

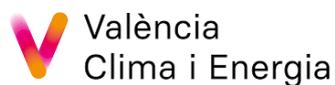
The logo for POWERUP. The word "POWER" is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The "U" is a stylized, green, rounded shape that loops back to the right. The "P" is a larger, green, rounded shape that loops back to the left, partially overlapping the "U".

POWERUP

The catalyst for social innovation in the energy market

A vertical bar on the left side of the page, transitioning from purple at the top to blue in the middle and green at the bottom.

Communication & Dissemination Plan



Author

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Chepko Danil Vitalevich on Shutterstock

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Introduction

About this Strategy

This document is meant to guide the consortium partners in the outreach activities of the project. It describes the scope and means of communication and dissemination around POWER UP. The strategy will be updated in M25, e.g. in October 2023. All communication and dissemination activities will be kept track of. Their reporting (D7.3) is foreseen for the end of the project with a first draft due also in M25.

About POWER UP

Recent estimations conclude that more than 50 million Europeans are affected by energy poverty, a silent phenomenon that has many different causes. Within this context, the implementation of the energy transition could lead to higher energy costs for end-users (e.g., via increased taxes or grid fees) and increased up-front investments, for example for renewable energy installations. Low-income families, whose expenditure increased by 33% between 2000 and 2014, are impacted the most, preventing them to benefit from the advantages of the energy transition. Consequently, special actions must be taken to ensure that the energy transition is fair. The European Union's "FitFor55" legislative package includes measures that are meant to "leave no one behind". It includes a promising set of proposals to tackle energy poverty, including a definition of energy poverty to help monitor progress.

Regional and local public authorities have a strong role to play in fighting energy poverty. The production of renewable energy is a key pillar of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAP). Based on these plans, POWER UP will offer the opportunity for pilot organisations to develop new schemes (financial, organisational, legal) so that the added value generated by renewable energy production and energy efficiency is employed locally to alleviate energy poverty. This is why the overall objective of POWER UP is for cities to go beyond their planning role and foster the emergence of local energy market players with a social agenda. This includes municipal companies and citizen energy cooperatives.

The definition of local energy market players *with a social agenda is still very broad. Each pilot city will identify the people and organisations in their place that are best suited to seize the entrepreneurial opportunity around renewable energy. Each of them will contribute to a common definition during the project lifetime and therefore enabling its replication.*

To push boundaries further, three main objectives are guiding the course of action of the project:

- Develop or strengthen local energy market players with a social agenda so that energy services can be provided at the local level while addressing energy poverty.
- Implement these pilot schemes in a collaborative way together with energy poor households: they benefit from renewable energy production and energy efficiency measures, without having to bear the financial risks.
- Disseminate the experience of the consortium members to increase the number of social market players tackling this issue in Europe.

Six pilot schemes will be developed in six locations across Europe: Eeklo (Belgium), Heerlen (The Netherlands), Valencia (Spain) and Skopje (North Macedonia) as well as in Campania Region (Italy) and in Czech Republic.

These schemes will be co-created with energy poor households and local stakeholders (municipalities, social organisations, energy utilities, citizen energy communities etc.), leading to at least EUR2.5 million investment in sustainable energy before the project ends and involving 55,588 energy poor consumers.

Six sister organisations (5 cities and one municipal company) will join the pilots and follow their capacity building activities to increase own skills and, in the mid and long-term be able to replicate the project results.

- KUMANOVO-GAS (Municipal Energy company - MK)
- Castellammare di Stabia (City - IT)
- Breda (City – NL)
- Albalat dels Sorells (City – ES)
- Leuven (BE)
- 2 SEMMO members (City - CZ)

The project consortium

Supported by a European city network, a leading UK university, a Belgium cooperative and finance experts, the consortium will build capacity of more than 160 people in local organizations. This will allow these players to either provide affordable energy to fuel poor households, and/or to reinvest benefits to carry out energy poverty mitigation measures.

