currently, Ida-Viru County is in a situation where large areas have been made unavailable for the development of wind farms at the request of the Ministry of Defense. However, this restricts the possibilities for constructing wind farms for the generation of green energy (closing off approximately half of Ida-Viru County, according to the experts). In order to make green energy production from wind possible in Ida-Viru County, these areas would need to be deployed as well.

In the discussions of the working group, the experts referred to neighbouring countries, where the situation is different. For example, the government of Finland recently announced that it was allocating state-owned land for the construction of renewable energy facilities. As a result, construction will begin in 2021 on nearly 80 new wind turbines.

Wind power has the potential to contribute significantly to local industry, the production of hydrogen and hydrogen-based e-fuels. The availability of green electricity would also provide a positive input for green industry, which would benefit both local residents and the local government (through tax revenue).

Proposal 4: Making it mandatory for the Environmental Board to take steps for the achievement of the national climate objectives

According to the expert group, progress towards climate objectives requires stronger intervention by ministries. For example, environmental agencies are responsible for approving designated spatial plans and local spatial plans, and both nature conservation issues and climate policy objectives should be taken into account in the evaluation of such plans. Climate policy objectives, in particular, should be acknowledged more and, where possible, supported at the legislative level in light of the fact that Estonia is aiming to reduce total greenhouse gas emissions by 70% by 2030 relative to 1990. Currently, however, decisions are made with greater deference to nature conservation issues rather than climate policy objectives.

In 2018, approximately 70% of Estonia's total greenhouse gas emissions were generated by the large energy and industry sector, with nearly 90% coming from plants located in Ida-Viru County. Therefore, major emphasis needs to be placed on the development of green energy, especially in Ida-Viru County. The importance of this proposal lies in greater acknowledgement and pursuit of climate objectives at the ministry level, which would promote, for example, the establishment of small wind farms and energy co-operatives (see wind energy proposal 1). The importance of these steps has also been recognised at EU level, where there has been a move to review laws on energy efficiency and renewable energy to bring them into line with more ambitious climate objectives. The proposal is therefore in line with the general direction taken by the EU.

Proposal 5: Introduction of a local benefit model in Ida-Viru County

This model would be a state-approved framework that sets out the extent and manner of compensation for inconveniences caused by the location of a wind turbine to, for example, people living below or near the turbine. In addition, the model would determine the revenue accruing to the local government therefrom. This measure would not be specific to Ida-Viru County, but rather applicable throughout the country. The experts believe that it could be possible to offer financial compensation to people (as well as local governments) who are settled near a wind farm. In such a case, proximity to the wind farm would be measured based on radial distance.

The potential negative impacts of wind energy development on local residents have been highlighted in a number of studies and reports, such as the report on the environmental impact of the proposed offshore wind farm in Northwest Estonia and other studies. Similar problems have been addressed differently in different countries. For example, Germany offers benefits to locals for environmental changes (e.g., the construction of a wind farm) in the form of rent discounts or rent exemptions. Additionally, different types of environmental compensation are offered in different federal states, ranging from compensation for land value impairment to business taxes on wind power.

In Estonia, one possible solution would be to require developers to pay a percentage of their production revenue as benefits to local residents and local governments. However, the shares would need to be established through careful consideration of how much money should be directed to the populace and how much to the local government. The exact amounts depend on the specific wind farms and situations, but in the future this number could be halved. The experts believe that this could help alleviate the problem of the 'not in my backyard' mindset and motivate local governments to allow wind farms to be built in their 'backyard'.

Proposal 6: New story

This proposal pertains to the communication of the so-called wind energy story, which is driven by the need to replace the current identity of the local people, one that is tied to the oil shale industry, with a greener one.

The experts consider the identity of Ida-Viru County to be tied strongly to oil shale and believe that the closure of oil shale plants will not cause this identity to change automatically. With regard to this, it is important to consider both the external and internal image of Ida-Viru County. Despite the fact that the shift to green living will improve the health and general environment of the local populace, the process will not find support for as long as it is seen to consist only in the loss of jobs related to oil shale.

Thus the proposal calls for building something new and modern on top of the existing identity (energy production), for example, to replace it with a green energy image. Such a change would enable Ida-Viru County to find its place in a world that is moving towards renewable energy and remain an attractive energy production region.

