

# Energy Citizenship in Europe

## EnergyPROSPECTS Factsheet Series

### **Part 3:**

## **Actors and Organisations**



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**Case researchers participating in the identification and data collection of cases:**

Adriana Dimova (ARC Fund), Anita Szöllőssy (GDI), Anna Farady (GDI), Ariane Debourdeau (TUB), Benjamin Schmid (UG), Camille Defard (JDI), Cecília Lohász (GDI), Claudia Buse (TUB), Desislava Asenova (ARC Fund), Edina Vadovics (GDI), Fanny Lajarthe (ULB), Ivars Kudreņickis (LU), Jānis Brizga (LU), Juan Carlos Brenlla Blanco (UDC), Karin Thalberg (JDI), Kristóf Vadovics (GDI), Linda Zsemberovszky (GDI), Luisa Losada Puente (UDC), Manuel García-Fernández (UDC), Marianna Markantoni (UM), Marie Delair (JDI), Marko Hajdinjak (ARC Fund), Myrto Ispyridou (ARC Fund), Nuria Rebollo Quintela (UDC), Orsolya Antal (GDI), Petar Kanchev (ARC Fund), Rasa Ikstena (LU), Rene Kemp (UM)

**Proofreading by** Simon Milton

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## Introduction

This document is Part 3 of the EnergyPROSPECTS Factsheet Series. We have created the Series to publish the results of the mapping of energy citizenship in Europe, along with the first stage of our analysis of the data. The EnergyPROSPECTS consortium mapped 596 cases of energy citizenship (ENCI) and collected data on many aspects of the latter. Although the analysis is a work in progress, we believe it is important to share our data and, through it, contribute to the understanding of energy citizenship in Europe.

The methodology for the data collection and analysis is presented in [Part 1 of the Factsheet Series](#) (Vadovics, Szöllőssy, 2023); for this reason, it is not repeated here.

The Factsheet Series includes the following parts:

1. [Part 1: Introduction and Methodology](#)
2. [Part 2: Motivations and Objectives](#)
3. **Part 3: Actors and Organisations**
4. [Part 4: Funding](#)
5. [Part 5: Aspects of ENCI I.: Hybridity, private/public, passive/active forms](#)
6. [Part 6: Aspects of ENCI II.: Frontrunners and late adopters, pragmatic and transformative ENCI](#)
7. [Part 7: Aspects of ENCI III.: Towards social sustainability: citizen power and equity/justice issues](#)
8. [Part 8: Aspects of ENCI IV.: Towards environmental sustainability: levels of environmental sustainability and recognising ecological limits](#)
9. [Part 9: Aspects of ENCI V.: Contesting the current system](#)



## Part 1: Actors initiating and involved in the ENCI cases

Q31. Who or **which actors initiated** the case?

Q33. Who and/or **which actors are currently involved** in the case?<sup>1</sup>

Among the actors that initiated cases, **two or more individuals/an informal group of individuals** (incl. community groups) **make up the largest proportion (27%) in the database**. This is followed by one or more NGO(s) (20.8%), then one or more municipalities, (incl. municipal departments or agencies or departments) (17.8%). Fourth place goes to “Other” (11.4%), and fifth to one or more for-profit companies/enterprises (10.6%).

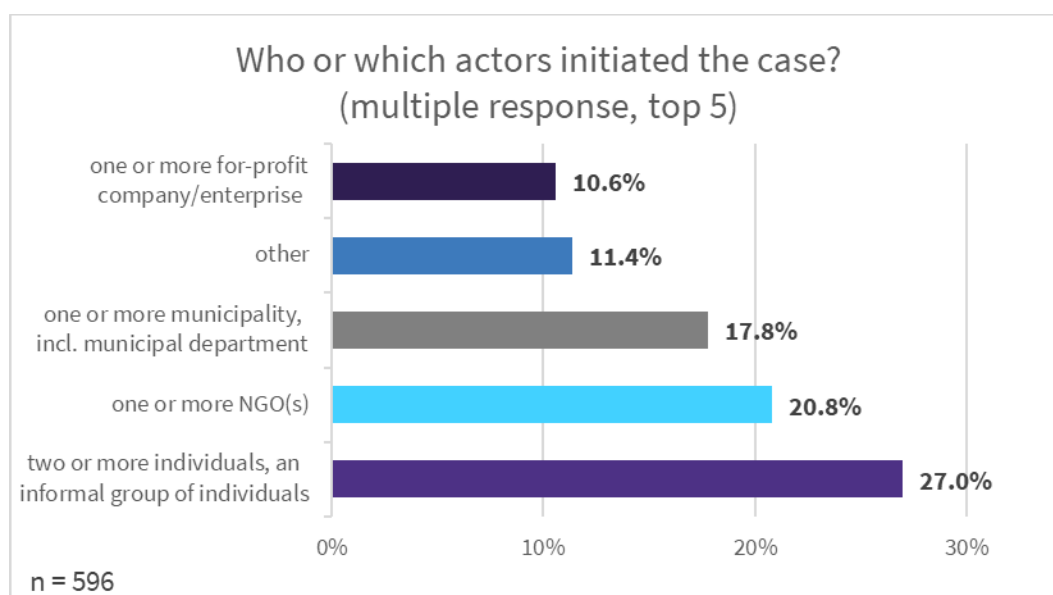


Figure 1: Initiating actors

“Other” responses included a large number of *community-apartment owners or housing associations*, a special form of initiative community.

Also, it was mainly specific organisations that were not categorised, such as a registered church community, research institute, or student association. There were also more corporate-sector-related actors, such as professional journals or innovation funds. In

<sup>1</sup> Questions from the mapping questionnaire. Methodology and questions are available here: [https://www.energyprospects.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ENERGY\\_PROSPECTS.EU/Deliverables/EnergyPROSPECTS\\_D3.1\\_310122\\_Final.pdf](https://www.energyprospects.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/ENERGY_PROSPECTS.EU/Deliverables/EnergyPROSPECTS_D3.1_310122_Final.pdf)

addition, specific public actors appear here, such as political parties or municipality-owned or managed companies.

Among the **actors currently involved in the cases, NGO(s)** (or NPOs, associations, foundations, charities, etc.) **are represented in the largest proportion** (43.1%). This is followed in second place by groups of individuals (incl. community groups) (33.4%) and in third place by one or more for-profit companies/enterprises (e.g. not-for-profit LTD., social enterprise, etc.) (32.4%). In fourth place are municipalities, incl. municipal departments or agencies (32%), followed by individuals in a household setting in fifth place (26%).

