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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 collective empowerment

Individual versus collective responsibility in the energy system.

The individual and collective responsibility intermingles in people who actively participate in ENCI initiatives as it is considered that "(...) this is the way to advance as a society" (Interview 29, energy cooperative). The sense of ownership and commitment to the initiative has strengthened people's ability to participate actively in the energy system:

For me to stand up for that, for example, it took community, and I haven't felt this or that anywhere. So if someone had told me before that I would stand up in an online workshop and tell people anything about how they should lead a more waste-free life, I would have laughed (Interview 23, individual energy citizen).

Some aspects highlighted in the sense of shared ownership by people involved in collective initiatives are as follows:

- **Shared interest and purpose.** People can develop strong bonds with a cooperative and its members: "you want to feel that the cooperative is there for you" (Interview 30, energy cooperative), which intertwines an interest in energy with other issues of identity as a community.

We have an identity, cultural, linguistic, maritime, coastal, farming, weather. We also feel, with our sense of identity, for other communities who can't form that structure. Little villages outside the main cities and hubs, they are all viewed as are extensions of the cities. We are not an extension of anyone (Interview 16, energy cooperative).

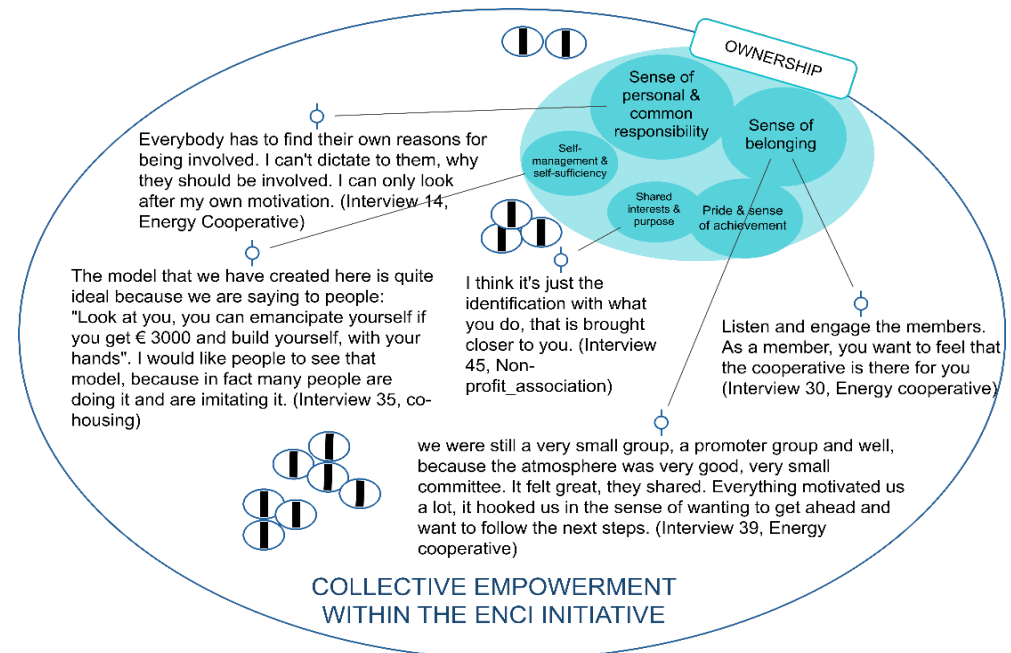
- **Sense of belonging.** The initiatives offer "an opportunity for communities to basically empower themselves (...) It's not about bringing hay, it's about working together as a group to make their homes more energy efficient" (Interview 12, energy co-operative), contributing to an environment of mutual help and support: "we have a community, a DIY community means that others help me and I help others" (Interview 49, energy co-operative).

This sense of responsibility emerges from a sense of achievement in having succeeded in going where other people or groups have not yet gone.

- **Pride and sense of achievement.** They are a result of developing actions on your own, such as Do-it-yourself (DIY) solutions, which acts as an internal psychological resource that generates "the feeling that they are now part of the energy transition" and a sense of achievement:

it's hard to say how people feel about it afterwards. Because I rarely see them again. So, I'm around most now when it's newly installed. And then everyone is always happy. Regardless whether they're talking about it there, or amongst friends and acquaintances you can tell they are proud, it stands out (Interview 44, energy cooperative).

