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NRGCOM

Energy Communities in Hungary

Training material

Photo: Community Energy Provider

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Introduction

This training material was prepared as background reading for the training courses implemented within NRGCOM project. However, this easy-to-read booklet can also be used independently by any interested party. We do not repeat here information, which is already available in other studies, instead we build on the materials recommended in the "Further reading" section. Since several years have passed since their preparation, the emphasis in this booklet is on describing the changes that have occurred in the recent period, and on providing information that is less included in already existing materials. In parallel with the gradual increase in the number of energy communities, more and more experience is available, and this training manual will cover these practical experiences for the first time. It will also cover the most important recent change, the availability of the legal framework to start condominium energy communities.

The NRGCOM project itself is being implemented with the support of the European Union's Interreg Danube Region programme. It runs between 1 January 2024 and 31 June 2026. Its aim is to help the spread of energy communities in the countries of the Danube Region - including by improving cooperation between experts and the flow of information. Please visit the project's Hungarian launch page at https://www.nrgcom.hu/indexen.html , where you can access the materials produced by the project (including this training material) and our social media contacts, where you can subscribe to our Danube Region-level LinkedIn expert group. We regularly publish current information related to energy communities in this LinkedIn channel, where there is an opportunity to ask questions and exchange ideas with other experts.

In addition to the NRGCOM project, the European Union programs also finance other projects supporting the energy community in Hungary, which we would like to mention here. The SHAREs project[1] has produced, among others, the "Community Energy Knowledge Space[2]", which we wholeheartedly recommend to everyone. DECA (Danube Energy Community Accelerator [3]) project Organises several professional events, facilitates participation and expert exchange, shares knowledge, exchanges experiences and encourages Organisational cooperation. [4]Within the framework of the ESINERGY and NRGCOM projects, also financed by the Interreg Danube Region program, preparations have been made for the establishment of several specific energy communities in Hungary.

The introduction of energy communities is currently at an early stage of development in Hungary (and many other European countries). The concept itself and the expected benefits are becoming more widely known, but in practice, those who decide to create an energy community still face many questions and difficulties. In particular, the legal environment is immature, as the basic detailed rules are still missing. However, there are also many technical, financial and Organisational issues. As the saying goes, "every beginning is difficult", so I would like to make

[1] https://shares-project.eu/hu
[2] https://tudaster.kozenergia.hu/
[3] https://interreg-danube.eu/projects/deca
[4] https://interreg-danube.eu/projects/esinergy

these initial steps easier by publishing this publication and sharing the experiences so far. We wish you a good read!

Energy awareness and local energy production

In addition to scientists, professionals, politicians and economic actors, civil communities and local Organisations of society have been looking for and are looking for answers to the economic and environmental issues related to large, centralized energy supply networks. As energy demand increases, environmental pollution increases and costs rise, the importance of energy awareness, i.e. the development of a lifestyle where we use energy economically, is growing.

Energy-conscious living and management focuses on minimizing energy consumption and prioritizing the use of renewable energy sources. Minimizing energy consumption extends to everyday life, both at home and at work. Improved energy efficiency allows for the production or use of a unit of product or service using less energy, which results in both financial savings and environmental benefits.

Nowadays, there is more and more talk about local energy independence. In addition to connecting to national and even continental-scale energy supply networks, full or partial energy independence provides a country, region, settlement, or even a community with more predictable and plannable operations, which has a positive economic, social and environmental impact. We can use a wide range of tools to create self-sufficiency, one of the possibilities of which is the creation of renewable energy communities operating on a local basis.

First, a few words about energy communities in general – for details, please consult the online publications recommended in the last chapter. An energy community is a voluntary and open-participatory group of local energy producers and consumers, where members share the renewable energy they produce. An energy community is a legal entity (non-profit business association, cooperative and association) managed by its members: municipalities, public institutions, small businesses, natural persons or civil society Organisations. As stated in the legal text, the primary purpose of an energy community is not to make financial profit, but to provide environmental, economic and social community benefits to its members and the area of operation, such as energy production, energy distribution, energy supply, energy storage or energy efficiency services.

An energy community operates as a partially or fully independent system in terms of energy, as some of its members produce part or all of the energy needed for operation. An energy producer can be a house's own solar panels, a biogas plant, or a wind turbine, which are financed by the members of the energy community (e.g. from their own resources, loans, or grant money). A consumer can be an apartment, a family house, an office, a business, or a public institution.

From a practical point of view, an energy community coordinates production and consumption during its operation. For example, in a family house equipped with solar panels, the owner is not at home during the day (excess energy is generated), but in a nearby school, consumption is highest during working hours. And vice versa on weekends. In an energy community, all energy producing, storing and consuming devices are therefore connected to each other, forming a so-called smart grid.

Smart mteres provide real-time data to a software that (possibly using artificial intelligence) “matches” producers and consumers. This makes it possible to feed previously unused solar energy into the grid. A smart grid can further increase local grid stability by flexibly switching consumers on or off based on predefined conditions: for example, electric car chargers, electric boilers, cold stores or heat pumps. Balancing the grid load is also beneficial for grid service providers, as it reduces investment requirements and grid congestion

Sharing energy is also financially worthwhile for the members, as those who were previously unable to sell electricity due to their production exceeding their own consumption can now sell it to others at a better price, while members who would normally purchase energy at market prices can get it cheaper. According to legislation, if all this takes place within the framework of an energy community, it is not considered energy trading, but only sharing. Therefore, within certain limits, energy sharing is exempt from tax.

Ideally, an energy community should produce a little bit more energy than its members would consume at a given time and then it can become even independent from the grid. If this is not the case, but it produces either too much or too little energy (and the built-in storage capacity is not enough), then the community can trade with the universal service provider.

European objectives

Although there is currently no legally defined target, the European Union sees energy communities in an important role to help the continent's economy achieve climate neutrality by 2050. According to some estimates, up to 45% of renewable energy production will be generated by energy communities. This will require radical changes, which will require fundamental technical, attitudinal and legal shifts. Member States interested in maintaining the "status quo" and the electricity supply companies that dominate the market do not necessarily support such a radical change, which is why the introduction of energy communities has been slow and rugged, not only in Hungary but also in other countries.

Despite this slow start, in 2025 there were over 9,000 energy communities operating in the European Union, with 1.5 million people sharing jointly produced renewable energy. Experience shows that these communities reduce energy costs by up to 20–30% annually and significantly increase energy independence.