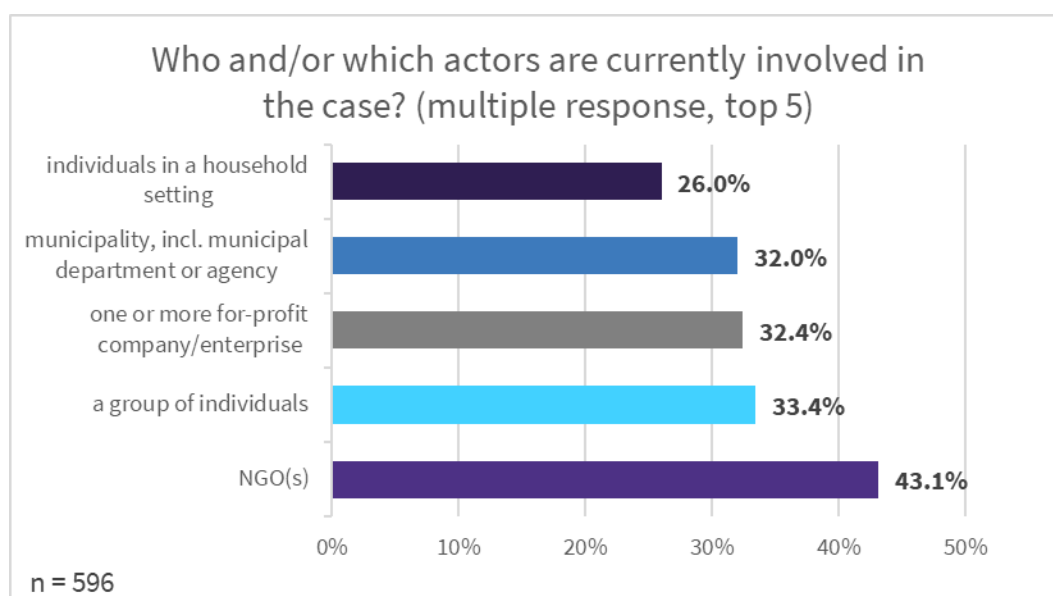


Figure 2: Actors currently involved

Regarding this question, the proportion of “Other” answers was less, at 14.6%. The responses are very similar to the ones presented above in relation to the initiating actors. Here too, the responses “housing associations” or “communities of apartment owners” appeared in several answers.

Likewise, specific communities such as farmers or local rural action groups, primary schools and nurseries are also mentioned. Manufacturers and media are even represented on the market side. Public and political actors, such as local politicians and city district heating utilities, are also included.

## Reformative and transformative cases

Looking at the initiating actors according to the transformative/reformative breakdown of cases<sup>2</sup>, it can be seen that in transformative cases, first position is occupied by “two or more individuals/an informal group of individuals” (38.9%), which response occurs significantly more frequently than with the cases associated with the reformative group (at 17.2%, the third most popular answer in this group).

With the reformative cases, the response “one or more municipalities” is ranked first (20.9%) among the initiating actors, with a significantly larger proportion than in the transformative cases (12.9%), the fourth most common actor(s) in this group.

In second place as initiators in both groups are “one or more NGO(s)” (t: 21.8%, r: 20.2%).

There is also a significantly larger proportion of individual actors in third place with respect to transformative cases (t: 14.6%, r: 6.7%). With the reformative cases, the fourth-ranked response, “department, agency or public body of a national government”, is represented in significantly larger proportions (r: 14.8%, t: 3.9%).

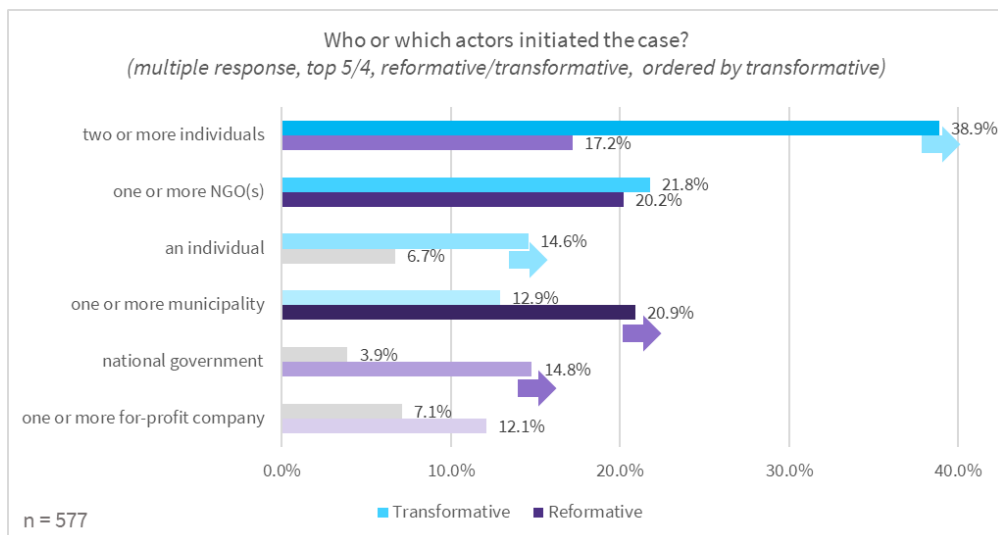


Figure 3: Initiating actors according to the reformative-transformative classification

<sup>2</sup> About the division of cases between „reformative” and „transformative”, please consult [Part 1 of the Factsheet Series](#) (Introduction and Methodology; Vadovics, Szöllőssy, 2023).

**NGO(s) are the actors most frequently involved in both groups** (t: 43.2%, r: 42.8%), but there are also some significant differences with regard to this question.

For transformative cases, a close second is “groups of individuals” (41.1%), which response is significantly more common than for cases associated with the reformative group (27.3%, where it is only the fifth most common). In addition, the third-place ranking for “one or more non-profit companies/enterprises” is also significantly higher in the group of transformative cases (t: 26.8%, r: 18.2%).

For reformative cases, the response “the municipality (incl. municipal department or agency)” is in second place (37%) in terms of the actors who are involved, with a significantly larger share than in the transformative cases (25%, in fifth place), similar to the case with initiating actors. The involvement of one or more for-profit companies/enterprises (36.4%, ranking third in the reformative cases) is also significantly greater than in the other group (25.4%, which is the fourth response).

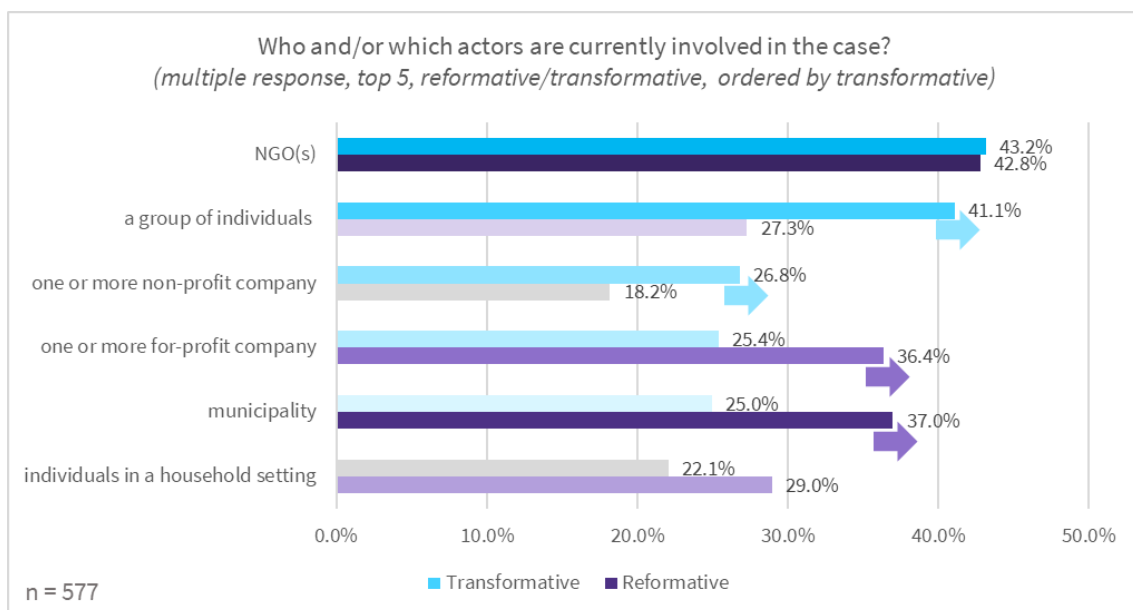


Figure 4: Actors currently involved according to a reformative-transformative classification of cases



Looking at these issues in terms of the **breakdown of the answers associated with the main aspects (“High/Medium” - “No/Low”)**<sup>3</sup>, there are also some differences.

