Supporting Energy Communities
the role of the municipality

Balkan Cooperation lab

7&8 December 2022

the most successful community energy projects in Europe are those where groups collaborate with local authorities

COLLATERAL BENEFITS

Community energy schemes bring many local benefits beyond contributing to climate objectives.

- *Improve energy efficiency and reduce energy poverty, either through cheaper tariffs or dedicated schemes to actively involve and support vulnerable consumers*
- *Enable a more active form of local citizenship, they encourage inhabitants to feel more involved and concerned about heir neighbourhood, and engage in other sustainable activities*
- *Boost local economic development, projects owned by local community members can contribute up to 8 times more to local added value creation*

There are 10 key areas that have been identified within the recently published SCCALE 203050 Municipal guidelines

1. *Favourable Regulations for Community Energy*
2. *Engagement & Outreach*
3. *Support in financing projects*
4. *Sharing staff & resources*
5. *Developing Supporting Platforms, Tools and Programmes*
6. *Facilitating dialogues between local stakeholders*
7. *Giving access to public sites*
8. *Buying community power or heat*
9. *Co-investing in a jointly owned local project*
10. *Becoming a direct member of an energy community*

1. Favourable Regulations for Community Energy

EXAMPLES

In May 2021, **Valencia's (ES)** Climate and Energy Foundation announced a new policy goal: to establish one hundred Energy Communities within the city by 2030.

In **Leuven (BE)** the 2030 Roadmap chapter on Generating Green Energy states that "A local energy cooperative is to be established, to invest in local production in and outside of Leuven. The aim is for at least 40% of households in Leuven to have joined up by 2030."

In the **Eurometropole de Strasbourg's (FR)** Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) there is a specific goal to reach 40% of renewable energy by 2030 and at least 1 MWc (6 000 mÇ) of community-owned installed solar power in 2030.

2. Engagement & Outreach

https://energycommunityplatform.eu/

It's time for some sunny savings
BALKAN-SOLAR-ROOFS.EU

Campaigning for Solar

EXAMPLE

The Balkan Solar Roof project is supporting Porec (HR), Mostar (BA) and Kragujevac (SRB) to inspire other municipalities in the Balkan region to increase t solar energy.

3. Support in financing projects

Seed funding to kick start energy communities

Municipal guarantee for financial institutions

EXAMPLE

Dutch eco-district of EVA-Lanxmeer in **Culemborg (NL)**. **Thermo Bello** is the citizen energy cooperative used a municipal guarantee to obtain a bank loan to finance the initial phase in 2008.

EXAMPLE

Energy community acting as an energy service company (ESCO)

In 2017 **Halle (BE)** decided to change the street lighting to more efficient LED system via a contract between the city and the local citizen energy cooperative **Pajopower**.

Crowdfunding (Croatia)

Enables fundraisers to collect money from many people via online platforms and it is a sure way to ensure the involvement of local communities

EXAMPLE

On the Archipelago of **Cres-Lošinj (HR)** in 2022 - The campaign intended to collect €65 000 over 2 months but was successful in collecting more than €100 000 in just 3 weeks for the Filozići solar power plant

4. Sharing staff & resources

Working with students

EXAMPLES

Eurométropole de Strasbourg (FR) – have a trainee who for her last six months will be a full-time graduation project to assist the Energy Community called the **Brasseurs d'énergie** to carry out their first solar energy installation on the roof of a local primary school.

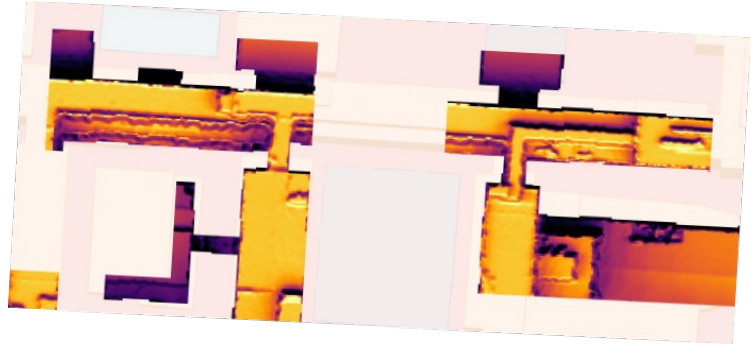
Leuven (BE) works with **CORE**, a cooperative of engineering students of the local university

5. Developing Supporting Platforms, Tools and programmes

Maps & Atlases

Mapping potential is a straightforward way to help citizens and cooperatives get started, by providing an overview of local deposits in terms of renewable energy or available space for installations.

EXAMPLE



Varazdin (HR) has an interactive web application/map showing solar potential, allows the citizens and all 9 suburbs of the city to calculate the recommended power of the solar power plant on their own facilities.

