



# POWER UP Eeklo Pilot Case (Belgium)

Inclusive energy services to fight energy poverty and empower citizens



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under Grant agreement No. 101033940

# Situation in Eeklo (Belgium)



**18,6%**

inhabitants need financial support  
*(avg 15,6% in Flanders)*

**> 15%**

households in energy poverty



# Eeklo objective: involve vulnerable households in local energy transition

- **Renewable Energy Community** : Citizen Co-operative Ecopower started in 1991 and is active in Eeklo since 2001
- **Energy supply as service to the members** : sharing produced energy as a service to the members since 2003.
- **Co-operative wind turbine** : build in 2020 with participation city Eeklo



# POWER UP project in Eeklo



Co-operative wind turbine:

- 2 MW -> 5 GWh/yr
- 2.000 households

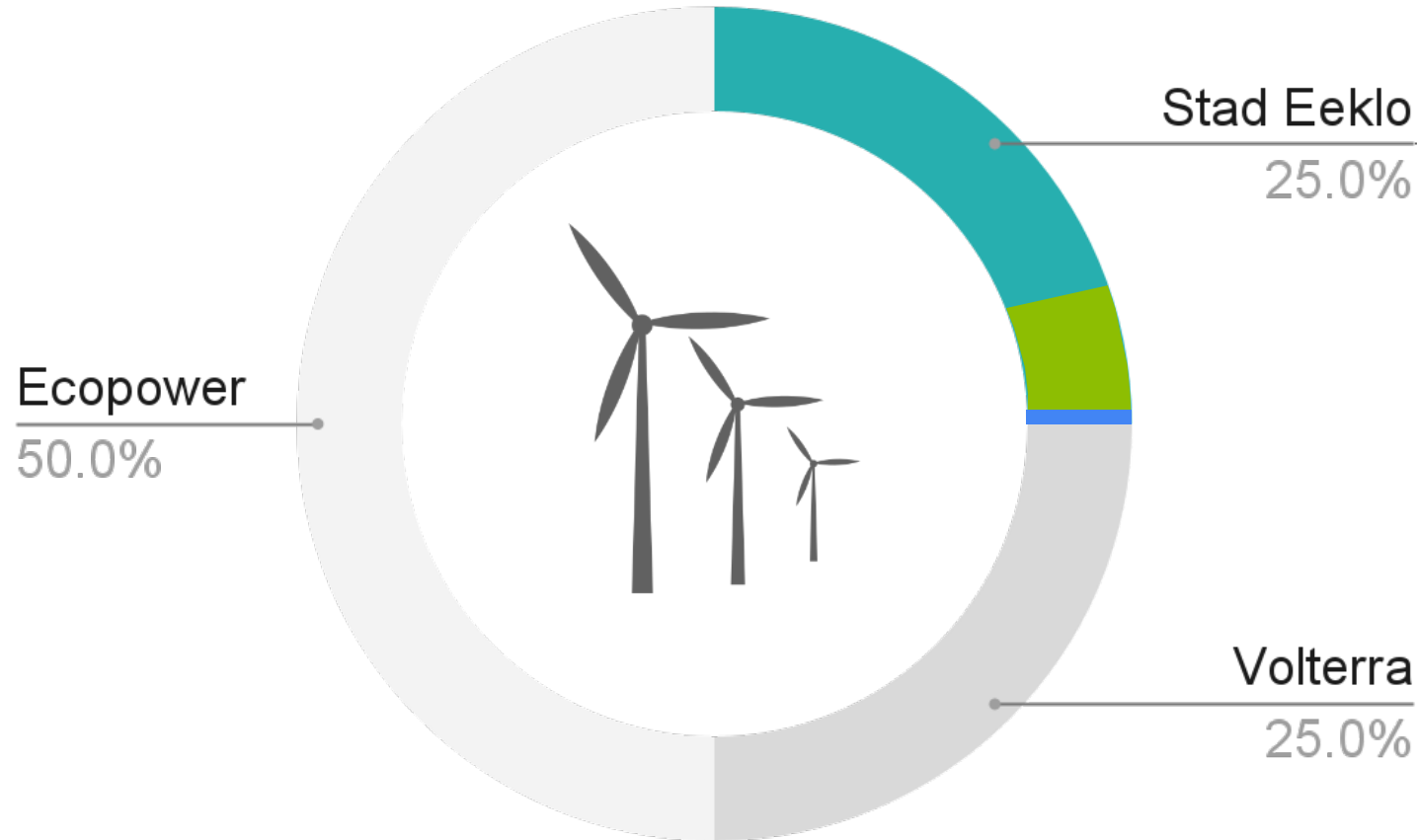
Participation:

- Ecopower
- Volterra
- **City of Eeklo**



# Original participation plan city

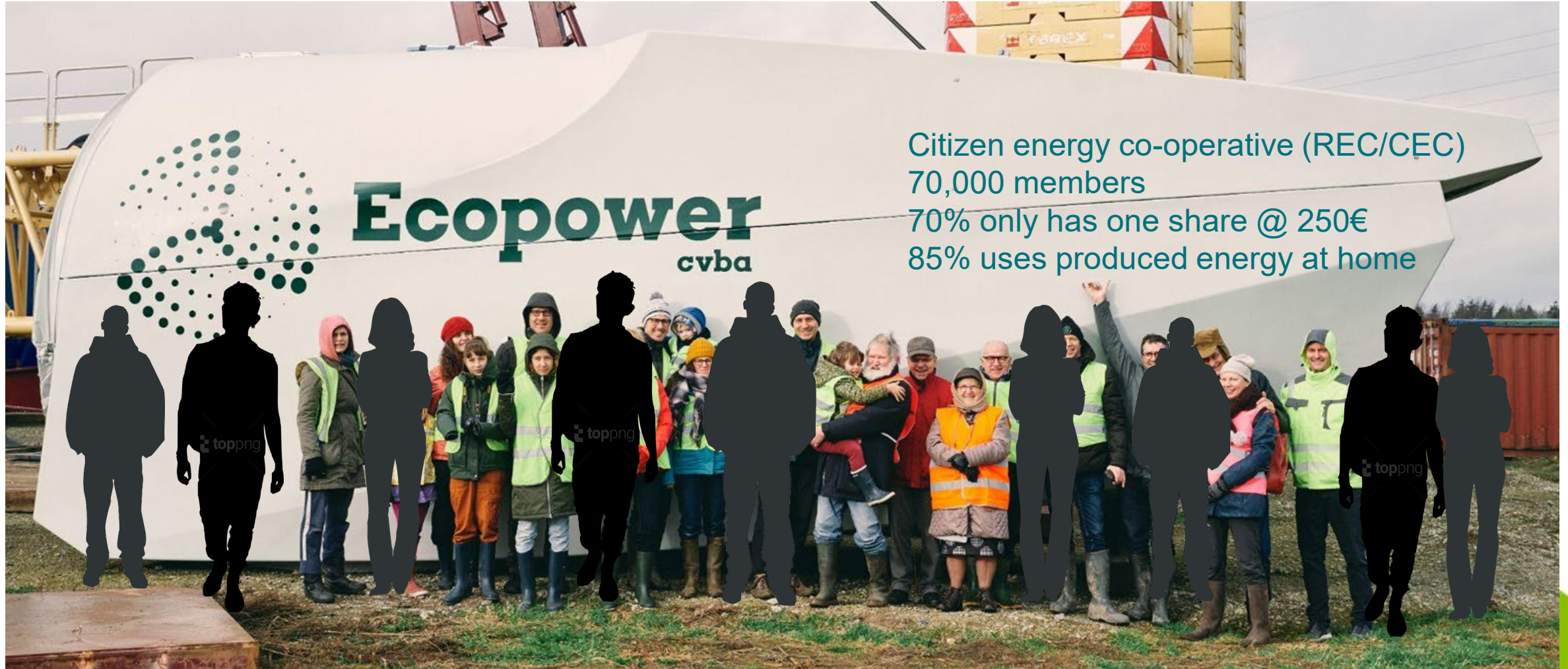
in co-operative wind turbine 'Huysmanhoeve' : 25% -> 1%



