

PRO GREEN DEAL: LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Report on the Full Implementation of the PRO Green Deal for Local Communities

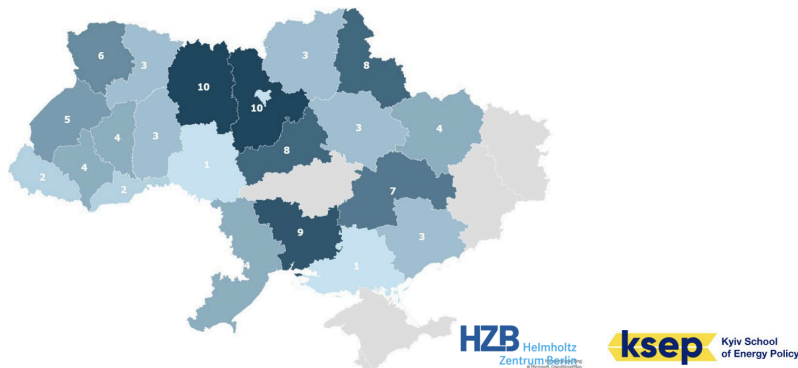


Fig. 1. Distribution of selected communities by region

Geography of Participants

The program aimed to empower local energy and climate advisors in Ukrainian communities by providing them with the knowledge and tools to drive sustainable energy solutions at the local level. A total of 106 applications were received, of which 45 communities were selected for participation.

The selected communities represent diverse regions of Ukraine (Fig. 1) and a range of community types—from large cities to small villages—underscoring the nationwide relevance of energy management and sustainable development at the local government level.

The selection of participating communities was carried out by a committee based on clear principles and criteria to ensure both qualitative and quantitative balance. Key considerations included broad regional representation, a mix of community types (urban and rural, small and medium-sized), and the demonstrated potential and motivation of each team. Applicants were evaluated through their application forms and interviews. Priority was given to communities with established or planned energy manager positions in local administrations and those from target regions (*Kyiv, Poltava, Cherkasy, Dnipropetrovsk, Chernihiv, and Zhytomyr oblasts*) to ensure wide coverage. As a result, the 45 selected teams encompassed all major parts of the country and varied in size (mostly communities of tens of thousands of residents).

Online Block

The online portion of the program ran from April through early June 2025 and comprised interactive lectures, workshops, and group work. This phase included an introductory module on EU and Ukrainian energy/climate policy context and a series of practical online workshops focused on energy efficiency and modern heating solutions. The weekly time commitment for participants was approximately 4-8 hours, which included an *Energy English conversational club* and mentorship sessions.

All 45 community teams engaged actively in the online training, with high attendance and participation throughout the remote phase (*detailed activity indicators – Fig. 2 and Fig. 3*). Key outcomes of the online block were an enhanced understanding of the European Green Deal framework, national climate and energy policies, and available funding opportunities, as well as practical skills in energy data analysis, conducting energy audits, and initial energy planning. This provided a strong foundation for the subsequent in-person training stage.

