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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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Good practices: transforming agency.

To address collective empowerment, we must discuss people, organisations and resources. We have previously referred to the individual impetus, capacities and resources that are at the basis of individual empowerment. We would now like to focus on how ENCI structures are arranged at different levels of citizen engagement, participation, and citizenship through some examples of the 40 in-depth cases under analysis. Specifically, you will be shown 20 examples of good practice cases, in a highly synthetic manner, based on a selection and grouping of cases by the EnergyPROSPECTS consortium.

Through these examples, shown in greater detail [here](#), we aim to furnish you with information on the main areas where ENCI can inspire the creation of new value-creating practices and thus new **Business and Sustainable Innovation Models** (BSIMs) or a broader integration of new concerns within existing BSIMs and, conversely, to consider BSIMs that can catalyse and enhance ENCI. Still, we will begin by defining what we mean by Business and Sustainable Innovation Models (BSIM):

By BSIMs we refer to both the “business as usual” or, more precisely, non-innovative framings of activities (for-profit companies, municipal action, NGO, NPO, etc) and the “new ways of doing, thinking and/or organizing energy” that are recomposing the energy system, labelled as social innovations (SI) (Wittmayer et al., 2022).

Our approach on BSIMs differs radically from the usual business model frameworks of value creation, capture and monetisation, to which we substitute single viability of the model, that is, the concrete capacity of a case or an initiative to sustain itself or to endure over time. In such a perspective the value creation is displaced on other issues than monetised value towards a conception of value that is based on various key features of ENCI, that we adopt as basic principles for BSIMs analysis:

author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.

- 1) Citizenry participation and collectives which include the possibility of being involved in the model's decision-making process.
- 2) Transparency, fairness, and openness with regard to the model.
- 3) Affordability and accessibility of the model to a larger audience.

The aim was to identify potential “good practice cases” that appear to be particularly viable while decisively supporting and improving ENCI practices. The findings show, inter alia, that BMSIMs are quite dynamic and unique in each one of the studied ENCI cases. However, the cluster analysis reveals several key features within subclusters that help to shed further light on our understanding of the role of these models in enhancing the positive impact of energy citizenship types. The figure x shows the comparative clustering of the 40 detailed case studies¹:

The **community-based ENCI cases** are largely cooperatives, focused whether on RES or housing (and therefore related to different policy frameworks). This should also encompass mobility related cooperatives. However, this was not represented in the 40 cases. The examples of this study are energy cooperatives with single (BEB and CFOAT) or complex organisational structures (Loenen Energy, ECTC and GoiEner).

The cooperative models that are supported or split into other types or associations or foundations display more flexibility and swiftness in decision-making processes which is often necessary when applying for funds or starting new projects. This shows that the traditional cooperative model is not fit-for-purpose especially when initiatives need to make snap decisions, which is essential in a context where applications for funds or tenders appear with little forewarning. Moreover, they are often part of specific local identity-concern as they are open to a certain (limited) geographic perimeter attached to a certain territory and culture (and/or political culture). Engagement and active participation of citizens is desired and part of their cooperative structure. That said, participation is often focused on the local citizenry.

based and community-based cases that are mixing several organisational forms.

¹ This clustering aims to be an analytical tool for supporting the data analysis and not at being considered as a fixed and rigid categorisation. It is important to note that some cases might belong to several clusters, considering their possible overlaps, such as between organisation-

COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES

RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITIES

HOUSING COMMUNITIES

The cases with a 'traditional' cooperative model face many challenges in achieving financial security and aiming to continuously diversify their income base. As part of their financial strategies, maintenance of key partners is of key importance for their long-term viability.



CITIZEN ENERGY BERLIN, BEB (DE)



ARAN ISLANDS ENERGY COOPERATIVE - (CFOAT) (IRL)

The cases with complex structures or 'enhanced' cooperative-models exhibit more professionalisation in their employed staff and economic security by spreading out their income stream into various fundings, including public, private or EU grants.



