



# Citizen Dialogue – Community Energy

Zagreb/Croatia – D4.3



CITY OF  
ZAGREB

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Stjepan Radić Square 1  
10000 Zagreb, Croatia

The LIFE LOOP project team from the City of Zagreb successfully organized a citizen dialogue and workshop on May 24th 2024. The timing of organizing the citizen dialogue was ideal as we have now established our goals and the direction the city wants to take, developed a funding plan through green bonds, completed the Match-making Tool and Solar Potential applications, and are soon set to establish a One-Stop Shop.

The in-person event was hosted at ZICER (Zagreb's Innovation Center) and took place from 11:00 to 15:00. This event featured five informative presentations, each covering a different aspect of the project and related green initiatives.

#### **Presentations that were presented were:**

- Introduction to LIFE LOOP and Project Roadmap
- Match-making Tool and Solar Potential Application
- Green Bonds and Economic Aspects of Green Bonds
- GreenScape CE Project
- Energy Communities

The workshop began with an overview of the LIFE LOOP project, detailing its objectives, phases, and expected outcomes. Filip Ćurko, who also served as the moderator for the citizen dialogue and workshop, delivered this introductory presentation.

1. **Introduction to LIFE LOOP and Project Roadmap:** Filip Ćurko kicked off the workshop with an in-depth introduction to the LIFE LOOP project. He explained that the project is funded by the LIFE Programme of the European Union, under grant agreement no. 101077085. The LIFE LOOP project, which stands for "Local Ownership Of Power," aims to promote the development of local energy communities, fostering sustainable energy use through local ownership. The project spans from 2022 to 2025, covering various activities aimed at enhancing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources.

During his presentation, Ćurko highlighted the strategic milestones of the project, emphasizing the commitment of the City of Zagreb to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. This commitment includes reducing CO2 emissions by 40% compared to 2008 levels by 2030 and adapting to climate change. He elaborated on the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) adopted in 2019, which outlines the city's strategies for sustainable energy development and climate adaptation.



This project has received funding from the European Union's LIFE programme under grant agreement No 101077085

The roadmap detailed by Ćurko included significant phases and goals such as the formation of energy communities, increasing public awareness and participation, and leveraging existing and new financial resources to support community energy initiatives. He also touched on the collaboration with various European partners, including Energy Cities (France), Electra (Greece), ZEZ (Croatia), Cooperativa de Energie (Romania), and REScoop.eu (Belgium), to drive the project's objectives across three pilot areas: Crete in Greece, Zagreb in Croatia, and Bistrița in Romania.

Ćurko concluded his presentation by outlining the main goals of the LIFE LOOP project: decarbonizing the local territory, increasing resilience to climate change, and ensuring universal access to sustainable and affordable energy. He stressed the importance of building capacities, removing regulatory barriers, and encouraging wider participation through training programs and resource libraries. The presentation set a solid foundation for the subsequent sessions, providing a comprehensive understanding of the project's scope and ambitions.



- 2. Match-making Tool and Solar Potential Application:** Marko Kućan delivered the second presentation, focusing on innovative tools designed to empower citizens in their journey towards renewable energy adoption. He began by explaining the match-making tool available at [Match Energy Community Platform](#). This tool facilitates connections between individuals and organizations interested in forming or joining energy communities. Kućan demonstrated its functionality, showing how users can register, create profiles, and find potential partners based on their energy needs and capacities.

Following this, Kućan introduced the Energy Info Center (EIC) of the City of Zagreb, accessible at [EIC Zagreb](#). He highlighted the center as a centralized platform offering valuable geo-information and energy tools to citizens. A key feature of the EIC is the "Solar Potential" application, which can be found [here](#). This application is designed to help users assess the solar potential of their rooftops.

Kućan provided a practical demonstration of the "Solar Potential" application, illustrating how citizens can input their address to visualize their rooftop's solar capacity. The application calculates the potential energy generation based on roof area, orientation, and local climatic

conditions. This enables users to develop preliminary ideas for solar projects, offering a practical first step towards renewable energy adoption. By empowering individuals with precise information and tools, the application supports the city's broader goals of increasing renewable energy use and reducing carbon emissions.



3. **Green Bonds and Economic Aspects of Green Bonds:** Morana Plejić presented the third topic, focusing on the concept of green bonds and their benefits for citizens. She began by explaining the increasing demand in the financial sector for sustainable investments. Plejić discussed how EU countries are leveraging capital markets to fund building renovations and other sustainable projects, highlighting the necessity for transparency in these investments to build trust among project leaders, financial institutions, and investors.

Plejić outlined the challenges within the financial sector, such as the low awareness and capacity among citizens regarding innovative financing models and investment opportunities. She compared crowdfunding and capital markets, noting that while crowdfunding is suited for smaller projects with quicker fundraising, capital markets can finance larger projects but require more time and resources. She emphasized that green bonds offer a unique opportunity for citizens to invest in local sustainable projects, providing economic benefits such as higher returns and tax incentives.

