

ACTIVITY REPORT



R U R E N E R

2018

We are delighted to see once again the members of RURENER's Board of Directors and Secretariat for the 3rd and last year before the next elections in 2019.

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RURENER's Secretariat

Tibor Kócse,
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Philippe Cortès,
Vice-president



Vassiliki Kazana,
Secretary



Aline Brachet,
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Without us noticing it, 2018 went along... And so did RURENER! The recipe for a fruitful year? A good deal of partners and members, stimulating projects on rural energy, a few conferences in Europe, hints of European gastronomy, a lot of exchanges and good times, without reserve.

We are offering you a short flash-back in pictures to illustrate a very busy year.



Welcome to the new members of the team!

In 2018, RURENER increases a lot its visibility at the local level, as shown by the significant increase of members, and at the European level, in particular thanks to the selection of RURENER's contribution du the European Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels. To keep everything under control, two interns joined the team for 6 months, from April to September.

Lou, economy and communication, that's her thing!



Adrian, multilingual with a mustache, he quickly becomes the expert in field study tours!

The association of Communities Les Monts du Lyonnais, France

Former member of RURENER at its very beginning, the Monts du Lyonnais get back in the network in 2018, and come testify in Brussels during the European Sustainable Energy Week. Dynamic and strongly involved, the Monts du Lyonnais territory give consistence to the energy transition through the Eco-Habitat Park (expression of the energy transition and sustainable development service of the public authority since 2010), resource center on energy efficiency that also hosts a renovation platform (2015).

The PETR Centre Ouest Aveyron, France

The Rural and Territorial Balance Pole (PETR) of the center West of Aveyron defined its territorial project and committed to a voluntary « Climate, Air, Energy, Territory » Plan, highlighting their commitment to sustainable development. One key word for the PETR (rather two), local development. If they become members of RURENER in 2018, it is to benefit from the project of « Innovation for Rural Energy » and experiment the simple and concrete approach of monitoring-evaluation of impact of the local energy strategy. Results will be shared in 2019!

Town of Prespes, Greece

Prespes is considered a pioneer territory in Greece, committed in different European projects and strong of a long experience, the small community succeeded in working with its neighbors to transform weaknesses into strengths. Today, they want to development sustainable tourism even further to combine attractiveness, economic growth and energy transition. When is the field study tour to Prespes scheduled?

The natural Park of Gaume, Belgium

When we visited the natural Park of Gaume for the first time, the local people shared with us their vision of a sustainable territory, that puts together the energy transition and local food. In this territory with a lot of agricultural land, energy and food challenges are closely linked, and acting upon one has a strong impact on the other. Beyond this, the conduct of the energy transition and the use of local food are ways to reinforce social cohesion, revitalizing town centers and lowering energy poverty. Resources are not scarce, but it is necessary to learn how to promote them locally. A field study tour will be structured within the Innovation for Rural Energy project, with two possible focuses : energy transition and local food.

The Pays des Condruses, Belgium

What to say about the Pays des Condruses other than it is a Local Action Group (LAG) that knows how to make a difference. Using all the levers within its reach, the LAG has reinforced the network of local stakeholders, built projects for the energy transition, social inclusion and awareness raising. The strength of the LAG is to always be looking towards the future, ready to welcome innovation.

Other news in 2018

In 2018, RURENER freshens up with the adoption of a brand-new graphic charter. The logo is refined and becomes a beautiful green leaf, translating nature and the environment, its nerves represent the connections constituting the network and, from above, the leaf can also be seen as a view from the sky of fields in the countryside to show the rural dimension of RURENER.

And since its time for renewals, we also update RURENER's articles of association so they describe the evolutions of the network's activities.

RURENER is there, and we see it!

European Conference of the Energy Transition, Geneva, Switzerland – January 2018

From January 30th to February 1st, Geneva welcomes the 19th edition of the European conference for the Energy Transition (former European Conference of Energy). Three intense days of conferences and exchanges that are a great opportunity to meet new territories, mainly francophones, and to reinforce the links with partners such as the energy and environment agency of Auvergne Rhône-Alpes. Despite appearances, we did talk about energy and not about skiing!