One-stop shops

Municipalities can also create dedicated one-stop shops to gather all information needed to set up community energy projects, start collective renovations or collective purchases.

EXAMPLES

Valencia (ES) has opened a one-stop shop Energy Office, run by the Foundation València Clima y Energía, which helps and advises citizens, for free, in all questions relating to energy.

Ghent (BE) supports **Energent**, the local citizen energy cooperative, to set up a dedicated one-stop shop for collective renovations thereby tackling this issue of housing refurbishment at neighbourhood level,

6. Facilitating dialogues between local stakeholders

Small energy communities may have useful contacts and resources, but local authorities or local or regional energy agencies can have a bigger reach. The local authority can be very helpful in putting Energy Communities in touch with relevant economic players, and other societal, environmental or energy actors in the area.

EXAMPLE

In Greece, the Development Agency of the region of Karditsa (ANKA) helped set up Energeiakh Koinothta Karditsas Synpe (ESEK LLC), the regional Energy Cooperative Society.

7. Giving access to public sites

A local authority owns buildings (town halls, sport halls and schools) and land that could be used by energy communities looking for available space for their renewable installations

EXAMPLE

In Serock (PL) The cooperative is building a solar power plant on the site of the former municipal landfill. The municipality is leasing the land to the cooperative at a preferential rate

8. Buying community power or heat

To be able to contract energy communities, local authorities can define qualitative criteria in their tenders that more or less directly favour citizens-owned energy supply.

EXAMPLE

Eeklo (BE) tendered the concession for a district heating network based on waste heat and renewables with a minimum of 20% citizen ownership and up to 20/100 extra points if more.

In the future cities should look to set up

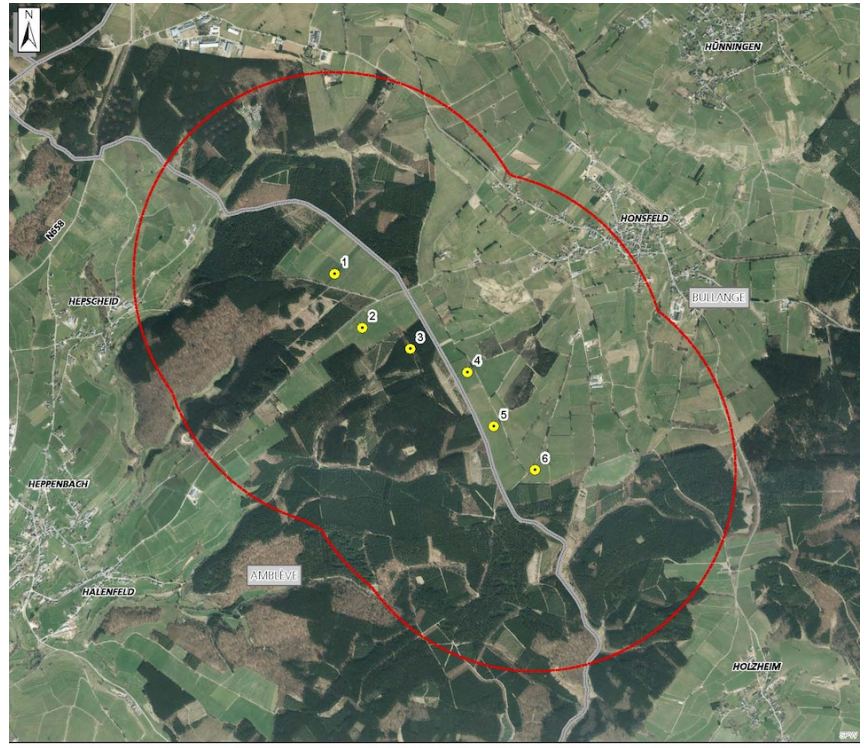
‘Community Power Purchase Agreements: C-PPAs’.

9. Co-investing in a jointly owned local project

Municipalities can be a partner and co-owner with an energy community of a local project. In this scenario, two separate entities invest jointly, and the public funds are poured into a joint investment vehicle.

EXAMPLE

Municipal councils of both **Amel and Büllingen(BE)** decided to organise a public tender for the development, construction and operational management of a wind farm.



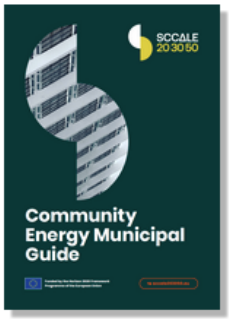
10. Becoming a direct member of an energy Community

When a municipality directly joins an Energy Community it sends a message to its constituency

EXAMPLE

The municipalities of **Minoa Pediadas, Archanes-Asterousia and Viannos (GR)** are members of the Minoan Energy Community.

