



STRONGER COMMUNITIES, THRIVING REGIONS

THE ROLE OF ENERGY COMMUNITIES
IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL
PARTNERSHIP PLANS

2026 BRIEFING

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Energy Communities have a strong social and territorial impact, and should be a cornerstone of the National and Regional Partnership Plans

The recast Directive 2018/2001 (Renewable Energy Directive II, or REDII) and the recast Directive 2019/944 (the Internal Electricity Market Directive, or IEMD), established Renewable Energy Communities and Citizens Energy Communities as the two legal definitions covering energy communities (ECs), and gave them rights to participate across the energy market. These activities were then further expanded throughout the FitFor55 package, including renovations, heating and cooling, energy poverty alleviation.

Through an EC, citizens, together with small businesses, and local authorities can co-create local renewable energy projects, fostering an inclusive energy transition at the local level.



+ 8,000

the number of ECs in Europe, as measured by the ESPON TANDEM project, the most comprehensive mapping project to date.



1,100€/year



the amount an EU household can save by participating in an energy community.



10%/year

average reductions in energy consumption

due to behavioural changes stemming from an increase in energy literacy.



74%

of ECs have social goals - often related to tackling energy poverty.



45%

of the EU's energy demand can be covered by ECs by 2050



Security of supply

Various community energy suppliers were able to either **cap or keep prices below that of the market throughout the energy crisis**, due to their ability to supply their members' full needs through self-owned renewable energy. Coupled with storage and flexibility, **energy communities can build local resilience and security of supply**.

How Energy Communities can contribute to Objectives of the National and Regional Partnership Plans

In July 2025 the European Commission published its [draft regulation establishing the new overarching 'European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security'](#). Now every Member State is set to draft its '**National and Regional Partnership Plan**'.

NRPP Objectives	Relation to Energy Communities
 <p><i>"reduce regional imbalances in the Union and the backwardness of the least favoured regions"</i></p>	<p>Capital generated from ECs stays local:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community energy projects generate <u>two - eight</u> times more benefits for local economies compared to private projects. • €1 of public subsidy for ECs generates €50 of economic benefits for the territory. Every public euro invested in a community energy project crowds in 40-60 euros of private capital. Overall ECs can mobilise up to <u>176 billion euros</u> towards the energy transition by 2030. <p>ECs create local jobs and economic opportunities, enshrining the right to stay.</p>
 <p><i>"to support quality employment, education and skills and social inclusion"</i></p>	<p>ECs across the EU contribute to 4800 FTE jobs. <small>(Extrapolation from the LIFE ENERCOM Facility project)</small></p> <p>Energy communities can be incubators for green and digital skills, as they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarise members with digital and flexible equipment (e.g., demand response, battery storage, grids) • Educate members to understand their energy bills, their consumer rights, and how to actively participate in the energy transition • Upskill citizens to take up qualifications on topics like housing renovations
 <p><i>"to support the implementation of the CAP"</i></p>	<p>As the Commission's Rural Energy Communities Advisory Hub highlights, energy communities can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify farmers' incomes (e.g., through the selling of residual biomass for energy), and reduce their operational expenses (e.g., through agri-voltaics) • Create opportunities in rural areas, especially for young people, strengthening social cohesion
 <p><i>"to protect and strengthen democracy in the Union and uphold Union values"</i></p>	<p>ECs are schools of democracy because their governance model familiarises citizens with participatory decision-making processes. They can also facilitate a strong working relationship between citizens and Local Authorities.</p> <p>By endorsing equal participation, ECs mitigate differences related to age, gender, social background etc. Crucially, through direct participation, <u>ECs foster social acceptance for renewables</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across Europe, 61% of those questioned said they would be likely to join an energy cooperative. • In the UK, <u>62% of the public</u> would support a community-owned renewable energy project in their area, compared to 40 per cent support for a privately-owned project.

Below is an overview of the articles from the draft regulation that are relevant for energy communities:

ARTICLE 6

Partnership and multi-level governance

ECs should be included in the drafting of the NRPP. In particular, national coalitions of energy communities should also take part in the monitoring committee(s) that will be set up to oversee the Plan's implementation.

ARTICLE 22

Requirements for the NRPP

Member states must demonstrate alignment between their NRPP, and National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs),

which already provide detailed information on support measures towards ECs.

- In that sense, Member States can **leverage ECs as tools for social cohesion particularly in less developed, transition, and outermost regions.** Enable local authorities to implement projects, together with citizens, on renewable heating, electricity sharing, shared electric mobility, and housing renovations.
- Indicator 191 of the Performance Regulation specifically mentions ECs with a 100% climate and 40% social co-efficient. This means that such investments **can be counted towards the 14% social earmarking and the 43% climate earmarking** in the NRPPs.

Member States must address the country specific recommendations of the European Semester

The Commission has consistently recommended that EU countries adopt **supportive measures** for ECs.

ARTICLE 26

On the implementation of the EU facility

The EU Facility is meant to support cross-border actions with added value at Union level. Eligible activities will include "LIFE activities". **The EU Facility should thus support ECs to develop joint, innovative services, covering different Member States** (e.g., online One Stop Shops, or tools to maximize self-consumption of energy).



Overview of the articles from the draft regulation continued

ARTICLES 35 AND 76

On the Common Agricultural Policy, and community-led local development

From agri-voltaics, to biopellets, **ECs can help farmers diversify their income, promote climate action, and build social cohesion.** They should be supported as an integral tool for community-led local development, particularly in rural areas.

ARTICLES 74 AND 75

On Territorial and local cooperation initiatives and integrated territorial and urban development

ECs can be a key tool of territorial development in every Region, pursuant to the EU Solar Strategy goal of 1 ECs per municipality of over > 10.000 inhabitants. Local authorities can partner with community energy expert organisations and roll out One Stop Shops to help citizens navigate the energy transition through a bottom up, place-based approach.

ARTICLES 80 AND 82

On the Social Climate Fund and Synergies with the Modernisation Fund

Today there are **over 650 community-led heating and cooling projects in Europe**, providing stable and **clean thermal power to over 1.9 million EU citizens.** The Social Climate Fund and the Modernisation Fund should prioritise such projects, as well as the home renovations that support them.

