

Output 2.2 Dissemination and professional awareness raising pilot activities

Prepared in the framework of the project:
**DRP0200163 – NRGCOM - Creating appropriate
operational conditions for renewable energy
communities in the Danube Region**

Project reference/identification	
Full title of the project	Creating appropriate operational conditions for renewable energy communities in the Danube Region
Acronym	NRGCOM
Supporting Programme	Interreg Danube Region Programme
Programme priority	A greener, low-carbon Danube Region
Programme priority specific objective	Support greening the energy and transport sectors in the Danube Region by enhancing the integration of renewable energy sources
Duration	30 months
Project website	https://interreg-danube.eu/projects/nrgcom
Project coordinator	South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency - STRIA

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Introduction

Harnessing renewable energy benefits everyone — from reducing costs and emissions to creating local job opportunities. Energy communities empower citizens, foster sustainable development, and build resilient neighbourhoods. Together, we can accelerate the transition to a greener, cleaner future!

Energy communities are crucial for democratizing energy access, giving local residents and small businesses control over their energy supply, and promoting social cohesion. They enable communities to generate, share, and benefit from renewable energy, making sustainability inclusive and accessible for all.

Our goal is to raise awareness and encourage society to create or join energy communities, fostering a more sustainable and inclusive energy future. Pilot projects play a vital role as they introduce a relatively new concept, helping to demonstrate its benefits and build trust among citizens and stakeholders.

With raising awareness as the primary goal—empowering communities, influencing public opinion, and inspiring action. By pilot projects, we aim to educate the public and stakeholders about the advantages of energy communities, ensuring broader participation and fostering a shared commitment to renewable energy.

Importance of Pilot Awareness-Raising Activities

Activity 2.3 and 2.4 within the NRGCOM project were designed to support the achievement of Project Specific Objective 2: raising awareness and encouraging society to create or join renewable energy communities (RECs). These two activities represent preparatory actions essential for building the knowledge, motivation and engagement of both the general public and key stakeholders in the Danube Region.

Objective of Activity 2.3

Activity 2.3 focuses on designing and launching awareness-raising pilot campaigns targeting regions and social groups that are less experienced or less committed to the transition to renewable energy. The main objective is to promote the adoption of sustainable practices, specifically the creation and operation of RECs, thereby contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel dependency. The campaigns include various communication tools—social media outreach, public events, educational videos, and online seminars—designed to make the concept of RECs tangible and relatable to everyday citizens. The involvement of 'REC ambassadors' and existing REC members ensures authenticity and credibility, as they provide professional insights and share lived experiences.

This activity is essential to the project as it measures societal readiness for change. The motivational programme, developed under a previous activity (A2.2), is tested during these campaigns, and the willingness of the general public to participate in RECs is evaluated through surveys. The feedback will be gathered feeds into the development of a methodology for an awareness-raising toolkit (Output O2.3). The implementation is collective: all project partners conduct campaigns in their regions, while REDASP, as the activity leader, evaluates the results and provides a transnational perspective.

Objective of Activity 2.4

Activity 2.4 builds upon the motivational programme by focusing specifically on municipalities, businesses, and other institutional stakeholders—key actors in the development of functioning RECs. Through professional training sessions, this activity aims to increase knowledge, address doubts, and foster active commitment. REC ambassadors and professionals serve as tutors, facilitating peer learning and confidence building. The trainings are designed to be inclusive and free, with pre-registration made available online to ensure broad accessibility.

This activity is particularly important within the project framework because while public interest is vital, institutional and corporate involvement is equally crucial for the successful and sustainable development of RECs. By increasing awareness and commitment among these actors, the project ensures a systemic and multi-level impact. STRIA, as the activity leader, oversees the assessment and contributes its experience as a co-operator of an REC, ensuring a practice-oriented approach.

Importance of Output 2.2

Output 2.2 is intended to contain the results and lessons learned from the experiences gathered during activities Activity 2.3 and 2.4. Both activities were implemented by all partners, adapted to their national or regional contexts. The results of the pilot actions will be systematically evaluated and processed into concrete deliverables: a comprehensive awareness-raising toolkit (O2.3) to provide transferable, scalable tools for further initiatives across the Danube Region. Output 2.3 The 'energy communities' awareness raising toolkit will consist of a finalised incentive method and additional tools to motivate actors to create/join energy communities and be applicable for potential REC founders, such as local and national authorities to encourage the public. The methodology included in the toolkit, will build on the results of the pilot actions.

In summary, Activity 2.3 and 2.4 aims to operationalise awareness raising, generate empirical insights, and build a participatory foundation for REC expansion aligned with the project's overarching objective of supporting the green transition through decentralised, community-led energy solutions.

Key Activities

Key activities aimed to inspire and empower individuals to take an active role in the transition to renewable energy sources and to foster a sense of community engagement and collective action.

The method was based on two pillars: 1) providing general knowledge about the benefits of using renewable energy sources as part of an awareness-raising campaign for the general public 2) encouraging people/institutions/SMEs/authorities, i.e. participants in professional trainings, to establish energy communities.

Through collaborative efforts of the PPs with REC ambassadors, experts, community representatives we organized and implemented following:

- public events,
- professional trainings,
- webinars,
- handbook,
- educational videos,
- podcasts,
- social media campaigns,
- publication (brochure/leaflet),
- TV and radio show/feature on the project,
- journal publication,
- study visits.

Below, we illustrate each type of event with a brief description and photo presentation.

PUBLIC EVENTS

When public events were organized, they were aimed at the general public as the main target group. The aim of the event in question was to present to the general public the



importance of using renewable energy sources, and in addition the advantages of joining an energy community. A significant group of stakeholders was also represented by potential REC founders, who wanted to learn more about the advantages of joining, establishing an energy community and its effective management.

In order to assess the change in attitude and motivation of the target groups, questionnaires filled in by the event participants were used, which were filled in by the participants before and after the public events.

At the level of the NRGCOM consortium, the implementation of all events planned within the framework of **A2.3 was carried out from November 2024 to July 2025. A total of 40 events (workshops, conferences, webinars) were organized, with approximately 1000+ participants in total.** The project was also presented and promoted at a total of 9 fairs on the topics of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in partner countries, which were visited by over 1,000 visitors in total.

Workshop "Community Energy: What, Why, and How in Czech Republic"

The event was supported by legal experts and included practical and legal aspects of community energy projects. It was part of the pilot implementation of motivational awareness-raising activities and served as a test for the NRGCOM evaluation questionnaires.