The concept of an energy community as a legal entity was introduced into EU law in 2019. (See the chapter on the legal background.) As a result, citizens can move from being passive consumers to being active participants in the energy transition. EU law defines two types of energy communities. The "renewable energy communities" included in the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) energy communities (RECs) and "citizen energy communities" (CECs) under the Internal Electricity Market Directive (EMD). energy The definition of communities (CEC) provides a legal framework for community energy sharing. The following table summarizes the differences between the two.

	Citizen Energy Community	**Renewable energy community**
Ownership and control:	Citizens, municipalities and small businesses	
Purpose:	Social, economic and environmental benefits instead of purely financial gain.	
Geographical scope:	Not necessarily the same geographical location (it could even be nationwide, with virtual settlement).	Only on low and medium voltage networks, at local level.
Technology:	Both renewable and fossil energy. Only electrical energy.	Only renewable energy. Both electricity and heat.
Activities:	Electricity generation, distribution, supply, consumption, sharing, aggregation and storage, as well as energy efficiency, electric vehicle	Generation, distribution, consumption, storage, sale, aggregation, transport and sharing

	charging and other energy-related commercial services.	of renewable energy, and energy-related commercial services.
Participants:	Anyone (natural persons, local authorities, micro, small, medium and large enterprises).	Natural persons, local authorities, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Municipal energy communities in Hungary

Today, all energy communities are still taking their initial steps in Hungary. In this short period, however, a lot of experience has been accumulated that can now be shared. Among the energy communities presented below, there are several that were established to gather experience in practical operation. This experience is then transferred to help establish new energy communities and to support policy makers to further develop the legal environment.

According to the records of the Hungarian Energy and Public Utilities Regulatory Office (MEKH), at the time of writing this training material (January 2026), there were a total of 17 registered energy communities. In terms of legal form, one was a cooperative, one was a public benefit non-profit limited liability company, and all the others were non-profit limited liability companies. The first official registration took place two years after the legal framework became available. The first two energy communities (Bábolnai Energy Community and Community Energy Service Provider) were registered by the office in October 2023. Then, 7 new energy communities were registered during 2024, and eight in 2025.

This relatively slow start shows that there are much more difficulties than expected. Thus, there is still a long way to go to reach the goal set by the National Energy Strategy, namely to have at least one “renewable energy community managed by an independent aggregator” per district by 2030. That is, at least 175. The following table summarizes the main challenges so far - without claiming to be exhaustive:

Challenge	**Experiences so far**
Financial difficulties	• If a start-up energy community has no previous renewable energy capacity, the initial investment cost is significant, therefore it is currently still too risky to implement it without state support. • Potential residential members in the energy community would be moved from “universal service” (i.e. subsidised price) to “partial service” by the electricity service provider, which is financially disadvantageous to them.

Legal and administrative difficulties	• One of the main obstacles to the spread of energy communities is the lack of detailed legislative rules. Since the concept of energy communities was incorporated into the domestic legal system (2021), there has been hardly any progress. • The long lead time of public procurements and the time required to obtain various official permits are a serious challenge to implementing applications within timeframe. • In many cases, project proposal deadlines and expectations do not match the slower processes of community decision-making.
Technical difficulties	• Although software and hardware solutions are already available, developing a smart grid that forms the technical basis of an energy community and cooperating with the network operator requires a lot of effort in practice. • The technical readiness of the DSO network is not always adequate for the integration of an energy community.
Conflicting interests	• So far the attitude of domestic network service providers has been very contradictory. This basically determines whether it is worth establishing an energy community in a given supply area or not. • Some DSO's explicitly view energy communities as partners. Energy communities can contribute to increasing the stability of energy networks, so the network operator has to spend less on investments. • In contrast, there are some that do not support the creation of an energy community for technical reasons: they are afraid of allowing "civilians" into the sensitive and carefully regulated energy networks. • Some fear losing the market: according to the European Union's objectives, an increasing proportion of electricity will be produced by energy communities, so service providers may lose customers as self-sufficiency spreads. • With the wider spread of tax-free energy sharing, the state may also lose tax revenue.

Energy communities have therefore started in Hungary much more difficultly and slowly than expected. However, this is hopefully just the initial stage. As energy communities will play an increasingly important role in the energy transition of the European Union, the creation of energy communities will gain momentum in more and more member states, including Hungary. Most of the challenges in the above table are constantly changing, and hopefully will be gradually resolved.

Finally, the question arises as to what business model is the best for an energy community? Apart from pilot energy communities created with national project funding, it may be financially feasible, for example, to establish an energy management system in a small settlement and then involve an aggregator company in its operation. That is, if a settlement has several public institutions with solar panels, but production and consumption do not coincide, then it is worth concluding a contract with an aggregator, accounting for the entire production and consumption. Although this solution takes away the community aspect, it makes operation more economical under the current circumstances.

Several interviewed experts also drew attention to the fact that current energy communities are often technically "overcomplicated", sometimes created with investments of several 100K EUR, and are therefore difficult to replicate. It may therefore be worthwhile to turn to small-scale, simple technical solutions, low-investment solutions (e.g. connecting only a few public institutions locally).

Examples of domestic energy communities

In the following section, we present some Hungarian energy communities that can serve as examples for the establishment of further energy communities. The main criterion for selection was that they already had experience that they could share with others. Another criterion was that they presented different types of solutions. They operate in settlements of different sizes, follow different business models, test different technical and community solutions, and the composition of the members also varies.