- ✓ Project return ca 5% over 20 year (cost-benefit approach ca 30k€/yr)
- ✓ 750 social shares -> 100
- ✓ participation in the development costs (ca 30k€)

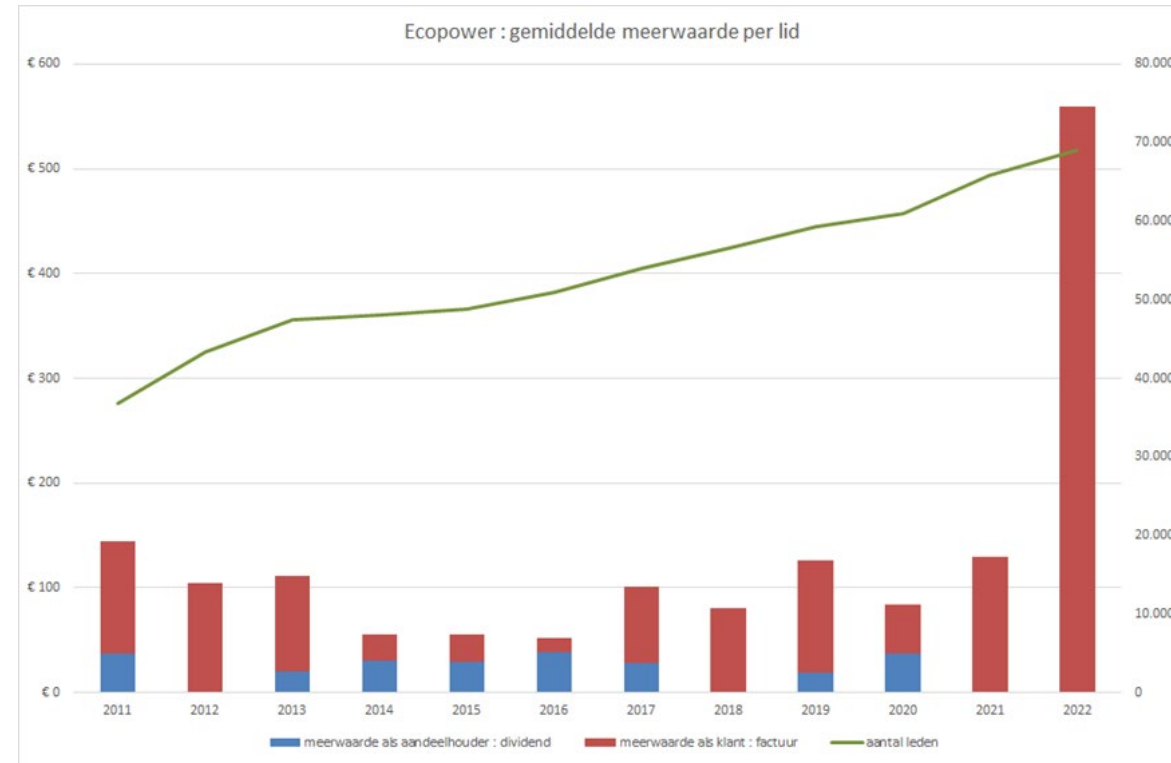
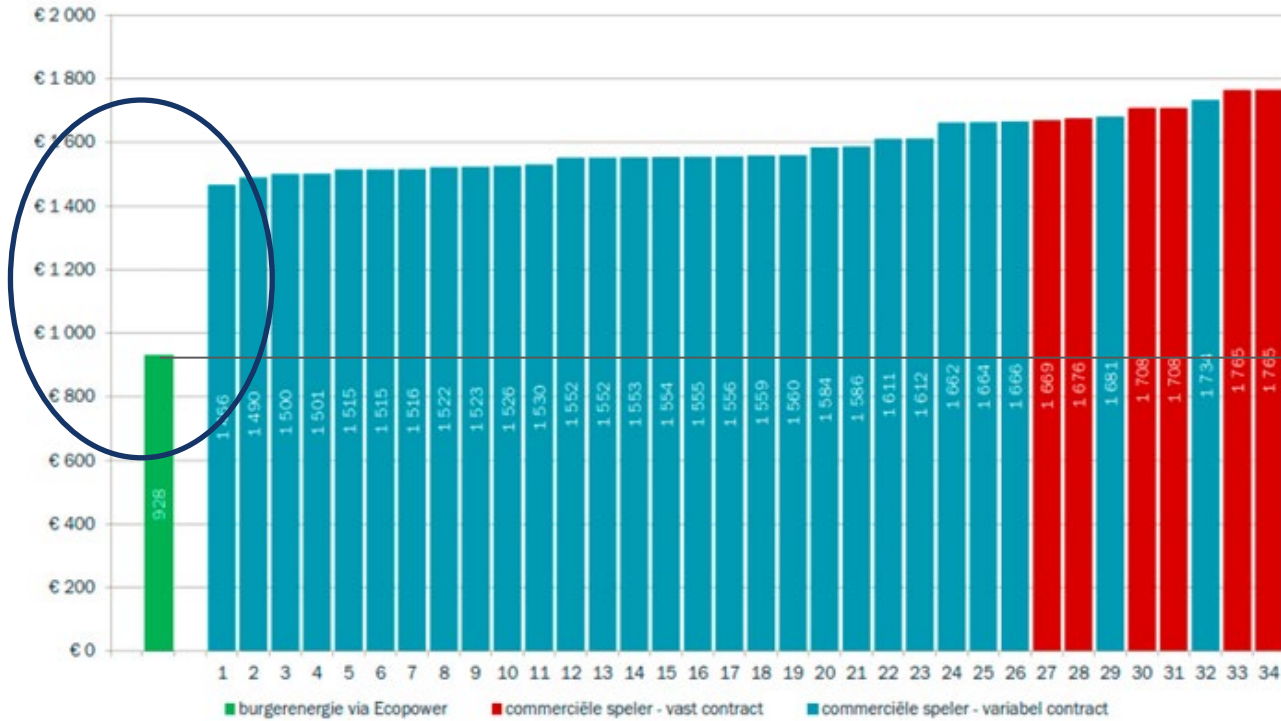


