

Energy Communities: Working Together.



Why is it important to build and sustain an energy community?

Energy communities have a key role to play in Europe's digital energy transition and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. However, energy communities often face difficulties sustaining over longer periods of time. Why is this the case?

Whilst energy communities currently face issues such as lack of financial support [[Source](#)] there are practical steps energy communities can take to increase their resilience for the future. A good starting point is understanding your current energy community membership and how you can deepen your engagement with the wider community.

This can mean means widening key community roles beyond the usual suspects of those who are able to actively contribute, the technically savvy or more well-off [[Source](#)].

Did you know?



In early 2024 there were an estimated 9000 energy communities across Europe. [[Source](#)]



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What motivates people to join an energy community?

In mid-2022 the [ENCLUDE project](#) surveyed 280 members of energy communities in 14 European countries on why they joined an energy community. The top responses:

Climate-friendly living (42%)

Community (31%)

Opportunity to save money (29%)

Self-sufficiency (29%)



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Working Together.



Collaborating with others and keeping people committed and engaged is an ongoing concern when you're managing an energy community. Explore some ideas for how we can work better together... for longer!



Understanding your membership

Understanding your energy community membership is an important starting point. It's likely that you will have different types of members. Some members might not be able or want to invest much time in the community, whilst others may only want to invest time at strategic points. Other members might want to be involved in the day-to-day running of the community. What motivated people to get involved?



Build a team to lead

Relying on one or two people to lead an energy community can be risky in the long-term. Plan for sustainability by encouraging engagement and ownership of the energy community both now and in the future.

How will you identify members who might like to get involved? How can you support others to develop the skills they need? Longer term will you need to employ people for key roles to ensure sustainability?

Supporting Engagement and Interaction

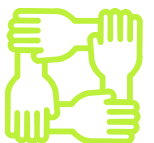


Be clear about how and when you will communicate with your members. Will you send an email once a month with updates and news? Or perhaps every quarter? Will you hold regular drop-in or Q&A sessions? What about face-to-face events or socials?

Onboarding new members to your energy community is also key. How will members have a say and get involved? What rights and responsibilities do members have? What processes do you have in place for disagreement or complaints?

Establishing shared vision and setting expectations from early on can help ensure everyone's on the same page going forward.

Beyond the community: Raising Awareness



Engaging with people outside of your current energy community membership is key for sustainability. This will help drive new member recruitment but also support engagement with the wider community. How can you reach different people in your community? Who is missing from the conversation currently? How can your energy community be more inclusive and supportive?