Name:	**Community Energy Service Provider (KESZ)**
Settlement:	Budapest and other settlements in the country
MEKH registration:	October 2023
Web address:	https://kesz.kozenergia.hu/ , https://www.facebook.com/kozossegienergia
Members:	It is owned by four founding civil society Organisations. External partners: public benefit association (e.g. incubator), local government (e.g. social institution), small and medium-sized enterprises (e.g. manufacturing, organic farmers, food processors), educational institutions.
Short description:	The Community Energy Service Provider Nonprofit Ltd. was founded by four civil society Organisations in December 2022. The Hungarian Association of Nature Conservators is the largest owner, along with the Ecological Studio Foundation, the Partnership for Sustainable Development, and the Solidarity Economic Centre. Its business model is based on installing solar panels for local consumption, with its own investment and ownership, and it tries to work

	with partners to ensure that the partners use the generated electricity as efficiently as possible. That is, they can produce it for the grid, but at the same time they strive to consume as much energy locally as possible at any given time. This is an investor energy community, meaning it implements solar systems through our partners and their members and sells the produced green energy to their partners in combination with energy efficiency services. Their partners include small businesses, social institutions, non-profit associations, educational institutions, and this circle is constantly expanding. Their solar system can be found, for example, on the roof of the Jurányi Community Incubator House in Budapest or the Forrásház Social Care Center in Kispest, or in smaller villages such as Parádsasvár. Agriphotovoltaics is an exciting area for them in particular, and they plan to involve partners in the agricultural sector to implement model investments. For the main founder, the Hungarian Association of Nature Conservationists, sharing experiences is important in addition to implementing model projects, so they have created an information portal about energy communities at https://tudaster.kozenergia.hu/ (see brief description in the last chapter). Those interested can read useful information here and in their Facebook group.
Main experiences	One of the main goals of the establishment of KESZ was to gain experience as a kind of living laboratory, thus the public and decision-makers were continuously informed about legal, technical and Organisational challenges and lessons learned. The goal of KESZ was not only to play a role in the market, but also to strengthen the community approach and energy citizenship. Based on the experiences so far, Organising the community, developing cooperation and increasing energy awareness have proven to be at least as important as energy production itself. This is especially true for the implementation of energy efficiency measures, where the human factor plays an important role. Pilot projects of KESZ — such as the solar panel system installed on the roof of the Jurányi Cultural Center — demonstrate that community investments have a social mobilization power and can integrate goals ranging from simple consumption reduction to complex energy renovations. Although difficult to implement in the current market and legal environment, KESZ has so far successfully demonstrated the strong community Organising power inherent in building an energy community.

Name:	**Bábolna Energy Community**
Settlement:	Bábolna, Komárom-Esztergom County
MEKH registration:	October 2023
Web address:	https://babekenergia.hu/ NRGCOM PODCAST (in Hungarian): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uL-uE3n5P0
Members:	Local government institutions and production plants are members of the nonprofit limited liability company. Households also participate in energy production.
Short description:	Bábolna is one of the first officially registered, operational energy communities in Hungary. This initiative, which fits well with the sustainability objectives of the municipality, aims to reduce the energy costs of the municipality and the city's public institutions (and even achieve zero energy costs by 2026!), create the city's energy independence, increase energy efficiency, and reduce the city's CO_2 emissions. Energy production is carried out using solar panels and a mini-power plant powered by methane separated from thermal water. In addition to the municipal institutions, the largest consumer is a food industry plant, which can practically use the entire local production. Consumers equipped with sub-meters and smart meters also include an energy storage unit, an electric car charger, a heat pump and a water heater. The network integrated into the smart grid is monitored, data collection and processing, and the switching on and off of flexible consumers/producers is carried out via an online platform. A smart box records the measurement data at each point and this is processed via a dispatch centre using a scada system. From the measured data, a fifteen-minute aggregated data series and a consumption curve are created, based on which, among other things, the next day's production/consumption schedule can be prepared. Based on this, they can trade with the network service provider or provide data to MEKH (the power market authority). Due to the scarcity of funding, a pilot implementation was first created, where participants were selected to include all kinds of areas and forms of use: households (with existing solar panels, in several transformer areas), various public users, medium and large-sized production plants. Some only consume, some only produce, and some are consumer-producers. There is also a company with solar panels operating in a reverse watt system, which has so far only used a small part of the energy produced.

	There is also a company operating within a private network. This diversity is the basis for as much of the energy produced as possible to be used locally at a given time. Since the application funds were not sufficient to implement the entire plan, the municipality installed solar panels on its own and financed all licensing and expert fees. The data sets obtained during the operation so far are also of great help in further planning, so that they can better coordinate production and consumption by involving energy storage and flexible consumers (e.g. cold storage). Their plans include purchasing additional high-performance battery storage, building a solar park with storage, and increasing the output of the methane gas small power plant. Since Bábolna is located in a relatively small geographic area, it is possible in many places to connect local institutions with private lines so that they are at a single metering point and thus save on system usage fees. If this is implemented, it will make a further significant contribution to the economic return of the energy community. As Bábolna has thermal water, another promising option for the future is to expand the energy community to include the sharing of thermal energy. Another important priority is to implement related energy saving measures and to develop an energy-conscious lifestyle. The aim is to reduce the amount of energy that has to be produced by energy-generating devices and to use the energy produced as efficiently as possible.
Main experiences	One of the keys to the success of the Bábolna energy community is strong and unwavering local political support: the commitment of the local government, and especially the mayor and the notary who supports her. At the initiative of the mayor, a feasibility study was first prepared, then they successfully applied for implementation, and finally - despite many difficulties - they began operations. The commitment, professional knowledge and perseverance of the project manager and the professional staff and subcontractors were also important. Without their contribution, it would hardly have been possible to overcome the numerous management, financial, technical, legal, etc. obstacles. During the implementation – as in the case of almost all other energy communities – the biggest challenge was the lack of an appropriate regulatory environment. In addition, keeping to the schedule according to the tender announcement was another significant challenge. In practice, much more time was needed than planned for consultations with service providers, obtaining various permits, building connections, purchasing equipment, and conducting public procurement.

	Managing all these long-term processes and technical relationships is beyond the capabilities of most municipalities, so it was important to involve an external team of experts who can handle the challenges inherent in the details. In the case of such a complex system, it may be necessary to involve representatives from these areas, for example: project management, technical design, strategic and business planning, legal and accounting professionals, software developers. In order for the established, relatively technically complex system to function well, the commitment of the actors (energy community members), their active participation and involvement were important. This was based on the good relationship already existing between the individual actors and the existence of a local culture based on cooperation. One of the main practical experiences was that an energy community should be considered fundamentally as an IT system. The biggest work was the design of the smart grid and the implementation of the necessary software and hardware components. This took much longer than expected. Bábolna's cooperation with the network operator (E.ON) was excellent. They considered this a very important learning and innovation activity and fully supported the implementation. As a result – far exceeding the original plans – the energy community eventually grew into a mini network operator ("microgrid"). Overall, the Bábolna Energy Community is making good progress towards radically reducing the energy costs of urban institutions, and even towards complete energy independence. However, as a pioneering initiative, they had to overcome many obstacles, the experiences of which they share with other municipalities in professional forums and through direct contacts.