Agenda: Community energy basics, legal steps, and real-life benefits. Stakeholders invited: Local citizens, Representatives of municipalities, Legal experts, Community energy promoters.



Event: "Energie aus der Region – für die Region" held in Germany

Attendees: 77 in total - Citizens, business representatives, municipalities, farmers, tenants and energy partners

The goal of the event was to introduce the vision, structure and strategic role of the Regionalwerke to a broad regional audience, stimulate discussion, and initiate participatory momentum. The program included a detailed keynote presentation, a moderated panel discussion and informal networking. Types of stakeholders invited: Industry partners, Government institutions, Media representatives, Experts and speakers, Community and local organizations



International conference SLOVAKIATECH Forum-Expo 2024 in Slovakia

Domestic and international conferences with their own professional contributions were attended by more than fifty representatives of companies, educational and research institutions, founding members of energy communities and representatives of regional and local governments from all over Slovakia. The event was organized by the ambassador and expert within the NRGCOM project in the structure of PP12-NEK, namely the Energy Community Cluster KEKS. The event was professionally guaranteed by the Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SIEA) Bratislava.



General awareness-rising online event in Bulgaria

The online information meeting on the "NRGCOM" project of the Pazardzhik Regional Administration. A total of 28 participants of the meeting received basic information on "Renewable Energy" and "Energy Communities". This online meeting started the process of raising awareness and encouraging municipal administrations and the population in Bulgaria to create or join energy communities, which is one of the activities of the NRGCOM project.

Workshops for school students in Montenegro

During December 2024, a series of 13 workshops was organised for secondary school students on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources by FORS Montenegro to conduct these events. The workshops were attended by 294 participants. The goal of these workshops was to raise awareness among young people about the importance of rational energy use, the preservation of natural resources, and their active involvement in energy initiatives that contribute to sustainable development. The workshops also aimed to motivate students to take concrete steps towards energy savings and the use of sustainable energy sources, both at school and in everyday life.



Awareness-raising pilot action in Slovenia

The pilot action aimed to evaluate public knowledge and motivation regarding energy communities (RECs) and to test the public's readiness to join or establish such initiatives.

The training focused on the integration of renewable energy communities into regional energy planning and the use of emerging technologies such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). It was conducted as an in-person training session and attracted around 130 participants, demonstrating a high level of interest from a wide cross-section of the public. The audience included a diverse group of stakeholders: representatives of public institutions and municipalities, regional and local policymakers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), SMEs and entrepreneurs, researchers, university staff and students, members of the general public, civil society, and energy enthusiasts from the SAŠA region.



Awareness-raising pilot event in Romania

The event aimed at providing general knowledge about the benefits of using renewable energy and of developing Energy Communities. The main goal was to inspire and empower individuals to take an active role in transitioning to decentralized renewable energy.

Organiser: Energy Cities Romania/ OER in partnership with the Agency of Brasov for the Management of Energy and Environment/ ABMEE and the involvement of two Energy Community ambassadors (Corina Murafa and Alexandru Mureşan). Participants: Number of participants were: 25, of which 11 are male and 14 are female. The event was designed to engage a diverse range of stakeholders from across the country: active citizens, representatives of local communities, public institutions and local organizations with an interest in renewable energy projects and Energy Communities.



Awareness-raising pilot event in Moldova

The events aimed at providing general knowledge about the benefits of using renewable energy and of the developing Energy Communities. The main goal was to inspire and empower individuals to take an active role in transitioning to decentralized renewable energy. Organisers: AEER / NRGCOM project, Energy Communities Ambassadors.

Respondents: in total 36 persons

The events were designed to engage a diverse range of stakeholders from across the country: active citizens, representatives of local communities, public institutions and local organizations with an interest in renewable energy projects and Energy Communities.



The conference “Synergy for a Renewable Future” in Serbia

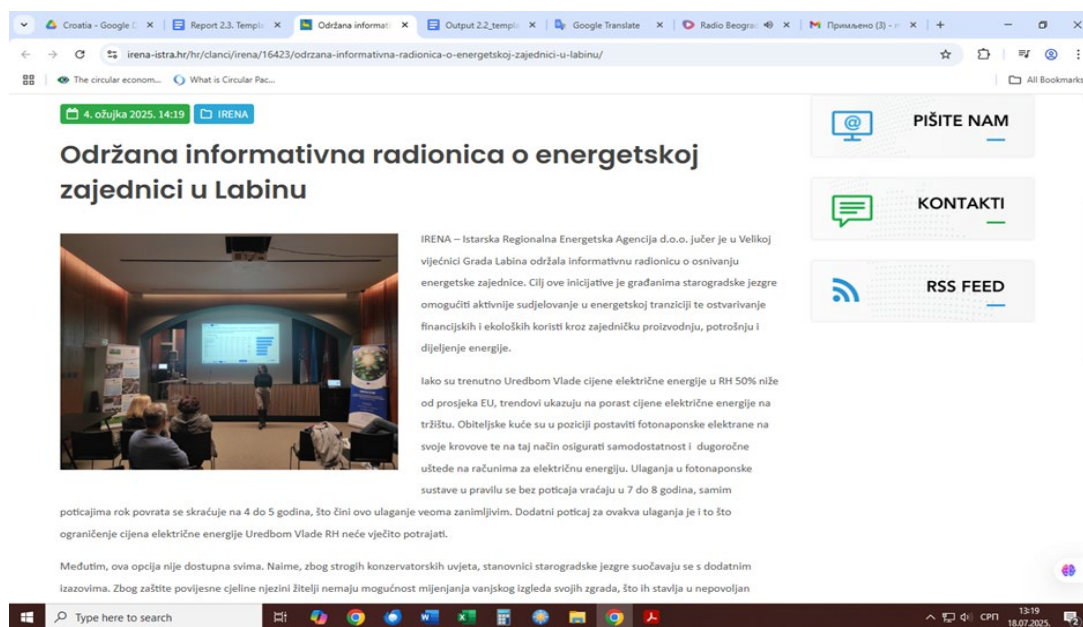
The conference gathered 53 participants from national, regional, and local institutions, the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities, academia, the private sector, civil society organizations and REC Ambassadors.