Composition of the consortium:

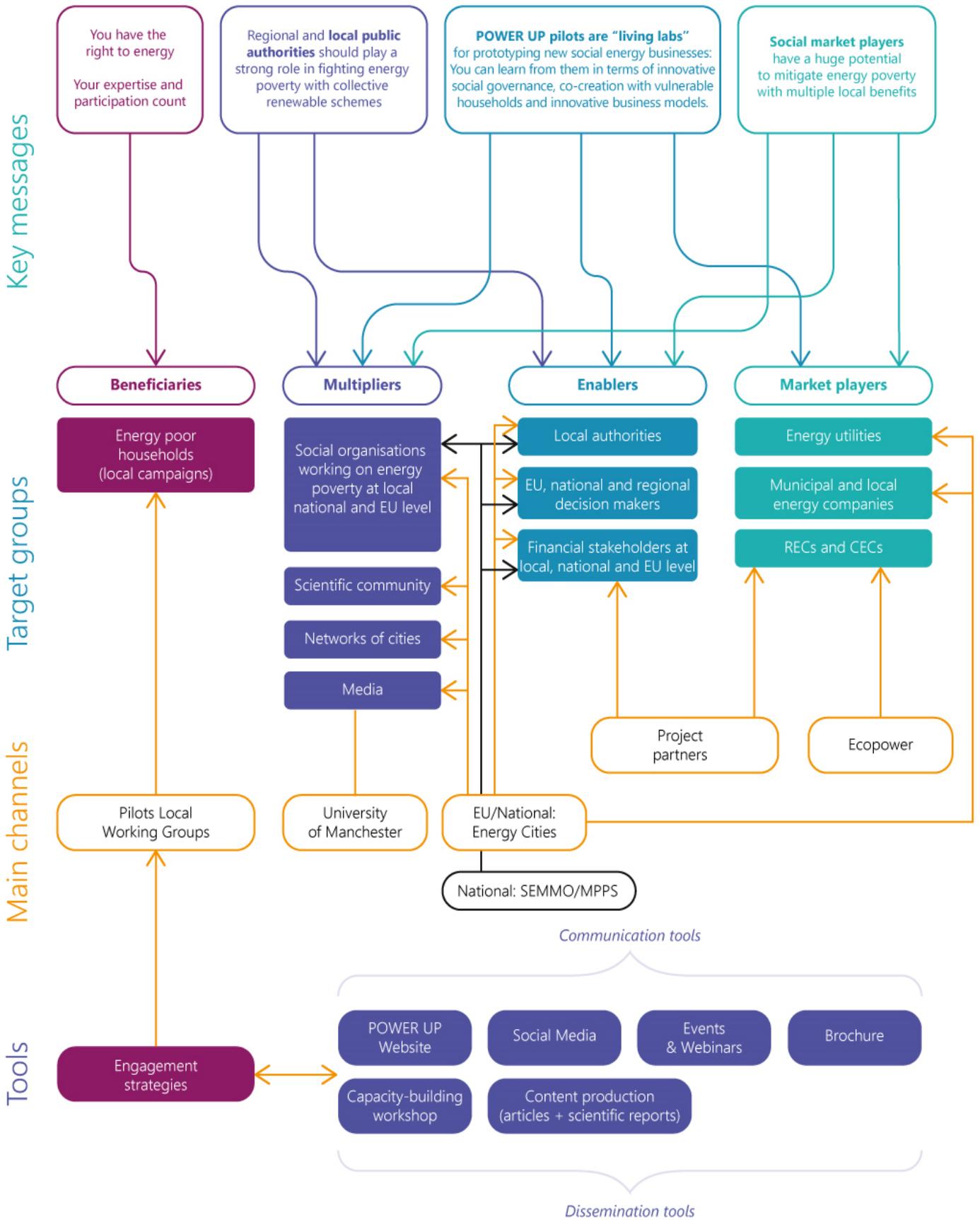
- Energy Cities (coordinator)
- Akcionersko drushtvo za energetske dejnosti gradski energetski sistemi-skopje ad (AD GES)
- Makedonska platforma protiv siromashtija (MPPS)
- Gemeente Heerlen (HEE)
- Sdruzeni energetickych manazeru mest a obci zs (SEMMO)
- Comune di San Giuseppe Vesuviano (UCSA)
- Observatori valencia del canvi climatic - Fundacio de la comunitat valenciana (VCE)
- Las Naves - Fundacion de la comunitat valenciana para la promoci3n estratergica el desarrollo y la innovacion urbana (LNV)
- Stad Eeklo (EEK)
- ECOPOWER (ECO)
- The University of Manchester (UNIMAN)
- Sinloc - Sistema Iniziative Locali SpA (SNL)