With cases classified as “High/Medium”, there is a significantly larger proportion of “two or more individuals, and informal groups of individuals” among the initiating actors, despite this being the most popular answer for cases in both groups (H/M: 40.6%, N/L: 27.1%). The difference is also significant for the response “one or more for-profit company/enterprise groups” regarding which cases in the “No/Low” group feature more (N/L: 13.4%, H/M: 4.7% - this is the fourth largest group in this category).

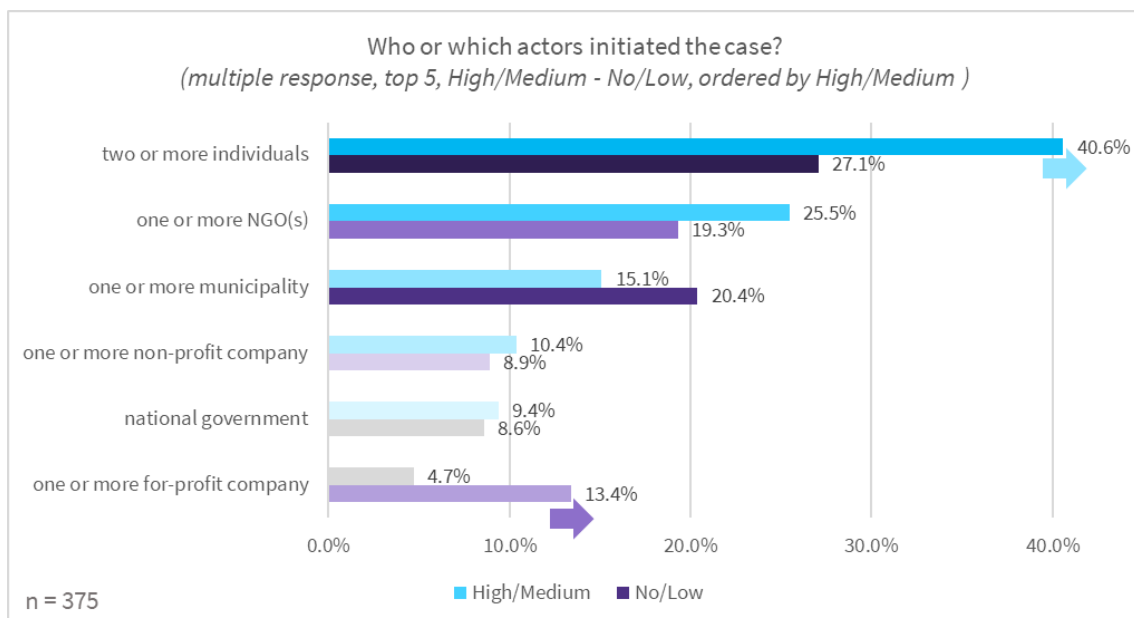


Figure 5: Initiating actors according to the “High/Medium” - “No/Low” case classification

There are also some differences in terms of the “High/Medium” - “No/Low” breakdown concerning the actors currently involved. In the “High/Medium” group, NGOs are ranked in first place, with a significantly larger proportion (H/M: 51.9%, N/L: 37.5%).

Regarding the actors currently involved, for the “No/Low” group, both the first-ranked “one or more for-profit companies/enterprises” (N/L: 39.4%, H/M: 28.3%) and the

<sup>3</sup> About the data breakdown regarding “High/Medium” and “No/Low”, please consult [Part 1 of the Factsheet Series](#) (Introduction and Methodology; Vadovics, Szöllőssy, 2023).

second-ranked “municipality, incl. municipal department or agency” (N/L: 37.9%, H/M: 20.8%) have a larger share.

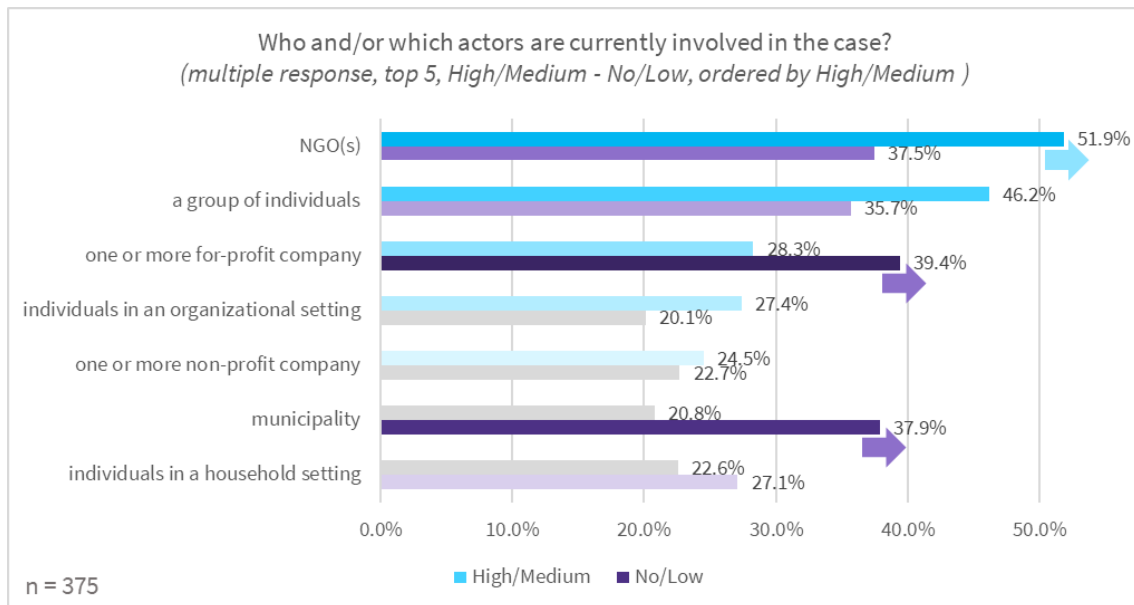


Figure 6: Actors currently involved according to “High/Medium” - “No/Low” case classification

It was also examined whether there are **differences in the actors among the ten ENCI ideal types<sup>4</sup>**.

For initiating actors, the most significant difference is found for two or more individuals/an informal group of individuals. The proportion is significantly larger in relation to Type 10: "Make their claims" compared to Types 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7; and also for Type 8: "Go ahead" compared to Type 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Individual initiating actors are significantly better represented in Type 4: "Do it their way (within hybrid organisations)" cases compared to Types 1, 3, 7, 8 and 10, and for Type 2: "Do it their own (in the household)" compared to Types 1, 7, 8 and 10.

<sup>4</sup> About the ten ENCI ideal types, please consult the [EnergyPROSPECTS conceptual typology](#) (Debourdeau et al., 2021).

Regarding currently involved actors, the most significant difference is with individuals in a household setting, where the proportion associated with Type 1: "Do their bit (in the household)", is larger than with Types 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Type 3: "Do their bit (within organisations)" cases are significantly more likely to be associated with individuals in an organisational setting compared to Types 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8, and with "one or more schools or universities" compared to Types 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10.



## Regions of Europe

Looking at the **actors**, there are some differences in terms of the regional breakdown.