Types of stakeholders invited:

- Government institutions (national, regional, local levels)
- Industry representatives and investors
- Academia and research institutions
- Civil society organizations and REC Ambassadors
- Media representatives



Among other activities to raise public awareness, the following content was produced:
163 number of **SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS**



The face book post about the event held in Croatia by the partner organization IRENA



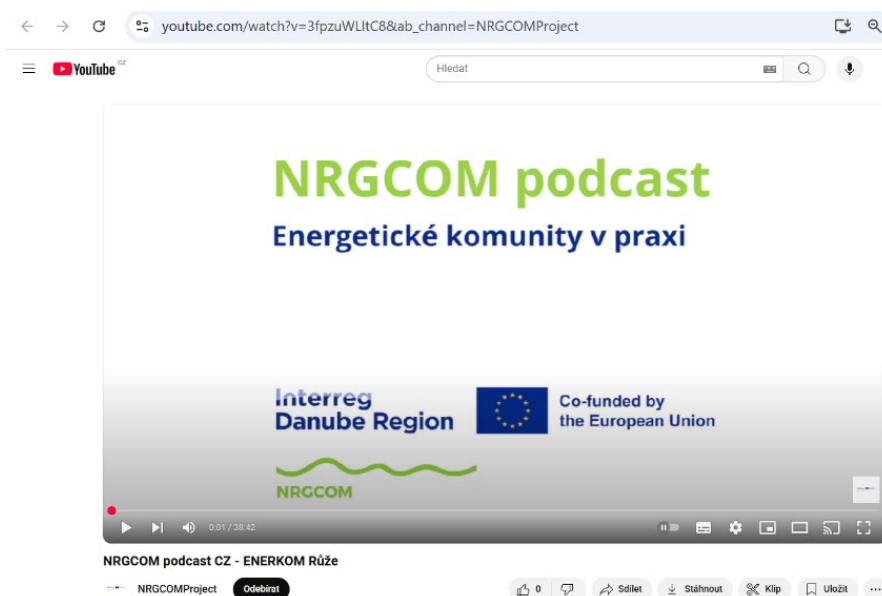
7 individual **VIDEOS** and 1 joint video at the project consortium level



3 **HANDBOOKS** to stakeholders

7 **PODCASTS**

<https://youtu.be/3fpzuWLtC8>



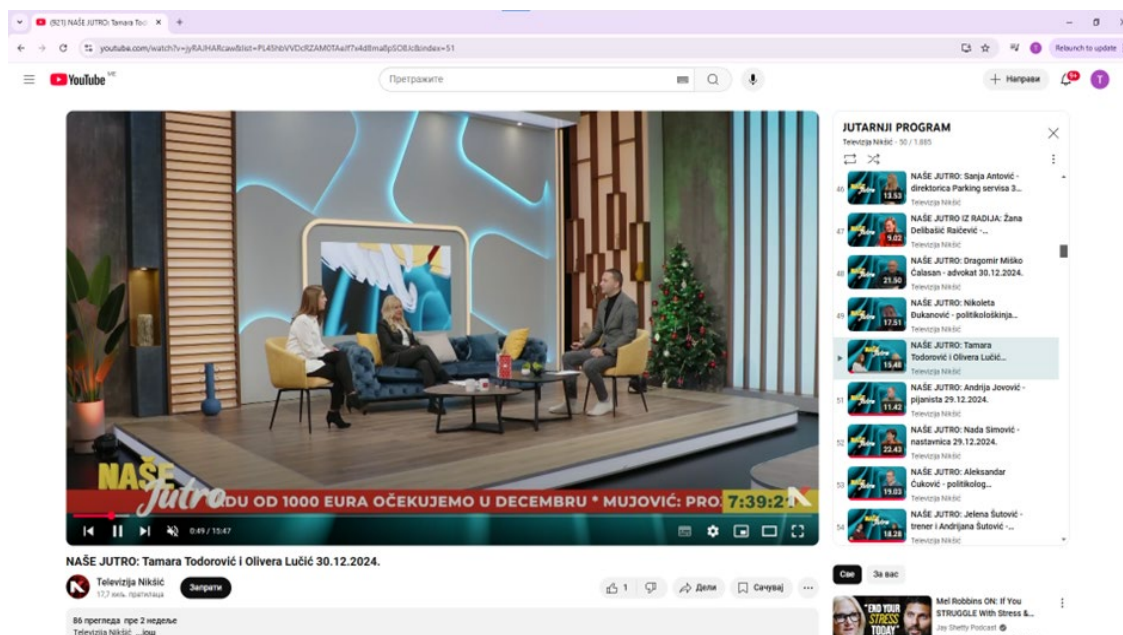
Podcast organized by the partner from Czech Republic

5 **BROCHURES** and 1 joint brochure at the project consortium level



Brochure prepared by REDASP partner from Serbia

6 **MEDIA APPEARANCES** (television and radio)



Participation in a television show by a partner from Montenegro

PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS

The objective of the professional training was to strengthen the commitment of key stakeholders towards the establishment of renewable energy communities. The sessions were facilitated by Renewable Energy Community Ambassadors, experienced REC members, and other sectoral professionals. The invited participants—potential members of energy communities—attended the training to enhance their understanding and address their concerns regarding the concept and practicalities of energy communities. Participation was open and free of charge for all interested individuals, subject to prior registration. In order to ensure equal access and prevent discrimination, the registration interface was made publicly available through the partners' official websites and social media channels.

At the level of the NRGCOM consortium, the implementation of all events planned within the framework of **A2.4 was carried out from November 2024 to June 2025. A total of 31 professional trainings were organized, with 601 participants in total.**

The willingness of the participants was measured before and after the training with pre- and post-questionnaires.

Professional Training in Slovenia

Two professional training sessions were conducted by KSENA aiming to raise awareness and improve stakeholder engagement in the development of Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) in Slovenia. The events took place on 7 March 2025, in Ptuj, Slovenia, where KSENA participated upon invitation by KLEAS consortium and 6 June 2025, in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, where KSENA participated upon invitation by the KLEAS consortium.

Both events were held as in-person sessions and were free of charge, open to a broad audience of institutional and professional stakeholders. These included public officials, municipal energy managers, local and regional authorities, NGOs, technical experts, and sectoral associations. The main themes aligned with national and regional efforts in implementing the EU Renewable Energy Directive and establishing a legal and operational framework for RECs.



Professional Training in Czech Republic

The professional seminar titled “Energy Storage and PV from A to Z” was held on January 30, 2025 at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague. It was organized under the NRGCOM project (Creating appropriate operational conditions for renewable energy communities in the Danube Region), specifically within Activity 2.4 aimed at raising awareness and increasing stakeholder engagement in community energy initiatives. The training program provided practical insights into legislation, technical solutions, funding opportunities, economic models, and case studies.