01

Outreach overview: Target groups and overarching key messages

The overall objective of the communication and dissemination plan is to ensure the project visibility and effective dissemination of POWER UP outputs.



1.1

Main target groups

The people and organizations we want to address through communication and dissemination can be split into three big categories:

ENABLERS - Organizations that can foster the emergence of local energy market players with a socio-environmental agenda

- Local authorities willing to replicate the POWER UP concept
 - POWER UP sister organisations in Belgium, Czech Republic, Italy, North Macedonia, The Netherlands and Spain (5 cities and one municipal company)
 - Other local authorities across Europe.
- EU, national and local decision-makers.
- Financial institutions and citizen's funding organizations at local, national and EU level.

PLAYERS - Current or future energy market players - Organizations providing energy services

- Energy utilities
- Municipal and local energy companies
- Renewable energy communities (RECs), and
- Citizen energy communities (CECs)

MULTIPLIERS - Organizations whose mission is closely related to the topic and who act as multipliers

- Social organizations working on energy poverty at local, national and EU level.
- Scientific community.
- European networks of cities, NGOs
- Media.

1.2

Key messages of POWER UP

POWER UP is a catalyst for social innovation in the energy market: it identifies and supports innovators who (can) act as local energy markets players with a socio-environmental impact.

- Energy poverty is a structural problem, and we need to foster the active role that the people suffering from it can play in the energy market
- The strong involvement of public and citizen organizations in local energy activities facilitates the pursuit of a not-for-profit goal, i.e. breaking the poverty circle while advancing society towards a carbon-neutral future
- POWER UP pilot cities demonstrate the entrepreneurial opportunities and create business prototypes with a socio-environmental agenda that can inspire others.



02

Communication

Using the consortium's variety of contacts and channels, POWER UP will reach out to various stakeholders EU-wide with tailored messages, ensuring that communication activities target their respective interests.

2.1

Objectives

The communication strategy consists of promoting POWER UP to multiple audiences at the national and EU levels. It needs to echo the impacts intended by the project:

- Engagement of energy poor consumers
- Creation of different support schemes
- Contribution to energy poverty policies
- Contribution to reducing CO₂ emissions

Via strong messages the communication provides visibility about the project partners and results as well as the contribution of EU funding in tackling energy poverty. It positions the project's achievements in the public narrative around the causes and consequences of energy poverty and its mitigation through social market players. The aim is to transform the perceptions and attitudes towards energy poverty and the active role that the people suffering from it can play in the energy market. This awareness-raising around the entrepreneurial opportunities as well as social and environmental benefits of a local energy market intends to encourage and engage more people in the field. Communication will be based a lot on networking with like-minded organisations and projects.

POWER UP will start its communication activities in the first months and will design messages and measures specifically tailored to its target groups and objectives. The plan will be further adapted as the project evolves, including continuation beyond its lifetime. The project will use innovative and the most suitable communication tools. The input of all consortium partners will be crucial, especially with pilot cities as the main ambassadors to communicate project outcomes.

