

Today!

Webinar



EVERY1



Energy Communities and Energy Literacy

 26rd Feb 2026

 12:00 - 13:00 CET

Part 3 of *Every1's Digital Energy for
Everyone Webinar Series*



Funded by
the European Union





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*Every1 enables inclusive participation in the **digital energy transition** by identifying knowledge gaps, developing accessible learning pathways, and strengthening stakeholder collaboration.*

*Through **capacity-building and knowledge sharing**, we empower citizens, policymakers, and industry to navigate and shape the evolving energy landscape.*



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the European Union



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About Every1

- 4-year project (2022-2026)
- Funded by the European Union's Horizon Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)
- Every1 Knowledge Hub, Networking + Matchmaking
- 11 Partners from 9 EU Countries

RdA
CLIMATE SOLUTIONS



INESCTEC

flux50
ENERGISING THE FUTURE

Th!nk E

eWORX



Steinbeis
Europa Zentrum

TU/e

JOANNEUM
RESEARCH
LIFE



The Open
University



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The Flow of this Webinar

You are muted and your camera is disabled to ensure that unintentional noises are not disturbing the speakers. However, **you can engage and ask** questions or give further input and feedback in three ways:

1. Via the Q&A button (between chat and people) Tell us who you are asking or addressing.
2. Via the **chat**. Tell us who you are.
3. **At the end** of the webinar you will have the possibility to unmute yourself.

Talks

Vera Kools (TU Eindhoven): **Every1 Research Findings: Energy literacy as dynamic & context-dependent**

Maria Margosi (Energy Community COEN): **How do you do it:** informing and engaging members?

Antonia Proka (REScoop.eu): SHINE project - Empowering local and regional authorities to brighten community energy across Europe



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How the talks are connected

Via information, knowledge, cooperation and participation ...

... **People** are enabled to ...

Do what they would like to do.

Change what they regard as necessary to be changed.

Empower themselves.



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Energy literacy

How to inform and engage?

Vera Kools, Eindhoven University of Technology

v.m.e.kools@tue.nl

Kools & Höffken, The relation between energy literacy and participation: an empirical and theoretical exploration. Submitted to Environmental Education Research, Jan 2026



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There is a lot for people to understand!



(www.energiebespaarshop.nl)

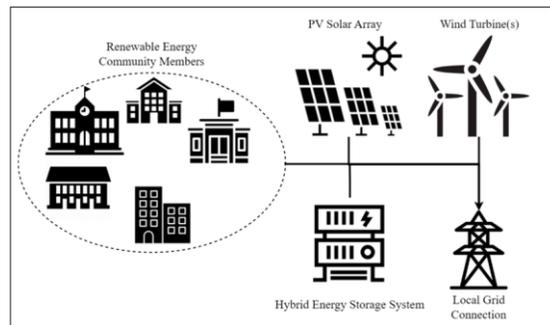
Saving energy



Smart meters



Energy bill



(Dehouche & Garner, 2023)

Energy community

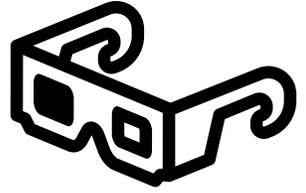
Energy literacy

= people's energy **knowledge and skills** (Santillán et al. 2023; Adams et al. 2022)

= often seen as **prerequisite for participation** (Santillán et al. 2023)

= **Need for energy literacy in energy communities!** (Ahmed et al, 2024; Koltunov et al, 2023)

We found: two ways of seeing energy literacy!



Energy literacy as prerequisite

- Often: literacy **before** participation
- You 'are literate' or not
- Static, linear approach

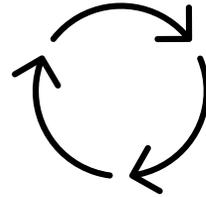


Energy literacy as social practice

- Energy literacy as something people ***do in a specific context***
- **Continuous process**
- Awareness for **diverse, personal, context dependent needs** = *more inclusive*



