



Understanding the Three Drivers of Public Support in the Nordic Energy Transition

*Nordic Hydrogen Valleys Conference 2026
Trondheim, Norway | 28–29 April 2026*

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Bright ideas.
Sustainable change.



**Nordic Energy
Research**

Public support is a rising topic in Energy transition – and appears in a number of advisory and implementation assignments



Christine Lunde Rasmussen

Global Head; Societal Impacts & Policy
Ramboll Management

Examples:

- Public support in the Nordic Energy Transition, Summary from Lahti Conference, Nordic Energy Research
- Social Acceptance in RE, DENZ UK, 2025
- Nordic Energy Trilemma 2022 – A sustainable, secure and inclusive transition, Nordic Energy Research
- Evaluation of the VE Task Force, Energy Agency
- Evaluation of Renewable Energy Schemes, Energistyrelsen, 2025
- Community engagement and Social Impact Assessment for mining project; Talga, 2023-2025,
- Green vision for Lolland, Lolland Municipality 2024: Employment benefits of PtX Plants
- Evaluation of the Nordic Co-operation Programme on Energy Policy, NCM
- Energy Poverty in the Nordics, NCM 2022
- Innovationpartnership on VE and biodiversity, Miljøstyrelsen, 2025-2027

Public Support in the Energy Transition



4–5 December, 2025



Sibelius Hall in Lahti, Finland



Gathering of key stakeholders including policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and civil society



Discussions of ways going forward for a green and inclusive energy transition

What I will cover today

01

The importance and key drivers for public support

02

What good public engagement looks like

03

A Nordic way going forward

PUBLIC SUPPORT NEEDS TO BE TREATED AS A SYSTEM REQUIREMENT – ON PAR WITH GRIDS, PERMITTING FRAMEWORKS AND FINANCE

We know the challenge....



...People are not resisting climate action; they are defending other important local goods – biodiversity, landscape, identity – and trust is what makes it possible to balance these values fairly.

...the main cause of local resistance is the perception that value is being extracted from a local area without any substantial value being added in return.

Simon Lex – Assistant Professor,
Copenhagen University



.... and we know some of the solutions

Kirsten er 'kommandocentral' i kampgruppe mod solcellepark



KEY DRIVERS FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT IN THE NORDICS

Three levers to win support



A FAIR PROCESS



Successful energy transition depends on public support **throughout the process**

Key strategies include:

- Engaging communities **early**, before key decisions are locked in.
- Designing processes that **allow** people to see how their input is considered and reflected.



DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS



Support depends heavily on whether people perceive that benefits are **shared fairly**

Effective approaches address:

- Whether value creation is retained **locally** or primarily benefits external stakeholders.
- Whether ownership models **enable local participation, co-investment, or community returns**.



RECOGNITION AND IDENTITY



Support rests deeply on whether people experience **recognition of local identity and history**

Key approaches that work:

- Take landscape values and cultural heritage **seriously** when transforming local landscapes.
- Respect indigenous and minority rights **in practice**, not only in principle.

WHAT GOOD ENGAGEMENT LOOKS LIKE



Early and inclusive engagement Case: Sønderborg



- Collaboration and co-creation through early citizen involvement → residents shape projects to reflect local concerns and context
- Recognizing protests as legitimate → improves design quality and builds trust, ownership, and acceptance



Distribution of benefits Case: Thy Model



- Local co-ownership ($\geq 20\%$) → profits redistributed to community
- Proven to increase acceptance by linking local costs (noise/visuals) with local benefits