# Why POWER UP? RE as a common



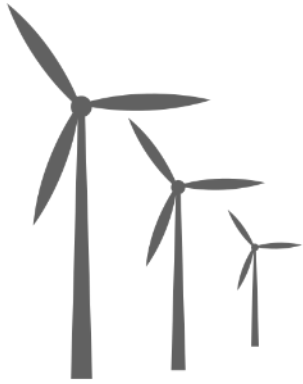
# Why POWER UP? Impact on energy bill

Burgerstroom versus commerciële spelers  
 scenario 1: 3500 kWh afname (18/06/2022)



# Social shares process

Rolling fund with social shares of energy cooperative provides access to local green energy



1

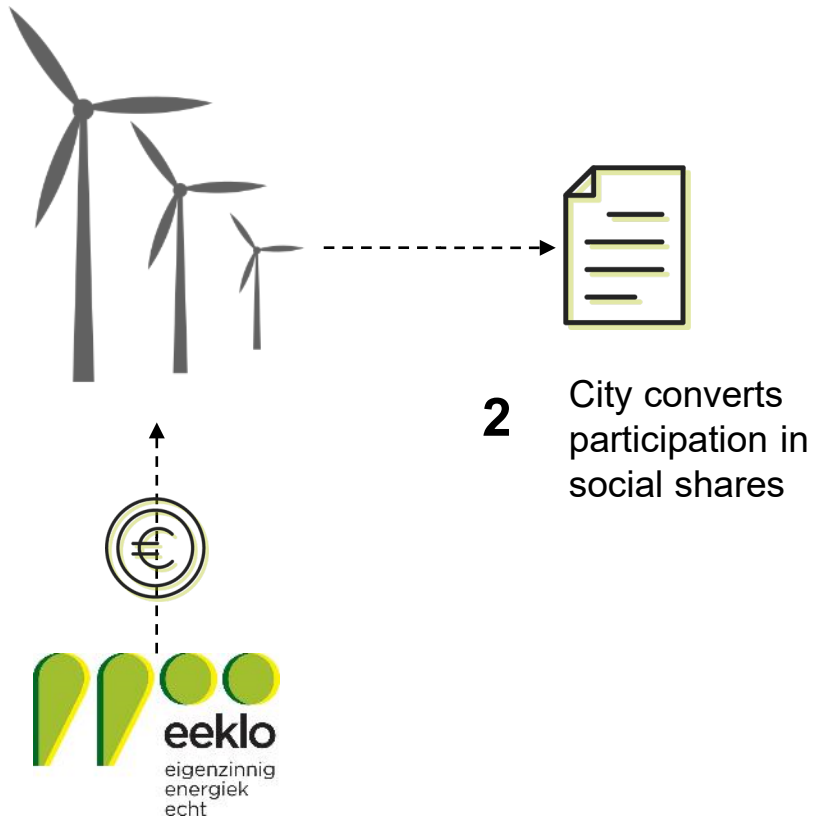
City participates  
in co-operative  
wind turbine





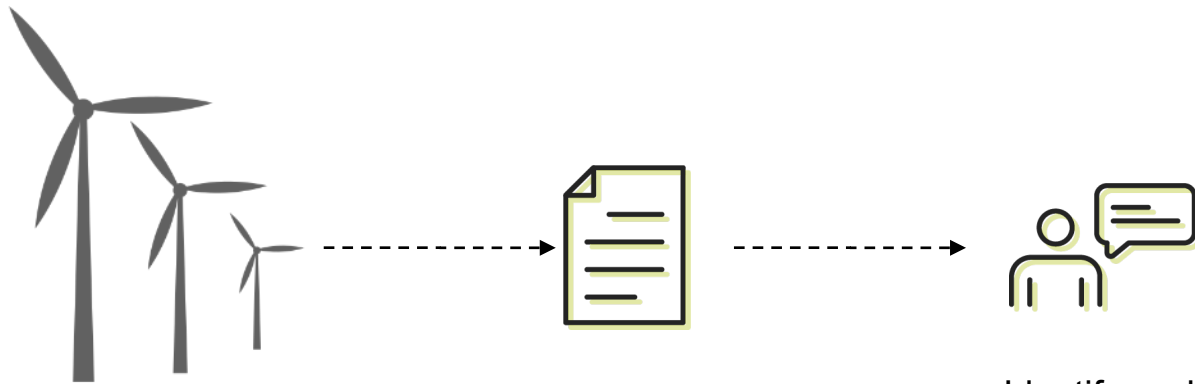
# Social shares process

Rolling fund with social shares of energy cooperative provides access to local green energy