European Sustainable Energy Week in Brussels, Belgium – June 2018



Every year, the EU organises the European Sustainable Energy Week and selects a few contributions to be part of the official programme. In 2018, the event took place from June 5th to 7th and we were selected to present our conference on "Breaking down the barriers between local action and European policies". Our small team went to Brussels early

June with 4 speakers: Patricia Nazio, European Alpine Space project manager in the Region Piemonte in Italy, Bernard Chaverot, president of the energy transition commission at the Association of Communities Les Monts du Lyonnais in France, Josep Subirana Jové, Environment and quality of life town councilor in Avià in Catalunya and Domac Julije, president of the European Federation of Energy and Environment Agencies and Regions (FEDARENE). Our room is completely full, showing the interest of the subject, at the heart of RURENER,'actions. A well deserved smile!



40 years of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Energy Environment in Lyon, France – June 2018



Anniversaries deserve to be celebrated! For its 40 years, AURA-EE, the Energy and Environment agency of the French Region Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes hosts a party. RURENER is on the guests' list and raises a toast to the great work accomplished by the agency with which we strengthened our partnership. The event gathers many territories and partners from around the large Region, it is a good occasion to meet new people (that, in their everyday life, do not wear a red wig or a fluffy scarf).

As it is so well put in their catchphrase, « Forward together! »

RURENER General Assembly meeting in Jarnages, France – September 2018

Just like every year, RURENER General Assembly is organized in one of our member's territory: the Pays de Combraille en Marche about to become the Syndicat mixte Est Creuse. Our small group is diverse because of the nationalities of participants (Hungarian, Greek, Catalans, French) and the type of territories, but all share common rural challenges. A full day is dedicated to field visits to promote local initiatives of a territory that does not lack either resources of creativity to use them in a sustainable way. Local elected representatives take part in the meeting and share their experiences with the



participants during fruitful exchanges that we wish would have lasted longer... Time flies when it's well spent! The event finishes with the closing of the general assembly that allows us to look back at 2017, the projects, ambitions, followed by a project building workshop. A photo souvenir and see you next year!



Positive Energy Territory meeting in Montmélian, France – September 2018

At the end of September, the annual meeting of the French Positive Energy Territories network is held in Montmélian. A few hundred participants were here to share experiences, take part in workshops and go on field visits organized for the occasion. RURENER was there in great number, as Lou and Adrian took part in the event, thus finishing their internship on a high note, and representing RURENER until the very last minute.



Field study tours

Power-to-gaz, Germany, June 10th -13th 2018



Storage is an upcoming challenge for the energy transition. Production of renewable energy is not enough, solutions to optimize its use are the current challenge. Smart grids are developing thanks to European projects that support innovation but what concrete solutions can a town develop to store its renewable energy? One answer to this question relies within the power-to-gas technology, that consists in transforming electricity into hydrogen, process of electrolyze, and, associated to a methanation process which combines hydrogen to CO₂ into CH₄ that can be

injected into the gas network. This technology can also be a solution to the mobility challenges, producing a biofuel (either hydrogen or methane – CH₄). In order to explore in more depths, the applications of this technology, we took part in a field study tour with the town Le Mené. The tour brought us to Germany and to the North East of France, for explanations and visits of pilot sites (Viessman, Energiepark of Mainz, Colombey-les-Choiseuil). Conclusions of the tour are mixed; on the one hand the power-to-gas technology is extremely promising and ideal to combine with an anaerobic digestion plant but it remains very hard (to impossible) to make it profitable in the current context. The rapid development of the market is encouraging and the subject will most likely be at the heart of other field study tours for territories that choose this direction. Thank you to Le Mené for the organization and the always innovative vision that you carry.