In Western Europe, the most common initiating actor is two or more individuals (39.7%), the second is one or more NGO(s) (15.3%), and the third is one or more for-profit companies (11%). In Southern Europe, the response “two or more individuals” is ranked in first place (25.8%), followed by one or more non-profit companies (18.3%), and then one or more NGO(s) (16.1%). In Northern Europe, the most common initiating actor is one or more municipalities (29.9%), followed by two or more individuals in second place (17.3%) and the national government in third (16.5%). Finally, in Eastern Europe, the most common actor is one or more NGO(s) (35.3%), followed by one or more municipalities (21.0%), with two or more individuals and an individual sharing third place (19.2%).

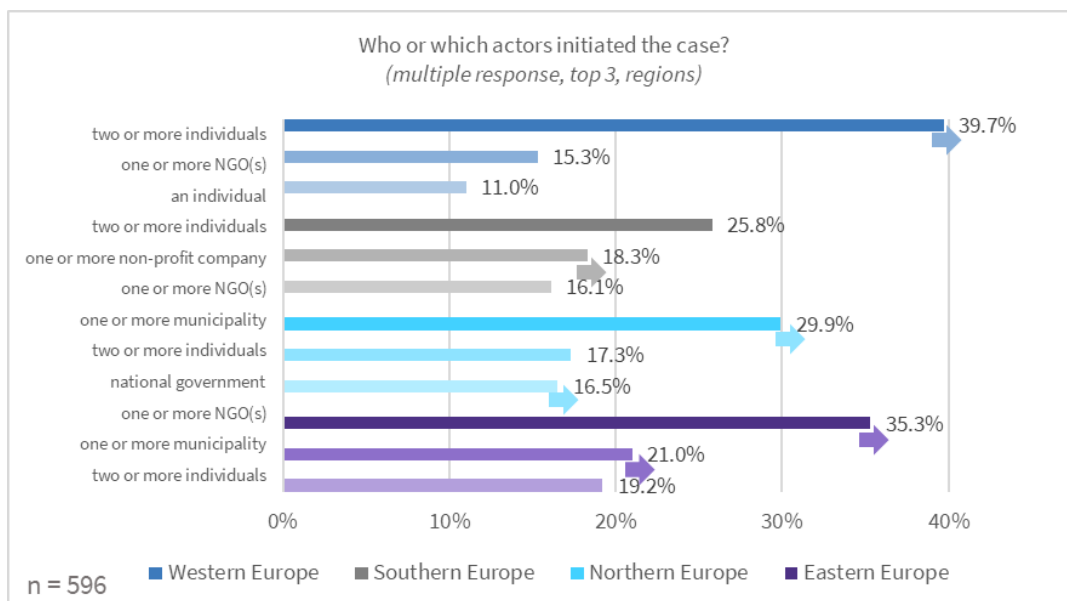


Figure 7: Initiating actors by region

Among the significant differences in terms of initiating actors, it is worth noting that more cases in Western Europe are associated with two or more individuals compared to in Eastern Europe and Northern Europe.

In Eastern Europe, the proportion of one or more NGO(s) as initiating actors is significantly higher than in the other regions. Moreover, the proportion of responses stating

“one or more municipalities” is significantly higher in both the East and the North compared to the West. On the other hand, the proportion of one or more non-profit companies/enterprises is significantly higher in the South than in the East and West.

Concerning the question of which actors are currently involved, there are minor differences. In all but Northern Europe, NGOs are in first place (W: 37%, S: 41.7%, E: 58.9%).

In Western Europe, groups of individuals are in first place (40.2%), followed closely by NGOs (38.8%), and one or more for-profit companies (28.7%) in third. In Southern Europe, NGOs (35.5%) ranked in first place, one or more for-profit companies are in second place (33.3%), followed by one or more non-profit companies (32.3%). In Northern Europe, municipalities are ranked in first place (50.4%), followed by one or more for-profit companies (42.5%), and then NGO(s) in third place (37%). In Eastern Europe, NGOs (57.5%) are in first place, municipalities in second (30.5%), followed by individuals in a household setting (29.9%).

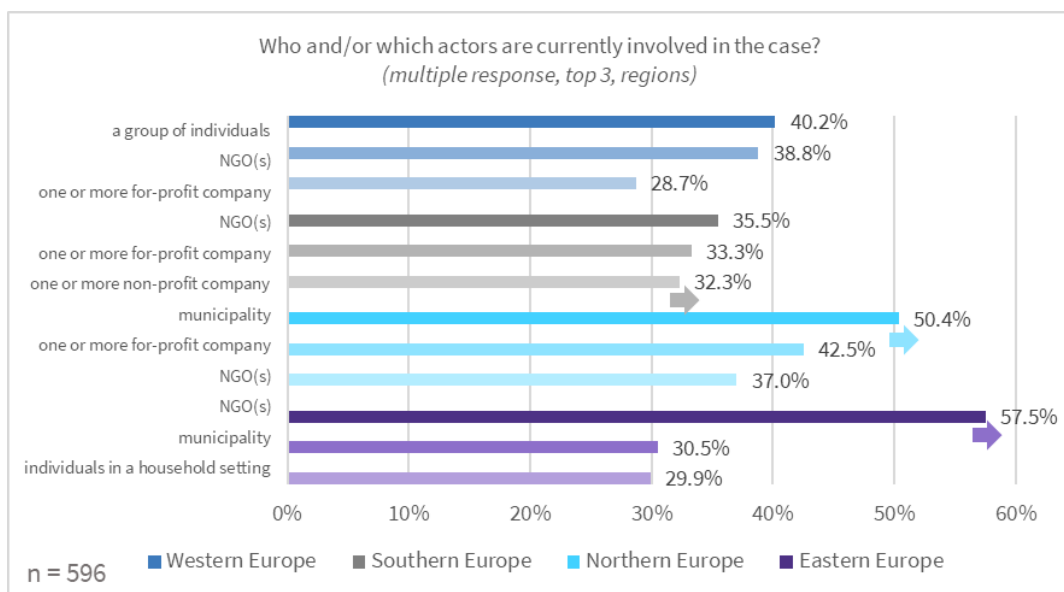


Figure 8: Actors currently involved by region

It is worth noting here that although the proportion of NGO(s) (or NPOs, associations, foundations, charities, etc.) is large in all regions, it is more prominent in Eastern Europe, significantly so compared to all the other regions. Although the role of municipalities is also important everywhere, the share of municipalities is significantly greater in Northern Europe than in the other regions.

## Part 2: Scale of ENCI operation, organisational form, network(s)

Q35. At **which scale** does the case itself currently operate or involve actors?

Q36. What is the current **organisational form/structure** of the case?

Q39. Is/was the case **part of a network** of similar initiatives?

Most of the cases operate at the national level (36.1%). This is followed by the municipal level (i.e., within the boundaries of a particular city, town, or settlement) (21.4%), then the local level (i.e., at a scale smaller than municipal – e.g., local community, neighbourhood, or an apartment block/housing estate) (25%). The fourth level is the regional one (20.5%), and the fifth is the organisational level (i.e., within an organisation, which may be an NGO, corporation, municipality, etc.) (15.4%).

