

# Newsletter

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**Welcome to the quarterly newsletter from EC²: Energy Citizenship and Energy Communities for a Clean Energy Transition.**

Funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Grants, EC²'s aim is to discover what it takes for energy citizenship and energy communities to thrive.



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# Introduction

**W**elcome to the summer EC<sup>2</sup> newsletter! This issue arrives after a fruitful consortium meeting held in the idyllic surroundings of one of our practice partner communities, Torri Superiore. After months of online meetings, two intensive days of in-person work cemented our strong collaboration and generated rich ideas for our ongoing activities. In this newsletter you can find the full meeting report; read about **what's happening on the ground** in energy communities; download our latest policy brief; explore a brand new **database of citizen energy initiatives**, and enjoy more updates from our project and beyond.

As we enter the final year of EC<sup>2</sup>, developments are moving fast: the Community Energy Academy is growing and reaching hundreds of participants in dozens of countries; we're developing a prototype of our web tool for energy citizens based on hours of co-creation sessions; and our research is starting to generate fascinating insights that we look forward to sharing.



Thank you for joining us in our ongoing investigations into energy citizenship and energy communities, and we hope you enjoy this newsletter!







# Consortium Meeting: Research meets practice in Torri Superiore



Fran Whitlock, GEN Europe



For a few days in May, the EC<sup>2</sup> consortium members traded offices and lecture halls for the winding cobbled streets and carefully restored medieval buildings of Torri Superiore ecovillage.

**Torri Superiore is home to our practice partner,** Ture Nirvane cooperative, and between sharing updates on our research and working together on our upcoming deliverables we were able to hear first-hand accounts of the community's energy solutions. It was clear that technical aspects are only part of the story: the social aspect of the community has also been crucial in creating a long-lasting and successful collaboration.

During our consortium meeting, we reviewed what we've achieved until today: an active consortium with several published deliverables (available on our [downloads page](#)), ongoing research, successful co-creation with citizens and a newly-launched Community Energy Academy. Sharing our personal key highlights, we particularly noted our in-person connections, our multidisciplinary collaboration, and our co-creation events as stand-out activities. Looking into the future, we especially hope to build a strong legacy and create impact, well beyond the project's finalisation.

We also heard with curiosity about our latest findings from our research partners, which inspired conversations about our upcoming work such as our **Energy Citizenship Empowerment Kits** and our **digital tool for energy citizens**.

We all enjoyed the relaxing and recharging energy that this change of setting offered and returned to our organisations full of excitement about the insights we shared and the new ideas that bubbled up in our work sessions, on walks out in nature, and over delicious homemade Italian food. We're confident that this meeting has strengthened our collaboration even further, and we're looking forward to the final year of EC<sup>2</sup> - and already thinking about what might come next together.





# Community Energy Academy Launched



Yu-Yi Huynh and Benedetta Buccolini,  
ICLEI Europe

The *Community Energy Academy* kicked off successfully this Spring! The practical online training programme already has over 300 registered participants from over 40 countries. The past modules focused on introducing the concept of energy citizenship and providing support in overcoming knowledge-related barriers.



Both self-learning materials and recordings of the live training sessions are available [here](#)



## Did you take part in the Academy? Help us and share your insights!

We are hoping to gain further insight from your experience and are kindly asking you to fill the feedback survey. All feedback will be used to improve the Academy content and support the development of the Autumn modules.



Answer the survey [here](#)



# How to mainstream energy citizenship in EU laws & tools?

The **second EC<sup>2</sup> policy brief** provides recommendations on how to adapt EU regulations to best guide and support member states in furthering both energy communities and energy citizenship. EU law can be very powerful, since it secures a certain degree of uniformity and makes it easier for member states to implement measures (even ones which may at first be necessary but unpopular). It helps to mainstream new approaches, including energy communities and energy citizenship, which have traditionally been seen as more grassroots in nature. In addition, there is a need to improve how legal information is made accessible to energy communities. The brief provides an overview of the shortcomings at the EU level in this regard, as well as actionable recommendations for regulatory changes and specific actions (particularly in relation to the Energy Communities Repository).

Read the brief [here](#).

## Check out our new policy brief



Daniel Botha, ICLEI Europe



# SolArterra: A step towards ecovillage energy sovereignty



Fanny van Hal, Arterra Bizimodu

Our practice partner in Navarra, Arterra Bizimodu ecovillage, recently took a big step forward towards energy sovereignty with a new solar installation. Project member Fanny van Hal tells about the evolution of the SolArterra project:



***It took us twice the time we had planned,***

but we finally installed our second wave of solar panels with the idea to cover half of our electricity needs as a community. Someone jokingly said during a coffee break: *"These projects always take twice as long as you plan"*. And it's true: we started in 2022 during the energy supply crisis by approving what was, for us, quite a high budget to install the panels. The idea was to install them the same year, but we started the installations in May 2023. We planned to install them in two weeks, which turned into two months because of supply issues! So it's safe to say we are very proud and relieved that we did it. Thanks to the community and friends that collaborated!"

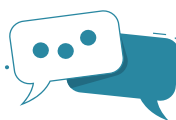




Photo credit: [www.cepconsult.com](http://www.cepconsult.com)

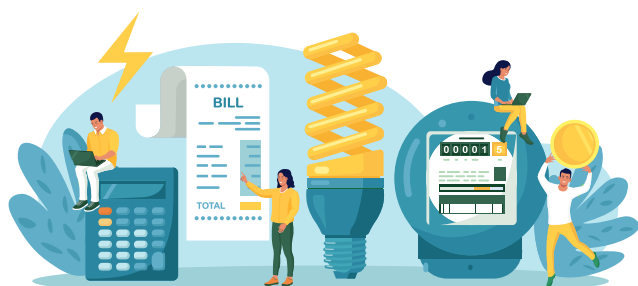
## Local Governments in the Energy Crisis

On April 26, 2023, EC<sup>2</sup> partner Piotr Szymański from Wrocław University of Economics and Business participated in the "Local Governments in Energy Crisis" session during the 15th **European Economic Congress in Katowice**, Poland. The EEC was attended by 11,000 participants in person, and 7,000 who followed the debates online. During the discussion with local government officials, representatives of housing cooperatives from the coal region and the National Chamber of Energy Conservation, Piotr's intervention was based on research carried out as part of the EC<sup>2</sup> project. He highlighted four levels of national barriers to the development of energy communities in Poland: political-economic, regulatory-economic, local government and civic.



Both local government officials and a representative of a housing cooperative from the coal region **emphasised the loss of trust in energy pricing by energy oligopolies in a centralised energy system** - an issue highlighted in many of our co-creation events with citizens.

[Watch the debate here](#)











# Stay connected

## EnergyPROSPECTS database launched

The [EnergyPROSPECTS project](#) has just launched its new online database exploring nearly 600 diverse cases of energy citizenship from around Europe.

Discover inspiring stories of individuals and communities driving sustainable energy initiatives, shaping the future of our energy system and the planet.



From local renewable energy cooperatives to innovative community projects, the database showcases the power of citizen action for a cleaner, greener future. Explore it [here](#).

## Follow us

Whether you're researching energy citizenship, a member of an energy community, working on energy policy, or simply curious about what the green energy transition can look like - **we invite you to stay connected with us on social media:**

[Website](#) (available in English, Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Polish)

 [facebook.com/EC2.EnergyCitizens](https://facebook.com/EC2.EnergyCitizens)

 [@ec2\\_energy](https://twitter.com/ec2_energy)

 [@ec2\\_energycitizens](https://www.instagram.com/ec2_energycitizens)

 [EC² - Clean Energy Transition ResearchGate](#)

