D6.4 Report on sustainability, replication and exploitation activities 2

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Energy Cities
Public Report

lifeloop
local ownership of power

Table of Contents

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1.Introduction

Sustainability, replication and exploitation were fundamental principles of LIFE LOOP and were key to ensuring the long-term impact and legacy of the project. Between October 2022 and September 2025, LIFE LOOP initiated a wide range of activities aimed at embedding long term sustainability, replication and impact. These activities included:

- **LIFE LOOP toolkit** which provides key community energy resources for municipalities, citizens and others, in pilot languages. This includes templates for contractual agreements such as Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), translated into Croatian, Romanian and Greek.
- **Capacity building** which was conducted in pilot and satellite areas and with associated partners. This enabled participants to develop the skills and knowledge needed to develop successful community energy partnerships, sustainable business plans and community energy roadmaps to ensure long term sustainability. The capacity building fed into the on-line Espresso course for municipalities enabling access across Europe. The Espresso course is now being further enhanced and translated through legacy project SHINE, scaling up the long term impact.
- **Citizen-led initiatives**: a wide range of citizen-led initiatives were enabled by LIFE LOOP. All initiatives have long term sustainability at their heart, including robust financial models developed from the toolkit. All of these projects have at least a 20 year predicted life span.
- **Sharing best practice**: this happened at local, national and European level, through for example, workshops and presentations at the EU Sustainable Energy Week.
- **Community Energy Accelerator**: kicked off in 2023 with a Good Energy tour and community energy meetings in ten cities in Croatia.

This report outlines the status of each of these actions in further detail as well as outlining the total impact the project has achieved which includes:

- Total energy savings in GWh: 13,84 GWh (against initial goal of 11,35 GWh)
- Renewable energy production: 6,08 GWh (against initial goal of 6,78 GWh)
- 67 new sites or new projects triggered and launched by LIFE LOOP with at least 20 sites due to start shortly after the end of LIFE LOOP (target 35)
- 1447 municipal actors trained and developed new skills over enabling and supporting energy communities (against initial goal of 940 actors)
- 53 municipalities have completed the Accreditation Scheme and received the qualification (against the initial target of 50 municipalities).
- 1,126,203 citizens have received training and joined in-person or online hands-on workshops or other events with active engagement (against the initial target of 995,688 citizens).

Medium	People reached
Events	8,502
Social media	459,125
Press (estimate)	604,892
Website	15,021
Newsletters	32,900

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Total	1,120,440

More information about LIFE LOOP's impacts, tools, resources and legacy can be found at the project webpage https://energy-cities.eu/project/lifeloop/ and in the project's final report https://energy-cities.eu/igniting-community-energy-action/ .

1.1 After-LIFE Implementation

To ensure continuity beyond September 2025, LIFE LOOP partners have formally agreed to maintain the core tools, documentation and support structures created through the project. Energy Cities and REScoop.eu will continue to host the accreditation scheme webpages, asset matchmaking tool and toolkit for at least five years after project closure, with annual updates incorporated into the newly established LIFE ENERCOM project SHINE. Pilot municipalities committed to keeping their One-Stop Shops operational through integration into existing municipal energy teams. Technical partners such as REScoop.eu, ZEZ, Electra Energy Cooperative and Ènostra will continue offering training, peer-learning and advisory support through their national networks, ensuring that municipalities and new energy communities can continue to access expertise developed under LIFE LOOP.

2 LIFE LOOP Tools for Sustainability, Replication and Exploitation

At the start of LIFE LOOP, a detailed analysis was undertaken of a wide range of community energy guidelines and information, including 120 resources listed on the Energy Communities Repository website. Through this process the most relevant guides and information for the LIFE LOOP pilots and satellites were selected and translated into the 3 pilot languages.

This process included gathering different contractual and financial models for citizen-led and community energy initiatives. These models have been used and adapted by the pilot and satellite authorities to develop and implement their local projects. The toolkit and models are available for any European municipality to access freely, helping to increase replication and exploitation of LIFE LOOP. The toolkit was disseminated to follower municipalities via targeted communications and training events and was promoted widely through the consortium's extensive networks, as well as via other LIFE CET ENERCOM sister projects to increase access and replication.

2.1 Sustainability and Replication through Capacity building

A tailored capacity building programme was delivered in the three LIFE LOOP pilot areas (see deliverable D2.5 for more detail). This included:

1. Task Forces & survey: Three Task Forces (Greece, Romania, Croatia) with cross-cutting expert partners were formed and met regularly to coordinate actions and share knowledge. The results from the LIFE LOOP survey on energy communities and citizen-led initiatives identified barriers, opportunities, and training needs in municipal-citizen collaboration; these results directly informed the project's capacity building programme.

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2. Workshops & community energy roadmaps: Based on survey insights, the programme delivered 3 workshops per pilot municipality (approx. 20 participants each) on stakeholder mapping, matchmaking, and community energy roadmap development, producing co-developed roadmaps in Crete, Bistrita, and Zagreb covering PV/thermal installations, green bonds, energy efficiency, citizen engagement, and policy advocacy.
3. One-Stop Shops / Info Centres: 3 OSS were established, serving as physical and online hubs, assisting 350 households in Crete, 150 citizens in Zagreb, and 60 citizens in Bistrita. All pilots have committed to sustaining these services for the long term.
4. Local seminars and study visits: technical partners such as CSI, Enostra, and Electra organised multiple trainings, workshops, and study visits covering residential renovation, renewable integration, energy management, district-level modelling, and municipal energy communities.