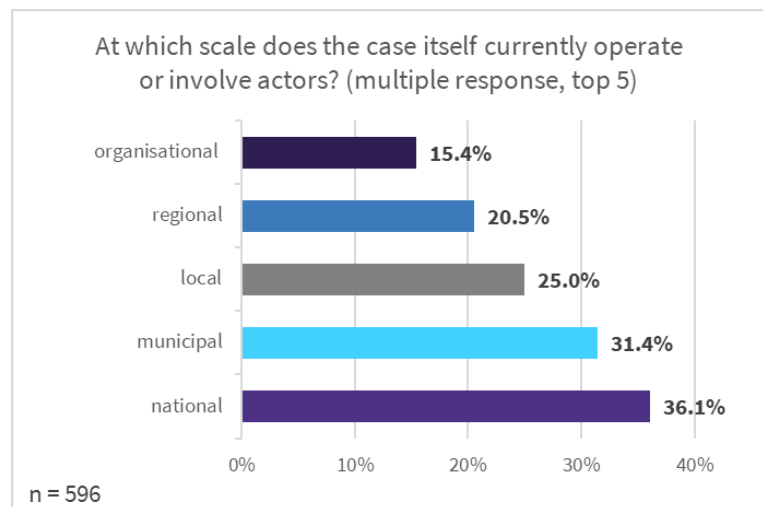


Figure 9: Scale of operation

Although not shown in the figure, it is worth noting that sixth place is occupied by the individual or household level (i.e., the case involves an individual or household) and seventh place by the multi-country level (i.e., in more than one country).

“Other” responses also appeared in relation to this question in the small proportion of 6.4%. This includes answers that referred to a scale involving two (or more) levels, such as: “metropolis level: grouping of municipalities, larger than a sole municipality, smaller than the regional scale” or an island level. There are also some multi-country collaborations, like the “H2020 programme project as a multi-country consortium”. Additionally, some responses referred to specific, smaller-level cases, such as at the school level or agricultural farm. The “online level” (i.e., cases operating virtually) was also mentioned.

In terms of organisational form, cases operating as projects/programmes within an organisation were the most common (21%), followed by NGOs (i.e., not-for-profit organizations, associations or foundations with a legal identity, charities, etc.) (13.8%),

then cooperatives (12.1%). The fourth most common organizational form was the “Other” category (10.2%), and the fifth was a project consortium (7.6%).

“Other” answers included that the case is a project/programme not operating within an organisation but in partnership with several organisations (e.g., “*it is a pilot project, not within an organisation but in partnership with several NGOs*”). Alternative answers included that it is not a project but a combination of several projects (e.g., “*several projects and programs of a municipality*”).

There are also very specific, unique formats, such as a national contest, an annually organised campaign, a publication, a document created within a project, an online event, a citizens’ assembly and an institutionalised referendum on the cantonal level (in Switzerland).

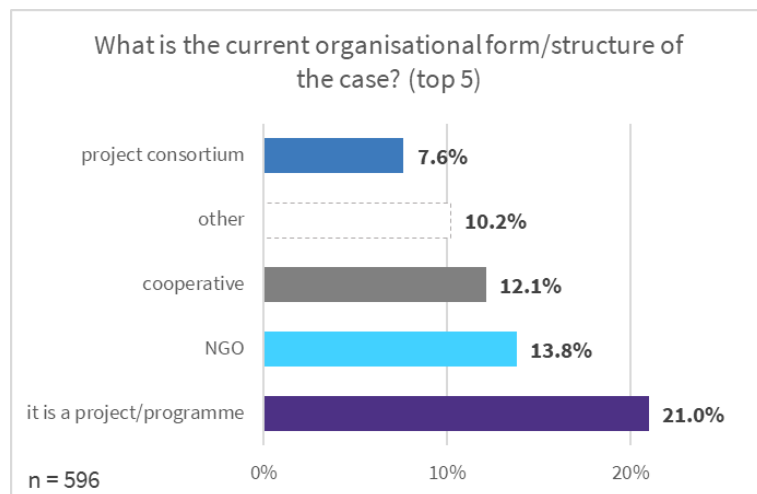


Figure 10: Current organisational form

The survey also evaluated whether the cases were part of a network (e.g. Transition Towns, RESCOOPs, eco villages, climate-friendly municipalities, etc.) A minority of cases, 35.4 percent, were, and almost half, 47.7 percent, were not. For some cases (16.9%), no information was available through desk research.

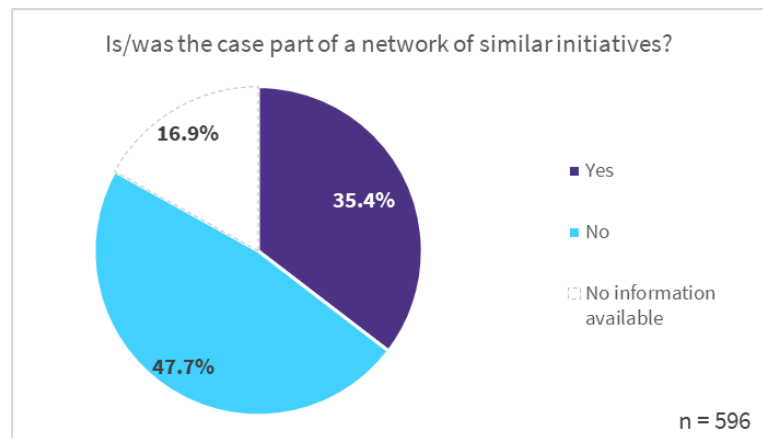


Figure 11: Network of similar initiatives



## Reformative and transformative cases

The **breakdown of the reformative/transformative cases according to the level of operation** was also examined. Here, there were few significant differences, and the order of responses between the two groups was only slightly different.

For the transformative cases, the national level comes first (39.6%), followed by the municipal (28.9%). However, in the reformative cases, the situation is the reverse, with municipal first (34%) and national second (31.6%).

In third place in both groups is the local level (t: 25.7%, r: 24.6%).

In the transformative cases, regional is fourth (25.4%), and organisational fifth (12.9%). In the reformative cases, it is the other way around, with organisational fourth (17.2%) and regional fifth (16.5%).

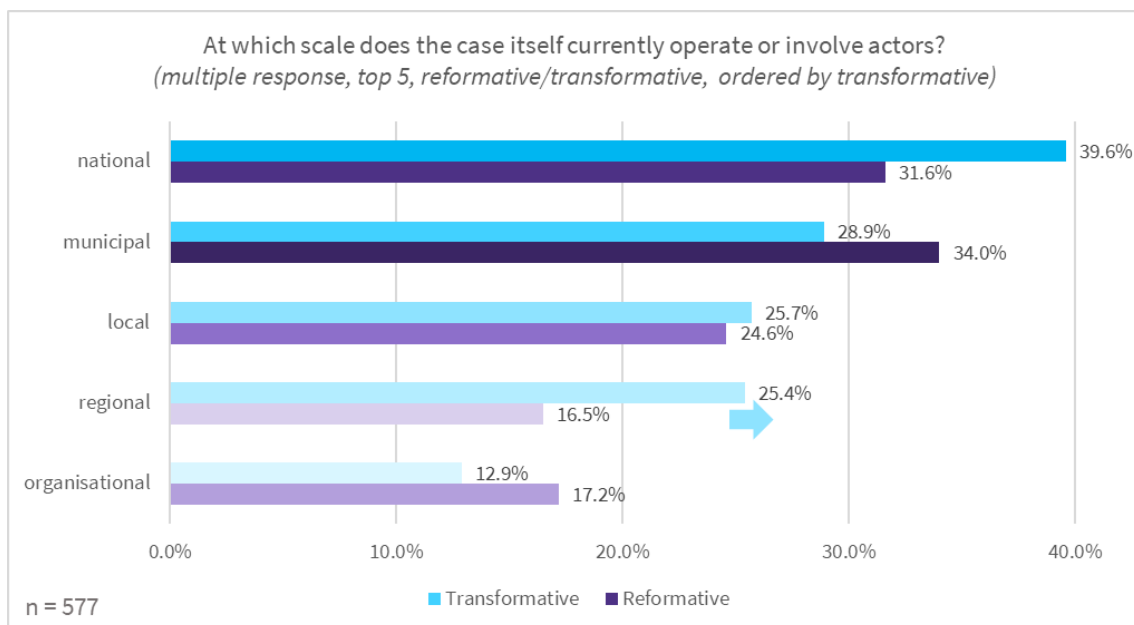


Figure 12: Scale of operation according to the reformative-transformative classification of cases

The only significant difference that can be highlighted is with cases operating at the regional level, which are more prominently transformative ones.