ENER'Creuse, France, 13th-14th of September 2018

The field study tour combined the RURENER General Assembly in Creuse (France) was the good time to address different questions raised by the rural energy. The Mayor of Janrages who welcomes the event starts out by presenting the projects in its small town, building refurbishment, revivizing of the market place, promotion of circular economy. After the tour in Jarnages, he leaves us with the Mayor



of Parsac, another town of the territory, that gives us a tour of the communal heat network, within a building covered in solar panels in order to be exemplary in terms of energy. The Mayor of Evaulles-Bains, yet another town, continues by presenting his project to save fatal energy from thermal water used by the thermal centers in the town. Indeed, thermal water are, paradoxically, too hot for thermal cures and require a lot of energy to cool down. The goal of the project is to use the extra heat to heat building before sending it back to the thermal center

at the right temperature. The visit of the thermal center allows us to better understand the challenges raised by the project that could maintain and create many jobs, reinforce attractiveness of the town and represent important savings both for the municipality (in €) and for the environment (in tons of CO₂). In the afternoon, the Fonty spinning factory shows us the virtues of a company that is engaged into a a sustainable development, respecting the environment. Its CEO explains how a big investment in the first place allowed him to make huge savings on the medium and long term in the running of his company, without mentioning the working conditions that have been significantly improved. Finally, the opening the Small Speed Hall in the town of Felletin closes the day perfectly. The old worned-out merchandise hall has been abandoned by the town that could not afford to keep it. The Hall was



bought by Granges Solaires, a local company established a few kilometers away. Granges Solaires rebuilt the framework of the building, which was completely ruined, and equipped the whole roof with photovoltaic solar panels. The goal? Transform this positive energy building into a place of interest for local SMEs that could benefit from cheap renewable energy (produced on the rooftop). In the end, this field study tour highlighted remarkable local initiatives, both public and private, that ensure rural areas' vitality.



Projects

2017 Year of Innovation for Rural Energy...

On going

... Continues! The project will end in 2019 but the whole year of 2018 was dedicated to it:

- Three monitoring-evaluation reports have been developed, thanks to the support of Lou;
- New cooperation projects are built;
- Field study tours are structured in Belgium and France under Adrian's diligence;
- The European activity continues, stronger than ever, as illustrated in the previous paragraphs.

PACHA-ACTE

Not financed

An awareness raising project to the energy transition challenges through the use of arts and the media in France, Greece and Bolivia? That is the subject of PACHA-ACTE that was submitted in the middle of the year to the call for project of RESACOOOP "Frame, Voice, Report!". Adrian takes advantage of its acquaintances in Bolivia to find the right partners and blow a South American wind over RURENER's actions.

COLEOPTER

Approved for funding

Local Consensus Building for the Optimization of Territorial Policies on Rural Energy, this is the subject of COLEOPTER submitted in September to the 3rd call for proposals of the Interreg Sudoe (South West of Europe) programme. The goal of the project is to develop an integrated approach of energy efficiency of public buildings: engaging local stakeholders to encourage them in having a more rational use of energy, but also to raise awareness on energy efficiency and renovation.

CEnergyC

Not financed

The European programme Horizon 2020 opened a Call for Projects to which proposals were expected for April 2018. Contacted by the National School des Mines in Saint Etienne, we took part in the definition and writing of the CEnergyC project that intends to define, experiment, and demonstrate the relevance of Collaborative Energy Clusters that would gather companies around common energy challenges. Unfortunately, we did not get selected in the very competitive programme.