COMMUNITY ENERGY MUNICIPAL GUIDE



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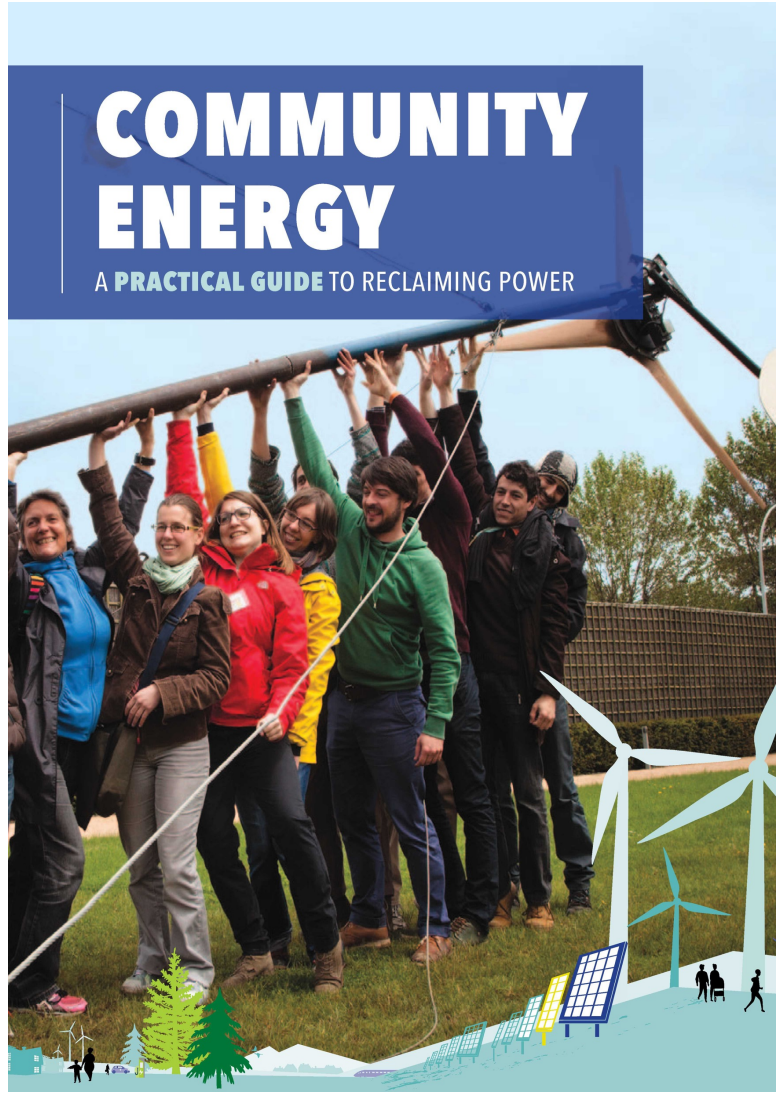
This guide will support municipalities to encourage and implement municipal collaboration with energy communities, or participation in energy communities outside public procurement, but taking into account the public procurement requirements and tendering framework. It will also provide examples from local pioneers to inspire further action.

DOWNLOAD

https://www.sccale203050.eu/toolkit/

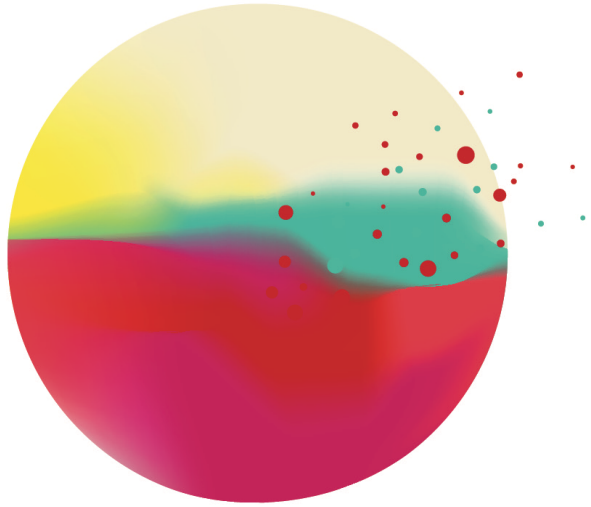
https://municipalpower.org/best-practice-guides/guide2/



https://energy-citi.es/communityenergy

The energy community platform (EU)

https://energycommunityplatform.eu/



ENERGY**CITIES**

www.energy-cities.eu

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More EXAMPLES?

- GHENT'S "NEIGHBORHOOD ENERGY" (BE)
- HEERLEN'S SOLAR COOPERATIVE (NL)