Name:	**Kistelek Energy Community Nonprofit Ltd.**
Settlement:	Kistelek town, Csongrád-Csanád county
MEKH registration:	July 2024
Web address:	https://www.kistelekjaras.hu/index.php?module=cikk&id=10149&mid=1 https://www.mnnsz.hu/energiakozosseg-alakul-kisteleken/ https://del-nyugat.hu/
Members:	Households
Short description:	Dél-Nyugat Kft, 3i Kft, Kistelek City Government and the Kandó Foundation submitted a project proposal for the implementation of the energy

	community at the end of 2021. After the application was approved, the implementation of the project began in August 2022 under the leadership of Dél-Nyugat Kft as the consortium leader. The first step was to visit the households to be supplied with solar panels. These were selected taking into account the appropriate technical condition of the houses, especially the condition of the roof and their shading. Local residents welcomed the new opportunity, and by the moratorium on new residential solar systems (October 31, 2022), 27 households had been involved as active producers. Then, around the active households, passive households, 16 in total, joined on a voluntary basis. In parallel with the implementation, the development of the legal operating form also began, and in the summer of 2023, the Kistelek Energy Community Association and the Kistelek Energy Community Nonprofit Ltd. were registered. The association is also a part-owner in the non-profit Ltd. It was established primarily to ensure that the entry and exit of members of the public can be carried out flexibly. By the end of 2025, the essential part of the technical implementation was completed, the battery storage systems were in place, and the solar panels have been producing in most households since September 2024. By December 2025, the software controlling the system was also completed, and in 2026, its testing by the public began. The development of electric vehicle chargers will also begin soon. The coordination of production and consumption, the switching on and off of flexible consumers, is brought together by a network using artificial intelligence and capable of communicating with smart devices. Based on the information from the data transmission units, artificial intelligence controls the energy distribution.
Main experiences	Based on the establishment and current operation of the Kistelek Energy Community, it can be stated that energy communities have limited operational capabilities due to the lack of uniform and detailed legal regulation and the obstacles to the possibility of energy sharing between households and economic actors. Although progress has been made in this area – the operation of energy communities in apartment buildings is a good example of this – energy communities similar to those in small-scale farms are currently only functional to a limited extent. This also affects the return on investment, as there is no possibility of actual trading of the energy produced or of providing flexibility services. However, the initial cost of energy communities is very significant, and there is no realistic chance of establishing grassroots communities. Energy communities can currently only be established with grant applications exceeding several hundreds of thousands of euros.

Name:	**NRG7 Energy Community Service Provider Nonprofit Ltd.**
Settlement:	Budapest, District VII
MEKH registration:	August 2025 (departure: April 2021)
Web address:	https://www.nrg7.hu/
Members:	Local government and local government institutions
Short description:	The energy community is installing solar panels on three municipal buildings: the Market Hall on Klauzál Square, the Local Government building on Erzsébet Boulevard, and the municipal apartment building at 15 Szövetség Street. • For the office building at Erzsébet krt. 6. 22kWp/18kW • Klauzál Square Market, Akácfa Street 42-48. 130.5kWp/80kW, reverse watt system, 100kWh/50kW battery energy storage; installation of 2 22kW V2G vehicle chargers for the market hall building. • 24.2KWp/18kW for the social housing building at Szövetség Street 15. The energy community partially stores the electricity that is not currently being used and partially feeds it back into the electricity grid, for which it receives a payment from the electricity supplier. The efficient use of the generated energy is facilitated by a modern energy management system and transparent cost-sharing software. The entire system started operations in June 2025. The basis for operational operation is provided by the project 2020-3.1.4-ZFR-EKM-2020-00012 "Establishment and operation of an energy community in Erzsébetváros" awarded in a consortium by the Erzsébetváros Municipality, EVIN, Erzsébetváros Market Operation Nonprofit Ltd. and DDRIÜ South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency Nonprofit Ltd.
Main experiences:	The experiences of the Erzsébetváros Energy Community project so far show that the biggest obstacle to implementation is not technical, but administrative and financing factors, especially the slow availability of project funding and the prolonged official processes related to it. Physical feasibility is further limited by the fact that the structural characteristics of the district limit the number of surfaces suitable for solar panel installation, which significantly limits the installation capacity. Due to the urban structure, diversification of renewable energy production – for example, the inclusion of technologies beyond solar energy – will be difficult to ensure in the future. Overall, the project showed that the

	success of inner-city energy communities would primarily require smoother administrative processes and technical solutions that are compatible with the urban characteristics and can be expanded in the long term.

Name:	**Alsómocsolád Community Development and Service Provider Public Benefit Nonprofit Ltd.**
Settlement:	Alsómocsolád, Baranya County
MEKH registration:	July 2025
Web address:	https://alsomocsolad.hu/?oldal=512 https://alsomocsolad.hu/?oldal=535 (Feasibility study)
Members:	Municipality (Nonprofit Ltd. 100% ownership)
Short description:	Alsómocsolád is a small settlement with 264 inhabitants, 45 km from Pécs. Due to the small size and limited possibilities of the settlement, it is a good example of how an energy community can be created not only with a large investment, but also with many small steps, perseverance and personal commitment. The village's energy community has already been registered by the Hungarian Energy and Public Utilities Regulatory Office (MEKH), but energy sharing is not yet taking place. However, several initial steps have been taken, the aim of which is to shape the population's attitude towards energy saving, and to increase energy efficiency, reduce energy costs and improve the local quality of life by supporting investments and launching community support programs. In 2021, the energy consumption habits of almost all households were assessed in a personal survey. During this, the energy properties of the houses were assessed: e.g. what the house is made of, whether it has thermal insulation, what kind of windows and doors are there, how much electricity and gas is consumed, how the heating is done, etc. When the opportunity arose to receive 100% grant funding for the installation of residential solar systems, the local government tried to help as many residents as possible apply. They held community forums and invited bid writers and construction companies. In collaboration with MTVSZ, the Solidarity Economic Centre, and Wattmenedzser Kft., a solar exposure survey of 35 properties was conducted, which showed how suitable each building is for installing solar panels. Based on the survey, the experts classified the properties into four categories: (1) Suitable for community solar panels (i.e., the solar exposure is such that it could produce more energy than its own consumption), (2) Suitable for installing a solar panel system, (3) Not suitable for installing a

