

# The energy transition to energy democracy

A young girl in denim overalls and a white shirt is standing in a field, holding a blue pinwheel on a wooden stick. She has her arms raised and is looking up with a smile. In the background, several white wind turbines are visible against a clear blue sky. The landscape is green and hilly.

Energy Communities: typology and key features

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*04/12/2024*

# Who am I?

- Dirk Vansintjan
- For Ecopower: president of REScoop.eu  
(European federation of energy communities)

- Get in touch!  
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@DirkVansintjan



# Where did it all start for me?



- Organic farm? 1983
- Watermill of Rotselaar 1985  
Vzw TSAP
- Ecopower cv 1991
- ODE-  
Vlaanderen 1996
- REScoop.be 2010
- REScoop.eu 2013
- REScoop Wallonie 2014
- REScoop Vlaanderen 2015

- 1991: 6 members around kitchen table
- Now: 70,000 members, producer/supplier
- In 2022 Ecopower 'shielded' its members for more than 500 euros from the very high electricity prices, linked to skyrocketing gas prices.
- Graph shows the difference between the average market price (red) and the Ecopower price (black).
- [www.ecopower.be](http://www.ecopower.be)



# Productie en prijs

## EVOLUTIE PRIJZEN 2022



# REScoop.eu

- Established in 2013
- REScoop.eu is the European Federation of Energy Communities
- Energy Communities are groups of citizens who cooperate in energy transition projects
  - regardless their legal entity
  - as long as they follow the 'REScoop Charter'



# What does REScoop.eu do?

- Represent the voice of citizens and their energy communities to European policy makers
- Support the start-up of new REScoops and provide them with trainings, useful tools and contacts
- Provide services for the European REScoops
- Facilitate international exchanges and cooperation between energy communities
- Promote the REScoop business model throughout Europe

