

Energy Communities: Making decisions about solar energy.



Why solar energy matters for energy communities



“Solar energy is pivotal for a people-centred transition as it can democratise energy production by enabling individuals and local communities to actively participate in and benefit from the energy transition.” ([Climate Action Network](#))

Solar energy plays a key role in Europe’s digital energy transition and a more sustainable future. By 2050 it’s estimated that 1 in 2 households could produce and store their own solar energy.

Solar panels support people becoming prosumers (both consuming and producing energy) and playing a more active role in the digital energy transition.

Did you know?



By mid-2025 10% of Europe’s energy was generated by solar panels or photovoltaic (PV) [[Source](#)].



Solar panels on a lawn by Andreas Gücklhorn is on an Unsplash license

Some benefits of solar energy

- Scalable
- Reduces the cost of energy
- Potential to reduce energy poverty
- Reduces fossil fuel reliance
- Limited environmental impacts
- Easy to install
- Supports individuals and communities producing their own energy.

[[Source](#)]



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Making decisions about solar energy.



Depending on where you live, there are a variety of challenges that may be factors to consider as an energy community interested in solar energy. These include:



Regulatory frameworks

Policies and support vary across Europe. Some EU countries have clear guidelines and support for energy communities, others lack the legislation needed.



Legal structures

Forming a co-operative or community owned energy entity can be complex. Where can you go for support?



Grid integration

Solar energy needs to be matched with flexibility services and digital solutions (e.g. smart meters, battery storage) to ensure efficient use.



Equity and access

Not everyone has access to rooftops or capital for installation. Models for collective ownership are key. How can you best ensure that you are being equitable and inclusive?

Income generation potential



Legislation and other support for generating income from solar energy generation by energy communities varies country-by-country across the Bloc.

Are there financial initiatives or support available?

How can you ensure a stable income from your communities generation of solar energy?

[Source]

Useful resources



REScoop.EU support energy communities and have created resources to support groups of citizens think through the types of energy transition projects and initiatives that best align with their needs. See: <https://www.rescoop.eu>

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has a useful summary of the role of energy communities in the digital energy transition. See [Empowering people - the role of local energy communities in clean energy transitions.](#)