2.2

Key communication messages and tools

To reach the relevant audience, the project will communicate its messages along the following lines:

- Social energy market players have a huge potential to tackle both the energy poverty and climate challenge: who are they and how do they do their business?
- Regional and local public authorities should play a strong role in bringing together local people and organizations around renewables to fight energy poverty.
- The POWER UP pilots are “living labs” for prototyping new social businesses: they experiment innovative social governance, co-creation with vulnerable households and the implementation of innovative business models.

The communication at local level in and by pilots will also address beneficiaries in promoting the message that “As a vulnerable household, you have the right to energy and can improve your situation by getting involved in collective action.” This more direct communication with subjects and the general public will follow the principles of social marketing, i.e., marketing for social change. This will mostly take place via WP 3 activities (engagement with vulnerable households).

For a coherent communication, a visual identity and brand will be produced for the project. This will be used for all types of communication activities, from the dedicated project website, over information in social media, brochures, or promotion at events. All the planned tools are detailed in chapter 4. Communication materials from previous projects, notably when available in the pilot’s language, will be used for maximizing their impact and optimizing resources.



03

Dissemination

The POWER UP consortium will ensure that knowledge generated by the project will be made available to enablers and market players. This will help maximize the project's impact beyond the partners' scope of action and contribute to the emergence of further socially-driven local energy market players all around Europe.

3.1

Objectives

To share and transfer knowledge generated in the project, especially with cities and local stakeholders, the consortium will wisely identify relevant results and translate them into a comprehensible language that encourages action by others. Dissemination will thereby contribute to increasing technical skills of organisations who can potentially become themselves socially-driven local energy market players. Dissemination activities will be implemented in close cooperation with WP 6 “Scaling local pilot and replicating” (M7-48).

Moreover, in order to maximise results, POWER UP has the ambition to pursue the exploitation of project results after the project has ended. The pilots and the other local and regional project partners are ready to use POWER UP outputs after completion of the project. By gaining additional experience, they will further refine their strategies to alleviate energy poverty. All project partners agreed to provide the material and guidance produced for free to other interested cities and public authorities in Europe.

3.2

Target Audience & Key Messages for Dissemination

Stakeholders that can best make use of the POWER UP results	Messages
<p>Local Authorities</p>	<p>You would like to speed up renewable energy production and mitigate energy poverty in your place, but the challenge is overwhelming?</p> <p>See how other cities combine social and economic matters through innovative methods and support to entrepreneurs: we have a wealth of good practices and tools you can get inspired from!</p> <p>Use (and share) the project's resources! Take example from POWER UP pilot sites to bring a network of socially-driven local energy market players to life!</p>
<p>Energy market players (incl energy utilities, local and municipal energy companies, RECs and CECs)</p>	<p>Our pilots are "living labs" for prototyping new social businesses. You can learn from them in terms of innovative social governance, co-creation with vulnerable households and innovative business models.</p>

**EU, national and regional
decision-makers**

Our long-term objectives foresee a radical increase in renewables and a socially just transition. Socially-driven local entrepreneurs are powerful to contribute to this goal while providing a solution at the local level to the current ecological, social and economic trilemma. Our know-how can support you in a better implementation of favorable regulations and a stronger dialogue with local governments and local stakeholders while designing national and regional strategies for the socially just transition.

**Financial stakeholders (local,
national, EU levels)**

Our know-how can help you gain trust in innovative local energy businesses and help you access new markets where money is invested in line with strong CSR principles.



04

Getting the word out: multi-platform communication and dissemination

The consortium wants the POWER UP information to be widely spread and strongly visible. Therefore, communication and dissemination will be based on a multi-pronged strategy whereby many different platforms and tools will be used, in line with the target groups communication habits and needs.

Energy Cities, as the WP7 coordinator, will make extensive use of their network to disseminate project activities and results. The association will leverage on its leading role in the Covenant of Mayors Office to ensure that project activities and results will be shared with the Covenant of Mayors Community and will participate in the CoM working group on the topic. The members of the association (cities and regional and national associations of cities) will benefit from the activities listed above (such as webinars, articles, publications, workshop) to learn, exchange their approaches and replicate actions. The strength and experience of Energy Cities to involve local actors in EU-level activities (debates, workshops, conferences) will ensure visibility and attention to POWER UP.