Method: qualitative, iterative process



Empirical: energy communities

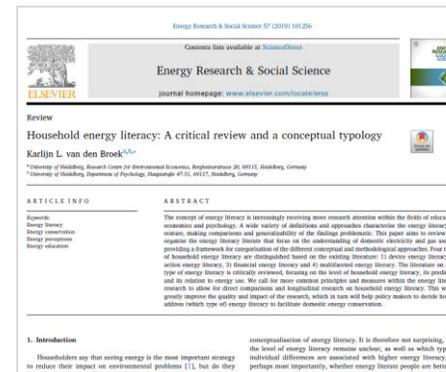
- **Greek energy communities**
 - 23 interviews, 3 focus groups
- Backdrop of **Every1**
 - 60 interviews, 180 survey responses – energy communities, municipalities, cluster organizations



Literature review

Diverse bodies of literature:

- Energy literacy research
- Participation research
- Energy community research
- Literacy studies research



Energy literacy as **prerequisite**

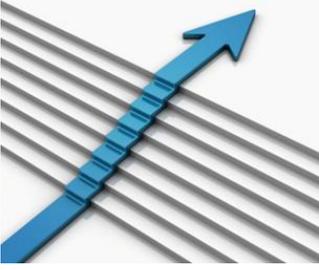
'fixing' people's energy literacy so they can participate.

Focus on:

- **topics**
- **tools**



Energy literacy as prerequisite



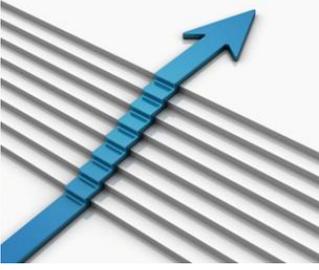
Focus on 'topics'



In Greek ECs we found as key topics:

1. **Joining an EC**
2. **EC decision making**
3. **Reducing household energy consumption** (e.g. insulation)

Energy literacy as prerequisite



Focus on **'tools'**



In Greek ECs we found:

- Informal mouth-to-mouth
- Events
- Secretariats
- Online
- Local news
- Leaflets and info sheets
- Online member channels
- General Assemblies

... but we found more!

Energy literacy as **social practice**



Energy literacy is what you *do* in a specific context.

- 1. Many literacies!**
- 2. Learning is participation**
- 3. Framing of information shapes participation**

1. Many literacies!



Topic needs depend on what you **do** in your **specific personal contexts, time, place.**

= continuously evolving!

= not a one-size fits all!

Literacy can also be: finding your way in the organization

... Knowing where to ask for help

... Knowing how to request to pay later



Local literacy needs

'Here in Greece we have a bad past. A lot of private energy companies came here to exploit for their own profit. So, people are not eager to participate. So, I try to explain them' (P3, 04-07-2024)



2. Learning is participation.



Learning requires actively doing!

Who are able to?

Access to learning tools

... childcare during event

... short and concise

...



Tools are connected

'when our president talked in the radio or television, we see a lot of phone calls from people who want to become members" (P3, 20-02-2024).



3. Framing of information



- Framing: the aspects put in focus (in text and pictures)
- Not only topics, but also framings need to link to what people *do*!

Framing of benefits

... financial

... social

... sustainability



Frame in relation to daily life

... non-technical, concrete information,

Examples

... what can people DO with the information?



Take away

Value in both energy literacy perspectives!



Energy literacy as **prerequisite for** participation

⇒ **Helpful concrete topics and tools!**



Energy literacy as **social practice**, something you **do** in local, personal contexts

⇒ **Diverse energy literacy needs, learning processes and framings! *More inclusive***

These insights feed into the Every1 Knowledge Hub



[About](#) [News & Events](#) [Network](#) [Publications & Reports](#) [Knowledge Hub](#) [Log in](#)

Welcome to Every1's Knowledge Hub

Welcome to Every1's Knowledge Hub, your central point for exploring resources on the **Digital Energy Transition**.

Here, you will find:

- **Learning Pathways**
- **Every1 Learning Materials**
- **Tool Repository**

All these resources are designed to enhance your understanding and engagement with this evolving field.