The presentation also covered the global trends and growing interest in green bonds, particularly in the EU. Plejić explained that green bonds are becoming popular as cities and regions seek ways to finance energy transition projects and as institutional investors face regulatory requirements to increase their green investment portfolios. She highlighted the advantages for both investors and citizens, including higher interest rates for green bonds and tax incentives provided by governments.

Plejić concluded by discussing the EU's Green Bond Standard, which aims to regulate green bond issuance by setting clear guidelines on who can issue them, for what purposes, and how they must report and inform investors. This standardization helps ensure the security of investments and prevents greenwashing, thereby promoting genuine sustainable development.

4. **GreenScape CE project:** Tijana Šimek delivered the fourth presentation, focusing on the GreenScape project, an initiative aimed at enhancing urban green spaces. GreenScape is part of the INTERREG Central Europe program, which seeks to improve the quality of life in urban areas by promoting green infrastructure and sustainable land use.
  
5. **Energy communities – experience from the field:** Mislav Kirac delivered an engaging presentation on energy communities, focusing on their role and benefits in fostering local renewable energy projects and promoting energy independence. He defined energy communities as legal entities that are collective and citizen-driven, allowing various stakeholders to invest in renewable energy projects, thus providing direct benefits to both participants and the local economy. Kirac emphasized the economic, environmental, and social advantages, noting that for every euro invested, there is a 2.5 euro return to the local economy, with a target of achieving a 32% share of renewable energy sources by 2030. He highlighted successful case studies, such as the solar power plant project in Križevci, which involved 127 members and raised 160,000 euros for a 200 kW plant, demonstrating the practical implementation of the cooperative model. Additionally, he discussed the support available from the Green Energy Cooperative (ZEZ) for local actors, including municipalities and SMEs, to participate in the energy transition. Kirac concluded by inviting institutions to collaborate in creating a supportive environment for energy communities, expressing optimism about establishing a system that enables broad citizen participation in renewable energy projects.

After presentations we had Q&A and argumentative discussion. Participants had questions about key benefits of investing in green bonds compared to other investment options and potential risks. There was also few questions about energy communities such as legal and regulatory considerations for establishin energy community and how are profits from energy projects typically distributed among members.

Although over 200 citizens were invited thru e-mails and many more thru city distric councils, about 40 citizens responded. Some citizens reported that they were interested in the topic, but due to business obligations, they were not able to attend the dialogue with citizens.

Overall, the workshop facilitated meaningful dialogue between participants and presenters, fostering a deeper understanding of the LIFE LOOP project and related green initiatives. The event emphasized the importance of citizen involvement in the transition to sustainable energy and the various opportunities available for individual and community participation. The LIFE LOOP project has been crucial in identifying local issues that need addressing. By facilitating open dialogue, we have gathered valuable feedback and insights from the community. The strategic use of green bonds for funding further solidifies our commitment to a greener future, making sure that both the city and its citizens are aligned and proactive in achieving our environmental objectives.

Annex: Agenda of the event (in Croatian)



# LIFE LOOP Radionica



# Sunčane elektrane – uključenost građana i energetske zajednice

**Što:** Radionica i dijalog s građanima

**Gdje:** ZICER – Zagrebački inovacijski centar, Av. Dubrovnik 15 (Paviljon 12)

**Kad:** 24. svibanj 2024. u 11 sati

**Za koga:** građani, energetske zajednice





Energetska politika Grada Zagreba dugi je niz godina usmjerena prema održivom energetsom razvitku gradskog područja baziranom na načelima zaštite okoliša, energetske učinkovitosti, korištenja obnovljivih izvora energije i održive gradnje. U rujnu 2022. godine, s ciljem poticanja građanske energije na području Grada Zagreba, osnovana je Radna skupina Grada Zagreba za građansku energiju. U cilju poticanja građanske energije na području grada Grad Zagreb želi aktivno uključiti građane kao fizičke osobe i energetske zajednice/zadruge koji predstavljaju modele udruživanja građana u kojima oni postaju aktivni sudionici energetske tržišta.

## Teme radionice:

- Sunčani potencijal i sunčane elektrane
- Aplikacija „Solarni potencijal“
- Građanska energija
- Energetske zajednice
- Kako suinvestirati u sunčane elektrane
- Zelene obveznice
- ublažavanje i prilagodba klimatskim promjenama  
zelena infrastruktura i rješenja temeljena na prirodi



## AGENDA

11:00	Pozdravni govor i uvod	
11:05	Prezentacija Roadmapa – Projektni tim LIFE LOOP-a	lifeloop 
11:15– 11:45	Prezentacija zelenih obveznica za građane – REGEA	
11:45– 12:15	Prezentacija o građanskoj energiji – Radna skupina za građansku energiju	
12:15– 12:45	Suradnja – ostali projekti ublažavanje i prilagodba klimatskim promjenama zelena infrastruktura i rješenja temeljena na prirodi	Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE  Co-funded by the European Union 
12:45	<b>Pauza</b>	
13:15– 13:45	Prezentacija o energetske zajednicama – ZEZ	 Zelena Energetska Zadruga
13:45– 14:15	Prezentacija aplikacije „Solarni potencijal“ – GZ	
14:15– 14:45	Q&A rasprava	
14:45	Završna riječ	



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