Lands of Study in Massif central

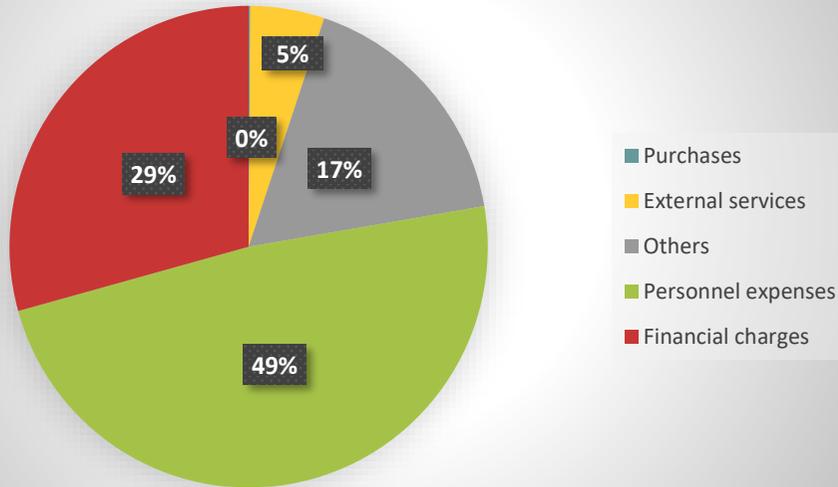
Submission in October 2019

To follow-up on the "2017, Year of Innovation for Rural Energy" project, we started to build at the end of 2018 a new project that would focus on supporting rural territories of the Massif central, still "learning" in becoming pilot territories: Lands of Study. The Lands of Study have to be able to host European visitors during a few days, which means having housing, restaurants and transportation in coherence with sustainable development values, and operational field sites to visit. Becoming a Land of Study will allow these territories to reinforce their attractiveness thanks to their exemplarity in terms of energy. This project, which will be submitted in 2019, will allow to reassess the exemplarity of rural territories in the French central mountain range.