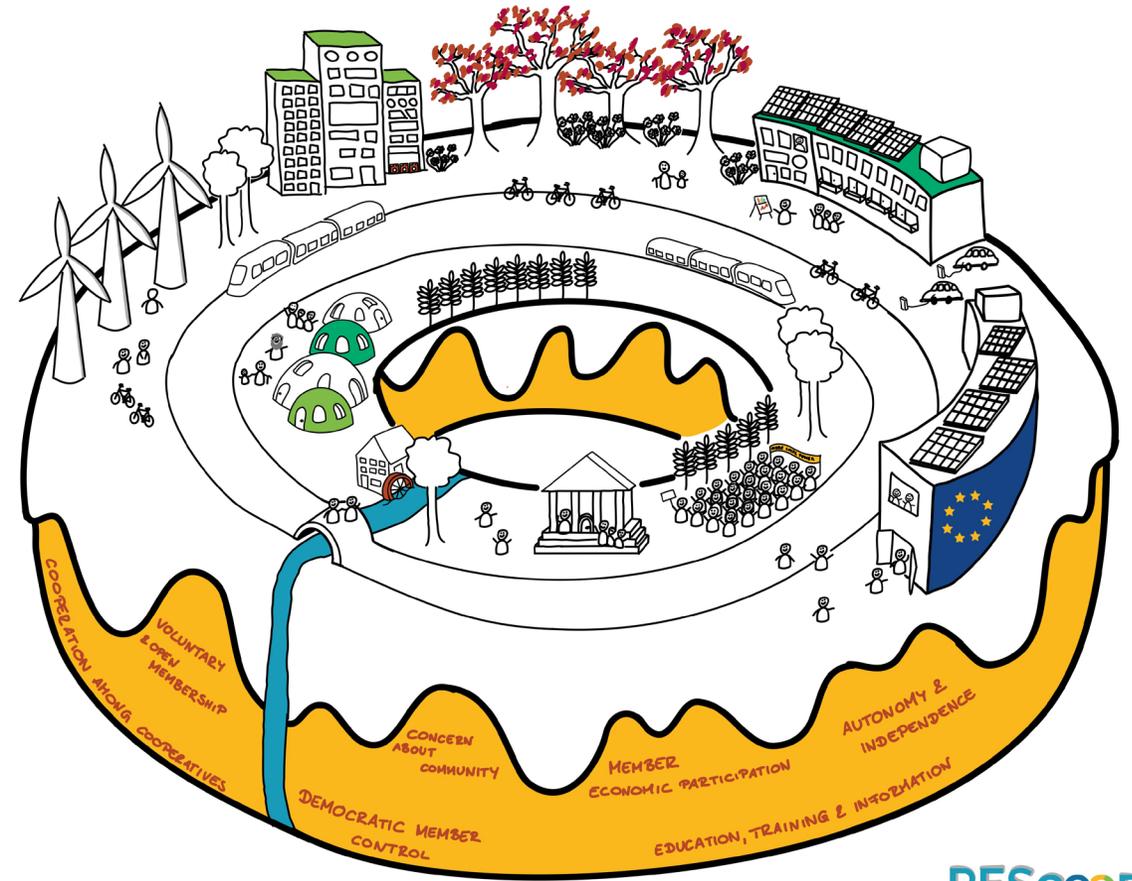


# The REScoop.eu team



# What do we have in common?

## The REScoop.eu Charter



REScoop's  
EU 2050

See: [https://www.rescoop.eu/uploads/REScoopEU\\_Charter.pdf](https://www.rescoop.eu/uploads/REScoopEU_Charter.pdf)

# What do REScoops have in common?

Every signatory of the REScoop Charter complies with the ICA-definition of a cooperative:

*'it is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, or cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise';*

(in case of an energy community)

AND/OR

# What do REScoops have in common?

Every signatory of this Charter adheres to:

*'the cooperative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity', and 'belief in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others'*

(in all other cases e.g. a federation of energy communities)

# What do REScoops have in common?

This does not exclude that signatories have assumed a legal entity other than a cooperative society, including but not limited to:

- an NGO,
- a foundation,
- an association,
- a trust etc.

# What do REScoops have in common?

The signatories of this Charter unite  
in the following set of:

- our ICA-principles,
- our challenges,
- our vision,
- our mission, and
- our objectives.



**1** **Voluntary and Open Membership**



**2** **Democratic Member Control**



**3** **Members' Economic Participation**



**4** **Autonomy and Independence**



**5** **Education, Training, and Information**



**6** **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**



**7** **Concern For Community**



# Community energy: the idea

“Community energy” or “community power” refers to people in a community cooperating on energy issues.

Community energy is a broad concept, it can refer to collective switching campaigns, collective investments in solar panels, but also the ownership of an energy supply company, or even a distribution network. Some people work together informally, while others set up legal entities. Depending on the activity, community energy can take different forms.

# Community energy: the idea

The different legal forms used to create local energy communities include (but are not limited to):

cooperatives, partnerships, companies with a community interest, foundations, non-profit organisations, trusts and associations.

The legal form you choose depends on your needs, and the rules around cooperatives and organisations in your country.

# Cooperatives

There are also other options that combine the ideas below, linking activities related to the energy community to an existing organisation. In the end, what matters most is your aim and the activities you carry out to support energy democracy, not the structure you choose.

One very good option for energy projects is setting up a cooperative, a group of citizens that organise themselves to work together on a specific topic for the benefit of their community. Cooperatives can cover issues such as food, housing, transportation, finance — and energy.

# Collaborations with municipalities

**Cooperatives** are a solid legal form for democratically owning and running your energy project.

However, they are **not the only solution** and other options are available for your project. In some countries, creating a cooperative is a long process and implies navigating a lot of administrative rules. Other forms can be an easier first step, and your group can evolve towards a cooperative later.

It's useful to check out what the legal requirements are in your country.