Learning Pathways

Explore Every1's learning pathways to navigate the digital energy transition. Discover an extensive array of essential topics, from foundational knowledge to advanced applications. Choose a pathway aligned with your goals – whether you seek to understand the basics, explore technologies, or learn about

<https://every1.energy/knowledge-hub/materials>

Every1 Knowledge Hub

- About **80 FREE learning materials** about energy, energy communities and digitalisation
- Acknowledging diverse literacies!
 - **Diverse topics, framings, formats, levels**
 - **‘Re-use, re-adapt, remix’**: open license materials to adjust to your context
 - **Translated** materials in EU languages

Course

Energy communities



1 hour study
Level 0: Beginner
Gain a digital badge

Ratings ☆☆☆☆
0 out of 5 stars

Sign up to get more
You can start learning at any time. By signing up and enrolling you can track your progress and earn a Statement of Participation upon completion, all for free.

View this course
Sign up to get more

Course description | Course content | Course reviews

Welcome to Energy communities



EVERY1
Τι είναι μια Ενεργειακή Κοινότητα και γιατί να γίνω Μέλος;
Ενημερωτικό Έντυπο – ΕΑ

YouTube

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Introduction to the Digital Energy Transition

Presenter: Salvador Carvalho (INESC TEC)
March 2024

Introduction to the Digital Energy Transition was created as part of the EVERY1 project and is licensed CC BY-NC 4.0.

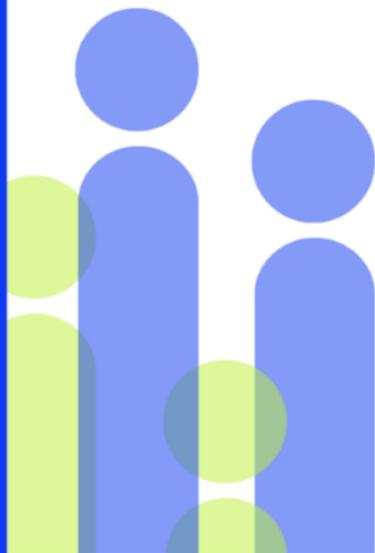
Every1: Introduction to the Digital Energy Transition (March 2024)

PEAK AND OFF-PEAK PEACOCK
EVERY1





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Knowledge Hub

A practical guide to resources on the digital energy transition

Introduction

This booklet is a short, practical guide to the Knowledge Hub developed by the Every1 project, a central space for learning materials, tools and pathways that support participation in the digital energy transition. It explains what you can find in the Hub, how the different sections work, and how to make use of the open, reusable resources available.

This guide offers



... a walkthrough of the Learning Pathways, the library of learning materials, the Learning Pathways Repository, and shows where to find translations and options for your own activities. It also gives an overview of how the Hub links to the wider Every1 network and project outputs.

... a project that supports people and organisations in taking part in the digital energy transition. It focuses on providing learning materials, building skills and strengthening collaboration between those working in energy. The consortium includes partners such as Flux50, The Open University, Eworx, Think E, InnoEnergy, INESC TEC, TU Eindhoven, RdA Climate Solutions, the International Cleantech Network and the International Cleantech Network. It provides technical and educational expertise to design training offers and support stakeholder

Check it out!

Every Knowledge Hub

<https://every1.energy/knowledge-hub/materials>

Energy Communities: Joining, Contributing, and Governance



This pathway focuses on a practical overview and framework to engaging with and sustaining an energy community. It starts by outlining the essential steps for joining, then details the diverse roles, rights, and responsibilities of members for effective contribution. Finally, it explores the principles and strategies involved in community governance, decision making, and long term sustainability through real world case studies.

By following this path, you will gain essential knowledge for the following topics:

- Collective energy action
- Energy usage
- Smart meters
- Energy efficiency
- Energy sources
- Sustainability and social responsibility

Energy Communities

What is an Energy Community and Why Should I Join?