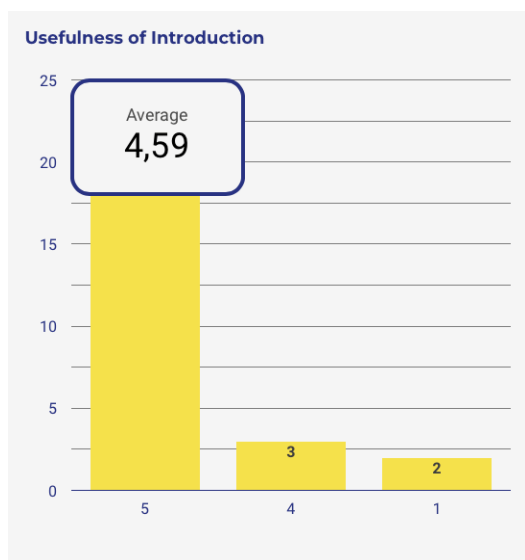


Fig. 2. Usefulness assessment of Online Block I

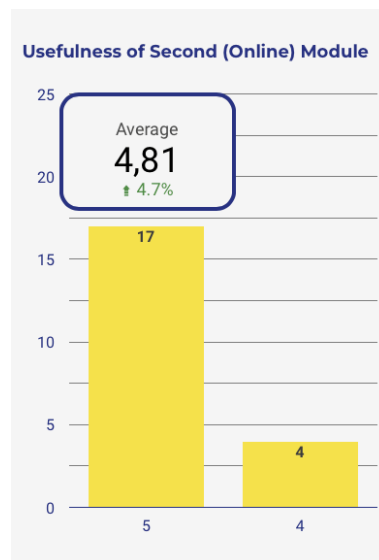


Fig. 3. Usefulness assessment of Online Block II

Thematic Training Modules

- **Block I (Introductory Sessions on EU Regulatory Context, online, April 22-25, 2025):** Provided foundational knowledge on EU and Ukrainian energy and climate policy, including an overview of the European Green Deal and related regulations. Participants were introduced to the program's structure and objectives, and working groups were formed for collaborative tasks. This module established a common understanding of the regulatory landscape and set the stage for the practical components of the training.

- **Block II (Practical Workshops on Energy Efficiency and Heating, online, May 19-28, 2025):** Focused on developing hands-on skills and solutions. In this block, Ukrainian speakers as well as experts from the German Energy Agency (dena) taught participants how to create phased plans for local renewable energy transition, explored modern heating technologies and district heating management, and used digital tools for energy monitoring. Through practical exercises, teams worked on collecting and analysing energy data, calculating energy balances, strategic energy planning, and basic financial modeling for energy projects. By the end of *Block II*, communities were equipped with concrete tools to start drafting their municipal energy plans and project proposals.

Summer School (Local Energy Bootcamp)

The Summer School on Energy Management, which was the final stage of the program, took place from June 16-20, 2025 in Vinnytsia.

Geography of Participants: Out of the 45 communities participating in the project, 32 were physically represented at the Summer School. The largest delegations came from Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, and Mykolaiv oblasts (each represented by multiple communities). The program also included communities from Odesa, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Cherkasy, Volyn, Chernihiv, Sumy, Zakarpattia, and Khmelnytskyi regions. This broad geography spanned both urban and rural territorial communities—from large cities to small villages—underscoring the nationwide relevance of energy efficiency and sustainable development for local governments.

Main Challenges Identified by the Communities: Each community defined key challenges to address during the Summer School. Most participants aimed to strengthen their energy independence, introduce renewable energy solutions, and improve energy efficiency in local facilities. They set ambitious goals such as developing Municipal Energy Plans (MEPs) and establishing robust energy management systems to serve as a foundation for future development. The guiding questions raised by the teams included, for example, *“How can we make our community energy independent and find partners and donors?”* and *“How can we reduce energy costs, enhance energy security, and improve our people’s quality of life?”* These strategic questions reflected a common aspiration: to move away from ad-hoc measures and towards comprehensive planning in energy efficiency and climate resilience.

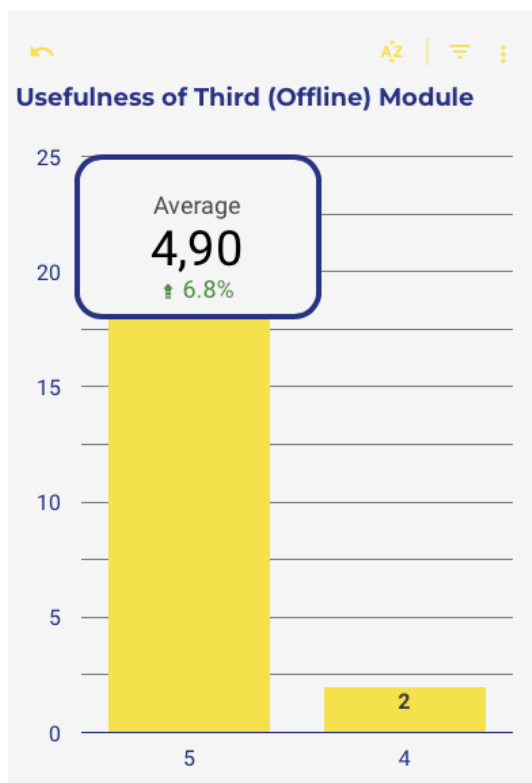
Speakers: We were privileged to work with a team of experienced speakers and mentors during the Summer Module:

- Vitalii Lesiuk, an energy planning consultant, led sessions on how to structure Municipal Energy Plans (MEPs) and provided hands-on guidance for data analysis and scenario building.