According to **the current form of operation, there are more differences in terms of the transformative/reformative breakdown.**

Among the transformative cases, ones which are organised cooperatively are most common (18.2%). This is followed by ones that operate within NGOs (16.4%), then projects/programmes and cases involving individuals in third place (10.4%). In fifth place is the “Other” category (8.9%).

Among the reformative cases, ones operating as projects/programmes are most common (30.6%). Those working as NGOs are the second most common (12.1%), and “Other” types are in third place (11.1%). Fourth are cases that are part of a project consortium (10.1%), and fifth are those associated with a cooperative (7.1%).

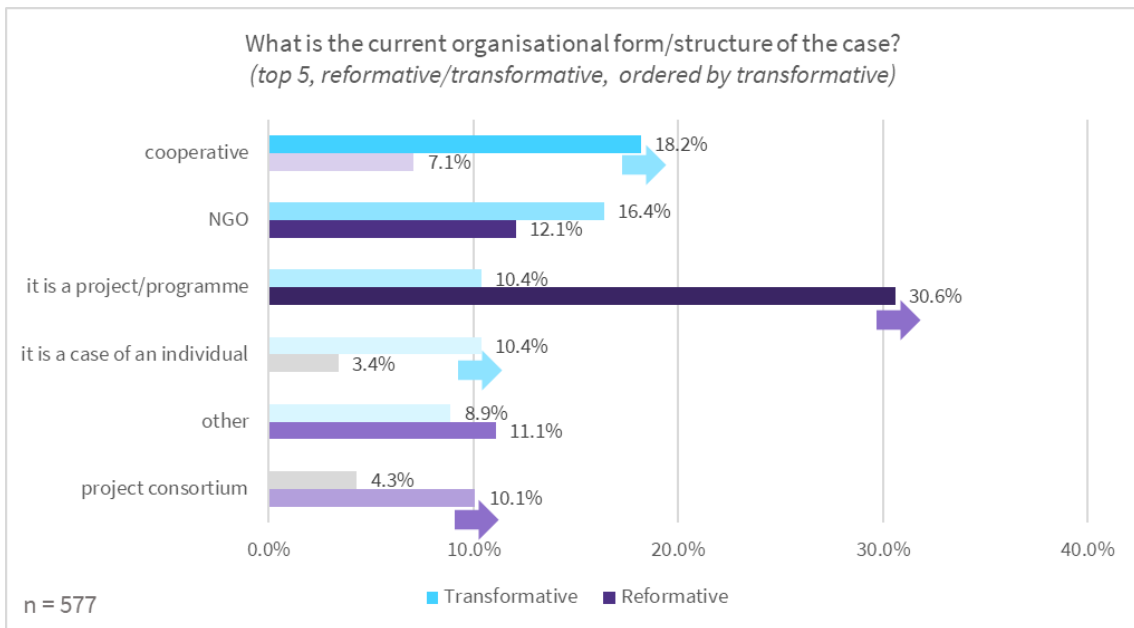


Figure 13: Current organisational form according to the reformative-transformative case classification

Not only is there a difference in the order of the popularity of the organizational forms between the two groups, but there are also significant differences in several areas.

The most noticeable of the latter differences is with the project/programme form, which is significantly more prevalent among cases categorised as reformative. The project consortium organisational form is also significantly more common among reformative cases.

At the same time, both the cooperative form of case and individual cases are significantly more frequent in the transformative group than in the reformative group.

**Regarding whether cases are part of a network, there are also some**

**differences.** For example, transformative cases are more likely to involve members of a network (t: 46.4%, r: 24.9%) than reformative cases (r: 56.9%, t: 37.5%).

**These issues can also be examined according to the classification of the aspect “High/Medium” - “No/Low” scale.**

Two significant differences can be seen in terms of the current operational scale. First, the “High/Medium” group is associated with a larger proportion of both national- (H/M: 49.1%, N/L: 30.1%) and regional-level (H/M: 33%, N/L: 20.4%) cases compared to the other group.

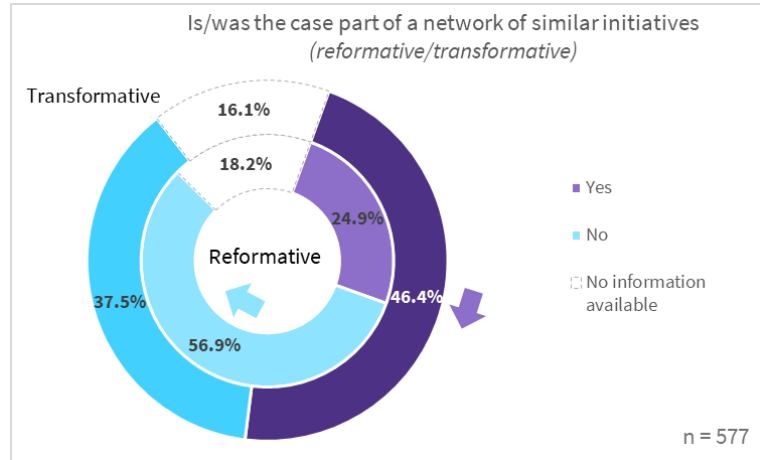


Figure 14: Networks of similar initiatives according to the reformative - transformative case classification

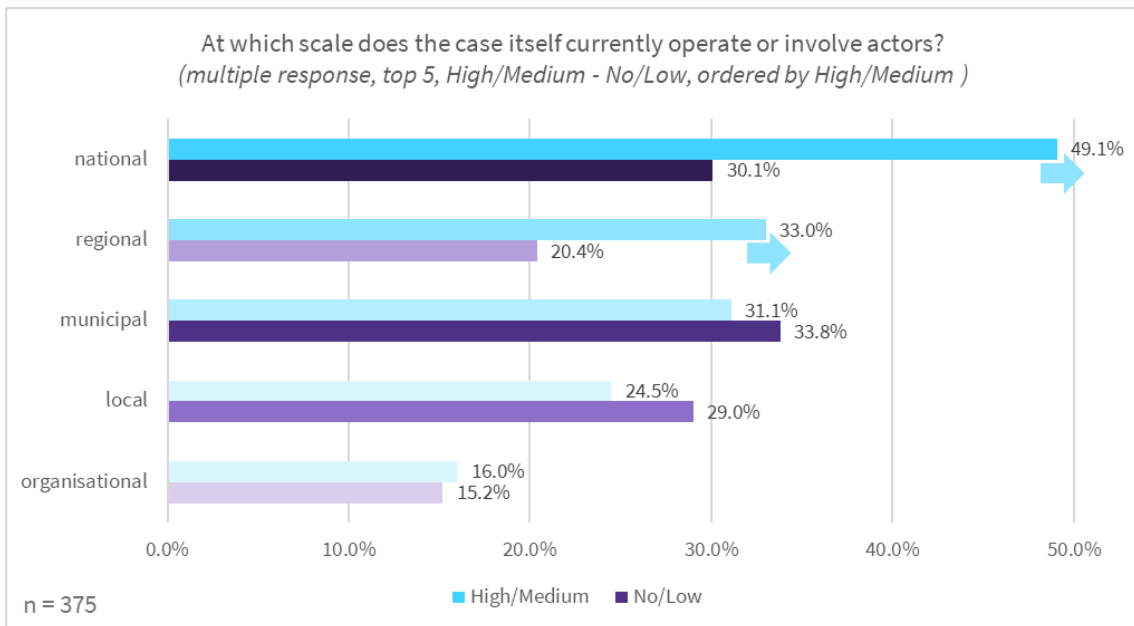


Figure 15: Scale of operation according to the “High/Medium” - “No/Low” case classification

Some significant differences can also be highlighted in respect of the current form of operation. The informal group form is significantly more common with the “High/Medium” cases (H/M: 13.2%, N/L: 4.5%) and the project consortium form in the “No/Low” group (N/L: 8.6%, H/M: 2.8%).