In addition, all other consortium partners will be tasked with promoting content through their own communication channels and networks. The University of Manchester, for example, led the EU Energy Poverty Observatory for years. It therefore has very good knowledge and possibility to reach out to Observatory's members, gathering more than 800 organizations from all over the world. The Macedonian Anti-Poverty Platform (MPPS) is an alliance of 50 non-governmental, non-partisan and volunteer organizations, associations of citizens, support groups, syndicates and individuals working towards promotion of social justice and equality, participatory democracy and civic solidarity. They have a large outreach at national level as well and are also part of the Board of the European Anti-Poverty Network.

All dissemination activities and their key performance indicators will be reported in a dedicated report.

4.1

Visual identity for project communication materials

In cooperation with a graphic designer, ENC will develop a set of graphic elements (task 7.2) to build a visual identity for the project. Project branding will include a logo and spin-off graphic elements, templates for publications and presentations, social media cards, etc., and graphic guidelines. The graphic guidelines will help ensure consistency across all the project products/deliverables. ENC will make sure that the graphic guidelines follow the EC's recommendations.

POWER UP also aims to build capacity and develop skills at a local level. Therefore, local communication campaigns are foreseen in WP3 (task 3.5). ENC will provide support to the consortium partners to implement their local campaigns and ensure coherence of the project's communication activities, while taking into account local specificities. Each communication support will include the acknowledgement of H2020 funding.

Target	Enablers – Market players - Multipliers
Timeframe	M4 – December 2021
Partner	ENC

4.2

Online promotional activities

Project website

A project website will be developed to reach potential replicators and anyone else interested in the project and topic. We will create a website that is user- friendly, engaging and brand consistent. It will meet the latest technical standards and will be hosted on www.socialenergyplayers.eu.

Energy Cities is leading the development of the website. All partners are invited to contribute with specific inputs for the website pages, related to their place and activities. In addition, each consortium member will promote POWER UP on its own corporate website. Moreover, the project's website will link to the web presence of each pilot, which will be implemented in each pilot's local communication campaign.

Target	Enablers – Market players - Multipliers
Timeframe	M6 – February 2022
Partner	Lead Partner: Energy Cities Content contributions from partners

Social Media

ENC will coordinate social media activity and ensure community management at EU level. ENC will make use of Twitter and LinkedIn in priority and will build on its large audience (over 10,600 Twitter followers). Posts will highlight latest activities from POWER UP or engage with relevant posts. Partners will be encouraged by ENC to engage with the POWER UP posts via their own social media accounts, especially in their national languages. ENC will also make sure posts are being followed by relevant organizations and persons who can act as multipliers.

The main project hashtag will be #EUPowerUp or #socialenergyplayers and will provide visibility while easing the tracking of posts.

In addition, we might curate content related to the project topic (energy poverty, social innovation and entrepreneurship, etc.) via Energy Cities Scoop.it. Content could be embedded in the POWER UP website to provide regular news.

Target	Enablers – Market players - Multipliers
Timeframe	Full project duration
Partner	Lead Partner: Energy Cities Content contributions from all consortium partners

4.3

Content production

Articles

At least 24 articles will be published during the project: at least one article will be edited and published by each consortium member in its own language and disseminated at national level. These articles with actionable and research-backed ideas will be widely promoted via the POWER UP website, consortium members' websites or third-party websites (Covenant of Mayors, media websites, EISMEA website, etc.) and disseminated via project's social media and partners' newsletters.

Target	Enablers – Market players - Multipliers
Timeframe	On average, one every 2 months
Partner	Lead Partner: Energy Cities

Participants: all partners

Brochure

The project will produce a brochure on setting up social energy market players. This publication will be made available in 7 languages: French, English, Dutch, Czech, Macedonian, Spanish, and Italian. We expect the brochure to be downloaded 1200 times from the website until the end of the project.