- Liubava Radiichuk, a member of the Recovery and Reform Support Team at the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine, gave a practical session on implementing energy management systems in local governments.
- Oleh Radiichuk, an expert in energy efficiency, conducted a comprehensive workshop on writing effective grant proposals and analyzing real examples from Ukrainian communities.

These expert contributions provided communities with both strategic direction and practical tools to tackle the very challenges they had identified. From designing actionable energy plans to preparing competitive grant applications, the support of our speakers played a key role in helping participants transform complex problems into realistic, structured solutions. Their guidance laid the foundation for each community’s continued work toward sustainable and energy-resilient development.

Achievements During the Training (Biggest Progress): The Summer School program enabled communities to make significant progress in planning and implementing their energy projects. The teams greatly enhanced their professional skills: in particular, they mastered how



to calculate their community’s energy balance and establish a baseline of energy consumption. Several communities learned to clearly set priorities for upcoming energy efficiency measures. For instance, the *Horokhiv community* identified priority steps for its energy plan and learned how to construct energy balances and trend lines for future consumption. Another major achievement was building capacity in preparing successful grant proposals. Participants practiced how to craft project applications in a way that would attract investors and donors. As the trainees themselves noted, the program helped them translate their vision into a structured project logic and confirmed that preparing a winning proposal is fundamentally a team effort. Overall, the communities developed a systemic vision of energy planning—from gathering baseline data and analysing problems to forecasting future energy needs and shaping an integrated action plan. This comprehensive approach was arguably the greatest leap forward for many of the program’s participants.

Fig. 4. Usefulness assessment of the Summer School

Documents Developed by the Communities: One of the tangible outcomes of the training is that each community worked on a specific document or project proposal to carry their plans forward. For most participants, the main product was a draft Municipal Energy Plan—a strategic document outlining the community’s energy development path. Some communities worked in

parallel on additional documentation. Notably, several teams prepared grant applications to finance priority energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. For example, *Petropavlivska community* drafted a project proposal to install solar power plants in local public institutions as an alternative energy source, and the city of Chernivtsi developed a “*GreenBuk*” grant application to create climate-resilient, comfortable green courtyards in the city.

Many participants also focused on local policy documents—such as regulations on energy management systems or council resolutions on implementing energy monitoring—in order to institutionalize the new approaches. Thus, by the end of the *Summer School*, every community had in hand a blueprint (or set of documents) that will serve as a roadmap for its next steps.

Discoveries and New Knowledge Gained During the Summer School: The training proved to be a source of numerous insights and valuable lessons for the communities. Participants noted that they tried working with project planning tools like the “*problem tree*” and “*goal tree*” for the first time, which allowed them to structure their project design process more logically. For several teams, conducting a full energy audit of their community was a new experience—in particular, they built an energy balance and baseline of consumption for the first time, which will inform their future measures.

A crucial realization was the importance of having formal energy plans and management systems in place—as one participant observed, an MEP and an energy management system are key factors for being able to successfully participate in energy projects and funding opportunities. A representative of the *Savynska community* summed up this mindset shift: “*It’s better to have an ‘imperfect’ MEP than none at all.*” The communities also came away with inspiring takeaways from the trainers and peers (one motto that resonated was “*Be realistic-demand the most!*”), encouraging participants not to shy away from ambitious goals. Among the methodological insights was a changed approach to project formulation: as one participant aptly noted, “*The goal tree grows not from the roots, but from the top—from the idea we want to implement.*” In other words, having a clear vision of the end goal is what drives a successful project. In sum, the new knowledge spanned both practical skills and mindset shifts, from technical calculations to the inspiration to act boldly and collaboratively.