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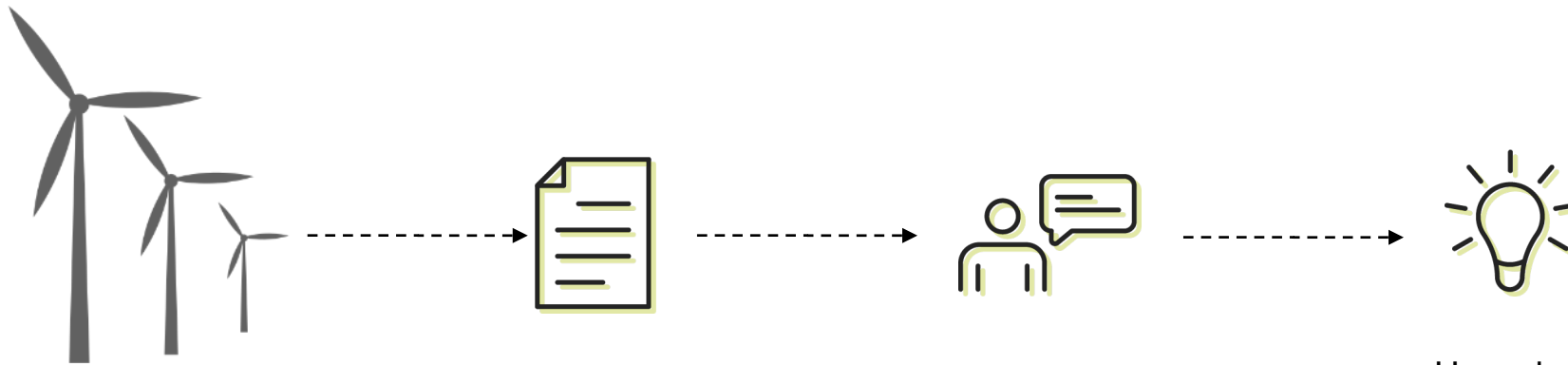
**3**

Identify and invite vulnerable households

V-test simulator savings energy bill

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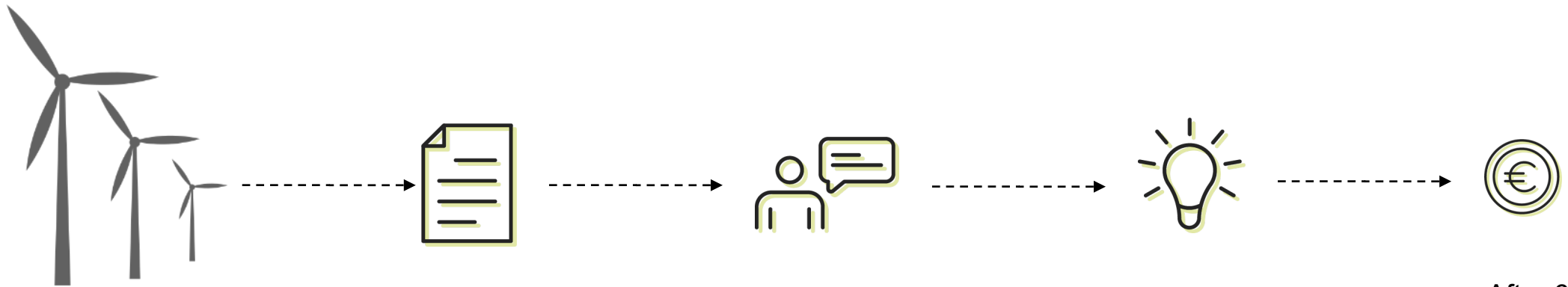