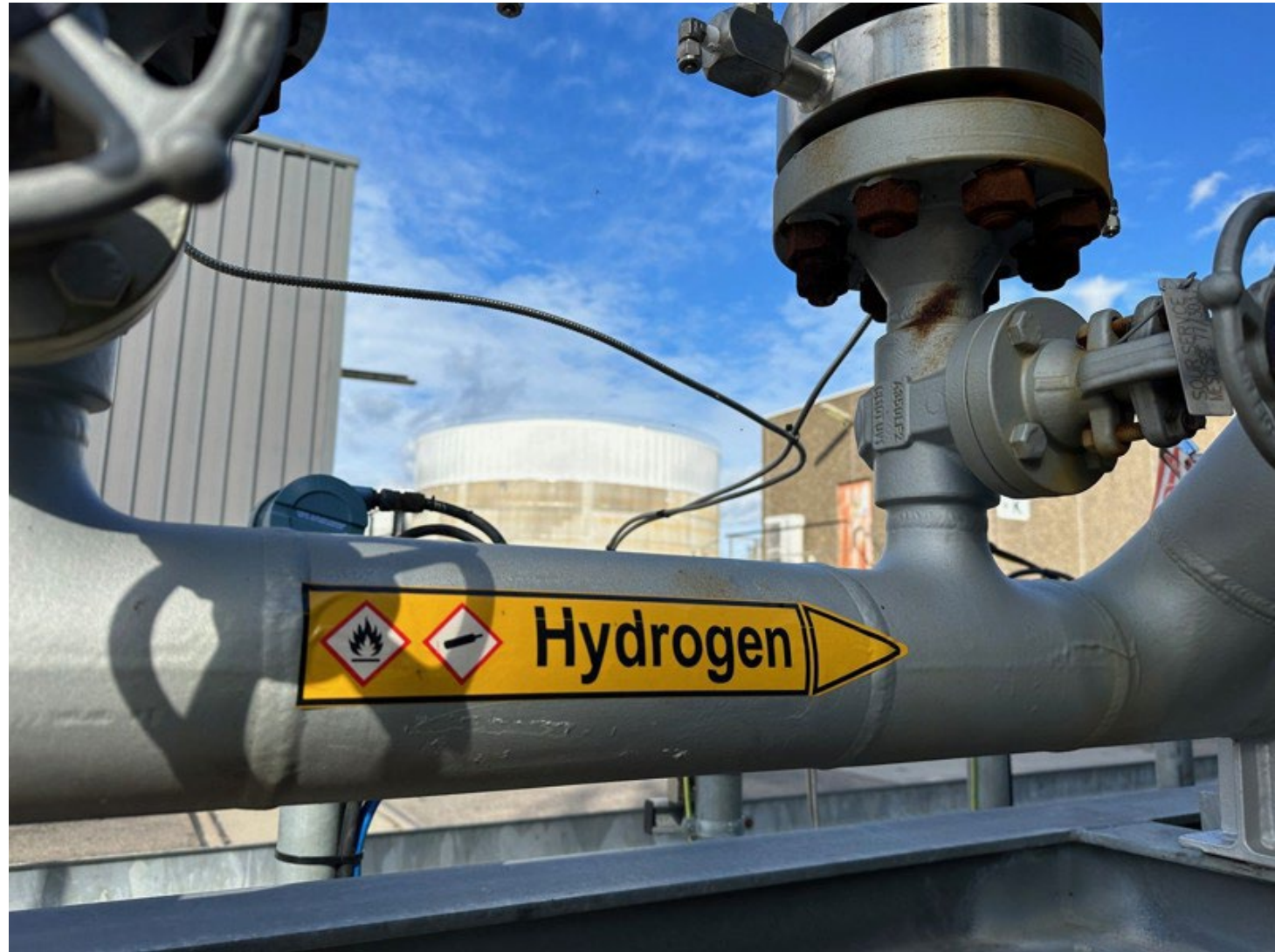
Identity and recognition Case: Dialogue project



- Hybrid event with communities, industry, and cultural actors → shared perspectives (incl. embroidered landscapes) on local identity
- Dialogue on landscape values → builds understanding and supports coexistence and acceptance