The event took the form of a one-day in-person seminar including expert presentations, case studies, and moderated discussion. A total of 74 participants attended.



Professional Training in Hungary

The professional training titled *"Promoting and Encouraging the Establishment of Energy Communities"* was held on 28 November 2024 in Hungary. Organised by Tréningmásképp Ltd. (on behalf of DDRIÜ), the training consisted of three 1.5-hour interactive session with 16 participants. It focused on the joint design of enabling conditions, stakeholder engagement, dispelling doubts, and enhancing the functioning of energy communities.



Study visit from Montenegro to Croatia

The three professional training sessions conducted in Montenegro focused on raising awareness and building practical knowledge related to renewable energy communities (RECs). The invitees – potential REC members – participated at the professional trainings to increase their knowledge and dispel their doubts related to energy communities.

The trainings included the following:

- An online webinar on Energy Communities of Citizens held on 24 April 2025
- A workshop on Energy Communities of Citizens held on 30 April 2025
- A study visit organised in Croatia on 9-13 June 2025. In addition to that, we have translated and distributed the brochure on 5 steps towards your energy community as a handbook for establishment of the energy communities of citizens.



Who was Involved / Our Partners

Project partners, REC ambassadors, REC members, and associated strategic partners jointly engaged local communities, municipalities, businesses, and the general public during A2.3 and A2.4. While A2.3 focused on citizens' awareness and motivation, A2.4 targeted institutional stakeholders through professional training, fostering broad engagement and cooperation for successful REC development.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Consortium partners for the NRGCOM project, grouped by relevance and similarity are:

1. Project Leader and Local/Regional Partners

- Southern Transdanubian Innovation Agency - STRIA (Hungary) (Project Coordinator)

2. Regional and Energy Agencies by Geography and Sector

- South Bohemia Agency for Support to Innovation - JAIP (Czech Republic)
- Istrian Regional Energy Agency IRENA (Croatia)
- Pazardzhik Regional Administration (Bulgaria)
- Energy Agency of Savinjska, Šaleška and Koroška - KSSENA (Slovenia)
- Regional Development Agency of Šumadija and Pomoravlje REDASP (Serbia)
- Foundation for Development of Northern Montenegro - FORS (Montenegro)

3. Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations

- Environmental Non-Profit Society IMRO-DDKK (Hungary)
- Romanian Network of Energy Cities - (Romania)

4. Research, Innovation, Development and Educational Institutions

- Deggendorf Institute of Technology - DIT (Germany)
- National Energy Cluster - NEK (Slovakia)
- Forschungs Burgenland GmbH (Austria) - Center for Sustainable Innovations
- Alliance for Energy Efficiency and Renewables - AEER (Moldova)

We involved also **ASSOCIATED STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

1. Local Government Authorities

- Municipality of Arandjelovac, Serbia
- Opština Nikšić, Montenegro
- Municipality of Šoštanj, Slovenia
- Pazardzhik Municipality, Bulgaria

2. Regional and National Cooperation Organizations

- Arrabona European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation with Limited Liability, Hungary
- Regional Association of the National Network of LAGs of the South Bohemian Region, Czech Republic
- Landratsamt Passau: District Office Passau, Germany
- Deputy State Secretariat for Transport, Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operational Programs, Hungary

3. Energy and Utility Organizations

- Citizens' Energy Bavaria, Germany
- MVM Optimum Zrt., Hungary

4. Educational and Research Institutions (Education, Innovation, and Research)

- Institute of Technology and Business in České Budějovice, Czech Republic
- Technical University of Moldova, Moldova

5. Government Ministries and Policy Organizations

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary

6. Chambers of Commerce and Industry

- Savinjsko-šaleška Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Slovenia

We have developed a network of **253 AMBASSADORS** at the consortium level, who are representatives of the following institutions and organizations:

- Government Ministries and Agencies

- Regional Development and Support Agencies
- Local Government Authorities (Municipalities)
- Educational and Research Institutions
- Private Sector / Energy Companies
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations
- Protected Areas and Nature Reserves
- Regional Development Agencies and Local Action Groups
- Research, Science, and Technology Parks
- Energy and Utility Companies
- Industry, Business, and Clusters

They are consultants and experts in following fields:

- Community energy
- Environmental protection
- Waste management,
- Energy efficiency
- Ecology,
- R&D, renewable sources of energy,
- Nuclear energy and technology,
- SMART solutions,
- Energy management,
- Consumer protection,
- Regulatory benchmarking,
- Policy development,
- Circular economy,
- Civil protection,
- Urban planning and construction,
- Energy regulations,
- Public relations,
- Energy markets
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Renewable energy technologies

Some of them are managers of existing Energy communities.

Why It Matters / Our Goal

One of our Specific goals was to raise awareness and encourage society to create or join energy communities. The NRGCOM project aimed to spread a positive perception of REC initiatives, encourage society to take similar actions and thus reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

The created network of “REC Ambassadors” facilitated the work of the consortium, gave greater credibility to the project mission and ensured a wide reach of the REC concept to the target audience.

The project partners developed a motivational program to raise awareness of the benefits of switching to renewable energy sources and belonging to sustainable communities.

We addressed different groups: the general public - to increase motivation and test the readiness of the general public", and the professional public and economic actors through professional trainings. We measured the extent of behavioral change based on the developed set of awareness-raising tools that we used.

What did we achieved? / Our Results

Summary of Activity 2.3

Activity 2.3 arrived at its results through an analysis of findings related to knowledge and understanding. We examined the data collected from both questionnaires to assess how participants' knowledge developed before and after the event.

Overall, the results synthesized quantitative data through rigorous analysis and visual presentation, allowing for an in-depth understanding of key findings related to participants' knowledge, status, and motivations.

The results obtained are presented using the classification of partner countries in the document D2.3.1. General Report: Assessment of the General Public Knowledge, based on the following facts:



- one third of the consortium members (from Serbia, Montenegro, Moldova, Croatia) are very open to the concept of energy communities and have a need to expand their expertise in energy communities,
- the second third have a tradition of energy communities (Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia), while
- the last third (from Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) have significant experience to share.

According to this categorization, the results are presented in the following groups of countries:

Group 1:

The common results produced for **Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Moldova**, countries in Eastern Europe and the Balkans

A high level of awareness and interest in the concept of energy communities, combined with existing barriers to active participation and implementation of projects. This highlights the need for increased education, support and the removal of financial and regulatory barriers. Key points of this common result:

1. High awareness and interest

The majority of respondents and stakeholders in all countries show a good understanding and curiosity about energy communities, recognizing their potential benefits such as cost savings and environmental protection.