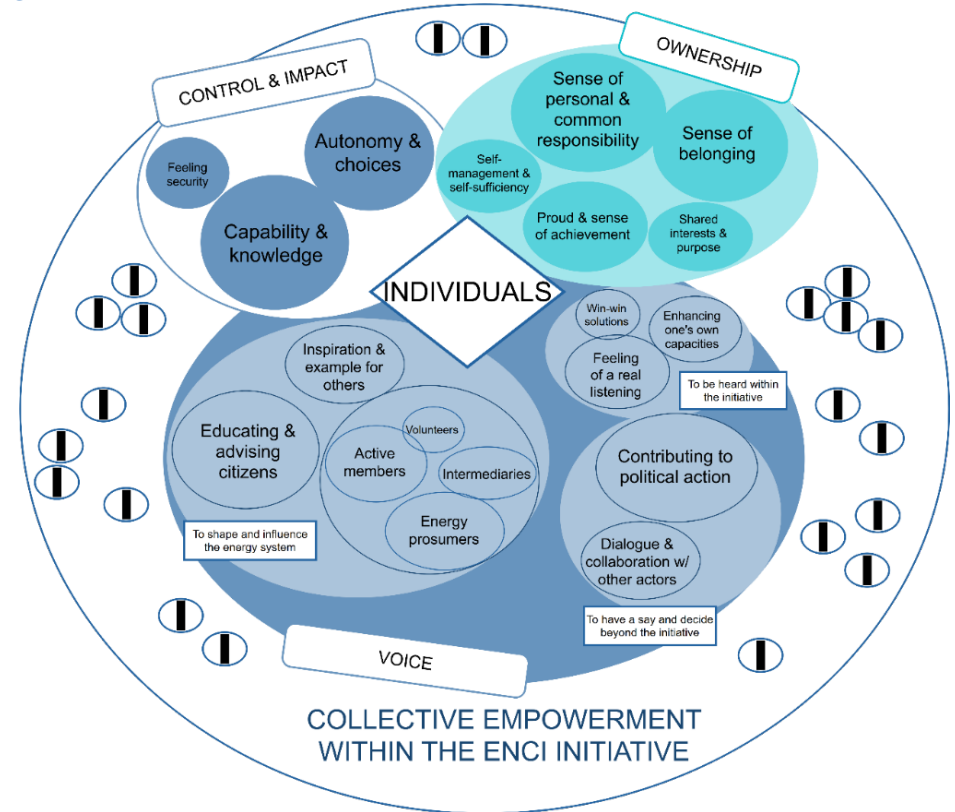
Figure 7. Collective empowerment: ownership



To conclude, in this section we have displayed the other side of empowerment. The side that refers to people acting collectively with their motivations, contributing their knowledge and skills, and exercising their entitlement to participate in decision-making within the energy system autonomously and safely. Likewise, they are granted a voice at different levels and can become part of a wider collective that can assist in the struggle for the democratisation of the energy system to accomplish greater outreach in societies. As one of our respondents points out:

I could do it myself, and I don't have any superpowers or special skills. You can do it too. Supporting this is what makes a little go a long way (Interview 23, individual energy citizen).

Figure 8. Collective empowerment model



[Please stop here for doing Activity 8].



Activity N.º 8

Let's think again about myself:

After reading these stories, would you change anything about the last questions:

- To what extent do you feel that acting to shape the energy system is part of your individual and collective responsibility?

The intention of presenting you with these stories of others is to make you reflect on your own perceptions and preconceptions on their capacities and possibilities to influence, individually and as part of an initiative, the wider energy system. Have they seemed worthwhile reading? To what extent have they helped you to change your previous answers to these questions? (e.g. varying your perception of your own individual and collective responsibility towards the energy transition, enhanced understanding of the roles that third party actors take/should take in this process, etc.).

Here is a selection of examples which may help you to complete what you have answered above. We suggest you consider whether:

- No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.
- No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.
- Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.
- Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.

If "NO" and/or "they are not my individual/collective responsibility", please try to reflect on how is(are) the responsible(s)

<p>Doing your bit as an individual that complies with the green energy system in the household; for instance, by adopting more efficiency in energy consumption practices, installing solar panels, or using smart appliances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Doing you own as a change-making individual in the household, for instance, by aspiring for self-sufficiency through off-grid energy sources and storage technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Doing your bit as an individual within an organisation such as workplace or a school, for instance, through complying with the organisations' climate policies, motivating the organisation to install solar panels on the roof, or initiating energy saving campaigns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility. <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Doing you own as a change-making individual within an organisation, mostly through the involvement in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility. <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.

<p>energy market newcomers with the ambition to transform the local energy market, for instance, through renewable energy exchange or flexible markets aimed at optimising production and consumption, or by supporting the creation of energy sharing communities.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Making your voice heard as an individual in the public sphere, for instance, by participating in societal energy discussions through citizen consultations, assemblies, committees, or fora, in the forms of institutionalised or isolated events, where citizens are invited to express their views on a specific local project or national energy/climate policy.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Making your vote count as an individual in the public sphere, for instance, by mobilising votes for the energy transition in referendums for a specific energy transition pathway at different geographical scales, or in general elections that are directly targeting climate and energy transition issues.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Doing your share by joining citizen or hybrid organisations, for instance, as a minority shareholder in renewable energy projects or by participating in the enactment of governmental public policies at the local level.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Going ahead by building, expanding, or linking citizen or hybrid organisations, for instance, in the shape of energy communities where the power rests in the hands of citizens, in energy cooperatives that promote active engagement for a decentralised energy system, or within initiatives that aspire towards low carbon footprints.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>
<p>Doing the job within social movements to facilitate the energy transition through alignment activities, for instance, in the form of non-profit organisations or unions that launch initiatives such as watt saving competitions in their neighbourhood, or promote debate, acceptance, and acceptability of renewable energy development.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do this as it is not viewed as my individual or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not do it, although I do consider that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it but, I think they are not my individual nor collective responsibility.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I do it because I feel that they fall within my individual and/or collective responsibility.</p> <p>The responsibility is of:</p>