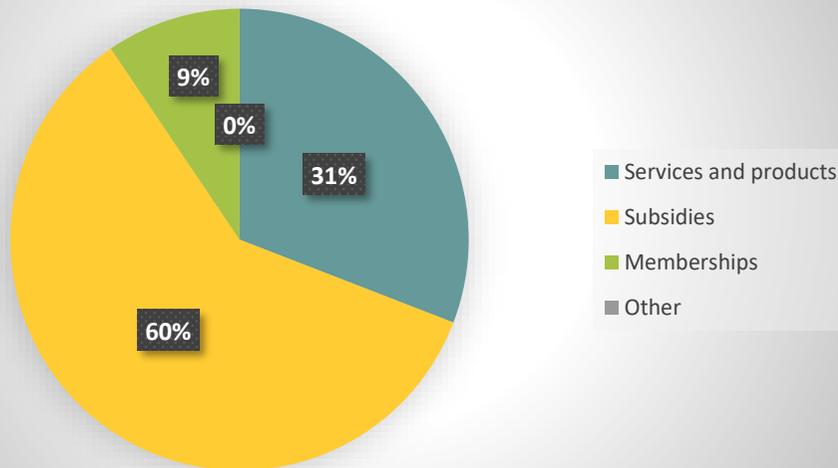
Numbers

2018 Budget

Expenses 2018

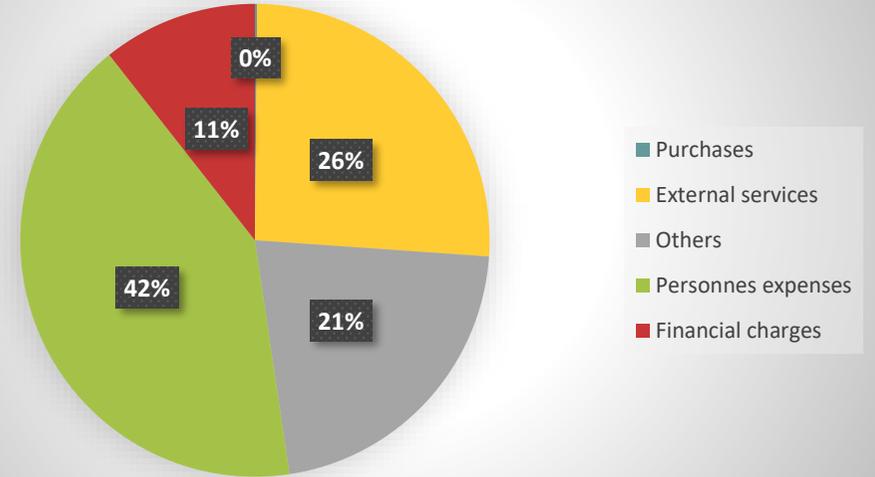


Revenues 2018

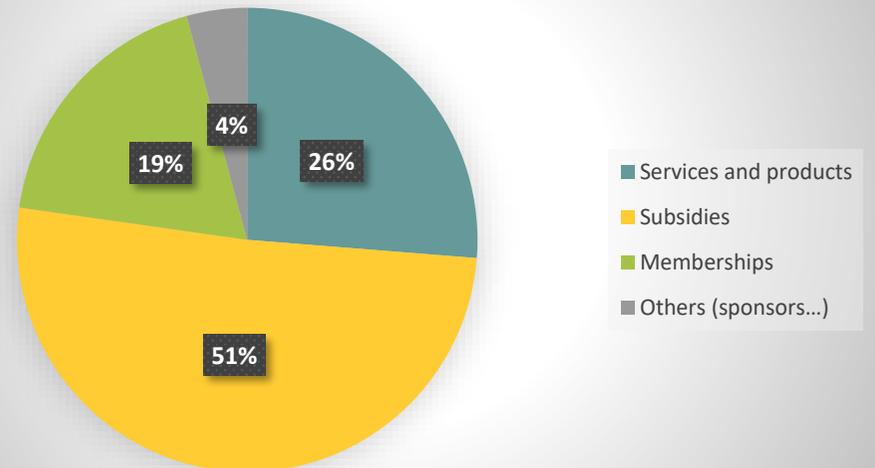


Projected 2019 budget

Projected expenses 2019



Projected revenues 2019



RURENER 2018's budget is of **55,105.79 €**. A raise of 17% (**64,746€**) is projected in 2019 thanks to the funding of two new projects (a European project and a Massif central project). The financial charges that represented about 30% of the budget in 2018 should be reduced in 2019 as the loan for the "2017 Year of Innovation" project will be completely reimbursed in the middle of the year and the new projects are meant to start in the last semester of 2019 (October). The cost of external services remains low in 2018 but should significantly increase in relation to the current and future projects.

On the revenue side, memberships only accounted for 9% of the revenues in 2018 (5800€) which remains low in comparison to subsidies (60% of revenues). The revenue from service provision and participation in project is quite high thanks to the endowments of the territories involved in the "2017 Year of Innovation for Rural Energy" project. In 2019, the amount of membership fees is expected to double (12,000€) reaching about 20% of the projected budget due to a better visibility of the network and to the many activities conducted and partnership with the "2017 Year of Innovation for Rural Energy" project. This should allow to lower the public subsidies to 50%, including the final payment of the "2017 Year of Innovation for Rural Energy" project, and, the pro rata public subsidies expected for the 2 new projects which should start at the last term of 2019.

RURENER tomorrow

For 2019, the priority is to reinforce the economic model of RURENER in order to ensure stability in the management of the network. The call for membership fee will be launched early in January to get the memberships as soon as possible and loosen the financial tensions that may arise before the project's payments. The first term will allow us to finish the building of the "Lands of Study in the French mountain range" project in order to get funding starting at the end of the summer 2019 and to continue to enrich both the Lands of Study catalogue with more territories of central France, and our experience in the building of field study tours. In addition, a legal work on RURENER's articles of association and internal rules start once the funding for 2019 and beyond are validated.

About RURENER's actions, our ambitions are in line with the axes developed in the "2017 Year of Innovation for Rural Energy" project:

- Deploy at the European level RURENER's approach of monitoring-evaluation of impact of local energy policies: Territorial Impact Measurement (TIM)
- Build and support the building of cooperation projects to speed-up the energy transition in rural areas and reinforce the exchange of experiences through the network.
- Enrich the Lands of Study catalogue with new Lands of Study in France and in Europe
- Lift the economic and social barriers to the energy transition by identifying funding opportunities for energy transition projects in rural areas and by developing territorial dialogue in territorial projects
- Continue to represent the voice of rural territories committed to the energy transition in Brussels and offer them new possibilities to give their testimonies directly to European decision-makers.

We will not get bored in 2019!

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RURENER NETWORK



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