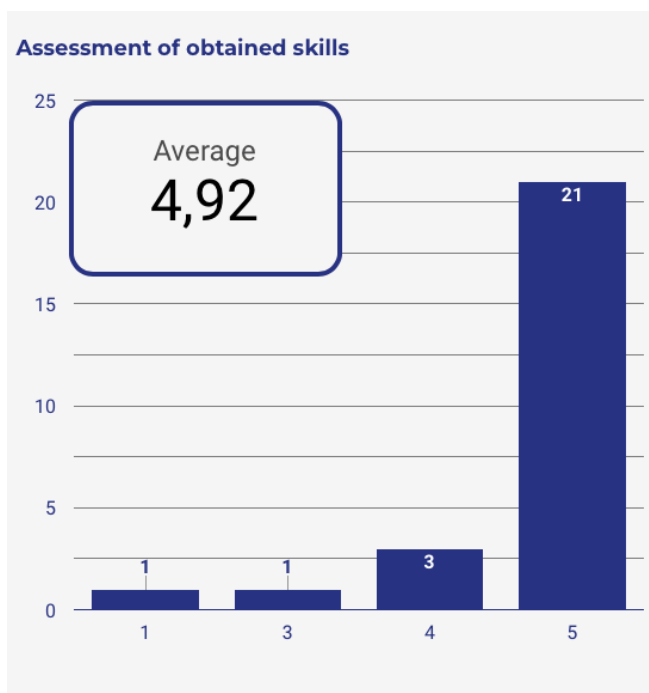


Fig. 5. Assessment of the importance of acquired skills for this work

Next Steps Upon Returning to the Communities: After the *Summer School*, participants outlined concrete steps to implement their new knowledge back home. First and foremost is broad internal communication: the community representatives plan to hold meetings with colleagues and local leaders to share the insights and materials they gained. For example, the delegate from *Petropavlivska community* intends to impress upon her team that “*writing a grant application is a team effort!*”. The next priority is to officially kick-start the development of Municipal Energy Plans where they do not yet exist: communities are preparing draft council decisions to initiate MEP creation, setting up working groups, and drawing up schedules.

In parallel, they will be implementing energy management tools—notably, establishing energy monitoring systems for public buildings and adopting the necessary regulations to sustain a municipal energy management (EnM) system. Participants are also committed to bringing the project proposals developed during the training to fruition: in the coming weeks they will hold final discussions and data-gathering sessions, after which the proposals will be submitted to potential donors. Additionally, some communities plan to undertake outreach and educational initiatives, such as introducing energy efficiency education in local schools and organizing training sessions for responsible persons. In essence, each community returned from the *Summer School* with a clear action plan. Armed with new knowledge and the support of a like-minded network, the communities are ready to move from learning to concrete implementation: turning their energy strategies into reality and improving the well-being of their residents.

Participant Feedback

An anonymous feedback survey was conducted at the end of the program. Overall, the responses reflected a high level of satisfaction across all components – online and offline sessions, expert input, and the structure of the program. Over **90% of participants rated the experience as “very satisfactory”**, with particular praise for the program’s practical orientation, relevant topics, and strong mentoring support.

Participants highlighted that the combination of **interactive sessions, real-life case studies, and peer exchange** helped them move from theoretical understanding to concrete planning and action.

“The combination of theory, teamwork, and discussion was exactly what we needed. The professionalism of the trainers and the thoughtful organization of every detail made this experience outstanding.”

“The opportunity to directly interact with mentors and receive feedback on our work was one of the most valuable parts of the program.”

“Thanks to the structure of the program, we were able to systematize our community’s ideas and develop a draft of our energy planning document.”

Respondents also provided recommendations for future iterations, such as extending the duration of practical sessions, including more time for networking, and integrating additional case-based learning formats.

The feedback clearly shows that the program helped participants not only improve their knowledge, but also inspired them to act – developing realistic plans, building local partnerships, and launching energy and climate initiatives tailored to their communities (Fig. 6).