Energising the Energy Community

Hyperion: A pioneer in Community Energy

The Collective Energy Coop Story

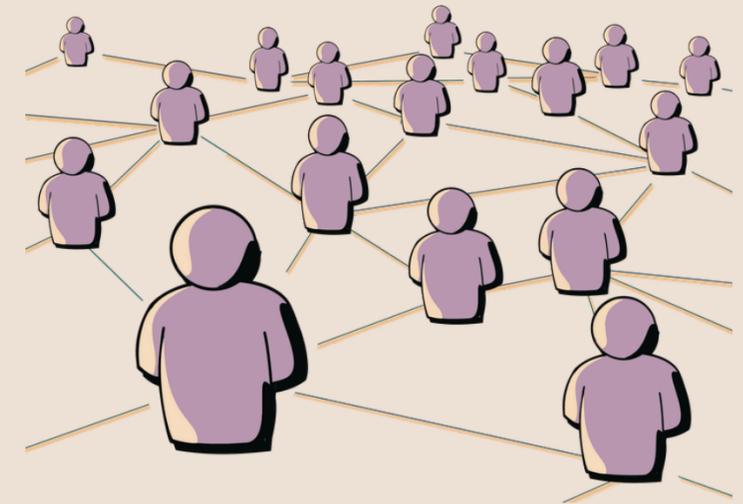
Empowering Citizens Through Energy: The Hindelang Cooperative



collective energy

Overview

Collective Energy is a non-profit citizen Energy Community founded in Athens at the beginning of 2020 according to the Greek law 4513/2018.



Area of Activity 1:

Access to clean and affordable energy for our members



Our first project is a solar plant integrated into the virtual net metering scheme.

- Through this project, **47** member households & **2** cooperatives based in Athens benefit directly from clean, renewable energy,
- **2** vulnerable households, from the Municipality of Moschato-Tavros, are included, ensuring that our efforts promote social equity.

By incorporating vulnerable households among the beneficiaries, we actively contribute to reducing energy poverty and advancing a more inclusive, sustainable energy transition.

This approach aligns with our commitment to creating a fair and equitable energy future for all.

Our solar plant

- Photovoltaic power station with a power of 99,7 kW in Argolida
- Estimated annual energy production: 150.000 kWh/year
- CO2 emission mitigation the 1st year of operation: 119.000,00 kg



Area of Activity 2:

Research on organisational models, operational models & technical methods for a socially just energy transition

Organisational Models

- Exploring how energy communities can be structured to maximize participation, democracy & fairness.
- Designing cooperative governance that promotes member involvement and accountability.

Operational Models

- Identifying effective ways to run energy community projects, from planning to long-term operation.
- Integrating processes that balance technical performance with social goals.

Technical Methods

- Testing and evaluating renewable energy technologies and tools that support shared generation and distribution.
- COEN participates in European research projects to develop, trial and refine these methods.

Area of Activity 3:

Supports the institution of Energy Communities in Greece & Europe

- We conduct training seminars and participate in workshops focused on energy transition and energy communities.
- We provide guidance and support to citizens and local authorities interested in establishing their own energy communities.
- Our team carries out in-depth studies on the energy needs of regions and communities, assisting with strategic energy planning.
- We are actively involved in the National Network of Energy Communities (DESMI), advocating for the interests of energy communities at the political level.
- Additionally, we engage with the European Federation of Citizens' Energy Cooperatives, Rescoop.eu, contributing to the broader movement for community-driven energy solutions.

Why Engagement Matters?

Citizen energy communities like Collective Energy and COEN aren't just about energy production — they're about people participation, awareness, inclusion, and collective action.

Civic Empowerment

- Energy communities shift citizens from passive consumers to active prosumers, with real ownership and influence in the energy system.

Social and Local Impact

- Engagement increases acceptance of renewable energy, strengthens local identity, and even improves energy saving behaviors.

Policy Context

- The EU actively supports broad citizen involvement and sets goals (e.g., one energy community per municipality >10 000 population by 2025).

COEN's Fundamentals

Founding with Citizen-Centric Values

COEN was formed on the belief that grassroots action is essential to tackle the climate and energy crises, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds for collective purpose.

Embedded in Broader Pilots

COEN chooses to participate as a partner in projects that explicitly aim to engage citizens and stakeholders in energy transition research, including flexibility and energy sharing evaluations.

Energy-Sharing Approach

COEN's model of collective self-consumption addresses energy poverty and empowers members and vulnerable households – an inherently social, educational and engaging initiative.

Best Practices for Informing and Engaging Citizens

Clear, Democratic Governance

- Strong democratic involvement (e.g., one member, one vote) and transparent governance helps members feel genuinely part of the community and its decisions.

Inclusive Education & Communication

- Workshops, info sessions, and educational programs help clarify energy topics, reduce barriers to entry and foster ongoing participation.

Heartful Storytelling

- Using storytelling and local narratives (instead of technical terms) to explain why energy communities matter can broaden appeal and understanding.