1.1 After the event, how informed do you feel about the topic of energy efficiency?

1.1 Nakon sprovedene kampanje, koliko možete da kažete da ste informisani o temi energetske efikasnosti?

13 responses

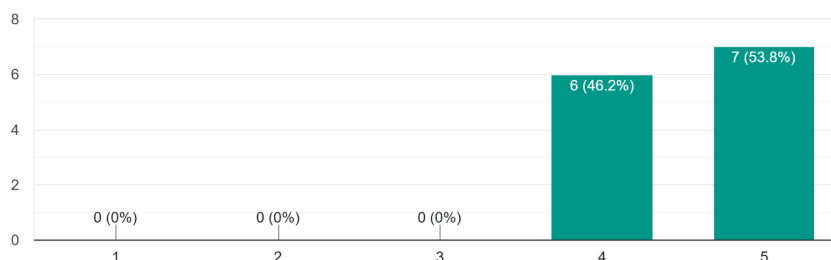


Chart 1: Results of research and surveys of the wider public in Serbia regarding energy communities after the campaign

2. Lack of active engagement and barriers

Despite high awareness, actual participation remains limited, mainly due to costs, legal and administrative barriers, lack of available information and the complexity of establishing and managing energy communities.

3. Need for education and support

The way forward towards wider implementation depends on improved education, capacity building and clear guidelines – especially regarding financing options, subsidies and simplified processes for establishing and operating energy communities.

4. Opportunities for regional cooperation

Given similar challenges and potentials across the Balkans and Eastern Europe, there is scope for joint regional initiatives in education, exchange of experiences and development of platforms to support energy projects.

This group of countries faces both challenges and significant potential for the development and expansion of energy communities. Achieving greater participation and benefits will require coordinated efforts in education, legal reforms, and financial models to ensure the shared success of communities and sustainable energy systems.

Group 2:

30

Common results for this group of countries (**Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria**) with a Tradition of Energy Communities, emphasizing their shared findings and overarching themes

Despite their different starting points, countries with a longstanding history of energy communities show consistent trends in awareness, motivation, and challenges, highlighting the potential for further engagement and development in this area. Key Shared Outcomes:

1. Significant Increase in Knowledge and Awareness Post-Event:

Across all countries, educational activities and events resulted in a marked improvement in participants' understanding of energy communities. Many individuals reported feeling more informed about their legal, technical, and organizational aspects, which previously were often only partially understood or unfamiliar.

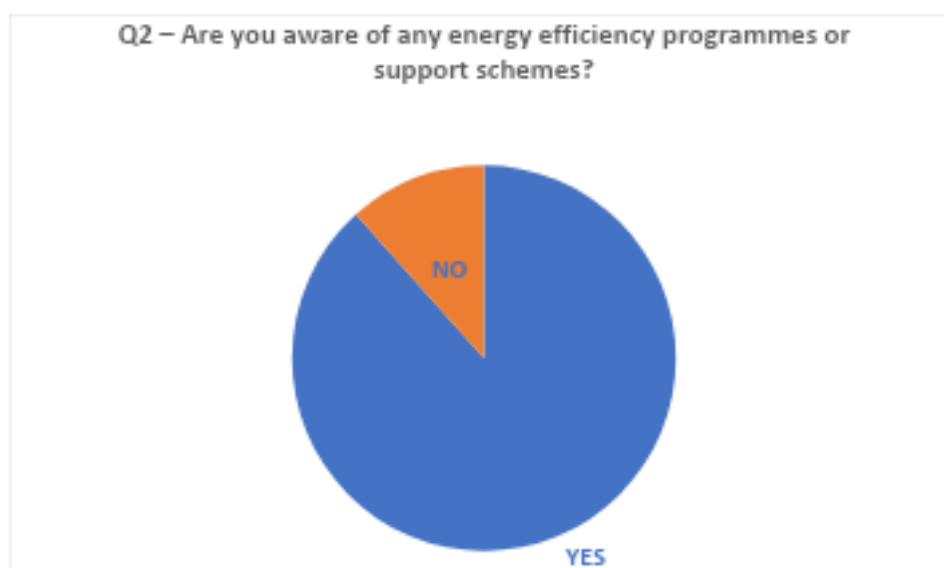


Chart 2: Report from Hungary

2. Growing Motivation and Willingness to Engage:

Participants expressed increased interest in joining or establishing energy communities after the events. The intentions to participate, either as members or founders, rose notably, indicating that awareness campaigns effectively boost practical motivation.

3. Recognition of Benefits

The perceived advantages of energy communities—such as cost savings, energy independence, environmental impacts, and social cohesion—are widely acknowledged. Many participants also recognize that energy communities can foster local economic development and contribute to energy efficiency goals.

4. Barriers and Challenges Remain:

Common obstacles include high upfront costs, complex administrative procedures, legal uncertainties, lack of detailed information, and limited visibility of existing projects. Regulatory and financial barriers are consistently identified as the main hurdles to active participation and establishment.

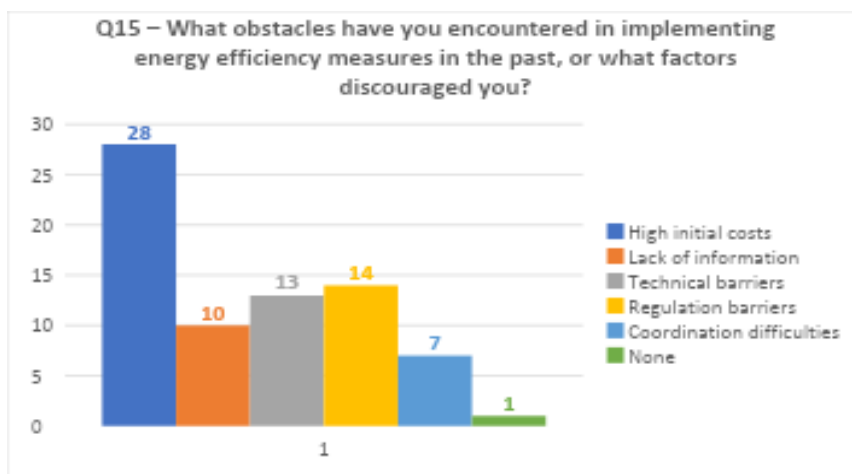


Chart 3: Report from Hungary

5. Importance of Education and Support Infrastructure:

The results underline the need for clear, accessible information, technical support, legal clarifications, and funding opportunities. Participants demand practical guidelines, success stories, and concrete examples to bridge the gap between interest and action.