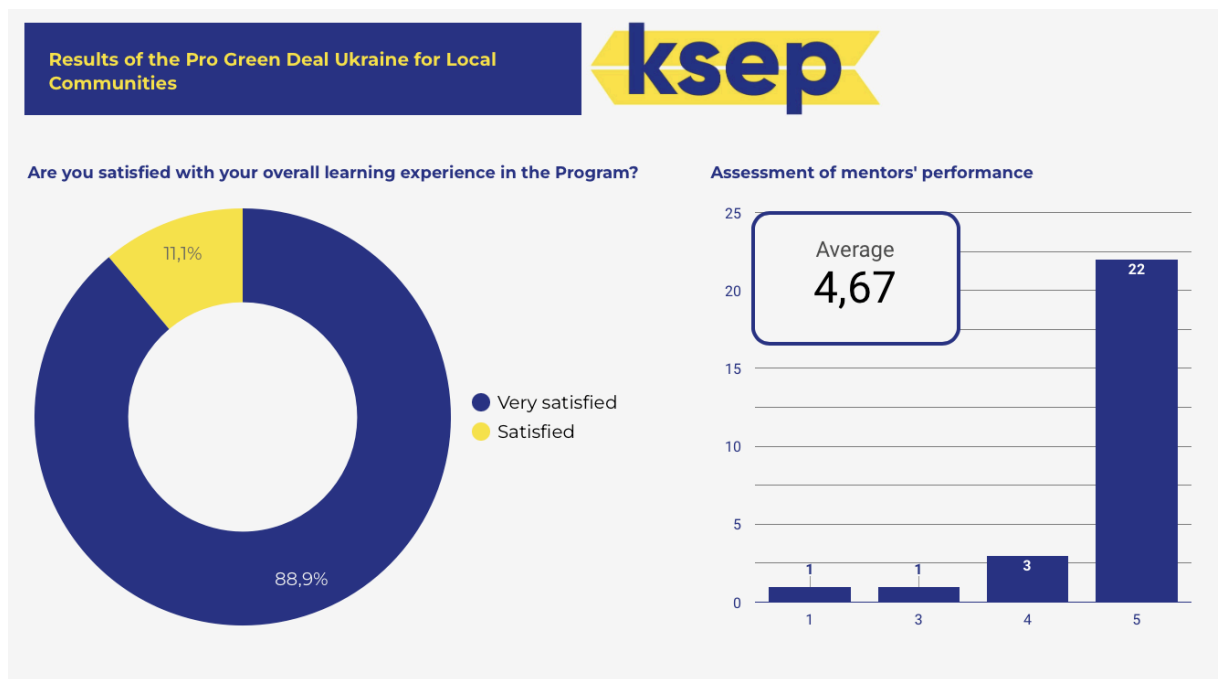


Fig. 6. Satisfaction assessment with the Program content and mentors' performance

Next Steps

To ensure the program’s sustainability and the long-term impact of its results, the following steps are planned to consolidate achievements and expand the reach of the initiatives:

- **Monitoring and support for implementation:** Regular monitoring of how the plans and initiatives developed during the program are being implemented will allow for tracking progress and addressing challenges promptly. Providing methodological support and

consultations after the program's completion will help communities successfully carry out these initiatives, ensuring that the intended results are achieved and sustained over time.

- **Network of alumni communities and experience exchange:** Plans are in place to establish and maintain a network among the communities that participated in the program for mutual learning and exchange of experience. Regular communication, alumni meetings, and peer-to-peer exchanges will enable communities to share best practices, support each other in overcoming challenges, and jointly develop new ideas. This approach will strengthen the communities' capacity and amplify the program's impact beyond its immediate scope.

- **Dissemination of the model to other communities and regions:** The program's successful methodologies and approaches will be systematized and shared with a wider circle of communities. Through partnerships with relevant associations and educational institutions, plans include conducting training sessions or educational programs that will allow other communities to adopt the developed model. This will help scale up the positive impact – the experience of the pilot communities will serve as a foundation for implementing similar initiatives in new regions.

- **Role of partners in supporting results:** Partners (professional associations, donors, and local authorities) are actively involved in ensuring the program's results are sustained. The associations will provide institutional support and a platform to disseminate best practices among their members. Donors will explore opportunities to further fund the most successful initiatives or to launch new cycles of the program in order to scale up these achievements. Local municipalities, in turn, will integrate the program's outcomes into their own development strategies and budgets, thereby ensuring the continuation of the changes initiated.

- **Future program cycles and scaling:** Based on the results and lessons learned, the possibility of launching subsequent cycles of the program or expanding its geographic coverage is being considered. New phases would engage more communities and take into account prior experience to enhance effectiveness. Scaling the program—both in thematic scope and geographic reach—will ensure a broader range of beneficiaries is reached and turn this successful initiative into a systemic practice.

Implementing these steps will ensure that the program's achievements are not only preserved but also multiplied, serving as a solid foundation for long-term positive changes in the communities.

The program was developed within the framework of the Green Deal Ukraine project, a trilateral initiative between Germany, Poland, and Ukraine and is implemented jointly by Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin, the Florence School of Regulation, and the Kyiv School of Energy Policy.