Local Events, Demonstration Projects & Co-creation

- Organise public in-person events — from solar festivals to participatory design workshops — to experiment, inform and involve.

The Biggest Challenge: *Engaging Members to Invest in the First Solar Plant*

1/3

Context – Greece & Energy Communities at the Time

- Energy communities were new and unfamiliar in Greece
- Collective self-consumption was not widely understood
- Citizens were not used to co-owning energy infrastructure
- There was limited trust in new cooperative schemes

For many people, this was the first time they heard:

“You can co-own a solar plant and produce your own energy collectively.”

That required a mental shift.

- Financial Risk Perception

Members had to:

- Invest their own money
- Trust a cooperative model
- Believe in long-term benefits (not immediate returns)

For many, the key concerns were:

- *Is this safe?*
- *Is this legal?*
- *Will I actually see savings?*
- *What if the project fails?*

***Why it was so
challenging?***

It wasn't just about solar panels.

It was about trust, uncertainty, and cultural readiness.

The Biggest Challenge: Engaging Members to Invest in the First Solar Plant

How We Addressed the Challenge (Lessons Learned)

Radical Transparency

We explained:

- The business model
- The financial projections
- The risks
- The legal structure
- The expected payback period

No overpromising.

No exaggeration.

Transparency builds credibility.

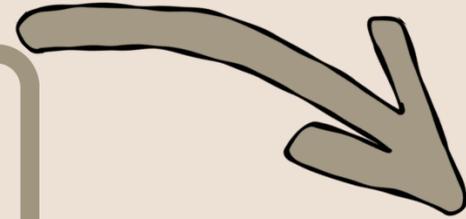
Education Before Recruitment

We didn't just say "invest."

We:

- Explained what an energy community is
- Explained how virtual net-metering works
- Answered all questions — even repetitive ones
- Took time

People needed understanding before commitment.



Framing It as Collective Action — Not Just Investment

*"Invest in a solar plant."
to
"Become part of a citizen-led energy transition."*

Conclusions

1. Trust Is More Important Than Technology

Building a solar plant is technical.
Building confidence is human.

2. Education Reduces Fear

Before asking people to invest, help them understand the model, the risks, and the benefits.

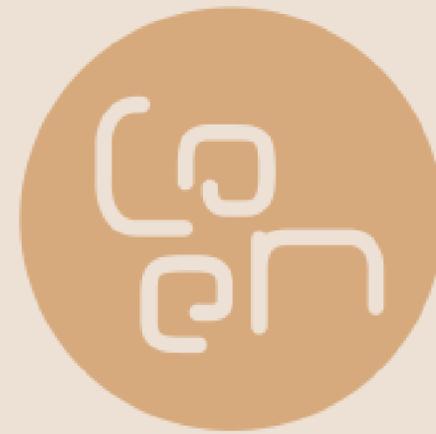
3. Transparency Beats Marketing

Be honest about challenges, timelines, and uncertainties.
Credibility is your strongest asset.

4. The First Project Is Always the Hardest

Once the first plant is operating and delivering results, engagement becomes easier and trust grows organically.

*Thank
You*



collective energy

shine

Energy Communities & Energy Literacy

EVERY1 webinar series

Antonia Proka (PhD)

REScoop.eu

REScoop.EU



Co-funded by
the European Union

The question:

How can energy communities better inform, engage, and empower their members?