6. Potential for Regional Collaboration:

Given similar experiences and challenges, these countries can benefit from regional cooperation, sharing best practices, and developing joint strategies to promote energy communities and accelerate their development.

Overall Conclusion:

Countries with a tradition of energy communities exhibit a strong foundation of awareness and interest, which can be further cultivated through targeted interventions, support mechanisms, and policy reforms. Addressing existing barriers and fostering knowledge exchange are crucial steps toward scaling up energy community initiatives across the region.

Group 3:

Countries with substantial practical experience in establishing and operating energy communities (**Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany**) demonstrate a high level of awareness, motivation, and understanding.

Their shared journey reveals both successes and ongoing challenges, underscoring the need for supportive frameworks, targeted education, and community engagement strategies to facilitate further development. Key Shared Outcomes:

1. High Levels of Awareness and Knowledge Post-Engagement:

Across all countries, awareness of energy communities and energy efficiency significantly increased following targeted awareness campaigns and workshops. Participants reported a deeper understanding of legal, technical, and organizational aspects, often citing legislative clarity and practical examples as the most valuable information.

Are you familiar with any energy community initiatives in Germany or in any other Danube Region country?

4 responses

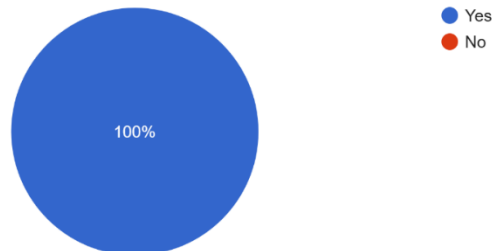


Chart 4: Report from Germany

2. Strong Motivation to Support and Join Existing Initiatives:

Participants demonstrated a clear inclination toward supporting, joining, or contributing to existing energy communities rather than establishing new ones from scratch. This trend indicates that familiarity and trust in proven models are vital for boosting citizen participation.



Chart 5: Report for the Czech Republic

2. Recognition of Environmental, Economic, and Social Benefits:

There is widespread acknowledgment that energy communities can offer tangible benefits such as cost savings, increased energy independence, environmental

sustainability, and social cohesion. These motivations are a driving force behind public interest and support for ongoing projects.

2. Persistent Barriers and Challenges:

Major obstacles include legal uncertainties, high initial costs, administrative complexity, and limited access to technical and financial information. Participants frequently request clearer guidance, successful case studies, and accessible support channels to overcome these barriers.

3. Importance of Education, Support, and Transparent Communication:

The need for targeted educational initiatives, accessible information, and participatory governance models is a common theme. Participants value transparency, clear communication, and practical guidance to foster trust and empower community members.

- To what extent do you think the event helped you to gain new knowledge about Energy Communities? (1 = To a very small extent, 5 = To a very great extent)? Average rating 4.64

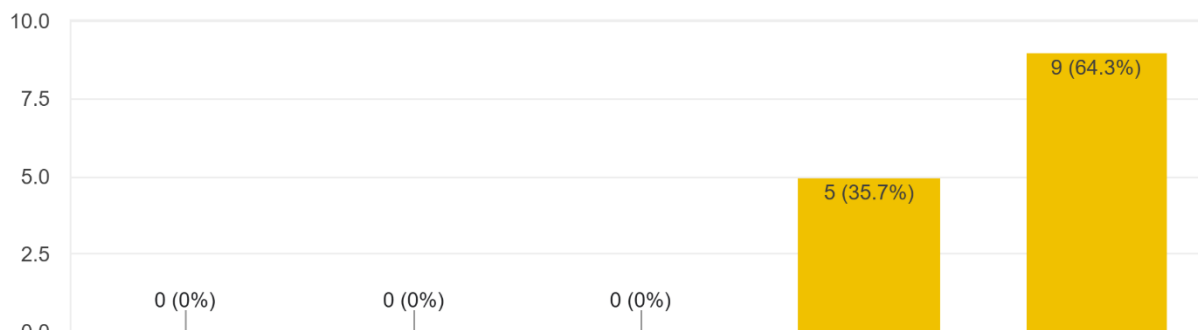


Chart 6: Report from Romania

4. Potential for Regional Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange:

Leveraging shared knowledge, best practices, and successful case studies across countries can accelerate the growth of energy communities in the region, fostering a



collaborative approach to overcoming common challenges.

How likely are you to establish an energy community?

4 responses

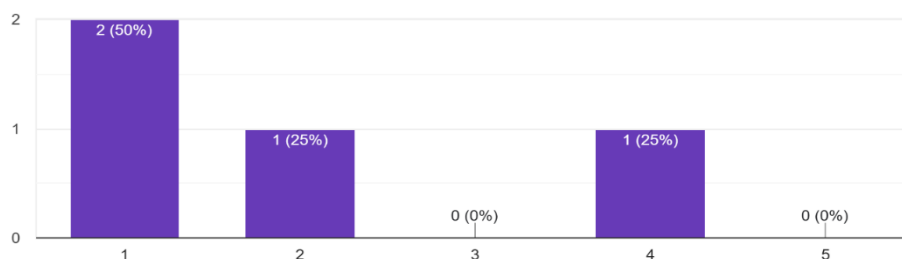


Chart 7: Report from Germany

- 50% rated likelihood at 1 (very unlikely)
- 25% rated it at 2
- 25% rated it at 4

Overall Conclusion:

Countries with significant experience in energy communities exhibit a solid foundation of high awareness, motivation, and understanding. To sustain and expand these initiatives, continued focus is needed on easing legal and financial barriers, expanding education and outreach efforts, and fostering cross-border cooperation. Strengthening support structures will enable communities to harness their full potential for sustainability, economic resilience, and social cohesion.

Summary of Activity 2.4

Increasing Knowledge and Understanding

Across all participating countries, participants reported a substantial improvement in their knowledge of renewable energy communities (RECs). Before the training, many respondents had a general understanding but lacked depth in areas such as legal frameworks, governance structures, and financial mechanisms. Post-training data indicate that participants were better equipped to understand and explain the principles



of RECs. Several countries highlighted that participants could now identify key actors, describe operational procedures, and distinguish RECs from other renewable energy initiatives.

