

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

# RESCOOP - SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN CITIZEN ENERGY COOPERATIVES & GUIDELINES ON COMMUNITY-LED HEATING AND COOLING



### Good to Know

#### Partnerships with Municipalities:

Collaborating with local governments can help streamline project implementation and increase technical expertise.

The REScoop model can be adapted to different regions and energy sectors, making it a versatile tool for local energy transitions.

## TOOLBOX CATEGORIES

**Promote local energy independence, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and strengthen community ownership in the energy transition.**

**Country:** Europe

**Category:** Other

**Media:** Application

**Source:** <https://www.rescoop.eu/>; <https://energycommunityplatform.eu/resources/guidelines-on-community-led-heating-and-cooling/>

### Summary:

REScoop.eu is an application designed to support European citizen energy cooperatives, empowering citizens and communities to participate in the renewable energy revolution. By providing tools, best practice reports and papers, REScoop.eu facilitates local, community-led initiatives, ultimately contributing to the goal of achieving energy democracy. This platform is relevant for government stakeholders and citizens at the local level, as it promotes awareness and participation in renewable energy projects, potentially leading to financial benefits and increased energy independence for communities. Through REScoop.eu, users can access resources to navigate the complexities of renewable energy projects including community-led heating and cooling projects, fostering collaboration and empowerment within their communities. Additionally, by supporting citizen energy cooperatives, this application aligns with the broader objectives of the heating transition in Europe, promoting decentralized, sustainable energy solutions.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Title:** REScoop

**Objective:** To empower citizens to co-own and democratically control renewable energy projects, promoting energy democracy through local energy cooperatives.

**Duration:** 2013 – ongoing

**Partners:**

- Ecopower (Belgium)
- Energie Samen (Netherlands)
- Enercoop (France)
- Som Energia (Spain)
- DGRV (Germany)
- Middelgrunden (Denmark)
- Energy4All (United Kingdom)
- Coopérnico (Portugal)

**Approach:** The REScoop model facilitates citizen-led renewable energy projects where individuals jointly own and operate energy cooperatives. These cooperatives work on energy production, efficiency and management across various sectors including electricity, heating and mobility. REScoops adhere to seven cooperative principles, such as voluntary membership and democratic control. Members purchase cooperative shares, become co-owners and can participate in key decisions, from investment allocations to energy pricing. The model emphasizes local ownership, social acceptance and reinvestment in community projects. REScoop also fosters partnerships with municipalities to implement energy transition projects that directly benefit local economies. REScoop has developed specific guidelines and recommendations for heating and cooling projects.

## TOOL EVALUATION

### How to Use

1. **Understand the Model:**  
Familiarize yourself with the REScoop principles of democratic control, local ownership and renewable energy projects to ensure community-driven energy systems.
2. **Identify Local Opportunities:**  
Assess local energy needs, resources and infrastructure to determine whether to focus on renewable energy production, energy efficiency, or both - REScoop website provides case studies and best practices on local energy projects, helping you understand how other communities have assessed their renewable energy potential and applied the cooperative model.
3. **Build Partnerships:**  
Form a core group with the REScoop LICHT approach and collaborate with local authorities, technical experts and other cooperatives to gather support and expertise.
4. **Create a Business Plan:**  
Develop a financial and operational plan that includes funding from cooperative shares, local subsidies and potential partnerships.
5. **Establish Governance:**  
Set up a legal structure and democratic decision-making processes, ensuring equal voting rights for all members. The website gives examples on how cooperatives can establish democratic structures and ensure fair decision-making processes.
6. **Implement and Monitor:**  
Launch your project, engage members and regularly monitor its energy, financial and social impact.
7. **Reinvest in the Community:**  
REScoop's focus on reinvesting profits in local projects can guide your cooperative in using funds for sustainable growth and community development, such as energy efficiency measures or infrastructure.

Best practices and examples can be found on the Digital Guidelines on Community-led Heating and Cooling (CH&C). Case studies from Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and Italy outline key elements such as:

- Access to capital for the energy community;
- Capacity building to develop skills, processes and resources;
- Capacity at municipalities level to build the expertise of civil servants;
- Regulatory framework to ensure citizen ownership and manage the monopoly nature of those projects.

### Key Benefits

- Keeps money within the local economy, creating jobs and boosting regional development.
  - Lowers the cost barrier for individuals to participate in renewable energy projects.
-

- Encourages citizen involvement, reducing opposition to renewable energy infrastructure.

### Cost Aspects

- Costs depend on the cooperative share price and the scale of the energy projects.
- Cooperative members manage operational and maintenance expenses, which are often lower due to local control.
- Profits are typically reinvested in new projects or returned to the community.

### Evaluation

- **Challenges:** Successfully starting a cooperative requires initial financial backing, technical expertise and community buy-in. Legal and regulatory frameworks can also vary across countries, affecting implementation.
- **Success Factors:** A clear commitment to cooperative principles, strong collaboration with municipalities and active community engagement are key to the success of REScoops. Interactive guidelines available online. These interactive guidelines aim to give an introduction into the world of renewable citizen-led heating and cooling, including an explanation of what they are, how they function, and give advice on how to replicate successful examples. **Link:** <https://energycommunityplatform.eu/resources/guidelines-on-community-led-heating-and-cooling/>

---

## MORE INFORMATION FOR WORKSHOP PREPARATION

**Contact:** [info@rescoop.eu](mailto:info@rescoop.eu)

### Willingness to engage in dialogue or workshop participation:

Possible support within REDI4heat: Energycities

Similar Approaches in the Toolbox: **PAW Guide (Netherlands)** and **SHIFFT (Europe)**.

The guide can be complemented with interactive web applications like **Get2c (Portugal)** or engaging games like **REWARDHeat (Europe)**, which can facilitate understanding and engagement in the energy transition process.

Further information on topic (with focus on target countries): n.a.

---