This proposal is in line with the basic documents on green energy and the EU guidelines in the field of green energy, which stipulate that Ida-Viru County should not only be an energy production region, but also a region of renewable energy competence and labour.

Solar energy

Proposal 1: A set of financial instruments for the wider deployment of solar energy by households, companies, and local governments and for starting a business in the solar energy sector

The main barriers to small solar energy projects in Estonia are a lack of information about technological and regulatory possibilities and access to financing. Despite historically low interest rates in the eurozone, households and SMEs have limited access to foreign capital for renewable energy investments. Banks' interest rates and guarantee requirements for households and SMEs do not enable solar energy projects to be carried out on market terms, and no other support measures are available. In addition, there exists a barrier to the entry of local businesses into the market of the design, construction, and operation of solar power solutions.

Overcoming this barrier requires a **package of state-guaranteed financial instruments** that would enable households, apartment associations, SMEs, and local governments to invest in local solar power projects at or near the point of consumption against project cash flow without (or with a very low amount of) self-financing and interest, while also allowing the project to generate some returns on market terms.

This package of financial instruments should include the following: firstly, guarantees and sureties for the construction of solar power plants without own contribution, but against project cash flow. Secondly, all-risk insurance for enterprises for the construction of solar power plants – all-risk insurance would mitigate the risks borne by clients in working with / contracting small enterprises that have just entered the market, as the insurance policy would cover all costs in the case of any problems. All-risk insurance makes it is easier for newly established small enterprises to find clients in their early days.

Proposal 2: Development of a working capital loan product for starting a business in the solar energy sector (as well as in the broader energy efficiency sector, e.g. heat recovery ventilation systems, heat pumps)

This consists in a training programme tied to a working capital loan. This measure is primarily aimed at middle managers in the oil shale sector who already have an understanding of the business environment, but it would also be suitable for other specialists (skilled in the fields of automation and electrical power) with the desire or personal qualities that permit them to become an entrepreneur.

The training programme would be focused on examining the solar energy market to explain to the participants which services are needed in the solar energy value chain and what they could offer from their end. It would also include the sharing of basic information in the field of entrepreneurship and business. Where possible, the training programme should also include mentoring for those who are actually taking steps to set up their own energy SMEs.

The training would be tied to a working capital loan. Interested parties would first need to complete business orientation training to be eligible to apply. If this proposal were adopted, a more detailed market analysis would need to be conducted to determine the exact terms on and purposes for which the start-up loan would be offered, i.e. the minimum package that a solar energy start-up would need to cover critical initial (labour) costs before it is able to generate income to pay its liabilities.

Proposal 3: Retraining programme for technical labourers

This proposal calls for the establishment of a retraining programme for technical labourers at the Ida-Viru County Vocational Education Centre, which would be aimed at training solar power plant designers (specific power project), electricians (based on the specifics of solar power plants), installation specialists (various installation solutions, e.g., roofs, facades, ground), and energy efficiency specialists.

This proposal differs from the second proposal for solar energy in that the latter relates to a training programme which is primarily aimed at business development and targeted mainly at people working in management positions.

The retraining programme is needed due to the fact that the oil shale industry will be expelling labourers with a background in energy production, who would have the potential to continue in a similar technical line of work. According to the preliminary results of an analysis conducted by Praxis (available here in the presentation by the Ministry of Finance), in 2019, the oil shale industry employed 653 technicians and mid-level specialists and 569 top-level specialists. This means that as the oil shale industry shrinks, roughly 1,000 technical labourers will need to find a new outlet for themselves.

According to the experts who participated in the working group, the oil shale sector mostly employs labourers with engineering and technical knowledge and experience, who are already in short supply in the solar power sector. This was particularly evident in 2018, when several solar power plants were under construction at the same time – according to the experts, more than 70% of the production capacity added was installed primarily by migrant workers from Ukraine. This was due to the fact that there were not enough labourers with the relevant skills available in Estonia.

All that is necessary to implement this proposal is to develop new curricula oriented towards renewable energy at existing vocational training institutions (such as the Ida-Viru County Vocational Education Centre). The Ida-Viru County Vocational Education Centre already teaches somewhat similar courses and it would only be necessary to add a few new study and retraining programmes, for example, specifically dedicated to the design of solar power plants, installation of photovoltaic systems, etc.