Changes in Participants Status - From passive observation to active participation

Prior to the training, most individuals identified as passive observers with limited engagement. The training facilitated a shift in perception, with many now considering active involvement. In several regions, respondents expressed willingness to either join or initiate an REC. This transformation was particularly notable in areas where community-level engagement had previously been low. The training enhanced participants' sense of agency and readiness to engage in energy-related community activities.

Motivation and Expectations

Pre-training motivations were generally centred on environmental consciousness and a desire for energy independence. Post-training responses reflect a broader and more nuanced motivation, including financial savings, social benefits, and enhanced control over local energy resources. Expectations became more grounded and practical. Participants showed increased interest in understanding regulatory obligations, funding mechanisms, and administrative challenges. In multiple countries, the training led to specific follow-up actions, such as planning local meetings or initiating partnerships.

In conclusion, the A2.4 training sessions across the 12 countries resulted in a demonstrable increase in awareness, engagement readiness, and practical motivation. The structured format of the sessions, focused on legal, technical, and participatory dimensions of RECs, played a significant role in shaping the post-training attitudes of participants.

Conclusions

Conclusions of Activity 2.3

Conclusions on the A2.3 activities carried out to raise awareness among the general population about the importance of renewable energy communities were categorized based on the initial division of countries in the consortium.

The countries (Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Moldova) that are very open to the concept of energy communities and have a need to expand their expertise in energy communities, are at varying stages of embracing energy communities. While progress has been made in awareness and initial registration, barriers such as administrative restrictions, lack of detailed information, and limited operational capacity need to be addressed. Strategic education, better regulatory clarity, supportive policies, and robust information dissemination are essential to unlock the full potential of energy communities and facilitate their growth across the region.

To what extent do you think the event helped you to gain new knowledge about Energy Communities? (1 = To a very small extent, 5 = To a very great extent)?

În ce măsură considerați că evenimentul v-a ajutat să dobândiți noi cunoștințe despre comunitățile energetice?
17 răspunsuri

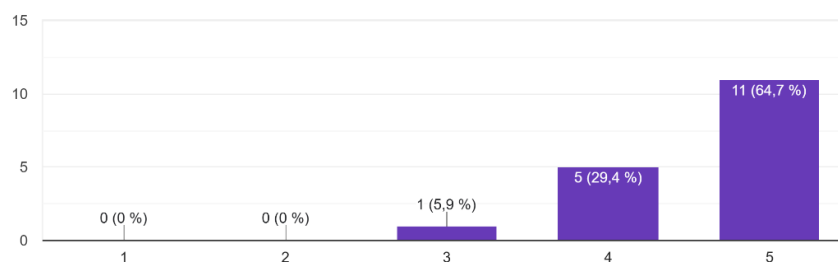


Chart 8 : Report from Moldova

In countries that have a tradition of energy communities like Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, and Bulgaria, the overall impact of awareness activities is positive—shaping

knowledge, motivation, and interest—significant challenges remain. Addressing structural issues, increasing practical support, and fostering cross-sector collaboration will be key to transforming increased awareness into tangible, widespread deployment of energy communities across the region.

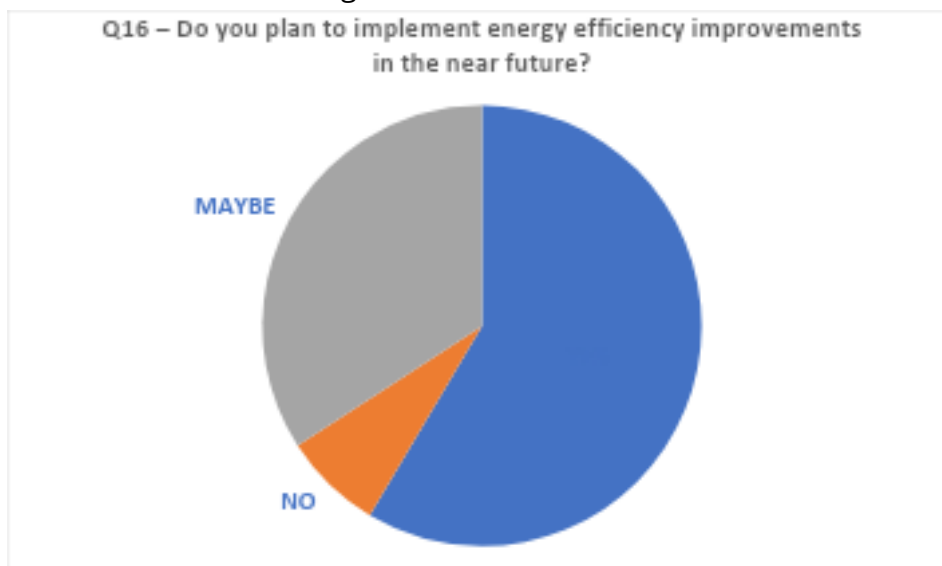


Chart 9: Report from Hungary

In countries with significant experience to share, such as Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany, there is a common recognition of the importance of energy communities and renewable energy initiatives in advancing sustainable development and climate goals. The events and engagement activities conducted show that combining technical education with accessible communication, practical examples and local outreach significantly increases participants' confidence and willingness to take action. Moreover, strategic tools such as information manuals and community-based approaches are vital for mobilizing local stakeholders, fostering regional cooperation and translating awareness into concrete projects.