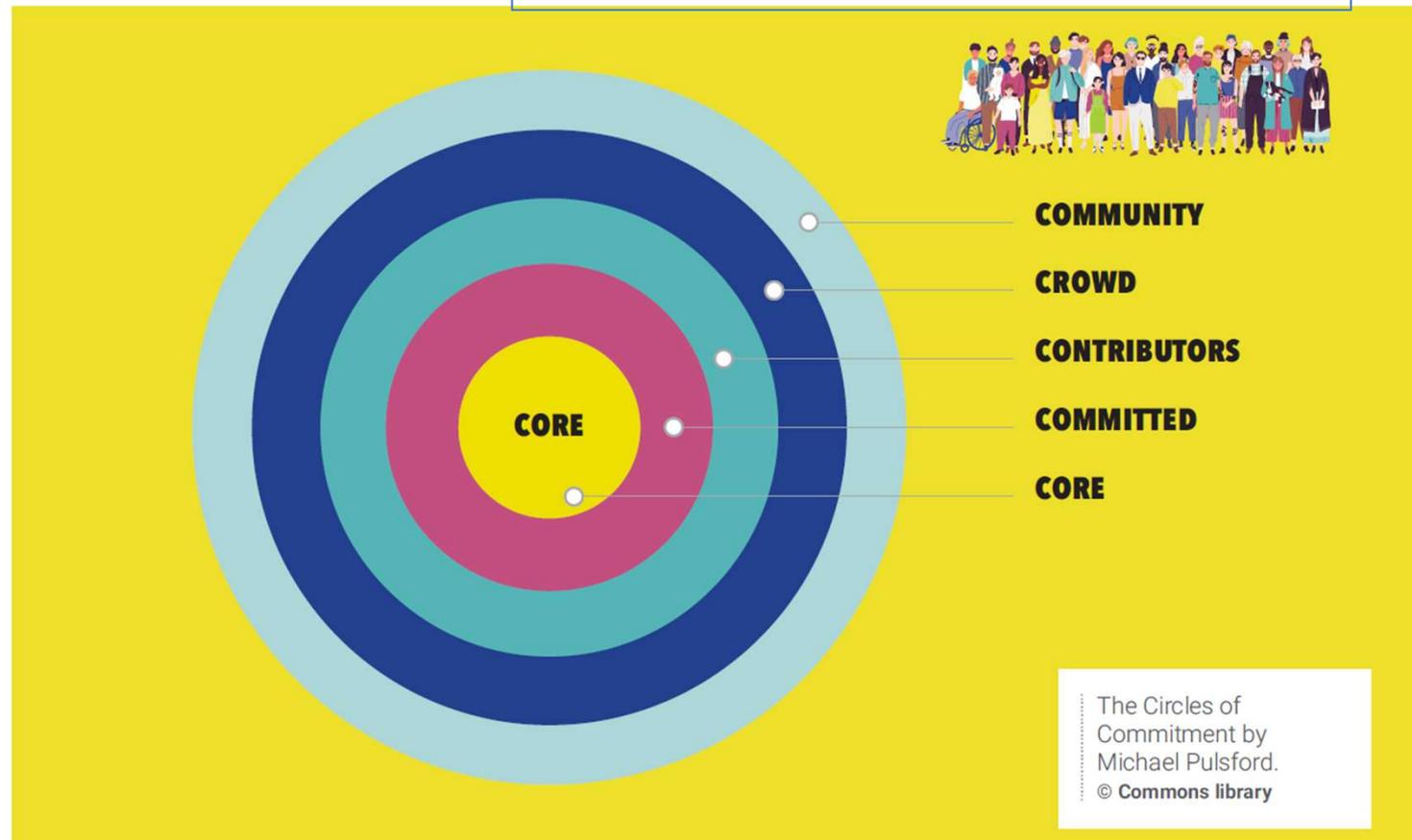


7 ICA principles

- **Voluntary and open membership**
- **Democratic member control**
- **Member economic participation**
- **Autonomy and independence**
- **Education, training and information**
- **Cooperation among cooperatives**
- **Concern for Community**

Who is making up my Energy Community ?

