

REScoop.eu manifesto

Europe's energy transition: active energy citizens take ownership

Policy priorities for the
2024 European
Parliament elections

REScoop.EU

Proud sector organisation of  cooperatives
europe





A cooperative vision for Europe

REScoop.eu's policy priorities for 2024 European Elections

Power to the people

The power of cooperation

REScoop.eu is the European federation of citizen energy cooperatives (now officially recognised in the EU's Clean Energy Package as 'citizen' and 'renewable' energy communities). It supports citizens and communities looking to invest directly – through ownership – in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and other technologies that contribute to decarbonising the energy system. REScoop.eu is a sector member of Cooperatives Europe, the European branch of the International Cooperative Alliance.

A vehicle for sustainable development and prosperity

REScoops encompass citizen and renewable energy communities, often organised as cooperatives within the social economy. They invest in producing, sharing, supplying and distributing electricity, heating and cooling from renewable energy sources. Additionally, they assist their members in participating in energy efficiency, citizen-led renovations, alleviating energy poverty, promoting flexibility, and embracing shared e-mobility.

Energy communities at the heart of inclusive innovation

Energy communities represent an alternative to commercial energy companies and are characterised by open and voluntary participation, direct ownership by citizens, collaboration with local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and local authorities, democratic control, and a commitment to providing community (socio-economic, environmental) benefits rather than pursuing profit.

Energy communities play a crucial role in fostering a stronger, healthier and more energy-sufficient and resilient community. They contribute to keeping Europe's economy centered on serving its citizens while preserving the vitality of its democracy.



Ensuring the energy transition benefits all citizens

The need for a just energy transition

The energy transition entails significant societal changes that cannot be achieved successfully without recognising and empowering citizens and their local communities. The recent cost-of-living crisis and skyrocketing energy poverty rates, exacerbated by the ongoing energy crisis, underscore the need for a just, inclusive, bottom-up, citizen-led approach to the energy transition and the economy.

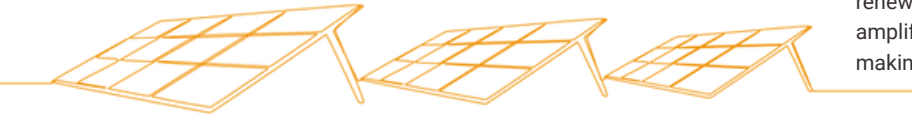
The commons - energy for all

Access to energy is a basic right - essential for heating, cooling, light and transport. As 'common goods', fair access to renewable energy sources (wind, sun, water), energy efficiency and other clean energy technologies must be ensured for all citizens, including those experiencing vulnerability or energy poverty. Energy communities, through their projects, ensure that locally produced renewables, and the resulting economic benefits, stay within the community. Research in [France](#) and [Germany](#) shows that locally controlled and financed renewable projects deliver 2 to 8 times more return to the local economy than projects built by external developers.

Boosting the local economy

Energy communities allow citizens and local communities to be involved in decisions about their energy production and consumption, controlling the prices they pay and shielding them from energy crises. They also support education and awareness in the local community, promoting behavioral changes towards energy use. They collaborate with municipalities and social service providers to reach vulnerable households. Energy communities help build strong acceptance and public support for renewables in both rural and urban areas. They diversify the energy supply by using local renewable energy sources, creating green sustainable jobs, boosting local growth and facilitating long-term energy savings.

All over Europe, examples abound of how an energy system can prosper when the for-profit focus is abandoned in favour of ecological, democratic and social purposes. Collective ownership and democratic governance strengthens the ties and the responsibility of the local community towards the success of projects and other issues crucial for the energy transition. As the only by the EU recognised way of collectively governing the energy system, energy communities not only increase accessibility to renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, but also amplify voices underrepresented in climate and energy decision making - a necessary precondition for a just energy transition.



An enabling environment for energy communities

The ongoing energy crisis highlights Europe's urgent shift from centralised, import-dependent fossil and nuclear energy to renewable energy: a transition to a sustainable, decentralised, carbon-free, democratic energy system. Energy communities, organising citizens and their local communities to actively participate in decarbonisation, contribute significantly to the EU's main climate and energy policy objectives.

While EU legislation, including the Clean Energy Package, Fit for 55, and REPowerEU, has recognised and supported energy communities, Member States have been slow to develop and implement concrete on-the-ground policies and measures. Renewed efforts are needed to fully unleash the meaningful role of active energy citizens in addressing climate change.

Energy communities should be guaranteed the right to participate in the energy market, ensuring equal and proportionate treatment in regulations, in order to provide a level playing field. National level enabling frameworks are needed to empower citizens across the EU to exercise these rights, including access to information, expertise, finance, and the removal of administrative and regulatory barriers. The co-benefits they generate for Europe's energy system, its resilience and security should be appropriately recognised and valued.

Energy communities can also serve as a vehicle for citizens, local authorities and SMEs to contribute to and benefit from larger projects. Citizens have the capacity to invest up to 240 billion euros towards the energy transition by 2030. Through Power Purchase Agreements, local self-consumption, and energy sharing projects, energy communities can help industry lower costs, boost competitiveness, and ensure local and sustainable energy production and consumption. European strategic autonomy in the renewables sector can -and should- be developed with citizen ownership at its heart.





Our priorities

REScoop.eu asks candidates and their political parties to agree with us that Europe needs to:

1

Ensure full and effective transposition, implementation, and enforcement of EU rules to create robust regulatory and enabling frameworks that level the playing field for energy communities in the energy market.

2

Develop an EU-level strategy for how different EU and national actions can support the development of energy communities across different areas of EU policy.

3

Ensure that energy communities are supported through available EU funds and the application of State aid rules, and national funding programmes are developed to help derisk community projects.

4

Encourage inclusiveness in energy communities by lowering barriers to entering such initiatives and by supporting them to take a stronger role in achieving social objectives and becoming more inclusive towards vulnerable and energy poor households.

5

Ensure that energy communities can pass on the benefits of local renewables production to their members, particularly through lower energy bills, by guaranteeing access to grids for energy sharing, the ability to supply, and to enter into Power Purchase Agreements.

6

Support the role energy communities can play in providing flexibility, including through better collaboration with system operators, particularly at the local level.

7

Guarantee that energy communities can play a larger role in decarbonising local heating and cooling through an enabling and financial framework to support Community Heating and Cooling.

8

Encourage the role of energy communities in reducing overall energy consumption through energy savings, citizen-led renovations, and a commitment to the efficiency first principle.

9

Promote collaboration between municipalities and energy communities by providing more funding and technical support to local authorities, and by clarifying rules around public procurement and concessions to support participation of energy communities in public tenders and concessions allocation.

10

Support energy communities to participate in larger projects, such as offshore wind, through the use of dedicated financing tools and programmes, and the inclusion of criteria to allow energy communities to participate in public auctions and tenders.



Who is REScoop.eu?

REScoop.eu is the European federation of citizen energy cooperatives.

We are a growing network of 2.250 European energy cooperatives and their 1.500.000 citizens who are active in the energy transition.

Talk to us

We are keen to discuss how our recommendations can be developed and implemented together towards the strengthening of Europe's economy and society. We encourage candidates and parties to approach us directly to collaborate and work together.

Talk to us



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Cooperatives Europe is the European cross-sectoral organization promoting the cooperative business model. On behalf of its 84 member organisations from 33 European countries across all

business sectors, we promote the **Talk to Cooperatives Europe** cooperative business model in Europe. **Our priorities are aligned with the ones of**

Cooperatives Europe.



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