

Supporting the digital energy transition in your community.



What is an energy community?



“Energy communities are legal entities that empower citizens, small businesses and local authorities to **produce, manage and consume their own energy.**” ([Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission](#))



Photo credit: [tribesh kayastha on Unsplash](#)

Why join or start an energy community?



Energy independence

Manage and generate your own energy locally.

Financial savings

Reduce energy bills by optimising usage and accessing community-shared renewables.

Energy justice

Empower communities to have a say in how energy is produced, used, and shared.

Citizen-led energy in Europe... more common than you think!

A recent study cited by Clean Air Task Force found approximately 10,500 citizen-led renewable energy initiatives across 30 European countries from 2000–2021.

Solar panels (photovoltaics) were used by over 80% initiatives, with biomass and hydropower as the next most common technologies. [[Source](#)]



Funded by
the European Union

This factsheet is part of the [Supporting the digital energy transition in your community](#) case study produced by the [Every1 project](#), funded by the European Union's (EU) Horizon Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027), grant No. 101075596. Responsibility for this material's content lies solely with Every1 and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the EU. The material is licensed [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), unless stated otherwise. Icons used (aside from the Every1 logo, funded by the EU logo and related images) are used according to Canva licensing terms: <https://www.canva.com/policies/content-license-agreement/>.

Supporting communities.



Challenges in using smart meter data and digital tools

The role of smart meters

Smart meters track real-time energy use, helping energy community members save, share, and balance energy more efficiently.

Some real-life applications of smart meters include:

- Using apps or web portals to upload/view smart meter data.
- Participating in community challenges (e.g., “most improved energy saver”).
- Identifying peak usage patterns and plan energy-intensive activities more efficiently.
- Sharing data anonymously for collective monitoring and policy advocacy.

Did you know?



As of 2023, Europe has over 9,000 energy communities where citizens generate and share renewable energy locally. [\[Source\]](#)

Fragmented tool landscape

The digital energy market has many apps and platforms, but they are often incompatible or region-specific, making it harder for communities to adopt a single system for tracking and managing energy.

Digital literacy gaps

Some users may not know how to read or interpret smart meter data, or how to use it to adjust their energy habits.

Privacy concerns

Sharing detailed energy usage data can raise questions about storage, access, and usage. Strong consent processes and safeguards are essential.

Lack of integration

Even when communities have smart meters and digital tools, they may not connect seamlessly. Local energy platforms may not sync automatically with apps, limiting visibility and requiring manual effort.

Potential solutions

Co-designed apps tailored to community needs, support workshops to improve digital literacy, and unified platforms promoted by energy communities to ensure smooth integration.