The Circles of Commitment



Brupower, Belgium

Brussels



500 members

Board of Directors of 6

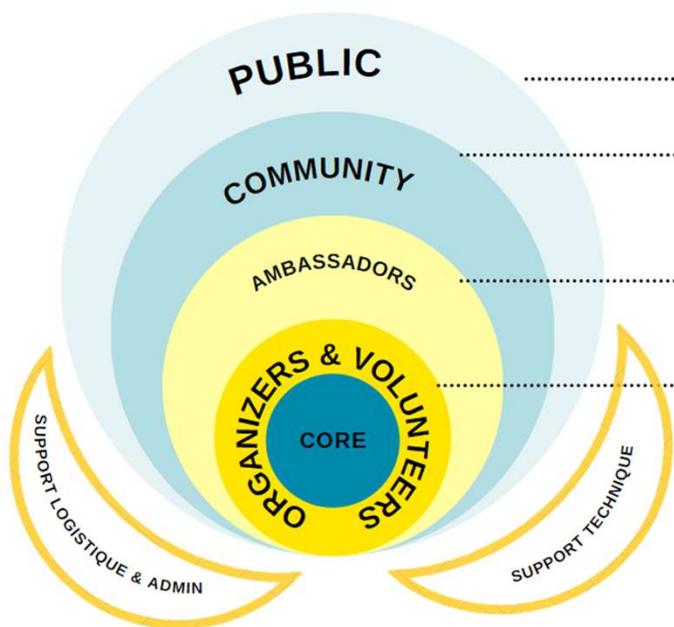
20 volunteers

3 part-time employees



© Brupower coop

Brupower, Belgium



You want to be informed by our newsletter / social networks...

You follow our activities closely, and participate in events

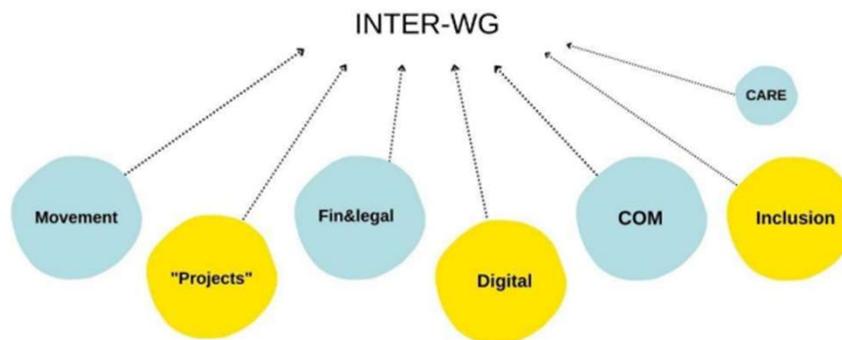
You get active to make the project known around you! You agree to be contacted for specific activities

You are part of a working group that meets regularly and you are committed to the long-term.



More time

More responsibilities



Urstrom, Germany



- energy cooperative
- founded in 2010 in Mainz, Germany.
- 500 Members
- 17 PV systems: 1.1 megawatts peak (MWp) installed capacity.
- Supply of green electricity to members
- e-car sharing service with 8 electric cars at 5 sharing stations as well as cargo bike sharing.

The different circles

1. COMMUNITY – the group of people you want to reach

The UrStrom community consists of citizens living in Mainz and the Rheinhessen region.

2. CROWD – the members of the community who showed an initial interest in your project or topic

People that know about Urstrom, its services and the values

- 
- test drives,
 - annual event – open to all – called “UrStromUnterwegs,
 - monthly meeting for members and interested citizens called “UrStromClub,
 - local public events,
 - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

3. CONTRIBUTORS – those members of the Crowd who volunteer, buy shares or donate

Members, users of the e-carsharing services

neighbourhood centre or a café

4. COMMITTED – those Contributors who structurally engage with and support your project

Members that vote on the GA, working groups

General Assembly, “UrStromClub”

5. CORE – those Committed people without whom the energy community would not exist

4 board members, 5 supervisory board members

Volunteers: 1. events, 2. Technical (monitor, clean and repair the solar PV installations, manage the e-carsharing platform 3. Communications (website,, design communication)

What about One-Stop-Shops?

Guidance material and advanced initiatives such as the [Urban Innovation Vienna](#) helped shape the establishment and operation of our LIFELOOP OSSs in:

- Zagreb (Croatia)
- Crete (Greece)
- Bistrița (Romania)