Target	All at national and EU level
Timeframe	M43 – April 2025
Partner	All

Scientific publications

POWER UP is not primarily a research project, however, its approach is based on academic insights in the field of energy poverty. Based on the pilots' evaluation, at least one **scientific publication** will be written by the University of Manchester and shared with the scientific community to be integrated in the broader body of knowledge. Budget is foreseen to ensure an open access to this published article. The University will also perform at least one presentation of the project in an academic event.

Target	Scientific community (Multipliers)
Timeframe	M46 – July 2025
Partner	Lead Partner: UNIMAN Participants: Pilots

4.4

Capacity-building

Webinars at EU and national levels

A total of nine webinars is planned to build capacity amongst stakeholders:

- Three European-level webinars will be organized in English by ENC with the participation of the consortium partners (with around 40 participants each as a realistic target, i.e., 120 in total).
- Six webinars will be organized in national languages (one webinar per pilot country) with a focus on the national context. Minimum 30 participants per webinar are expected (180 in total).

Target	EU webinars: Enablers - Market players - multipliers National webinars: Enablers - Market players Multipliers
Timeframe	M24 (Sept 2023) – M46 (July 2025)
Partner	All

Organization of one EU capacity building workshop

In addition to the webinars, but also to the planned final advocacy conference (D 6.5) and on-the-spot capacity building workshops organized at national level (WP6), one capacity building workshop will be organized at European level. It will gather at least 50 participants from the main target groups and will primarily invite potential replicators (cities, municipal companies, RECs, CECs...) and policymakers outside of the pilot countries. The workshop will be held back-to-back with a European event such as EUSEW, the European Green Week, the European Week of Regions and Cities, Energy Cities Annual Conference, etc.

Target	Enablers - Players
Timeframe	M42 (March 2025)
Contribution expected from partners	Lead Partner: Energy Cities Participants: pilots