	solar panel system due to the condition of the house or roof, (4) Not suitable for installing a solar panel system due to the solar exposure. After all this, in September 2023, within the framework of RECAH technical assistance, KESZ Nonprofit Ltd. prepared a feasibility study for the preparation of the Alsómocsolád Energy Community. This proposes a possible business model, the operation of the energy community. The Municipality's "On Our Own Bread" economic development program previously offered the opportunity to receive interest-free loans and non-refundable grants for the renovation of apartments. The council has now expanded this to include applications for energy renovations and interest-free loans of up to 50% of the investment. The Municipality has purchased a thermal imaging camera that can be used to assess where heat is escaping from buildings. The camera is used by the Municipality's maintenance staff for the benefit of the public. The Municipality, together with the other 3 settlements of the Micro-Region (Mágocs, Mekényes and Nagyhajmás), is planning to announce a one-year residential energy saving competition, the aim of which is to provide help, support and ideas so that each participant can make their household more energy efficient based on their own living situation and consumption habits, based on their own voluntary commitments. With small changes that do not require investments and do not mean that we have to give up our comfort, they still result in measurable savings. A micro-regional planning process entitled “Clean yard, energy-efficient house” has been launched in cooperation with Rezsinullazó Ltd. As a result, the Municipality hopes that an energy survey of the current state and an investment plan can be prepared for all inhabited properties in the settlement to achieve the CC energy category. The aim is to help the population, based on well-founded energy renovation plans, to renovate their properties by making the most of state subsidies. The dialogue with the public is also facilitated by the Climate Café, an online café where anyone interested can join and learn more about climate protection, sustainability, nature-based solutions, water conservation options, energy management, or the potential of smart devices. To implement all these (and many other) activities, the Municipality participates in numerous international projects, such as the EUCF program, the SHAREs project (Horizon 2020), the DECA project (Interreg Danube Region), the RECAH project (EU technical assistance), the SURF project (EUKI) and the Citizen Led Renovation program. Finally, it should be noted that the Municipality uses its previously existing non-profit Ltd. to operate the energy community, as the members are now only local government institutions. They only provide opportunities to the population as a service. Since this Organisational form is only limitedly

	suitable for ensuring the voluntary and open membership expected from energy communities, it is planned to establish an Energy Cooperative in a later phase, of which the Non-profit Ltd. will also be a member.
Main experiences	Thanks to the dedicated staff of the municipality and the close cooperation with the residents, many steps have already been taken that are necessary to create an energy community. The emphasis here is not on complicated technical solutions, e.g. on the development of a smart grid, but rather on shaping the attitude of the population, improving energy efficiency, and building a community. Despite limited resources, the municipality has successfully implemented all of this, which has received considerable recognition in professional circles. The municipality's commitment to sustainable energy is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the village has prepared a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan, is a member of the Association of Mayors, and aims to achieve carbon neutrality. This is unique in Hungary for such a small settlement. In the case of such a small village, employing an environmental and climate officer is a great achievement. The contribution of a proactive colleague who considers the topic to be his or her heart is of great importance in strategy creation and settlement development, as well as in participating in projects and establishing a network of contacts. Of course, the scope of responsibility attached to a single person is also a risk (e.g. overloading, or continuing projects in the event of departure), but if several settlements in the micro-region join forces, Organisational sustainability can be ensured more easily (e.g. by operating a joint Green Office). It is also important to collaborate with external experts, NGOs, and other Organisations, at regional, national, and international levels. This is necessary not only to establish partnerships for applications, but also because they have the knowledge that is not always available locally. An important experience so far is that as long as the legal environment does not allow for the easy practical implementation of energy sharing, there are still many opportunities for action. As in most disadvantaged areas, the main problem here is not the lack of some kind of “smart” solution, but the poor condition of the building itself. The first step is therefore to modernize the energy and structural aspects of the buildings, and only after the lower consumption achieved in this way should the installation of appropriately sized solar panels and controllable consumers (e.g. heat pumps) be carried out. As can be seen from the above list, quite a few projects, participatory planning and EU support have arrived in the village. However, it is worth implementing these in cooperation with neighbouring villages and focusing on the implementation of existing projects rather than always coming up with new ideas. In any case, due to the financial situation of the

	residents, the creation of an energy community and the energy modernization can only be achieved with external support. Being a small settlement, human relations and the cultivation of trust are also important experiences. In the case of a larger settlement, for example, it is unthinkable to conduct a survey that affects practically all households in person. However, this happened in Alsómocsolád, and it shows how important human, professional and financial support and personal contact are for the residents. As part of community engagement, it is necessary to stop and see where the process is going from time to time. It is necessary to inform decision-makers and the public so that they understand what an Energy Community is and what community energy, energy democracy, and energy citizenship mean. This is essential for working together, maintaining trust, and supporting future actions. Another important aspect in Alsómocsolád is the aging population. It is very difficult to motivate the elderly to invest in the renovation of their properties – especially in a disadvantaged area where the investment cannot be realized in the event of a possible sale. They try to overcome this by involving younger relatives who no longer live in the village, but who will be the heirs of the properties, and it is important for them that their parents and grandparents do not live in energy poverty. They want to address the elderly with creative, even humorous, but definitely community-based means to restore the values of rural life, the beauty of voluntary simplicity, neighbourhood, and the slow lifestyle, all in a way that makes the population feel that this comes from them, and that this is not a program managed from above, implemented with project funding.

Condominium energy communities in Hungary

Although this document mainly deals with municipal energy communities, it is necessary to mention a special type of energy community, namely condominium energy communities. These are regulated by paragraphs (7) – (11) of the Hungarian Electricity Act. According to this, a condominium energy community is not an independent legal entity, but a written agreement between the owners of at least two sub-units in a condominium (housing cooperative).

In practice, a condominium energy community is an Organisational form in which residents of a condominium or housing cooperative jointly produce electricity – typically with solar panels – and share it among themselves. This allows the electricity produced to cover not only the consumption of common areas (e.g. staircase, elevator), but also to be used in the residents' own apartments. This is an important change, as under previous regulations, a common solar panel could only serve common consumption.

Condominium energy communities represent a significant potential for the utilization of community solar energy, as the housing stock in Hungary consists of approximately 120 thousand condominiums. This number is also growing dynamically: according to the Central Statistical Office, approximately 1,700 condominiums were under construction in 2025. The vast majority of condominiums in Hungary currently do not use their roof surfaces for renewable energy production (solar panels), the main reason for which has been the lack of legal background for ownership and sharing between residents.