3 OSSs & 3 approaches:

- Municipality-led
- Cooperative-led
- Hybrid

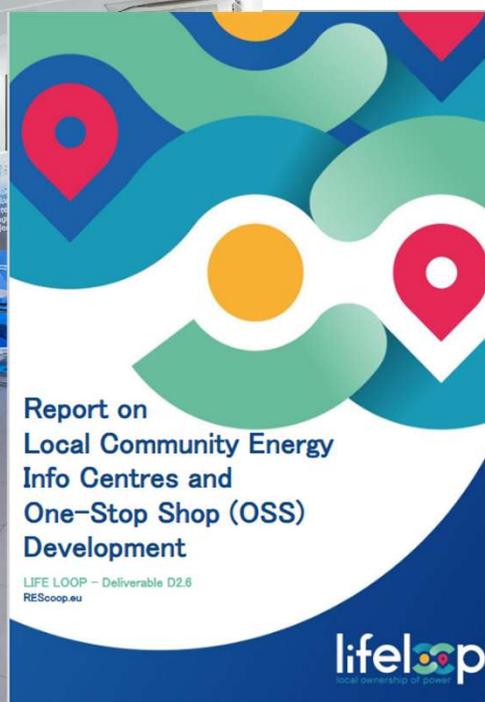


Image: OSS Zagreb



Zagreb's OSS

Municipality-led

Initial municipal funding

Main services: technical-, legal assistance, and energy poverty alleviation

Target audience: citizens, people in vulnerability, local businesses





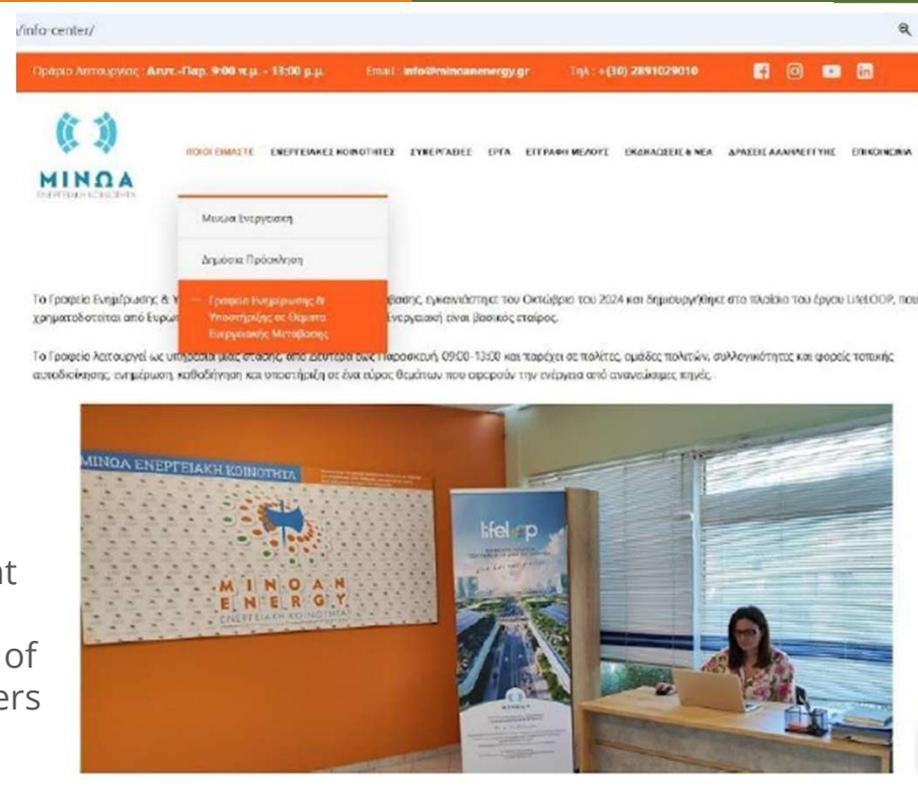
Crete: Minoan Energy Community

Cooperative-led

Volunteer-driven with municipality collaboration

Main services: technical-, legal and advocacy support, public engagement

Target audience: citizens, members of coops, wider community, policy makers





Bistrița's OSS

Hybrid: joint effort

Limited (project-based) support from municipality, backed by volunteers and local businesses

Main services: legal-, financial assistance and awareness campaigns

Target audience: citizens, local community, energy cooperatives



What's coming up

Enabling Energy Communities to SHINE across Europe

European Network for One Stop Shops providing Operational Support Services for energy communities

Discussions will focus on operational matters, such as training, management, financing and practical arrangement of services.

Start from **pilot** & ambassador regions:

- BE
- ES
- IT
- PT
- BG
- CY
- DK
- FR
- GR
- HR
- LT
- NL
- RO

Questions & Answers

Contact details

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antonia.proka@rescoop.eu

The logo for 'shine' features the word 'shine' in a bold, lowercase, yellow sans-serif font. A small, stylized sun icon with radiating lines is positioned above the letter 'i'.