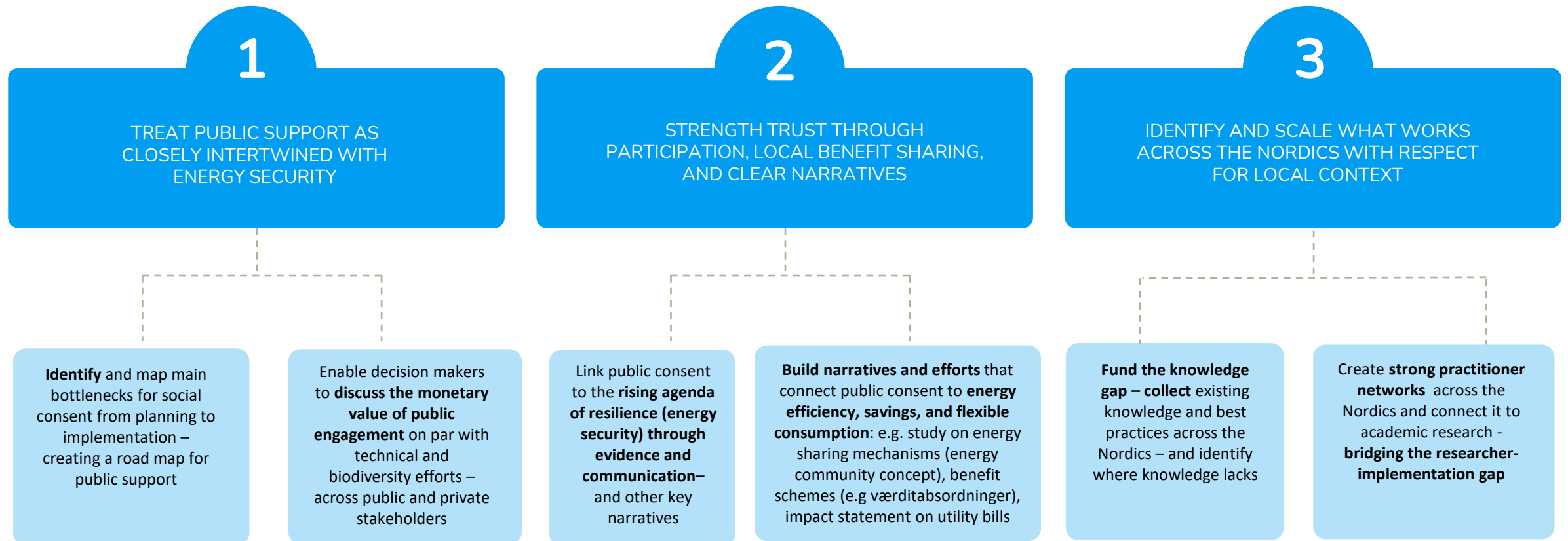
In Hydrogen a good practice example is HySynergy in Fredericia

- Power-to-X project producing green hydrogen from renewable electricity
- Integrated with existing industry → replaces fossil hydrogen in refinery (anchor demand)
- Excess heat supplied to district heating → creates local value and strengthens acceptance
- Placed in industry park means less disturbance for local landscape



SO WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO BRIDGE THE KNOWLEDGE-IMPLEMENTATION GAP?

The Lahti conference indicated that public support should be treated as a system requirement on par with grid infrastructure, permitting frameworks and financing mechanisms



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OVERVIEW OF CONFERENCE INSIGHTS



MIKKO HEIKKILÄ

Head of Public Affairs and Communications,
Fingrid Oyj

Public support for the energy transition in a new geopolitical era



ANNI MIKKONEN

CEO,
Renewables Finland

Renewable energy and the future of Nordic energy security



DAG INGE FJELD

Assistant Professor,
Kristiania University College

Climate skepticism and social opposition to the green transition



ØISTEIN SCHMIDT GALAAEN

Director of Production and Sustainability,
Renewables Norway

Public trust in the Nordic electricity market



DANIEL UREY

Co-founder and Head,
LABLAB

Not here! On energy transition, landscapes and the sense of locality



MARTE SKOGEN

PhD Candidate,
University of Bergen

The case of Norwegian wind power



CHRISTINE LUNDE RASMUSSEN

Global Head of Societal Impact & Policy,
Rambøll Management Consulting

The Danish case: How to win (or lose) social acceptance in the green transition



ANTTI SILVAST

Associate Professor,
LUT University

Citizen involvement through energy citizenship, mini-publics, and beyond: Concepts, methods, and Finnish case studies



ANDERS TONHAMMAR LÖÖF

Regional Director,
Sympower

Empowering customers to be flexible

PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE NEEDS TO BE AN INTEGRATED PART OF ENERGY PLANNING

Exclusion of process

Experience of being left out of decisions that shape their everyday life



Uneven distribution

A feeling of bearing the costs while others reap the benefits

Loss of identity & environment

A feeling of losing the landscape and local community they identify with