

Press release

The “E-Cloud”: collective self-consumption for the benefit of businesses, with the potential to reduce energy bills by between 8 and 14%

Louvain-la Neuve – 3 July 2019

In Wallonia, local energy communities will soon mean that neighbours will be able to join forces to produce and consume local renewable energy. ORES is already turning this ambition into a reality with the collective consumption initiative, “E-Cloud”, which started on 1 July 2019.

Against the backdrop of the ecological transition, collective self-consumption is now emerging as a significant development in the energy market. The concept is based on the possibility of creating a community of consumers in a clearly defined area, supplied by one - or more - local renewable energy system(s).

An initiative that is both ecological and community-driven

Last spring, Wallonia adopted a decree paving the way for these new energy communities. The text defines collective self-consumption as a “*process involving sharing electricity produced from renewable energy sources or good quality cogeneration between one or more producers and one or more end clients within the same clearly defined geographical area, via the public distribution or transport network.*”

The process must always involve the public network – no private cables between neighbours or closed micro-networks – which boasts the twofold advantage of not needing investment in new facilities, and also maintaining a collective, community-driven energy distribution system.

A pioneer in this field, **ORES** has been working on an innovative full-scale test for some years now, at the Tournai Ouest business park. The “E-Cloud” project brings together ten or so businesses from the site, recruited by **IDETA**, Picardy Wallonia’s development agency. Their electricity needs and the local renewable production flow (wind and photovoltaic) are matched up with one goal: to encourage collective self-consumption. **Luminus** is the company that has coordinated the provision of renewable production resources.

A preferential rate and targeted information to encourage customers to consume local, green electricity

The companies involved in the “E-Cloud” are incentivised to consume green electricity produced locally thanks to two distinct network tariffs: one specific preferential rate for renewable, local self-consumed electricity and a classic tariff for the electricity provided by their supplier.

Communication is a key part of the concept. As they are systematically informed of the prospects for the next day’s local production, businesses are given the opportunity to be proactive when it comes to managing energy by adapting their level of electricity self-consumption.

Above and beyond the positive financial impact, the idea behind the initiative is to encourage participants to manage their consumption as efficiently as possible according to the natural resources – wind and sun – available. It thus encourages the ethical integration of renewable energy, as well as the growth of new markets based on the principle of the circular economy.

ORES, as distribution system operator and market facilitator, ORES organises the exchange of information between the participants in this local energy community. The project also helps to harness more new renewable energy produced in the distribution network efficiently, specifically thanks to collective self-consumption.

In order to implement the project, ORES has been supported by the expertise and active contributions of the following partners:

- **DAPESCO** for processing consumption and local production data;
- **SIEMENS** and **UMONS** for the development of the interface to forecast consumption and local production;
- **N-SIDE** for the development and provision of a technical-economic simulation tool for collective self-consumption, based on optimisation algorithms and models.

On 1 July, the “E-Cloud” moved into the full-scale testing phase. A number of players on the energy market, as well as volunteer businesses, are putting the model into practice. The initial results of these tests are expected in the second quarter of 2020, and it already looks like they will show savings of between 8 and 14% for participants’ total energy bills.

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A locally-based public service company, ORES is responsible for all the activities in managing and running the electricity and/or natural gas distribution networks for 200 Walloon towns and municipalities (covering a total of around 50,000km for electricity and more than 9,500km for natural gas). It connects customers to the distribution networks, carries out work associated with maintaining, developing and repairing the networks, as well as fitting meters, taking meter readings and managing market data. It carries out a large number of public service community-oriented tasks and is responsible for operating and maintaining the public lighting in the associated municipalities (450,000 lights). With around 2,300 employees, the company plays an important role in Wallonia’s socio-economic life. Over the last four years, it has invested more than €1.2 billion in developing and updating the distribution networks. More information at ores.be

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