**4** Household signs participation form and becomes member & customer co-operative

Savings formula on invoice 3,5€/month

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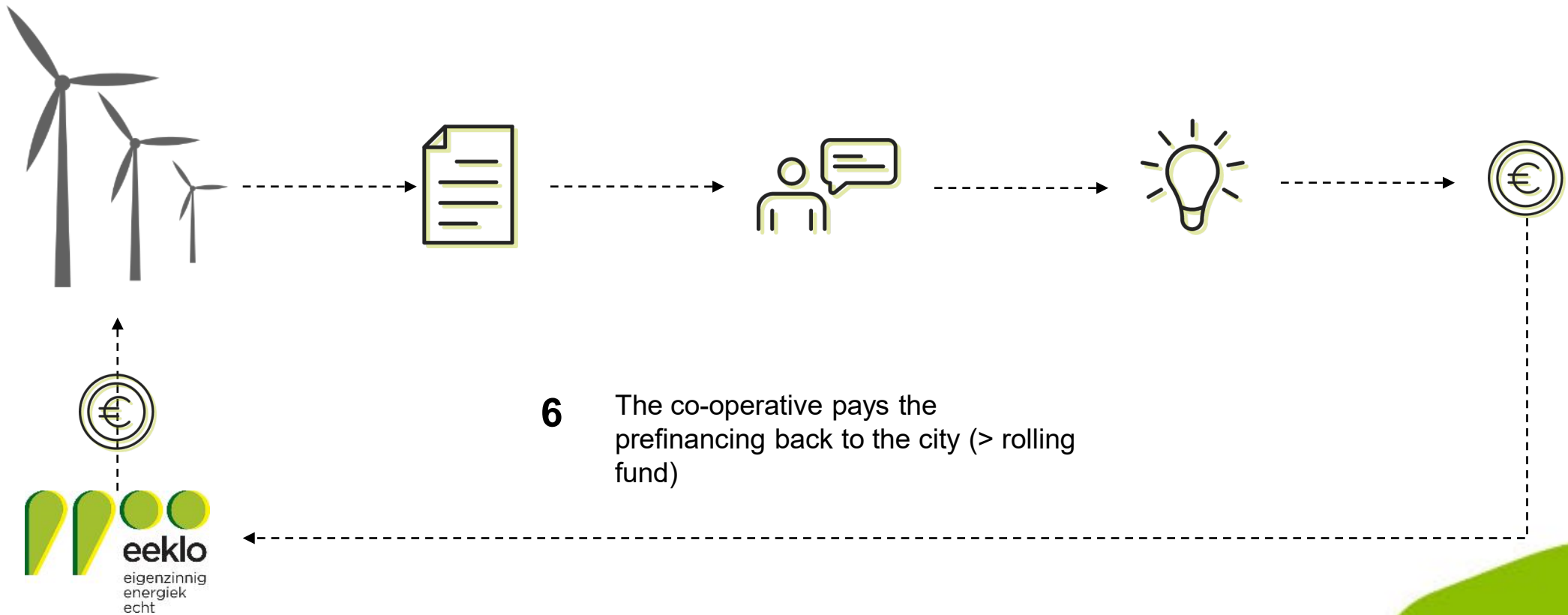


**5** After 6 years the social share becomes a regular share



# Social shares process

Rolling fund with social shares of energy cooperative provides access to local green energy