Proposal 4: Agrovoltaics promotion pilot in Ida-Viru County

Agrovoltaics is a concept that brings together solar energy and agriculture. This proposal is aimed at reducing monotypic land use, increasing cross-sectoral co-operation, and ensuring a seamless change in the use of land covered by panels after the depreciation of current solar parks (2050).

The pilot measure supports local farmers. The proposed subsidy/concession would also be available to local developers of new parks. The measure would additionally benefit the local government. It would result in an increase in the value of land in the region as well as co-operation between different groups of producers, including in, for example, new opportunities arising from cross-sectoral co-operation, such as agro-tourism.

Adopting this proposal requires analysing which of the following proposed subsidies/concessions would have the greatest impact, piloting it in Ida-Viru County, and eventually implementing it across Estonia.

SUBSIDIES: First, compensation for the price difference (purchase + installation) between higher and lower frames; eligible costs would also include the installation of fencing. Motivation: savings on lawn mowing. Second, subsidy for well construction.

CONCESSIONS: First, concession for micro-producers to connect to the grid. Second, tax concession (VAT), e.g., organic production in Latvia, tourism in Estonia (9%).

Proposal 5: Improving access to capital for communities and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and democratising resource use

This proposal is aimed at increasing the number of final beneficiaries in the region. The objective is to ensure access to capital for communities and SMEs to participate in / implement renewable energy projects and to ensure access to resources (land and grid connection) for communities and SMEs.

The first part of the proposal centres around ensuring the supply of capital that is as green and sustainable as possible to Ida-Viru County. Here, the state has two possible instruments: loans and sureties. In this respect, this proposal overlaps with the objectives of the first proposal for solar energy. **Access to capital for** communities and SMEs Ida-Viru County is a problem that needs to be addressed through both loans and security instruments. There is a need for green and sustainable financing that ensures low capital expenditure; equity securities or loans from Kredex (additional capital share reduction), periodically fixed tax concessions to ensure more stable financing for projects.

Democratisation of resource use means that the additional capital should reach the members of the community so that they can decide for what purpose it is to be used. One solution here could be a **'capital voucher' for members of communities in Ida-Viru County.** This would enable competition between projects and allow communities to decide which renewable energy projects will be realised using the transition funds and which will not. Thus, the people could decide for themselves which type of renewable energy (wind, solar, etc.) the funds should be directed towards.

Presently, the challenge is that the loans described in the first proposal for solar energy are hard to obtain and that the populace of Ida-Viru County has limited savings. The communities and their members currently lack the opportunity to participate in discussions through capital and thus have no real say in renewable energy projects. Ida-Viru County is the region with the lowest savings in Estonia. A good illustration of how this proposal could work is the 1 MW solar power plant Ignitis Saulės Parkai built in Lithuania, where every Lithuanian was given the opportunity to become a shareholder, i.e. a producer of electricity even as an apartment owner in a city, and to consume the electricity produced by the plant remotely.

Another proposal concerning resource use is a periodic tax concession, for example, at the time of making a 10-year investment or on cash flows. This would boost investment. Thus it could generate revenue for the state rather than expenses. If the value of the projects is increased, the banks would also be willing to come along.

Proposal 6: Transition/transfer competence centre in Ida-Viru County

The core of the idea is to establish a competence centre bringing together higher education institutions, businesses, and other organisations, which would focus on new technologies and the related business activities, as well as the socio-cultural aspects of the transition. The work of the competence centre would mainly be focused on research and development (both applied and fundamental research), but also innovation pilot projects (both technological and social innovation) and the development of the curricula of local higher education schools.

The establishment of a Green Economy Competence Centre has previously already been proposed to the Ministry of Finance in the context of a just transition, where Cleantech ForEst was named as the potential leader of the project and initial agreements were already concluded for the use of premises at Linda 2 in the city of Narva. The document included in this document has been developed and expanded upon independently of that process and is not identical, but both proposals suggest that there is a real need for a regional competence centre.

The proposed centre would pool existing expertise in the fields of both social science and technology to elucidate the various social and technical aspects of the transition. The focus of the competence centre should not be directed narrowly towards one field.