The technical and legal conditions were developed by the Hungarian Energy Office in 2022, and after several years of negotiation, the amendment to the Electricity Act came into force on 1 January and 1 September 2025, respectively. Apartment energy communities now offer residential communities a real alternative for sustainable and economical energy use. The new legislation has enabled residents of apartment buildings to become not only consumers, but also active energy producers.

Overall, the benefits of condominium energy communities are similar to those of municipal energy communities. It enables cost reductions for participating residents, as they need to purchase less electricity from the grid provider. It also helps energy independence, as residents and the condominium are less dependent on market electricity prices. It helps to exploit renewable energy sources (mainly solar energy), and is therefore a significant and effective way to promote the green transition and climate protection from a sustainability perspective. Last but not least, it strengthens cooperation between residents through community building.

How does a condominium energy community work?

The basis for the operation of a condominium energy community is a small-scale household power plant, such as a solar panel system, which is installed jointly by the residents who have joined the energy community. The electricity produced can be used for common consumption (e.g. lighting, elevator) and for the residents' individual consumption. The system requires a metering and accounting system that can track how much electricity the members have produced and consumed, as well as a distribution network license, which the electricity supplier must provide.

An important difference compared to municipal energy communities is that in the case of condominiums, it is not necessary to establish a legal entity, but can be established simply by a written agreement between the residents. The consent of 75% of the entire condominium is not required for decision-making, the majority of the affected owners is sufficient.

The condominium energy community can choose two settlement models based on Sections 39/D and 39/E of Government Decree 273/2007 (VHR).

In the **discounted system usage fee reimbursement** model, the electricity generated by the household-sized small power plant is primarily used by community consumer equipment, such as stairwell lighting or elevators. The electricity that is not used by these equipment can be supplied to the members through the interconnection device, and if there is any unused electricity after this, it is supplied to the public grid through the connection point of the condominium.

For the electricity produced by the power plant installed on the condominium and consumed in total by the condominium (common consumption of the condominium and consumption of individual apartments), the Distribution Licensee pays a discounted system usage fee refund to the condominium as specified in the legislation.

In the **condominium sharing assignment model,** the electricity generated by the household-sized small power plant is shared among the members participating in the energy community based on the agreement between them, and each energy community member must have a smart meter measuring their own consumption. The basis for the settlement of the affected members is the electricity consumed by them per quarter hour, and the amount reduced by their share of the electricity generated by the power plant installed in the condominium in the same quarter hour based on the sharing assignment.

The most important legal changes in 2025 were:

- The concept of a condominium energy community has become legally recognized and has been included in the Electricity Act.
- It has become mandatory for distribution networks to support the establishment and operation of condominium energy communities.
- The restriction on exclusive shared consumption has been lifted: residents can also use the generated electricity in their own apartments.
- The legal and administrative process has been simplified: creating a community has become faster and easier, as it is not necessary to establish a legal entity.
- New support opportunities have also opened up, such as applications for the installation of solar panels.

Community building and communication

Energy communities are not only important because of the technological innovations or economic constructs of sustainable energy production, but as their name suggests, they Organise the participants into a community. This community approach makes energy communities special and successful, because even with the most modern technology or financial support, if the integrating power of the community is not there, the project may stall or even fall apart.

Members of an energy community are not just passive consumers (or producers), but actively participate in decision-making, enjoy the benefits of the common good, and take responsibility for the operation of the project. This active participation distinguishes energy communities from traditional energy market players. International good practices also show that the active participation of members and a democratic operating model are key to their long-term success and growth.

The majority of energy communities currently registered in Hungary are led by local governments, the main practical reason being that most energy communities were started with grant funding. The leading role of the local government nevertheless effectively helps to develop a community character, involves local government institutions (public institutions), and provides access to the local government's communication channels.

By involving local small and medium-sized enterprises, civil society Organisations and other public institutions and local groups, the aim is to exploit local opportunities by optimally selecting each actor and jointly develop the business model, operational structure and legal form (i.e. cooperative, association or non-profit economic Organisation). An important aspect when determining the type and proportion of Organisations is when and where there is energy surplus and demand (see table below).

Although in the long term, public involvement will definitely be one of the main drivers of the growth of energy communities, in the current situation in Hungary, public involvement is limited, for two reasons. One is that all currently operating energy communities have chosen the legal form of a non-profit limited liability company – which is not really a suitable legal form for managing a large and rapidly changing membership. As a hybrid solution, one of the members of the limited liability company is an association, and the entry and exit of public members is managed through this by the energy community.

The other main reason why the participation of the population in energy communities is currently not typical is that it is not financially worthwhile to join an energy community due to the subsidized residential energy prices. Regardless of this, it is important for energy communities to plan with this target group in mind for the future, especially since the excess energy produced by household solar power plants is already significant today (e.g. during working hours, when there is no or little use at home). It is definitely important to utilize this “free energy” in some way at the system level, and energy communities provide an excellent opportunity for this.

The following table summarizes who should be addressed when creating an energy community and what their main role might be:

Broad	Main role/characteristics
Municipality	Organising power, addressing the community, bringing in project funding
Public institutions	They consume the most energy during the week, and in the working hours. Can share excess energy on weekends (PV) Has material interest in purchasing energy at a more favourable price
Local residents	It consumes the most energy in the evening during the week and on the weekend. Excess energy production during the day during the week (when people are not at home) Small investor (e.g. for community solar panel investment)
Small and medium-sized enterprises	Consume a lot of energy (beyond their own solar generation) High financial interest in purchasing cheaper electricity
Non-governmental Organisation	Awareness-raising activities

Finally, the question arises, how can one join an energy community? If an internet search does not yield any results, it is worth asking your local government about a possible local initiative, or visiting one of the energy communities registered by the Hungarian Energy and Public Utilities Regulatory Office (MEKH)[5]. If there is no energy community in your area yet, you can find useful information about starting a new initiative in the Community Energy Knowledge Platform[6].

Joining an existing energy community is usually a regulated, multi-step process. First, personal or online contact is made, followed by thorough information about the community's legal form, goals, operations, financial conditions and membership obligations. This is followed by forums or meetings where members can ask questions and become familiar with the community. After that, membership becomes official after various declarations and possible payment of fees.