4.5

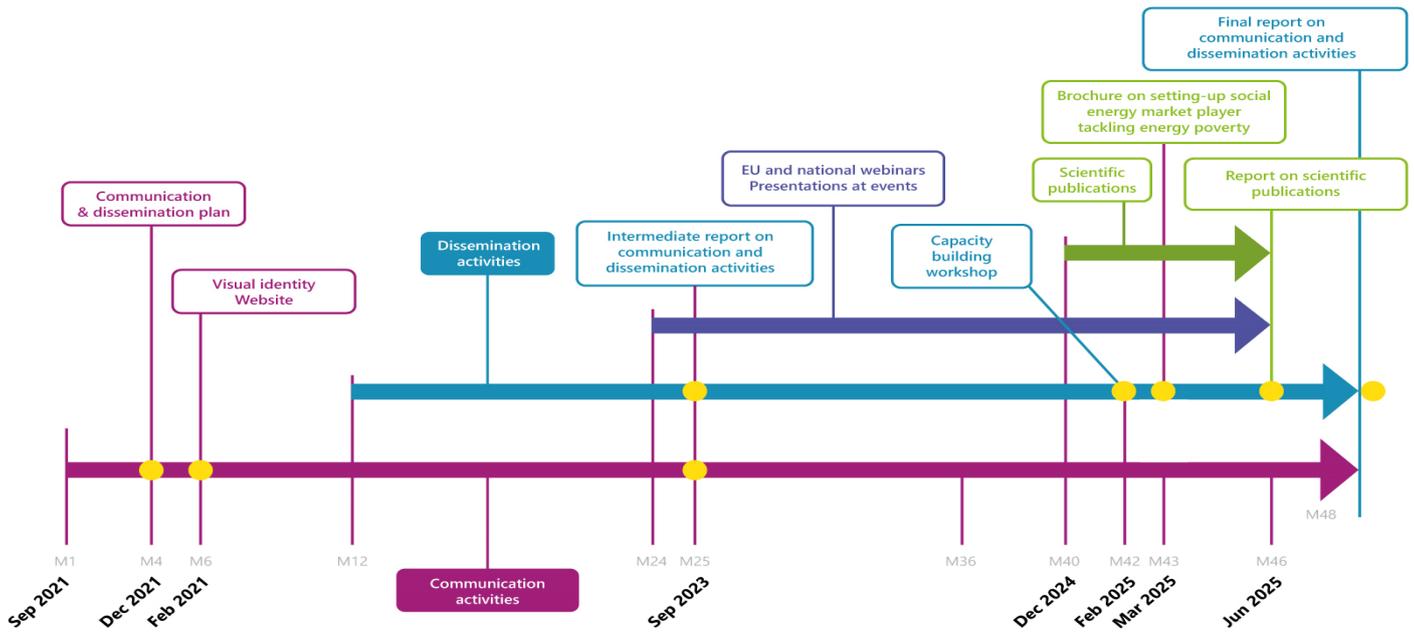
Presentations at events

Each partner organization will perform presentations of the project and its results during various events and conferences. 17 presentations are foreseen in total. Events attended will be decided according to the target audience and the relevance of the topic.

Target	All
Timeframe	Full project duration
Partner	All

4.6

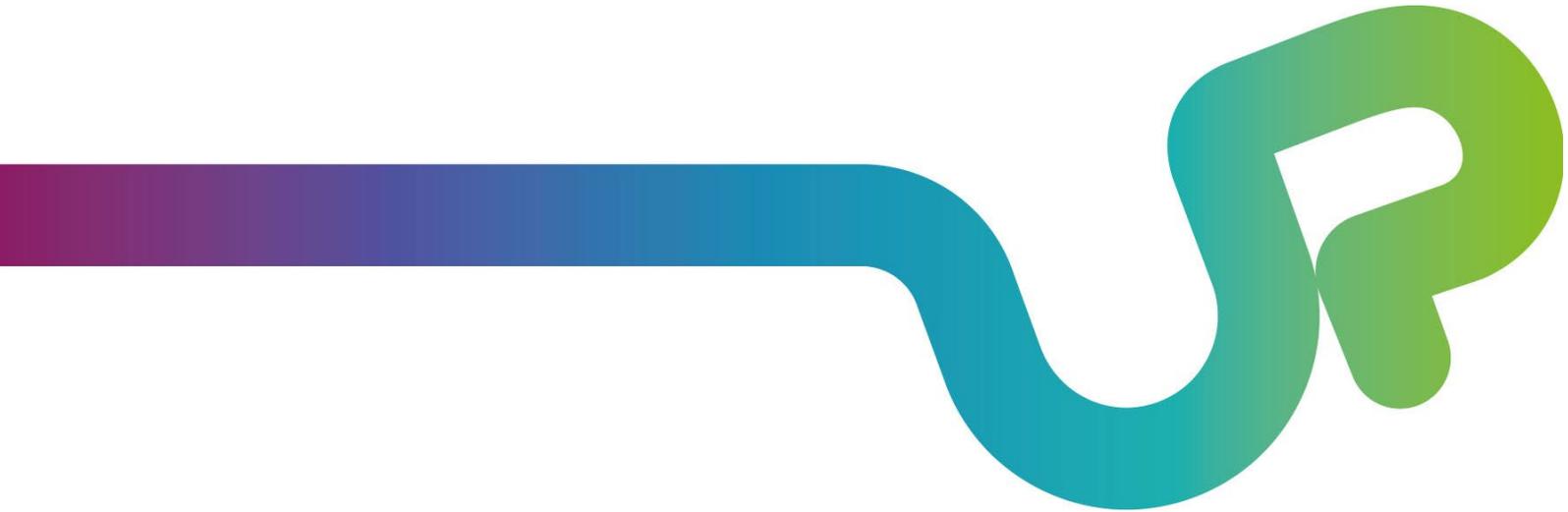
Timeline of communication & dissemination activities



