The EU’s ambitious decarbonisation targets cannot be met by technology alone. What are the social, economic and legal conditions that will enable a shift in our energy model: from a centralised energy regime to a decentralised one, from a society of passive energy consumers to one of empowered, engaged energy citizens?

Gathering insights from the fields of law, economics and psychology, EC² will provide answers on how to facilitate and strengthen energy citizenship. Knowledge co-creation with municipalities, energy communities and citizens will enhance the research to deliver recommendations that support the EU’s energy and decarbonisation goals.

The project will develop a clear conceptualisation of energy citizenship, and gather actionable insights into the optimal conditions for it to flourish. It places a special focus on the role of energy communities and how their set-up can help - or hinder - the creation of energy citizens.

The insights gained will lead to policies, tools and practices that will support the sustainable, just, inclusive transition to a low-carbon society with citizens at the centre.

**Project Partners**

- ZSI Centre for Social Innovation, AT
- Universität Graz, AT
- Universität Leipzig, DE
- Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny we Wrocławiu, PL
- Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, NL
- ICLEI European Secretariat GmbH, DE
- Global Ecovillage Network of Europe E.V., DE
- Spółdzielnia Mieszkaniowa Wroclaw-Południe, PL
- Gmina Prusice, PL
- Commune di Scalenghe, IT
- Ture Nirvane Societa’ Cooperativa Sociale di Comunità’, IT
- Arterra Bizimodu, ES
- Buurkracht Projecten B.V., NL
- Groningen municipality, NL

**EC² Objectives**

Through empirical research, theoretical analysis and co-creation activities with diverse stakeholders the project will...

- Provide evidence-based tools and a digital training program to scale-up energy citizenship and energy communities
- Develop actionable policy recommendations and briefs for policymakers by connecting project findings to policy and practice
- Supply tested tools to support energy citizenship and energy communities
- Foster inclusivity of energy citizenship and energy communities
- Deepen our understanding of energy citizenship and how to empower citizens to become energy citizens
- Identify legal and economic conditions supporting or hindering energy citizenship
- Understand how energy citizenship shapes and influences the energy sector, the energy transition, and the achievement of EU decarbonisation goals.

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To advance the state of the art in the area of study and to inform policy and practice on energy communities and energy citizenship for a low-carbon transition, the project will deliver:

1. A catalogue of legal and economic barriers and facilitators of energy citizenship
2. A scale to measure how energy citizenship emerges in individuals
3. Co-created tools for energy communities
4. Energy citizenship policy briefings, citizen empowerment kits, and an energy citizenship academy

The EC² Methodology

EC² employs both an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach to gain an in-depth conceptualisation of energy citizenship. It will also enhance the understanding of the barriers and facilitators of energy communities and energy citizenship, and the interplay between the two. EC² works with:

✔ Theoretical research on legal, economic and psychological aspects of energy communities and citizenship
✔ Empirical lab and field studies on energy communities and energy citizenship
✔ Co-creation workshops with key stakeholders including municipalities, energy communities and citizens

In-depth Country Studies

The project's outputs will be informed by research including in-depth studies in four countries: Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Poland. These will integrate the expertise of in-country research partners with the on-the-ground experiences of local energy communities and municipalities in diverse cultural and socio-economic settings. This diversity of actors and level of advancement will allow a better understanding of barriers and drivers of energy citizenship development.

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