

## Energy communities: Building Citizen Acceptance and Engagement

4 December 2024

9h00 – 18h00

**Novotel Budapest City (Budapest Congress Centre), Budapest, Hungary**

Energy communities empower local populations to generate, consume, and manage their own renewable energy, fostering energy independence and resilience. They promote sustainable development, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and combat climate change, as well as stimulating local economies through job creation, and reduced energy costs for residents. By decentralising energy production, energy communities enhance grid stability and reduce transmission losses, contributing to a more efficient and sustainable energy system overall.

The EU is supporting energy communities through various initiatives and regulatory frameworks. The **Clean Energy for All Europeans** introduced changes to ensure energy communities have access to the grid and can participate in the energy market on equal footing with traditional energy producers. Several different programmes provide finance, technical support and knowledge exchange to energy communities, including LIFE, Horizon Europe and the European Regional Development Fund.

This workshop will highlight the role of people in energy communities, focusing on citizens and key stakeholders. You'll learn practical methods and approaches to raise awareness, motivate, and engage those crucial to creating and developing energy communities. The emphasis will be on the early stages of building these communities, offering training and insights on how to successfully mobilize support and involvement.

## AGENDA

Moderation: Katharina Krell & Simon Hunkin, Thematic experts, Policy Learning Platform

8h30 – 9h00	<b>Registration and welcome coffee</b>
9h00 – 9h20	<p><b>Opening session and welcome from Interreg Europe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opening words</b> – Katharina Krell &amp; Simon Hunkin, <i>Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform</i></li> <li>• <b>Welcome and introduction to Interreg Europe and the Policy Learning Platform</b> – Diane Bulon, <i>Policy officer Interreg Europe Joint Secretariat</i></li> <li>• <b>Thematic introduction of the topic:</b> policy framework, Interreg Europe projects - Katharina Krell &amp; Simon Hunkin, <i>Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform</i></li> </ul>
9h20-9h30	<b>Ice Breaker</b>
9h30 – 10h15	<p><b>Keynotes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Europe's Policy Framework and Support for Energy Communities</b> – Achille Hannoset, <i>European Commission, DG Energy</i></li> <li>• <b>Energy communities: typology and key features</b> – Dirk Vansintjan, <i>REScoop.eu</i></li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A session</p>
10h15-10h40	<b>Coffee Break</b>
10h40-11h30	<p><b>Building social acceptance for energy communities</b></p> <p><i>Interreg Europe projects partners present inspiring methodologies and approaches to build social acceptance for energy communities, either identified from their own experience or elaborated in cooperation with their consortia.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EKIOLA: Energy Community Citizens involvement</b> – Iñigo Sagasti, <i>Basque Energy Agency &amp; Leire Arrizabalaga, Leartibai Foundation (SireENERGY – Interreg Europe)</i></li> <li>• <b>Increased awareness and consensus building among stakeholders</b> – Michalis Karakonstantis, <i>University of Patras, Greece (BIOWIND – Interreg Europe)</i></li> <li>• <b>Communication Strategy for Energy Communities</b> – Ágnes Szalkai-Lőrincz, <i>Friends of the Earth Hungary (SHAREs – Horizon 2020)</i></li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A session, with particular emphasis on the following questions: <i>What aspects must be addressed to build acceptance? How to turn acceptance into engagement?</i></p> <p>Interactive flash group work (tbd)</p>
11h30 – 12h40	<p><b>Engaging citizens in energy communities</b></p> <p><i>Interreg Europe projects partners present the successful approaches to build social acceptance for energy communities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ENLUCES: a Germinator of Energy Communities for Extremadura</b> – Beatriz Rico Sánchez &amp; Ana Martínez Pinilla, <i>Extremadura Energy Agency, Spain (ShareRES – Interreg Europe)</i></li> <li>• <b>Engagement path for stakeholders</b> – Mathieu Bourgeois, <i>Energie Commune, Belgium (REC4EU – Interreg Europe)</i></li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A session</p> <p>Interactive flash group work (tbd)</p>
12h40-14h00	<b>Networking Lunch</b>

14h00-15h45	<p><b>Interactive Training Session</b></p> <p>Interactive training on two key topics: the circles of engagement, and the socio-dynamic mapping.</p> <p>After a short introduction to the methodology, participants work in breakout groups before presenting their work in the plenary.</p> <p><b>The circles of engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theory of member engagement, the engagement plan, working with a tool</li> </ul> <p><b>The socio-dynamic mapping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership models with municipalities, various ways of municipal co-development, the socio-dynamic map, how to prioritize community engagement activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderation of the session: Dirk Vansintjan &amp; Óscar Güell, RESCoop.eu</i></p>
15h45-16h05	<b>Coffee Break</b>
16h05-17h00	<p><b>Success stories of energy communities</b></p> <p><i>Interreg Europe project partners present good practices on successful involvement of citizens in energy communities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bürgerenergie Pfaffenhofen Cooperative</b>, Holger Klos &amp; Helmut Muthig, Citizen Energy Cooperative and ESV of Pfaffenhofen, Germany (<b>LEEWAY</b> – Interreg Europe)</li> <li>• <b>Regional funding for local advisors to support citizens' initiatives</b> (CIRENA), Anaïs Cognacq, ALEC Gironde, France (<b>REC4EU</b> – Interreg Europe)</li> </ul> <p><i>Q&amp;A session</i></p>
17h00-17h30	<b>Wrap-up and conclusions</b>
17h30	<b>End of the Workshop</b>
17h30-19h00	<b>Networking Cocktail</b>