This competence centre is needed because innovation cannot emerge without new ideas; their seedbed and testing ground is research and development, which feeds both innovative enterprise as well as evidence-based policy decisions. Additionally, there is a need for long-term monitoring of social well-being, changes in different social groups, and adaptation to change in Ida-Viru County.

An E-plan or education plan for Ida-Viru County is also under development. The leaders of the e-plan have also taken on this idea and according to the current vision it includes:

- a RITA-type network project based on research problems that involves experts working at local colleges and working groups from universities elsewhere in Estonia;
- a pay and research subsidy for colleges for the leaders of three research fields: technology transfer (Viru College), social transfer (Narva College), economic transfer (Narva College);
- a social science monitoring study of the transition in Ida-Viru County;
- a regular international conference on the results of studies on the transition in Ida-Viru County.

Proposal 7: Establishment of an energy agency for Ida-Viru County (aimed at local governments, local communities, citizens)

Establishment of a local energy agency or competence centre (at Viru College). Main functions:

- raising awareness of energy-related matters (energy savings, renovation, etc.) among residents, small enterprises, and co-operatives;
- providing consultation to apartment associations;
- providing information and consultation on everything from the very basics regarding the opportunities available to ordinary citizens (incl. communities) to act as a renewable energy producer, consumer, participant in the electricity market, etc.;
- organising monitoring of energy and climate indicators at the local government level;
- assisting with self-financing of energy and climate projects (initially through project, later possibly also through a separate regional fund);
- finding European project funding measures and implementing them for local projects.

The need for this measure stems from the fact that there is currently a lack of comprehensive knowledge of all renewable energy issues (incl. energy efficiency, microgeneration, opportunities for energy communities and co-operatives, etc.) at the level of individuals, communities, and the local government. Currently, venture assessments are sourced from experts at energy agencies and universities in Tartu and Tallinn, but this is unsystematic and generally reaches the residents (beneficiaries) in a scattered and chaotic manner. Local governments also generally lack the capacity to hire a dedicated field expert. The proposed Ida-Viru County Energy Agency would enable to speed up processes and significantly increase the efficiency of the work done for raising awareness among the local population and local governments.

Energy efficiency

Proposal 1: Development of innovative heat management in Ida-Viru County

The dynamics of heat management in Ida-Viru County are changing and it is necessary to introduce solutions based on renewable energy sources, including innovative technological solutions, which are also compatible with the increasing energy efficiency of buildings. The proposal calls for the deployment of needs-based solutions: making optimal use of the existing heat network, implementing innovative technological industrial symbiosis solutions (waste heat, heat pumps, electric boilers, geothermal energy), and efficient cogeneration combined with heat storage. Individual sites would be provided with local renewable energy solutions and with maximum energy efficiency (class A, low temperatures, smart building automation, etc.). Innovative solutions and industrial symbiosis business models would be piloted.

The proposal is aimed at switching heat management in the whole region over to innovative solutions and simultaneously closing down the oil shale mines, which is why further analyses would need to be conducted to assess complex impacts and risk mitigation.

Proposal 2: Changing the building policy in Ida-Viru County

As is true for Europe as a whole, Estonia, too, faces a major challenge in the renovation of its existing building stock to meet energy efficiency requirements. 85–95% of buildings in Europe will continue to be in use in 2050, yet most of them are not energy efficient. The challenge is also huge in Estonia: Estonia's building stock accounts for nearly a half of the country's final energy consumption, which makes it one of the most energy-intensive areas. Estonia's long-term renovation strategy is based on the maximum programme, meaning that the entire existing building stock will be reconstructed by 2050. This includes 18 million m^2 in apartment buildings. Experts have previously pointed out that already by 2020, 1,072 apartment buildings with a net floor area of 2,557,988 m^2 will need reconstruction work in Ida-Viru County. At the same time, only a marginal share of the national renovation grants have gone to Ida-Viru County (13 grants) and without additional support it is not possible to undertake a larger wave of renovation in the county. The situation is aggravated by the low real estate prices in the region, which prevent residents from getting loans for renovation from banks; however, renovating the building stock would increase real estate prices as well as the residents' confidence in and readiness to undertake renovation projects.