[5]Hungarian Energy and Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, https://www.mekh.hu/download/fix/Villamosenergia_engedelyesek , last tab of XLS
[6]Community Energy Knowledge Space: https://tudaster.kozenergia.hu/

Communication and conflict management

Communication with members and the wider public is an important aspect of any energy community. When communicating with existing energy community members, it is not enough to simply inform them, but to build trust, transparency and shared decision-making. This means that financial data and the decision-making process must be public, honest and understandable to everyone, and risks must be clearly discussed. Without this, a lack of trust can easily lead to the disintegration of the community. Inclusivity is also a basic requirement: every member's voice counts, no one should be excluded from the process, and decisions must be made openly, not with backroom deals.

For this communication, it is worth using multiple channels, in addition to annual general meetings, even additional personal meetings, forums, sharing on online platforms, regular newsletters, etc. - especially if the membership is large and there are also public participants. Of course, the selection of specific communication forums and the regularity of communication depends on the size of the energy community, personal capacity, and the existing (and usable for this purpose) communication channels of the energy community members.

From the very beginning of creating an energy community, it is necessary to be prepared for emerging conflicts, to properly handle conflicts of interest and differences of opinion. Building on existing good examples, it is necessary to develop norms of behaviour, rules for decision-making and dispute resolution, as well as sanctions for cases when someone grossly violates community principles. For this, proven communication methodologies can be used, such as assertive communication. It is worth reading more about this methodology, attending workshops and mastering it, as many conflicts can be prevented or softened with it.

Based on the experience so far, quick response, moderated discussions and the search for compromises accepted by everyone (or at least the majority), as well as documenting conflicts, are important to prevent disputes from becoming disruptive factors in the community. Toxic behaviour – such as aggressive communication, backroom deals, information withholding or personalization – should be explicitly discouraged. Of course, all this depends on the nature and size of the given energy community: the case of an energy community with only a few members (institutions) is completely different from that of an energy community with a large number of members with different interests. In such cases, it is worth involving a professional moderator, communication expert or mediator – it will pay off handsomely.

When creating an energy community, it is worth putting together the main members in such a way that there is an Organisation that emphasizes communication or can reach a larger target audience through its own channels. In practice, this usually means the participation of a civil society Organisation (e.g. public awareness-raising) and the local government (e.g. available communication staff and channels). This is especially important in the case of communication towards the wider public, i.e. in sharing experiences and attracting potential interested parties, and in continuously expanding membership.

Social media channels created by the NRGCOM project

Finally, we would like to recommend to the reader the social media channels that the NRGCOM project, which also supports the implementation of this training material (and related training), has created for experts interested in energy communities. You can also access them from the launch page available at https://www.nrgcom.hu/.

On an international level, we recommend our English-language LinkedIn group, which you can access at https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9876119. Anyone from the countries of the Danube region, including Hungary, can freely join this English-language, moderated group. This is an excellent forum for international exchange of experience, following current trends, learning about events related to energy communities, and sharing domestic experiences.

We also have a domestic (Hungarian-language) Facebook group about energy communities at https://www.facebook.com/groups/6048655051910065. Similar to the international group, this one has a professional focus, but the language of communication here is Hungarian. This is also a good opportunity to learn about recent events and trends, ask and discuss questions, and share experiences. We look forward to welcoming you among the group members, and recommend it to others!

Legal background

The legal framework for energy communities has undergone significant changes in recent years, both at the European Union and Hungarian level. The following chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the legal framework governing the operation of energy communities, with particular attention to the relevant laws, directives, operating forms and taxation rules.

The European legal basis for energy communities was laid down by the long-term objectives of the EU's energy policy. The European Union aims to make energy production more decentralised, democratic and sustainable, while making citizens active actors in the energy system.

The main EU legislation and initiatives are as follows:

- **RED I. (2009/28/EC):** required that at least 20% of the EU's energy consumption should come from renewable sources by 2020.
- **RED II (2018/2001/EU):** defined the concept of a "renewable energy community" and required Member States to support their creation.
- **Directive 2019/944/EU:** introduced the concept of a "citizens' energy community", which allows citizens, municipalities and small businesses to participate jointly in the production, distribution and consumption of energy.
- **European Green Deal (2019):** aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, with local energy communities playing a key role.
- **"Go for 55%!" package (2024):** aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

EU directives not only provide a legal framework, but also offer incentives: for example, network fee discounts, grant funding, and technical assistance for the creation of communities.

Hungarian regulations

The development of a legal framework to ensure the active participation of communities in energy production began in 2021 with the transposition of the EU Internal Electricity Market Directive (IEMD) and the Renewable Energy Directive, i.e. RED II, but the process is still not complete. The individual concepts have largely been transferred to Hungarian regulations, but some of them do not correspond to EU terminology. Most importantly, however, clear regulations facilitating the operation of communities are still lacking in many aspects.

Hungary transposed the EU directives in 2021 by amending Act LXXXVI of 2007 on Electricity (VET). Sections 66/B and 66/C of the Act regulate the legal status, scope of activities and registration of energy communities.

The main points of Section 66/B of the VET:

- An energy community can be a cooperative, a non-profit business entity or an association.

- Its primary goal is not to make a profit, but to provide environmental, economic and social community benefits.
- It must carry out at least one energy activity: electricity generation, storage, consumption, sharing, aggregation, electromobility.
- A renewable energy community is an energy community that produces and uses energy from renewable sources.
- The energy community cannot engage in cross-border cooperation and cannot be under the control of energy market monopolies.

According to Section 66/C of the VET:

- The registry of energy communities is maintained by the Hungarian Energy and Public Utilities Regulatory Office (MEKH).
- Registration requires: articles of association, business plan, technical data, management information.
- The register is public, except for personal data.

There are two significant, consecutive steps in the administrative process of establishing an energy community:

- Establishment of a legal entity and its registration with the competent court. (This ensures compliance with civil law.)
- Registration as an energy community with the MEKH. (This ensures compliance with energy legislation.)

The following table summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the three legal forms allowed by law:

Legal form	Advantages	Disadvantages
Cooperative	- One member – one vote - Easy to join - Profit can be shared	- Strict composition rules - You cannot recruit members publicly
Non-profit business	- Public benefit status possible - Known business forms (Ltd., Bt., Zrt.)	- Profit cannot be divided - Voting rights are subject to financial contribution
Association	- Flexible operation - Democratic decision-making - Unlimited number of members	- Difficult to operate with a large number of people - Consensus decision-making is required

The operation of energy communities is supported by several tax incentives in order to encourage the population and local communities to actively participate in renewable energy production:

- **Personal income tax exemption:** for individuals, income from community energy sales is tax-free up to 12,000 kWh per year.
- **VAT exemption:** if the service is provided for public interest purposes and the member does not use it as a taxable person.
- **Project funding:** Since 2020, several projects have supported the creation of energy communities.