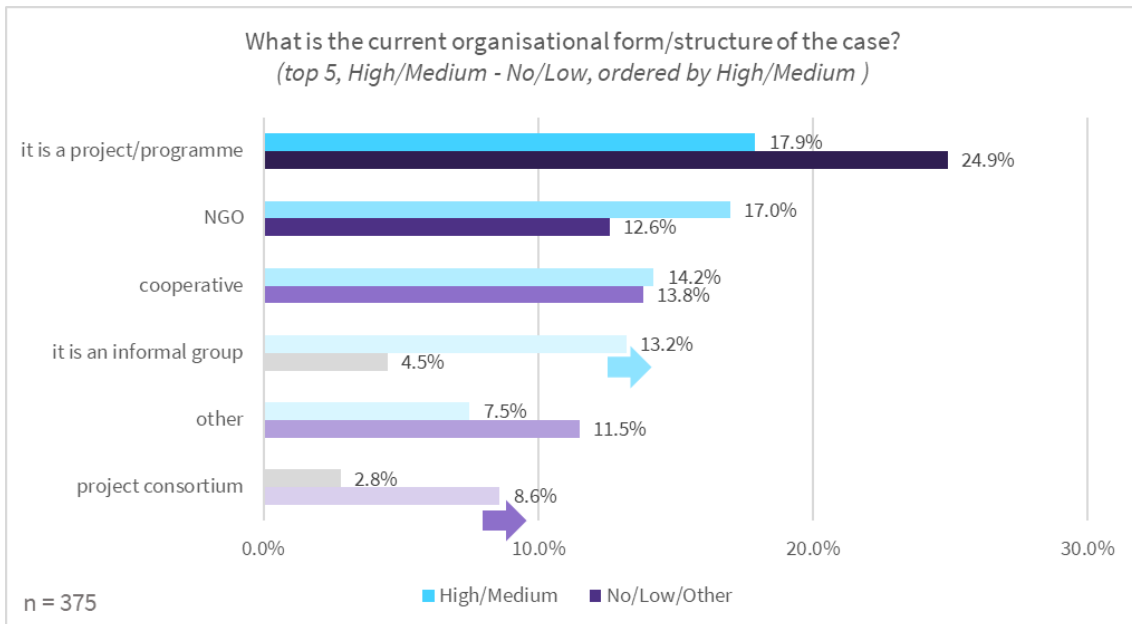


Figure 16: Current organisational form according to the “High/Medium” - “No/Low” case classification

As with the transformative/reformative breakdown, the classification of aspects also varies according to whether the cases are members of a network. The “High/Medium” cases are significantly more likely to be members (H/M: 54.7%, N/L: 32.7%), and the Now/Low cases are significantly more likely not to be (N/L: 52.4%, H/M: 33%).

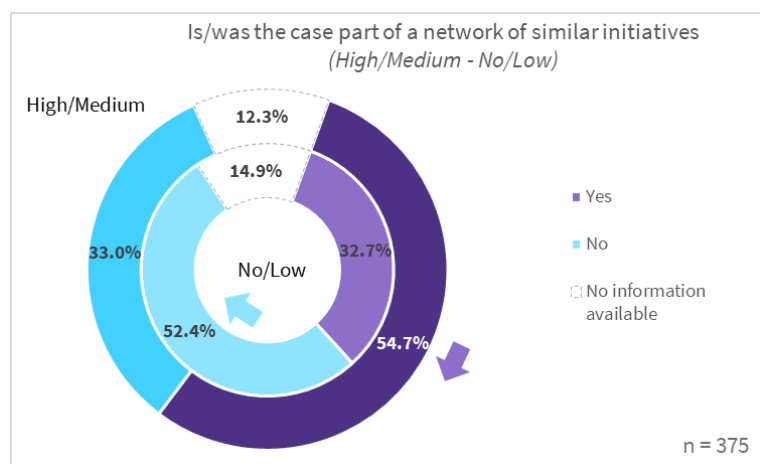


Figure 17: Case is part of a network of similar initiatives, according to the “High/Medium” – “No/Low” case classification

Looking at the **disaggregation according to the ten ENCI ideal types, some significant differences can be highlighted.**

Not surprisingly, at the current operational level, the individual or household level is more prevalent in both Type 1 cases ("Do their bit (in the household)") compared to Types 5, 7, 8, 10, and Type 2 ("Do their own (in the household)") compared to Types 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

The main difference in the current operational form is with the cooperative form, which is significantly more frequently associated with Type 8: "Go ahead" cases than in Types 1, 4, 7, 9 and 10.

It is interesting to note that Type 8 cases are also significantly more likely to be members of a network compared to Types 1, 2 and 7.

## Regions of Europe

**Regional disaggregation reveals some minor differences in the level of operation.**

In Western Europe, cases at the municipal level are most common (34.4%), regional second (23%) and national third (32.5%). In Southern Europe, the order is national (32.3%), then municipal (25.8%) and finally organisational (23.7%). In Northern Europe, the most common level is national (37.8%), followed by local (35.4%) and municipal (30.7%). Finally, in Eastern Europe, national is first (41.3%), followed by municipal (31.1%) and local (24.6%).

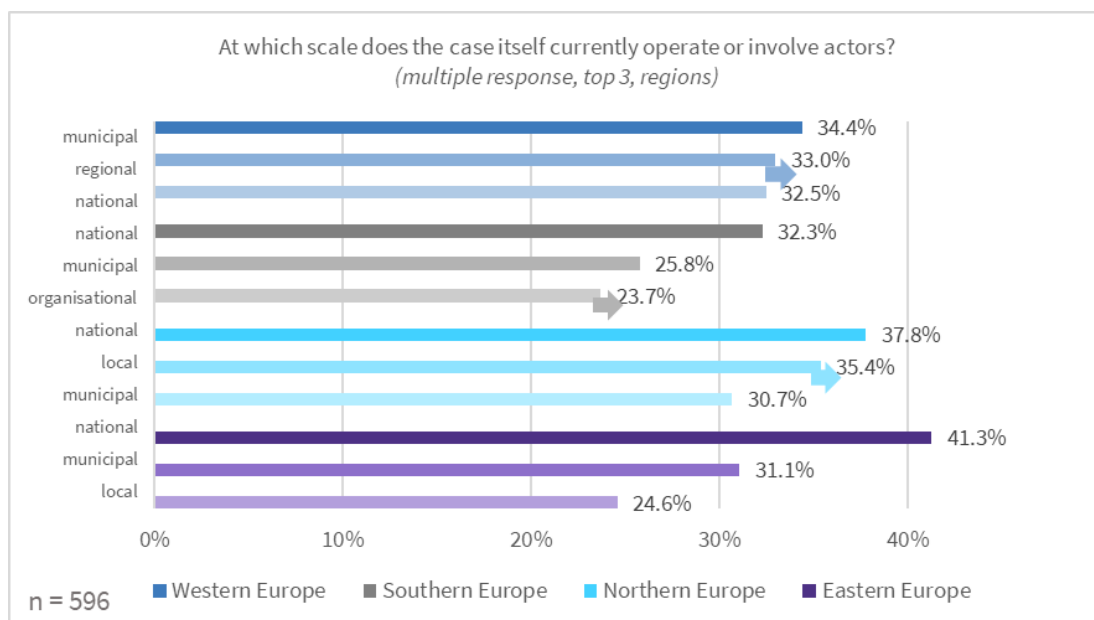


Figure 18: Scale of operation by region

There are only a few significant differences between regions concerning this issue. However, what is worth highlighting is that in Western Europe, the regional level is significantly more prevalent than in East and North.