More focus needs to be put on directing renovation grants to the region, as well as simplifying and providing support in the renovation application process. Additionally, an analytical base of the baseline condition and existing building stock needs to be created in order to identify buildings that need demolishing and those that need comprehensive renovation, especially considering the declining of the population, which is projected to be

greater in Ida-Viru County (up to -40% by 2045) than in any other region in Estonia. This is a prerequisite for creating a better awareness among residents about the possibilities for and necessity of renovation and for carrying out renovation projects on a larger scale.

Proposal 3: Comprehensive energy efficiency demonstration project ('Green Beacon')

This proposal calls for the construction of a new small residential district containing multiple apartment buildings which utilise the latest green technology solutions in Ida-Viru County. Such a so-called positive energy district would serve as a beacon that shows which direction the county could take on a broader scale if ambitious goals were set and the shift to green living were supported. A 'positive energy district' is defined as a city district with zero annual energy consumption and CO_2 emissions and which contributes to the achievement of a surplus of renewable energy and is integrated into the energy system of the city and the region. The keywords here are energy savings, geothermal energy, heat storage, and renewable energy. Active energy management allows to balance and optimise systems, adjust loads, and respond to demand. A positive energy district incorporates households, sustainable production and consumption, and mobility to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, as well as to create added value and incentives for consumers.

Apartment buildings in Ida-Viru County account for up 9% of all apartment buildings in Estonia and 15% in terms of area, sharing the 2nd/3rd place with Tartu County. The building stock of Ida-Viru County is outdated and inefficient, and the large amount of real estate that has been left unused as a result of population decline and the distortions that occurred in the real estate market after Estonia regained independence is also a major problem. The experts found that the region needs an innovative 'green beacon' to set up a practical centre for the shift to green living, test novel technologies and demo solutions, and support the realisation of the positive social impacts of the shift to green living. Such an appealing living environment would become an attraction for residents from both within and outside the county.

This proposal has been delineated precisely and many similar projects have already been undertaken elsewhere in Europe, thanks to which there is a wealth of past experience to draw from, which also allows to avoid some problems that might otherwise arise (specific materials and collections of advice have been developed within several EU projects for replication and for sharing experience).

Energy storage

Proposal 1: Launching of consortia that include stakeholders from the whole value chain for energy storage pilot projects and making the potential of the business model a prerequisite for their launch

Not much testing has been done on different ways for storing energy in Estonia. The reasons for this include the **relatively low population density and the concentration of energy production in one region**. Nevertheless, this concentration of energy production in one region provides a good opportunity to create a **pilot base** for the introduction of new technologies in synergy with existing companies (for example, by using CO_2 emissions from existing industries for the chemical storage of electrical energy).

Thus this proposal is aimed at launching various consortia for energy storage pilot projects in order to test innovative storage technologies. According to the experts, these technologies do not need to be fully ready (level 9) in terms of their technology readiness level (TRL), but should presumably be in the testing phase (level 6–8). It was also noted that the projects should have a high potential for solving energy storage problems and should be economically viable. Furthermore, it is important to involve actors from across the value chain in order to avoid projects from fizzling out due to a low number of stakeholders. In addition, during the preparation of the proposal, the experts pointed out the fact that the energy production volumes in Estonia are small, which may, if the pilot projects are implemented successfully, allow to alleviate the energy storage deficit in Estonia.

Proposal 2: Needs-based support/subsidies from the state for energy storage business projects (TRL 9) and special acceleration of authorisation processes for such projects

This proposal is thematically related to the first proposal of the energy storage workshop and concerns the provision of support for energy storage projects. The proposal comprises three main activities. First, a project would be launched to **determine storage needs and capacities**. Second, the experts proposed to organise **an international call for tenders**, where the projects with the highest potential would be selected using a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) model. And third, the **authorisation process would be simplified** for the winner's proposal.

The proposal thus covers several aspects. In particular, the experts pointed out that under normal conditions the granting of authorisations takes a very long time (5 to 10 years, see proposal 1), which hinders the development and implementation of energy storage projects under normal conditions. In addition, the development of energy storage technologies within the framework of the proposal would have an international dimension by also allowing foreign experts and foreign companies with the best technologies to participate in

the competition. In this, the proposal is aimed at finding higher-capacity storage projects and not technologies with a storage capacity of only a few hours.