

# 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

After the summer break, EC<sup>2</sup> is back in full action and approaching its final phase. With six months to go, our studies on energy community set-up are concluding, while community engagement activities pick up pace with five energy community open days in the calendar. Meanwhile, after extensive rounds of feedback and testing, our tools for citizens and organisers will soon be launched (read on for details).

It's clear that such tools for citizens are highly pertinent in a time when concern over energy prices remains high: a [September Eurobarometer study](#) showed 86% of people in Europe surveyed believe it is important to take action at the European level to limit the impact of rising energy prices on consumers and customers.



**The question is: will the solutions remain top-down, or can we empower citizens to increasingly take clean, affordable energy production and consumption into their own hands?**

Our research may provide clues on how this can be done, while we hope our policy briefs, tools and events will inspire policymakers and citizens to take action to enable a citizen-led energy transition.





# Consortium meeting report

## “An energy community-enabling community”



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- that's how our advisory board member Prof. Konrad Lachmayer described the EC<sup>2</sup> consortium in the feedback session of our last consortium meeting, held online on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was a chance to take stock as we enter the final six months of the project: highlights included a detailed dive into the preliminary results of research by our partners in the Universities of Leipzig and Groningen on the relationship between energy citizenship and energy community membership. Their work also explores the factors - motivational, diversity and others - that influence individuals' willingness to join energy communities. From colleagues at the University of Graz, we heard about the process of empirical testing of our digital tool for energy citizens, which will soon be ready to launch.

Our policy partners shared their strong progress developing policy recommendations, with [three policy briefs already published](#). Of particular interest to the meeting was the highly-anticipated upcoming brief on coal regions, which will provide novel recommendations for these regions that face unique challenges. Meanwhile, the [Community Energy Academy](#) continues from strength to strength, with hundreds of registrants and upcoming modules on finance and empowerment to look forward to.

During the afternoon we heard feedback from our advisory board, who shared their favourable impressions of our collaboration thus far and made valuable suggestions for the final stretch of the project. These included strengthening our focus on our [concept of energy citizenship](#) (rather than energy communities alone). Ideas already emerged regarding the future of the project's resources, like the [Community Energy Academy](#), to ensure their longevity.



We look forward to the final months of the project, which promise thought-provoking results from our research on energy community set-up, the launch of practical tools for citizens and municipalities, and further recommendations for policymakers in our upcoming policy briefs.



# EC<sup>2</sup> opens doors to energy communities

**B**etween November and March, five energy communities across the EU and UK will open their doors to showcase the power of citizen-led initiatives for a clean energy transition.

Funded and supported by EC<sup>2</sup>, these open days will enable energy communities to actively approach and support interested citizens, local authorities, stakeholders and emerging energy communities.

The first two open days take place during November. In Navarra, northern Spain, EC<sup>2</sup> practice partner Arterra Bizimodu will host a full day of guided tours and workshops with a focus on community energy. Workshops include an exploration of different models of energy communities, an introduction to biogas, tools for self-organising, and how to take advantage of local energy resources.



Arterra Bizimodu, Navarra, Spain

Meanwhile in Colchester, UK, **Community Energy Colchester** will host a family-friendly day out with the theme *Our Energy, Our Choice - Save Energy, Save Money*. As well as games, activities and competitions, the day will also offer members of the wider community in Colchester the chance to get free advice on government grants and how to reduce energy bills. There will also be demonstrations of clean energy technology, hands-on learning opportunities and much more. Christopher Blomeley of Colchester Community Energy explains: "We want to make it as easy as possible for people to do the right thing and where possible save energy and money. Colchester is more than ready for our zero-carbon initiative and we look forward to a successful event."





Coming soon  
Coming soon  
Coming soon

STAY TUNED !



# The Energy Citizenship Empowerment Kits and Tool

Besides innovative research into energy citizenship, one of the clear goals of EC<sup>2</sup> is to empower citizens and communities to play active roles in the energy transition. Two upcoming deliverables aim to do just that: by providing practical tools to municipalities, organisers and citizens, we aim to assist them to overcome barriers to energy citizenship and facilitate the creation of energy communities.

The **Energy Citizenship Empowerment Kit** focuses on bringing awareness to marginalised groups in the set-up of energy communities. The kit presents a set of cards representing each of four different socio-demographic factors which are recognized as critical in the production and re-production of dynamics of exclusion:

- **gender**
- **socio-economic background**
- **ethnic minority**
- **and housing.**



This set of cards offers 'lenses' through which to focus attention on five different conditions which play an important role in fostering individuals' opportunities to take part and engage in the energy system: knowledge and skills, legal, finance/economic, empowerment/psychology, and participation. We envisage that the use of the cards by promoters of energy communities will enable a more nuanced approach to set-up, increasing awareness of potential barriers to entry and how they can be overcome.

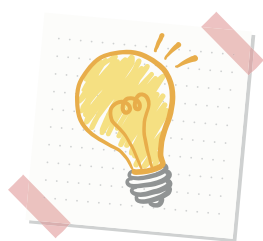
Besides the empowerment kits, we are also reaching the final stages of a tool, co-created through a series of workshops with citizens, that aims to guide groups through the process of creating a virtual one-stop shop for energy citizens.

Both resources will be **launching soon** - so keep an eye out on this newsletter and our social media to find out more.



# Stay connected

## Stay tuned for the EC<sup>2</sup> final event



There are still six months to go for EC<sup>2</sup>, but we're already planning for the final event to showcase our findings alongside our sister projects. This event will take place on March 5<sup>th</sup> in Brussels and

will be a chance for policymakers to engage more closely with our results and recommendations, as well as those of other projects which have also been working on energy citizenship. More information and invitations to follow, so stay tuned!



## 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)

 [EC<sup>2</sup> - Clean Energy Transition](#)  
[ResearchGate](#)

