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EMPOWERMENT TOOLKIT AND KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY

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



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Fostering individual empowerment.

Personal motivation and behavioural drivers

There is no single motivation behind our behaviour, but rather a set of factors drive our actions. It is important to understand what impels you to move, what barriers to progress you encounter and what you can also do to feel supported and supportive. Some of the motivations we have found in people are:

- **Feeling supported.** It is a major driver for change ["Individuals display their behaviour, replicate them, and collectives accept and support them thus enhancing behavioural choices in large social groups" (Interview 51, energy citizen association)]. Indeed, support can be something that pushes you to move forward, as you feel the satisfaction arising from acting, not only for yourself, but also for those around you:

you're actually here in the community, you've felt this before, or before a community where basically I like to organise like that, so this is the assistant position. I think this describes this way of life very well, that basically I am very happy to support good projects, not necessarily on a world-changing level, still I am content to carry the heavy loads. (Interview 23, individual energy citizen).

- **Doing our bit.** Making changes to our energy-related behaviour does not have to entail giving up things we like, nor does it have to require such an effort that the commitment to action erodes over time. Analysing what motivates us to change and what motivates others, as well as feeling part of something bigger, sharing experiences and purpose, can be key to keeping that motivation alive:

So, the thing that motivated me at the start, was that this seemed to have a chance of success. And that it was, how to say it, sort of active, it was not just nice words. Plus it acknowledged the severity of the problem, that most of all. I guess that's what convinced me to join. (Interview 4, Social Movement).

- **Improving life satisfaction.** Adopting behaviours that reduce energy consumption can endow us attain freedom over our decisions and even self-sufficiency.

- **Avoidance.** We may also be motivated by a desire to avoid something, either because since it is harmful to us (our health, our well-being, our wallet, etc.) or because it is harmful to the environment.
- **Influence by social and cultural factors.** Motivations related to climate and environmental concerns are at the heart of many of the changes adopted by society, but at the same time a range of social, cultural, economic, and psychological blockages, along with institutional, legal and infrastructural constraints may be behind inaction, and coupled with disempowerment, result in a lack of capacity, control and resources to act:

it is not that people are intrinsically unmotivated, opposed, against or indifferent to energy saving endeavours. There's just a certain fatalism, a certain resignation, in the face of tasks that seem impossible to fulfil (except by wholesale demolition and rebuilding). I see that there's quite some individual willingness and motivation to change. Yet there is also a kind of fatalism regarding the incapacity to deliver the change. So, there is this combination. First of all, there are the individuals willing to change, yet sometimes there is this fatalism, regarding the size of the task (Interview 1, institutional campaign).

- **Joining collective energy-related initiatives.** Several forms of social innovation, such as community-based lifestyles, cooperative projects for the production and consumption of renewable energies or social protest movements are a good resource for keeping alive the individual and collective desire and interest in the energy transition. As one of our respondents points out:

if people are empowered through these cooperatives of alternative, ecological energy consumption, where their energy source comes from alternative and ecological sources, if there were more pressure from us, from the people who use the electricity grid, I believe that there could also make a change (Interview 35, Co-housing).

In the forthcoming section, we highlight certain factors that encouraged people in our case studies to take an individual or collective stance in ENCI initiatives. Before beginning [spelling mistake], we would like you to reflect on yours:

[Please stop here for doing Activity 3].



Activity N.º 3

Let's consider and observe my resources and barriers: Have I ever thought about...? Why not...?

(Here there are some questions about possible changes in your behaviour, so that you can reflect on whether they are feasible in terms of the options you have to introduce them and the barriers that prevent you from doing so)

	Possibilities & resources	Possibilities & resources
Consuming less food and/or consume it more sustainably (in small shops, organic products, locally-sourced consumption...)?		
Commuting to my place of work/ study by cycling or walking?		
Or by using public transport?		
Using an alternative to the private car to get around in my leisure time?		
Making fewer leisure trips?		
Reducing my heating and/or hot water consumption?		
Improving my home's insulation?		
Switching my appliances for more efficient or energy-saving ones?		
Buying fewer products and opting for second-hand products instead?		
<p>One last task for now... Why would I do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have made changes in my consumption patterns because... OR ● I could make changes in my energy consumption if... <p>(e.g. I would save money, I would have time at my disposal, I have enough information, I feel a personal responsibility, in my inner circle there are like-minded people that support me...)</p> <p><i>(Please write down all the ideas that come to mind when thinking about what might motivate you to reduce your energy consumption patterns)</i></p>		

