



# Drivers and barriers to energy community projects at national and local levels

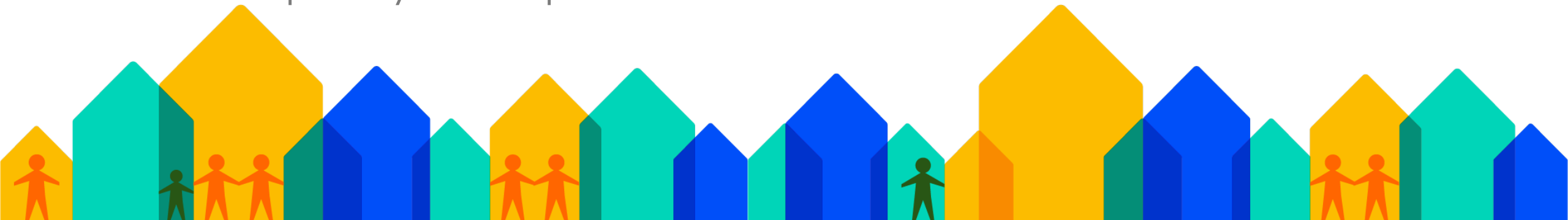
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Inclusive energy services to fight energy poverty and empower citizens



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# Conclusions from research and interviews with Sun4All project leaders on the ground: national & local levels

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Improving national legislation

2

Ensuring implementation

3

Adapting municipal law

4

Getting politicians on board

5

Making information accessible

6

Providing resources and incentives

7

Leveraging on partnerships

8

Putting energy justice at the forefront

# Energy communities' contribution to energy poverty reduction 1/5

New developments on energy poverty at EU level

- Common definition in EED (deal reached in trilogues)
- More discussions to come regarding indicators
- Recognition of energy communities as social actors in EU policies

But, today, in practice, **energy communities actively contributing to energy justice remain the exception** (Source: Hanke, 2021)

- Narrative: local/citizen-led vs inclusive
- Lack of diversity of members
- Lack of action of energy communities for vulnerable groups: offering lower memberships fees, targeting these groups directly, engaging with energy-poor households outside of the community (less than 25%)
- In most cases (65%) becoming a member of an EC does not result in lower energy prices compared to market prices

# Energy communities' contribution to energy poverty reduction 2/5

## **To fulfil this social role, energy communities need to be supported**

- financial resources to offer lower participation fees
- human resources to engage in energy justice activities & collaborate with the relevant partners

Encouraging ECs to contribute to energy poverty alleviation should never replace structural efforts and policies at EU, national & local level

**Minimum EU standards** are crucial to provide some political certainty to project leaders and investors on the ground

**EU Solar Strategy target** of 1 REC per municipality above 10,000 inhabitants by 2025 is an opportunity increase awareness among local policymakers and get them on board

# Energy communities' contribution to energy poverty reduction 3/5

## Recommendations at EU level

- Ensuring Member states report on how they plan to support the social contribution of energy communities in their NECPs
- Adapting the enabling framework so that energy communities are granted certain advantages/benefits when they engage in energy justice activities
- Conditioning future dedicated funding to energy communities (Energy Communities Facility under the Life Programme) to the redistribution of social and local benefits by the community
- Pursue current efforts to foster energy communities and renewable projects in EU legislation (EED, RED, EPBD, state aid, EU technical support etc.)

# Energy communities' contribution to energy poverty reduction 4/5

## Recommendations at national level

- Improving transposition to provide more legal certainty
- Making sure that social welfare rules do not limit the participation of low-income citizens to energy communities
- Ensuring that legislation mitigates the risk of cooptation by incumbent interests (through stricter enforcement, monitoring unfair practices)
- Improving implementation to keep people (especially vulnerable people) motivated: closer cooperation between utilities, ECs, municipalities; clear procedures (e.g. electronic platform)
- Improving funding/incentives: better price incentives, more sources of funding (beyond ad hoc support), tackling EC-specific challenges

# Energy communities' contribution to energy poverty reduction 5/5

## Recommendations at local level

- Adapting municipal rules to foster energy communities (urban planning, budget, long term agreements)
- Introducing green public procurement rules to facilitate the involvement of municipalities in energy community projects
- Making information accessible both for citizens and municipalities (awareness, OSS, training, etc.)
- Ensuring that municipalities have the human and financial resources to adequately support and engage in energy community projects
- Encouraging energy community initiatives among social housing residents
- Leveraging partnerships (other citizen projects, using existing networks in the local community, cooperation with companies under some conditions)



**What about your  
own experiences?**

**Other insights,  
reactions?**

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# Thank you!

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