LOENEN ENERGY (NL)



GOIENER TALDEA (SP)



LA BORDA (SP)



LAVIDAVERDE (DE)



ENERGY COMMUNITIES TIPPERARY COOPERATIVE - ECTC (IRL)

The **publicly-run ENCI cases** are initiatives spearheaded mainly by public institutions and/or governments at various administrative and regional levels. In these cases, a hybrid modality may also be adopted (public/private), in which public institutions play a predominant role in their organisational and funding structure. Most relevant distinction with regard to the policy frameworks is observed between infra-national and national or supra-national levels. They place the onus on contributing to common goods linking to more equitable energy transitions and that stems from the commitments of the initiatives to their respective national, regional or local ambitions for tackling climate change and speeding up their energy transition. Although such initiatives have a long-term and stable revenue stream, they are also highly vulnerable since if their support from the public funding is cut off (e.g., due to change in political landscape or national ambitions), it is more likely that they will cease to function. Therefore, business models with single source of public funding are more vulnerable and depend on or are at the mercy of the 'political will' of a 'top-down' stakeholder culture. ENCI still need to be further enforced in such kind of initiatives as citizens are mostly consulted, with their view seldom coming into fruition. Initiatives spearheaded mainly by public institutions and/or governments at various

administrative and regional levels. In these cases, a hybrid modality may also be adopted (public/private), in which public institutions play a predominant role in their organisational and funding structure.

PUBLICLY-RUN INITIATIVES

INFRA-NATIONAL (I.E. LOCAL/REGIONAL)

NATIONAL OR SUPRA-NATIONAL

Initiatives led mainly by public institutions and/or governments at various administrative and regional levels. In these cases, which might also adopt a hybrid form (public/private), public institutions play a predominant role in their organisational and funding structure.



DRECHTSTEDEN ENERGY (NL)



ENERGY TRANSITION OF CITY OF BURGAS (BG)



CONSULTATION: SHAPING OUR ELECTRICITY FUTURE (IRL)



HAUTS-DE-FRANCE PASS RENOVATION (FR)



NAGYPÁLI, THE RENEWABLE ENERGY VILLAGE (HU)

The **organisation-based ENCI cases** display more widespread complexity and diversity in their funding base, stakeholders, partnerships networks as well as in their organisational structures in comparison with public run modalities. The models with simple organisational structures and a focus on citizen participation can be replicated in other contexts and countries provided their set-up and structures remain at a minimum and are deeply rooted to their locality in terms of support networks and local partnerships.

ORGANISATION-BASED INITIATIVES

INCL. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The cases focused on local-scale activities are in general highly anchored at the local scale and exhibit a number of local and informal partnerships which help the cases to self-sustain. Their BSIMs focus on concepts such as degrowth, sociocracy, deep sustainability with an emphasis on citizen empowerment putting the energy transition in the hands of citizens and oriented towards the needs of people.



CARGONOMIA (HU)

NO ECONOMIC ACTIVITY



SOLOCAL ENERGY (DE)

The organisation-based cases with a more national scope and growth ambition are proven to be more long-lasting cases that have survived the course of time with larger networks and partnership coalitions with a focus on policy activities and lobbying. In addition, these initiatives have more professionalised organisational structures (compared to the public-run cases), and the development of some specific tools and financial mechanisms illustrate how their models and activities help to enhance ENCI-related economisation processes.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ACTIVE RESIDENTS - (LSA) (NL)



SHARED ENERGY



HYDRO ELECTRICITY OUR THE & SAMBRE (BE)



TREEDEPENDENT (HU)



NATURSTROM EG (DE)

Finally, **individual initiatives** were not represented in the detailed cases to compose a worthy of research. [This does not mean, though, that they are not important in the energy transition. If you wish to get some examples, please check the EnergyPROSPECTS database.](#)

In short, the ENCI cases under study are proven to have business models that focus on multiple value creation activities combining viable financial structures, sturdy partnerships and coalitions with multiple stakeholders on several levels (local, regional, national), participation of citizens or citizen collectives in their decision-making models, accessibility of their model to a wider audience and focus on values such as deep sustainability, sociocracy, degrowth as well as transparency and openness. Echoing Wittmayer et al. (2022) business models that enhance ENCI requires 'new ways of acting, thinking and/or organising energy' in innovative ways.

More detailed information is available here

[D3.2. Catalogue of energy citizenship cases and typologies](#)

[D3.5. Publication of metaanalysis report](#)

[D4.4. Enhancing the transformative agency of energy citizenship](#)