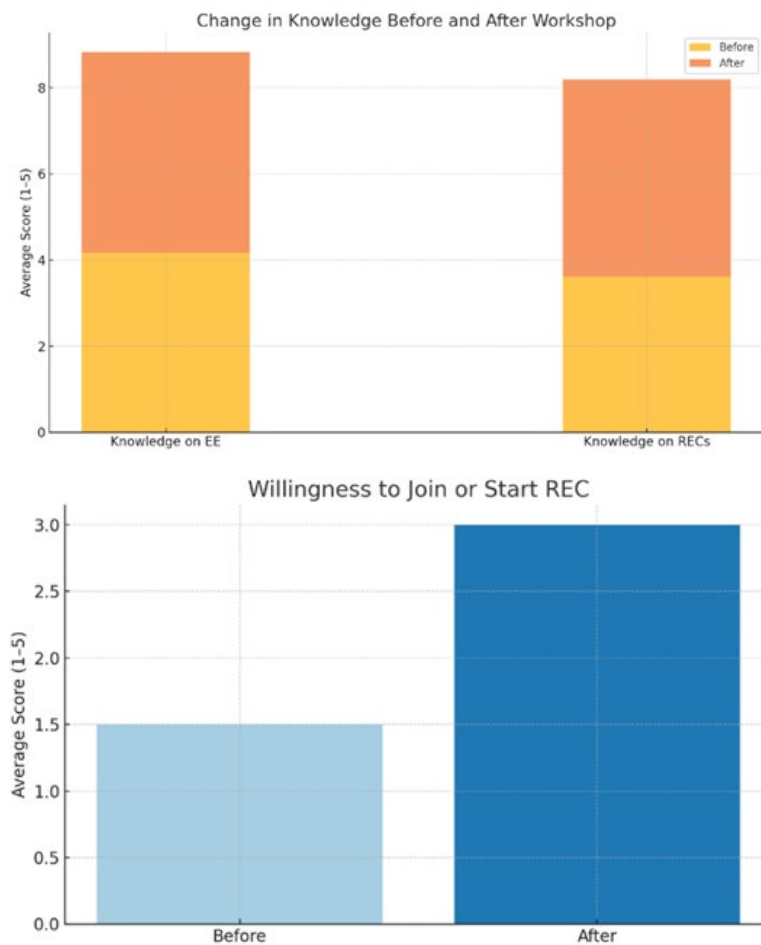


Chart 10: Report from Czech Republic

Ultimately, a collaborative, inclusive and well-coordinated approach – integrating education, public participation, policy support and financial mechanisms – is necessary to accelerate the adoption of energy communities and achieve the broader goals of energy transition and climate neutrality at the regional and national levels.

Conclusions of Activity 2.4

In line with the project's objectives, training sessions were organized on the following key topics:

- Joint design of the appropriate conditions with stakeholders to create energy communities;
- Engagement of stakeholders to set up energy communities;
- Increasing the knowledge and dispelling doubts of stakeholders regarding RECs;
- Improvement of the functioning of existing RECs.

Based on the results of the questionnaire and the conclusions drawn by PP's introducing their experiences in organizing the training sessions in each country, we can summarize the following points regarding the four key topics.

Joint design of the appropriate conditions with stakeholders to create energy communities

Several countries emphasised the need for an enabling legal environment. It is necessary to create a simple and practical legal form of REC, especially in those countries where the legal and regulatory framework is still missing. The lack of a stable legal framework as a core barrier. In order to improve the situation necessary to clear identification of roles, training of municipal staff, and introduce standardised procedures are recommended. These observations underline the need for foundational regulatory clarity and institutional support.

Engagement of stakeholders to set up energy communities

Potential members need to understand their benefits and responsibilities. In order to establish appropriate relations and communication with the community the proactive approach, accessible language and open communication are key to gaining trust and involvement. Raising awareness and informing is crucial for the involvement of stakeholders, reinforcing the idea that engagement requires both transparency and strategic communication.

Increasing the knowledge and dispelling doubts of stakeholders regarding RECs

There are many countries where there is a great interest in this topic, but at the same time there is also a lot of uncertainty. Targeted trainings and good practices can help reduce mistrust, while clarity and legal certainty to proceed with concrete actions. These findings show that knowledge transfer and legal transparency are central to strengthening stakeholder confidence.

Improvement of the functioning of existing RECs

Several project partners observed that for long-term stability, communication and regular meetings between members are needed. Some of them pointed to the need for transparency and feedback mechanisms within community operations. Responses highlighted that appropriate governance models are essential to avoid internal conflicts and ensure equitable participation. These conclusions demonstrate that operational stability depends on structured communication and inclusive governance.

In Activity 2.4, key training topics - defined in line with the project objectives - covered the most important areas based on the survey results.

As regards the training methodology and recommended tools, based on the results of the questionnaire and feedback from training organizers, it is recommended that the following be taken into account in future.

A common emphasis across all contexts was the need for tailored and accessible educational content to **adapt training tools and language to target groups**, stressing that communication must be adjusted in tone and form to fit various community profiles. Another report noted that “information materials and visual elements should be tailored to each target group” and supported by “easy-to-understand content to increase engagement and comprehension”. This was echoed by the observation that “potential members must be informed about their roles, benefits and risks in a targeted way”.



It was recommended to **“raise awareness about the benefits and obligations of energy communities”**, particularly by expanding on legal content within training curricula to address questions and uncertainties observed among participants. Complementary suggestions highlighted the need for **“comprehensive training materials covering legal, technical and financial aspects”** especially where national regulatory frameworks are not yet fully developed.

A strong focus was placed on the importance of practical, step-by-step guidance. One contribution advised that **“trainings should include simplified instructions for founding and operating RECs”** combined with user-friendly legal and administrative checklists. Another reinforced the necessity of **“concrete steps for REC establishment”** suggesting that abstract information should be accompanied by procedural clarity.

To enhance the impact and replicability of awareness-raising activities, it was proposed to support the dissemination of good practices. Several reports suggested to **“share successful initiatives to demonstrate feasibility and motivate engagement”** and promote **“practical, replicable examples”** that communities can follow. The development of a **“regional knowledge platform”** was also proposed to compile, exchange and disseminate these practices across borders.

Localization of activities emerged as a recurring theme. One recommendation was to **“organize local discussions, in-person community dialogues and thematic debates”** promoting dialogue as a method of building trust. Others stressed the importance of **“locally grounded”** and **“regionally relevant”** content, noting that different municipalities may face different regulatory and infrastructural contexts. Further recommendations included the inclusion of interactive and scenario-based learning elements to **“stimulate the active participation of citizens and local institutions”**. Another contribution added that trainings should be accompanied by **“visual aids and infographics”** that illustrate key legal and technical principles. The integration of multimedia tools and gamification elements was also recommended to make content more accessible and memorable, particularly for younger audiences.



Engagement with municipalities and other public actors was seen as essential. One suggestion called for **“dedicated training modules for municipal staff”**, while another proposed to **“train local authorities on how to facilitate community energy projects and act as multipliers of knowledge”**. The establishment of partnerships between educational institutions and municipalities to jointly deliver community-based trainings was also encouraged.

Finally, the need for continuity and follow-up was underlined. It was advised that **“trainings should not be one-off events, but part of a continuous process”** with regular follow-up workshops and refresher courses. Additional suggestions supported the idea of ongoing mentorship, proposing the establishment of expert pools to accompany communities through the different stages of development.

In conclusion, the recommendations converge around four priorities for future training and awareness efforts: tailoring content to audiences, providing clear and practical guidance, enabling local dialogue and exchange, and ensuring continuity of support. Each partner contributed specific and context-sensitive suggestions to these overarching themes.

The document was prepared as part of the NRGCOM project, an Interreg Danube Region Programme project co-funded by the European Union.