# Clubs, trusts & other forms

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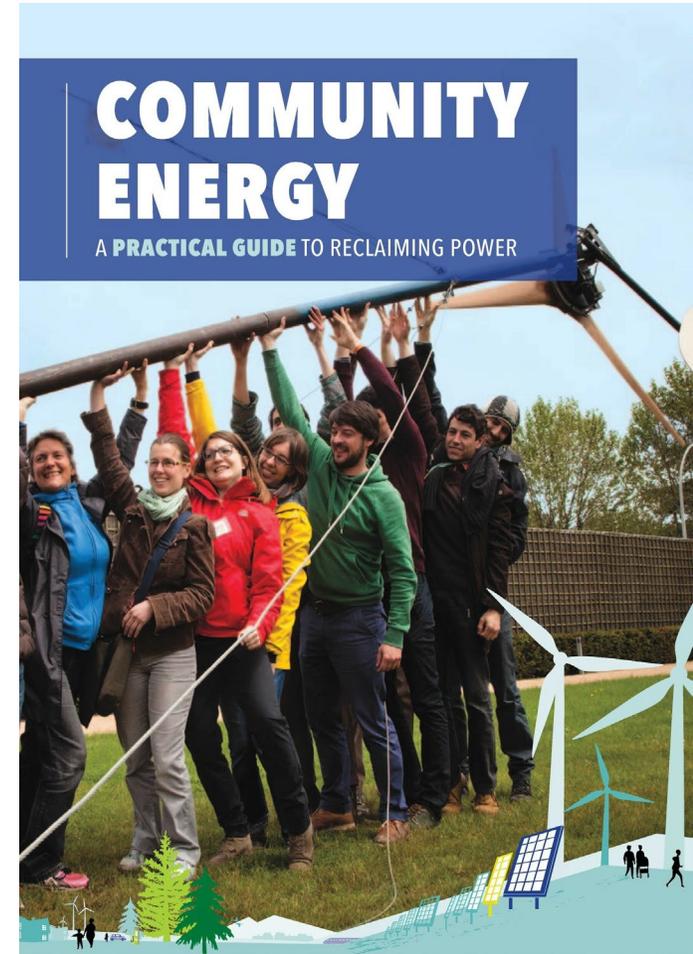
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# Community Energy Guidebook

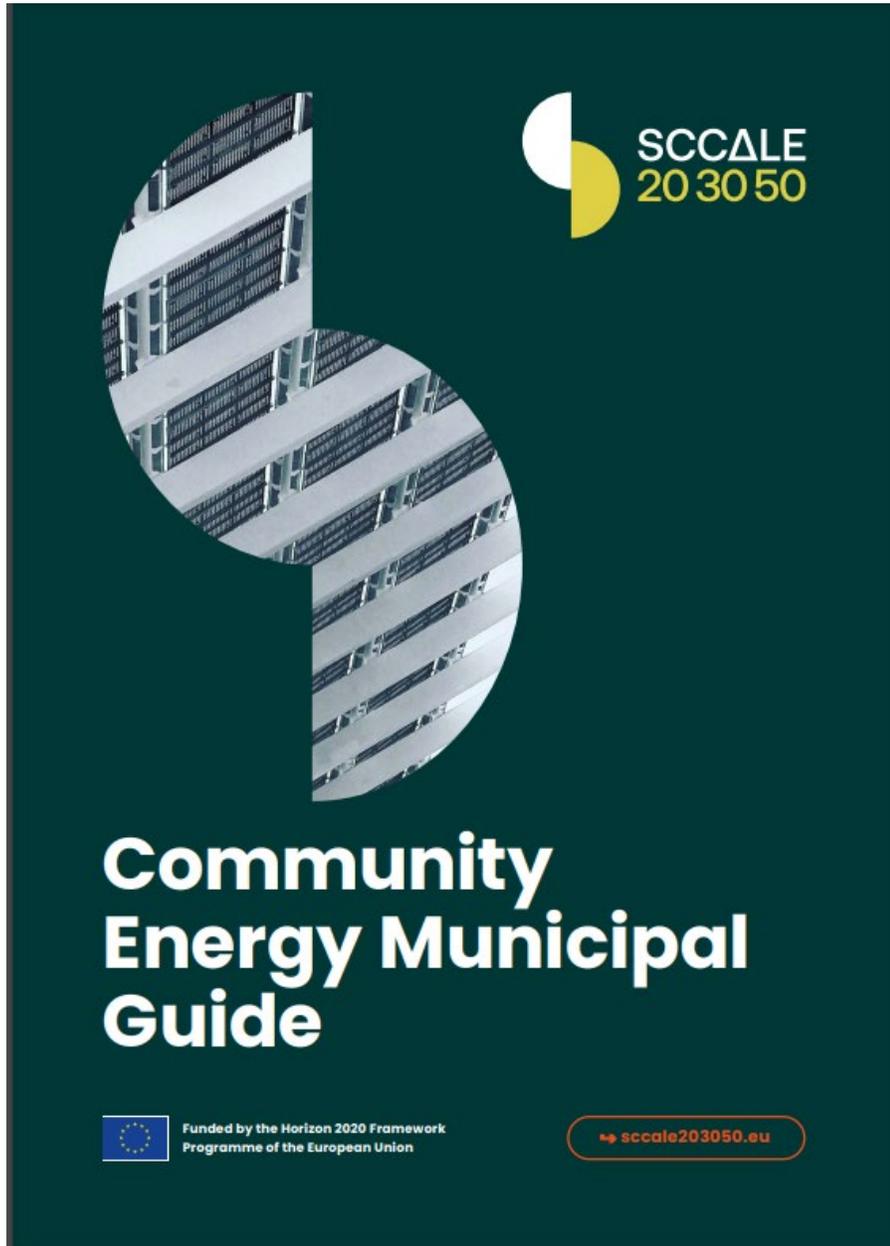
The guide is – apart from in English- also available in the following languages on the REScoop.eu website:

<https://www.rescoop.eu/toolbox/community-energy-a-practical-guide-to-reclaiming-power>

- [Czech](#)
- [Dutch](#)
- [French](#)
- [Greek](#)
- [Polish](#)
- [Spanish](#)
- [Portuguese](#)
- [Romanian](#)
- [Croatian](#)
- [Hungarian](#)



Lots of examples from different countries!



# Energy Communities Cooperate with municipalities

See: <https://www.sccale203050.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/SCCALE-Municipal-Guide-Final-view.pdf>

November 2022 Authors: REScoop.eu, Energy Cities



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**The energy transition must be a just and social transition that benefits all citizens, local communities, and the local economy in the first place.**

# Answer to most of your questions!



<https://energycommunityplatform.eu>

# Transposition progress

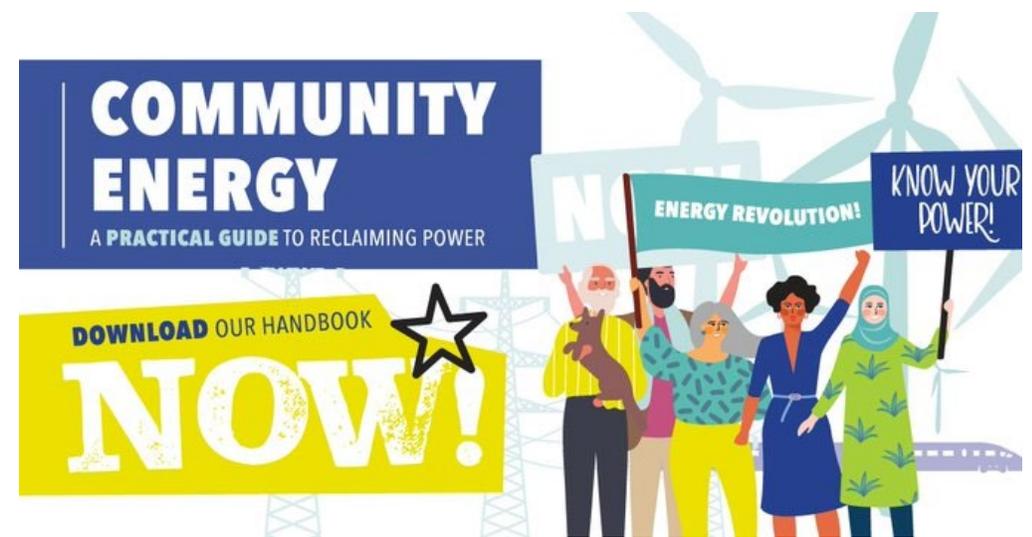
- Member States still have some way to go...
- The energy community concept = often very new and it takes time to introduce in the legislation
- REScoop follows up on the transposition with its Transposition Tracker:



<https://www.rescoop.eu/transposition-tracker>

# Keep in touch!

- <https://www.rescoop.eu>
- <https://www.rescoop.eu/policy>
- <https://energycommunityplatform.eu/>



# REScoop.EU

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