List of activities in other WPs related to communication or dissemination:

Activities and products	Main target audience	Diffusion: Local, National, EU	Key Performance indicators
Capacity building workshops and sister organisation scheme to go beyond the pilots primarily in pilot's countries (T6.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sister organisations Local authorities, energy market players and social stakeholders Policy makers 	Local National (BE, IT, CZ, NL, ES, MK)	<p>Sister organisations fully involved in the project (participation in the project meeting in their country webinars and final conference).</p> <p>One capacity building workshop per pilot country (50 participants each from local, national stakeholders)</p>
Local communication and engagement materials developed by the pilots (leaflets, posters, radio spots, visuals for social media, etc.) (T3.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy-poor households 	Local National (BE, IT, CZ, NL, ES, MK)	<p>6 packages of communication-engagement materials produced and used by the pilots</p> <p>At least 55 588 energy poor consumers reached</p>
Guideline on engagement strategies with vulnerable households (D3.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For sister organisations to enlarge and anchor their local communities For other Local stakeholders who intend to replicate the scheme 	Local National European	<p>The Guideline to be used by the sister organisations (one per pilot country)</p> <p>700 downloads from website</p>
Guideline on RES production business case including a general part and a case studies part per country (D4.1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sister organisations Local authorities in Europe Energy market players including municipal companies and REC / CEC 	Local National European	<p>The Guideline to be used by the sister organisations (one per pilot country)</p> <p>700 downloads from website</p>
Policy recommendations (T6.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities and EU decision makers 	National European	<p>Policy recommendations mentioned in at least 4 publications</p> <p>400 downloads from website</p>
National Guides for a step by step approach to set-up social energy market players tackling energy poverty (T6.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities in pilot countries and elsewhere in Europe Energy market players including Renewable Energy Communities REC at local, national and EU level. 	Local National	<p>6 national guides (one per pilot country) in national languages</p> <p>1200 downloads from website in total</p>
Final advocacy conference (T6.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy-makers (EU, national, local) Energy market players including REC/CEC Local authorities Media and academics 	European	<p>1 conference gathering 80 participants</p>

Table 1 – Dissemination and exploitation of results with performance indicators regarding the target audiences



05

Monitoring & Evaluation

5.1

Monitoring Tools

As lead partner for communications and dissemination, Energy Cities will make sure all partners provide progress update on their local outreach activities. Continuous dialogue between Energy Cities and partners will be ensured through:

- The internal project mailing list
- Regular calls between the partners will include updates on communication activities.
- Monitoring tables for communication and dissemination activities
- Google analytics and social media analytics tools to monitor website and social media performance.

5.2

Indicators

Energy Cities will evaluate communication activities' impacts through the following key indicators:

PRODUCED CONTENT

- Scientific production: 1 scientific article published, 1 presentation at academic conference
- Articles: At least 24 articles published, at least one per partner in its national language
- Brochure on setting up social energy market players: brochure available in 7 national languages (FR, EN, NL, CZ, MK, ES, IT)

WEBSITE

- Traffic on the project website: at least 20.000 website visits, 40.000 pages viewed
- Statistics for downloads of the project's resources: 1200 downloads of the brochure

SOCIAL MEDIA

- 300 tweets with project-related hashtag (#EUPowerUp and/or #socialenergyplayers)
- At least 50K tweet impressions over a 1-year period

EVENTS

- Attendance: 350 participants in events (EU and national webinars, EU capacity-building workshop;
- Visibility at events: 17 presentations at third-party events

This set of qualitative and quantitative check points should allow Energy Cities to properly monitor and evaluate POWER UPs communication activities, and to adjust them if need be. Energy Cities will share information on the performance of the communication activities in the framework of the project reporting.



www.socialenergyplayers.eu



#EUPowerUp #socialenergyplayers



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