It is also interesting to note that European Union level in Southern Europe, ranked eighth, is significantly more common than in the other three regions.

The **current organisational form/structure has a slightly more varied regional distribution.**

In Western Europe, the most common form of case is the cooperative (18.7%), followed by the NGO (16.3%) and then the project/programme (12.9%). In Southern Europe, the most frequent form is the NGO and cooperative (17.2%), followed by project/programme (16.1%). In the North, the project/programme (22.0%) is the most popular, followed by the “Other” type (19.7%), and the project consortium (15.7%) is in third place. Finally, in Eastern Europe, the most common form is a project/programme (32.9%), followed by NGO (10.2%) and then an informal group (9%).

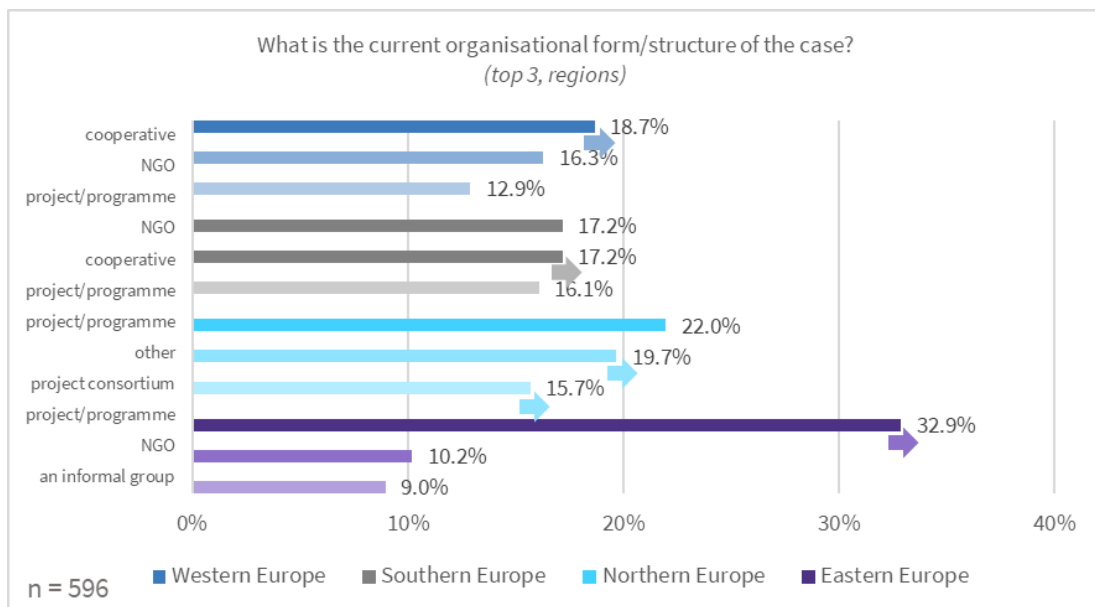


Figure 19: Current organisational form by region

Some significant differences can be highlighted concerning this issue.

The cooperative form is significantly more common in the West than in the East and North, and more common in the South than in the North. The project/programme form in Eastern Europe accounts for a notably large share, significantly larger than in the South and the West. Project consortium form is significantly higher in Northern Europe, than in the South and the West. It should also be noted that the “Other” form is more prevalent in Northern Europe, significantly more so than in the other three regions.

Regarding the third issue examined here, network membership, there are only one significant difference between regions. Cases are more likely to be part of a network in the South than in the North.

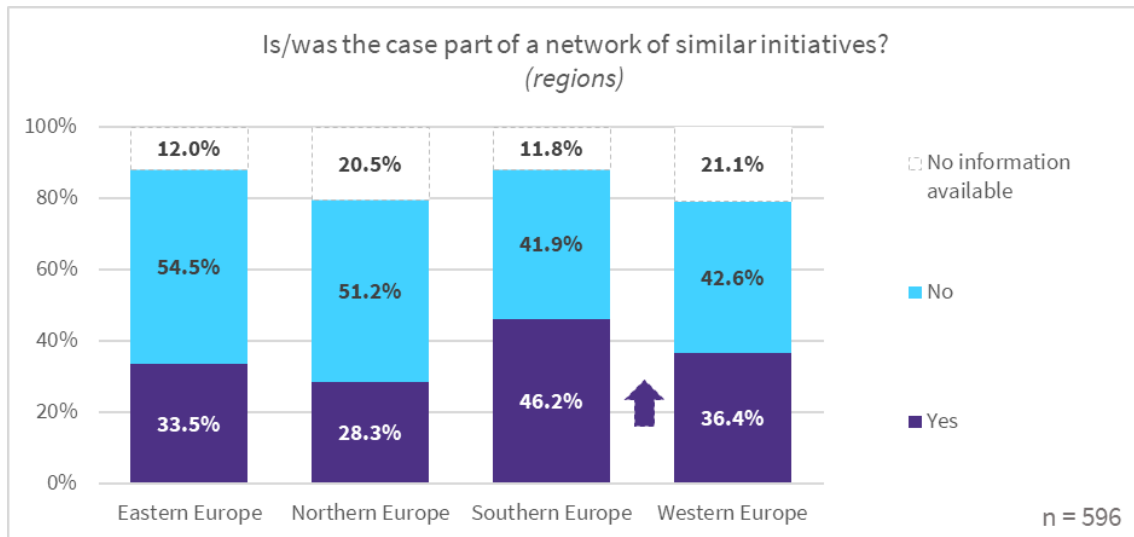


Figure 20: Case is part of a network of similar initiatives (regional comparison)



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## EnergyPROSPECTS partners

### University of Galway (UoG)

University Road, H91 TK33, Galway, Ireland



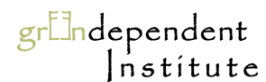
### Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB),

Avenue Franklin Roosevelt 50-1050, Bruxelles, Belgium



### GreenDependent Institute (GDI),

2100 Gödöllő, Éva u. 4., Hungary



### Universiteit Maastricht (UM),

Minderbroedersberg 4-6, 6200 MD, Maastricht, Netherlands



### Applied Research and Communications Fund (ARC Fund),

Alexander Zhendov Street 5, 1113, Sofia, Bulgaria



### Notre Europe – Institut Jacques Delors (JDI),

18, rue de Londres 75009, Paris, France



### University of Latvia (UL),

Raiņa bulvāris 19, LV-1586, Riga, Latvia



### Technische Universität Berlin (TUB),

Straße des 17. Juni 135, 10623, Berlin, Germany



### Universidade da Coruña (UDC),

Rúa da Maestranza 9, 15001 A Coruña, Spain