# Co-creation process : local working groups

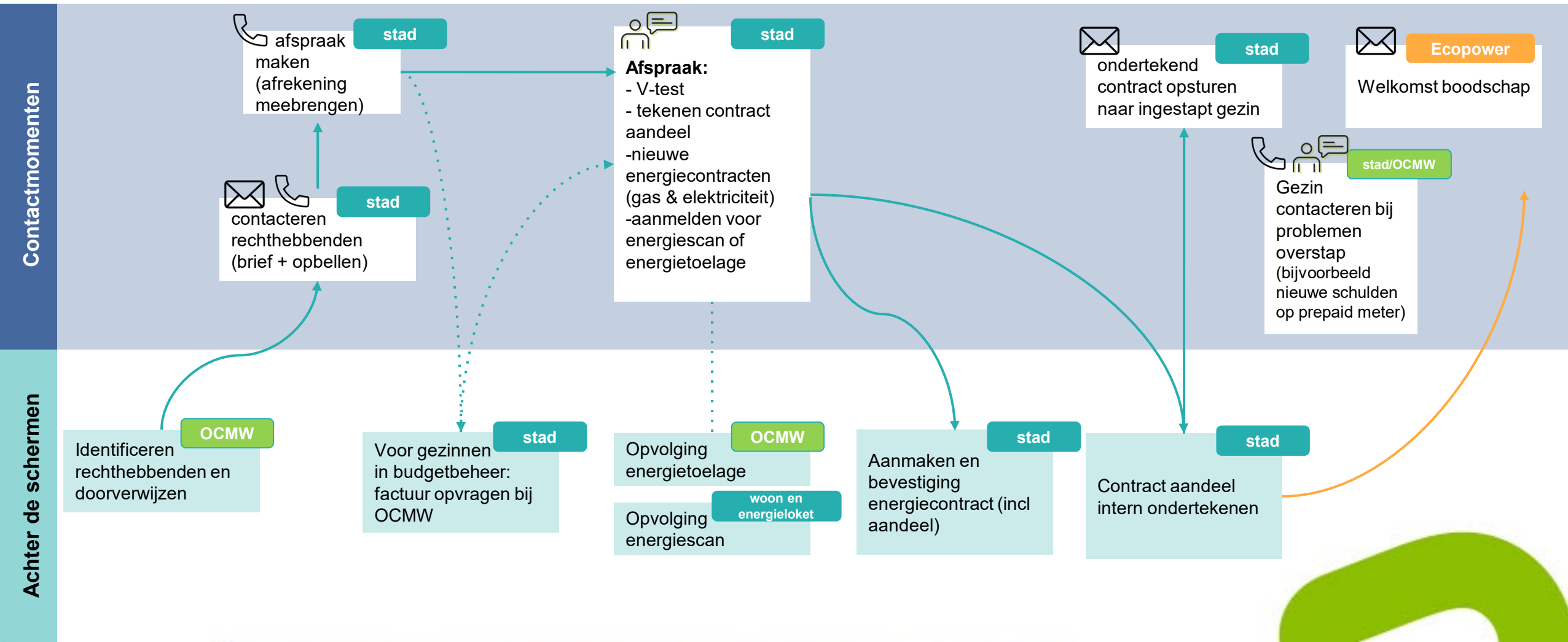


The design of the scheme involved a number of important local stakeholders and future beneficiaries:

- **Vulnerable households**
- City of Eeklo
- Co-operative Ecopower
- DSO
- OCMW
- Social organisations



# Customer journey process



# Preliminary results of the start-up

34

Households contacted

€185 avg yearly savings energybill incl monthly saving formula

20

appointments

€227 avg yearly netto savings

14

Households participate

Reasons not to join yet:

- New debts with DSO (prepaid meter) prevents transfer
- Consumption profile : cheaper supplier found at the moment of the V-test simulator
- Long-term contract (3y) at fixed price from before the energy crisis



# POWER UP scale-up: timing

## 2023 Optimize pilot project Eeklo

- Evaluation of testphase with 20 households: October 2023
- Scaling up to 100 households: autumn 2023
- After process optimisation intake : from manual to automatic

## 2024 Ecopower

- Evaluation pilot project Eeklo 100 hh (organizational, procedural, technical, financial)
- Conditions for scaling up to other municipalities?
- Conditions for scaling up to other citizen energy co-operatives?
- Disseminate spring 2025?

# POWER UP 2.0 : what can municipality do?

Preparation 3 roles



## PROJECT

- Energy co-operative
- Injection KWH
- Co-operative energy sharing



## SPONSOR

- Pre-financing co-op share
- Rolling fund
- Surety default of payment



## CAREGIVER

- Selection participants
- registration and first-line follow-up
- Default of payment

# Challenges

## Target group:

- Selection criteria
- How are we going to reach those vulnerable households

## Caregiver:

- comparing energy contracts and energy suppliers (V-test simulator)
- Time commitment intake (at least 1 hour per family)

## Task package:

- Follow up, even after the family has joined

## Personal communication (calling and referring) works best

- contact details
- clear language, concise information
- Working in accordance with GDPR

## Limit administrative burden for all parties:

- 1 appointment where both participation and energy contact(s) are arranged
- automation intake procedure



*Thank you!*

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**Ecopower**  
CV





We are  
the catalyst  
for social  
innovation  
in the energy  
market