Future directions and regulatory developments

One of the main obstacles to the faster spread of municipal energy communities is currently the immature regulatory environment, especially the lack of detailed rules. Professional Organisations have formulated several proposals for further development of the regulation:

- Distinguishing between physical and virtual energy communities.
- Establishing a transparent pricing system.
- Designation of a national contact point to support energy communities.
- Introduction of simplified registration and operating rules.

The goal is to create a regulatory environment that both encourages community energy solutions and ensures the stability of the electricity grid.

Electricity Act (VET) - (Act LXXXVI of 2007 on Electricity): In this act, the Parliament regulated the establishment of an effectively functioning competitive electricity market.

Electricity Act Implementing Decree - (Government Decree 273/2007. (X. 19.) on the implementation of certain provisions of Act LXXXVI of 2007 on Electricity), Decree on the implementation of certain provisions of the VET.

METÁR Decree - Decree 13/2017. (XI. 8.) MEKH on the amount of operating support for electricity produced from renewable energy sources regulates the preferential feed-in of electricity from renewable energy sources into the electricity grid and guarantees producers a fixed feed-in fee.

Government Decree on the Rules of Guarantees of Origin: The detailed rules on guarantees of origin are contained in the Hungarian legal system in Government Decree 309/2013. (VIII. 16.) on the certification of the origin of electricity obtained from renewable energy sources and high-efficiency cogeneration.

Recommended reading about energy communities

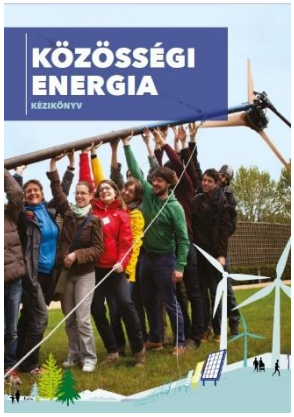
In this chapter, we have summarized some Hungarian-language publications, educational materials and online platforms where you can gain further knowledge about energy communities. In English, we recommend the website of the European Association of Energy Communities (https://www.rescoop.eu/), the Energy Community Platform (https://energycommunityplatform.eu/), the Energy Community Facility (https://energycommunitiesfacility.eu/) and the online platforms of EU projects with Hungarian participation on the topic (NRGCOM, SHAREs, DECA, HERCULES-CE project – see web addresses in the list of sources).

Community Energy Knowledge Platform

by the Hungarian Association of Nature Conservationists within the framework of the SHAREs project, provides useful information for those planning to establish an energy community. The portal describes the initial steps of establishing an energy community in 12 points, presents news and inspiring good practices, offers tools, helps with member recruitment and community building. The knowledge space also discusses legal knowledge, financing options, related concepts and includes a frequently asked questions section.

https://tudaster.kozenergia.hu/

Community Energy Handbook



guides the interested party step by step through the process of establishing an energy community. It discusses the benefits of community energy, the concept itself, different forms of operation (e.g. cooperatives, associations, business companies), the possible role of local governments, community production, distribution and use of electricity, energy saving and overcoming energy poverty, community utilization of thermal energy, flexibility services, self-sufficiency and energy storage, and community solutions related to sustainable transport.

https://mtvsz.hu/uploads/files/MTVSZ_kozossegienergia_teljes_KESZ.pdf

Community renewable energy is for everyone! Let's unleash it!

The 36-page, colorful publication, produced in collaboration with the Hungarian Association of Nature Conservationists, is primarily aimed at national and local communities, municipalities, citizens, future energy cooperative members and authorities interested in community energy. Its aim is to present in a clear way what the EU renewable energy regulation means in practice. It uses examples from all corners of Europe to explain how EU regulation helps to eliminate obstacles for individuals and communities producing and consuming renewable energy and to promote the spread of initiatives. Chapter 2 explains the new rights and measures. Chapter 3 details the consequences for national and local decision-makers and authorities. Chapter 4 presents practical steps and specific community energy proposals.

https://mtvsz.hu/uploads/files/kozossegi_energia_mindenkinek_mtvszkiadvany_2019dec(1).pdf

A guide for energy communities

The publication, produced within the framework of the COMMENCE project, aims to help community energy initiatives to start developing their business models. Its core is the Community Energy Project Canvas, which helps to present to anyone on one page what the initiative aims to do, what activities it does, for whom, how, etc. The second part of the 24-page publication discusses the role of local governments in community energy projects and presents an overview of business models according to the different types of energy communities.

https://mtvsz.hu/hirek/2025/09/naprakesz-kezikonyv-az-energiakozossegekrol and https://www.euki.de/en/euki-publications/guideline-for-energy-community-founders-in-hungary/#

Regulatory framework for energy communities

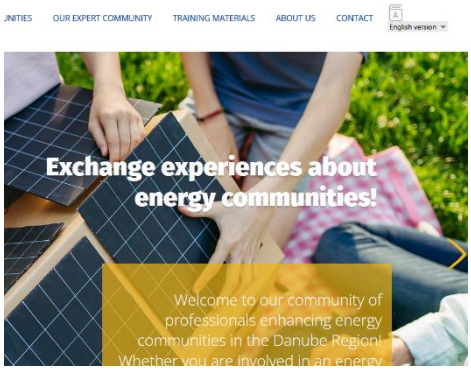
The 20-page publication, produced within the framework of the COMMENCE project, in collaboration with the Hungarian Association of Nature Conservationists, describes the Hungarian legal environment, introduces the types of energy communities, who can form an energy community, what is needed to establish an energy community, how it works in practice, how energy communities and the distribution network are connected to each other, discusses consumer protection within the energy community, available support systems, technical

innovations related to different energy communities, as well as various obstacles and possible ways to overcome them.

https://mtvsz.hu/uploads/files/commence_magyarorszag_az_energiakoezoessegek_szabalyozasi_keretrendressere.pdf

NRGCOM publications

On the Hungarian and English language launch page at www.nrgcom.hu you can download all Hungarian language publications produced within the framework of the NRGCOM project. These include infographics, posters, brochures and this training material. For more (English-language) materials please visit the official NRGCOM home page at https://interreg-danube.eu/projects/nrgcom



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