The capacity building activities were then tailored, replicated and delivered to the five satellite areas. This equipped participating municipalities and public officers with the skills, understanding and motivation needed to support the development of new citizen-led and community energy partnerships, focussing on long term sustainability. The capacity building programme culminated in the publication of municipal community energy roadmaps which outline the steps municipalities will be taking to achieve their targets.

The capacity building programme was subsequently further replicated for LIFE LOOP's seven associated partners in five countries, adapted to local needs and opportunities. The translated and adapted Espresso on-line training was used as a basis for this, accompanied by online meetings with associated partners and in-person workshops. The associated partners also attended key capacity building events such as the One Stop Shop and Community LED Retrofit webinars. The associated partners were supported by LIFE LOOP's technical partners in mapping opportunities, matchmaking assets and human resources, developing community energy roadmaps using resources from LIFE LOOP's community energy toolkit. Electra Energy further extended its training activities conducting meetings and capacity building with two municipalities in Albania and one municipality in North Macedonia.

The capacity building programme was also shared with the LIFE CET ENERCOM sister projects to enhance replication and exploitation. Elements of the capacity building activities and roadmap sessions fed into the Espresso training course developed as part of LIFE LOOP's community energy accreditation programme, further detailed below.

Through these activities 1447 municipal actors were trained and developed their skills and knowledge to support and replicate LIFE LOOP's approach, putting citizens at the heart of the clean energy transition.

2.2 Community Energy Friendly training and accreditation

One of the key outputs of the LIFE LOOP project, in terms of exploitation and long term legacy, has been the development of a pan-European accreditation programme for municipalities which was launched in February 2024, with a special campaign on Valentine's Day.

In total, **53 municipalities completed the entire process, while 55 municipalities signed the Charter**. The full structure of the scheme includes a charter, acknowledging their commitment, which was eventually translated in all LIFE LOOP languages, a self-assessment test, also translated in all languages, LIFE LOOP additions to the Espresso community energy training (early 2024), the adaptation of the course to all LIFE LOOP countries in national languages, and the release of the Asset Matchmaking tool.

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Finally, 2 celebration moments were organised to celebrate municipalities' achievements and build relationships between civil servants from different backgrounds on 14 February 2025 gathering 50 participants, and on 16 September 2025 gathering 22 participants. The accreditation programme will be further enhanced under SHINE, including translation and promotion into an additional languages and countries (FR, ES, PL, IT).

Figure 1 LIFE LOOP accreditation roadmap

2.3 Community Energy Accelerator programme

The Community Energy Accelerator programme initially foreseen in LIFE LOOP was incorporated into the project's accreditation and outreach and replication activities. In Croatia ZEZ led on this activity, organising a Good Energy Tour in 2023, visiting 11 municipalities. This included Solar Literacy and a capacity building workshops in every municipality, along with "solar living room", workshop for citizens and a workshop for community energy projects. Solar Literacy workshops were organized in Samobor, Sisak, Biograd na Moru, Drniš, Rijeka, Labin, Medulin, Pleternica, Dubrovnik, Zagreb and Umag. In total there were 90 city officials participating. In a similar vein Electra and CdE conducted a wide array of meetings and workshops with municipalities in Romania and Greece to build capacity, enable them to support community energy and to highlight opportunities for additional funding and support.

Figure 2: Good energy tour ©ZEZ

The second phase of the accelerator followed the launch of the community energy accreditation programme in February 2024. As well as the online learning modules which included two dedicated modules on financing and procurement for community energy several live workshops were organised, including a live class on PPAs. In addition, relevant funding opportunities were highlighted to municipalities including the Energy Communities Repository in 2023 and the ENERCOM Facility in 2025.

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3 Sustainability, replication and exploitation in Pilot and Satellite Areas

Following on from the capacity building programme a range of new citizen-led initiatives were organised and implemented by pilots and satellites, primarily focussed on solar and energy saving refurbishment. The toolkit and capacity building programme provided participants with a variety of financial models and templates, and the LIFE LOOP team worked closely with the cities to ensure the long-term viability was embedded into all projects and activities. Highlights include:

- ZEZ Sunce, Croatia's first official energy community was successfully launched thanks to LIFE LOOP and inaugurated Croatia's first citizen-owned solar installation of 200kW in Križevci in 2024.
- Nicosia energy community has been registered and is Cyprus' first energy community, enabled by LIFE LOOP.
- Gabrovo in Bulgaria established an energy community for a 150-kW rooftop PV installation, combining crowdfunding and shared energy usage. 10% of redistributed energy will be dedicated to social needs. The municipality now serves as a replicable model for integrating solar energy, civic engagement, and social equity in the energy transition.
- The Greek partners, Minoan Energy Community and Electra Energy significantly scaled up their activities involving municipalities, installing two new community energy solar parks producing more than 2MW and supporting the establishment of 6 new energy communities in Greece.

Greece (Minoan Energy Community & Electra Energy Cooperative)

Two PV parks were successfully implemented in the Region of Peloponnese under the energy community "Minoa Aroania" (2023). The first PV park in Andravida-Kyllini (1.025 MW, 1.65 GWh/year) supplies 201 households and small businesses in Crete and Western Greece and represents MEC's first virtual net-metering project outside Crete[1]. The second PV park in Amaliada (1.1 MW, 1.55 GWh/year) benefits 369 households under the same model. Both parks, through collective self-consumption, benefit members directly through reducing their energy bills and offsetting consumption, with production set for the next 25 years. Additionally, LIFE LOOP funded two more PV park studies (316 kW in Anogeia and 600 kW in Leros) and the parks will soon be installed, further enhancing the project's legacy.

Four energy efficiency upgrade studies were completed for municipal buildings (3 in Crete and 1 in Leros) aiming to transform them into nearly zero- or zero-energy facilities through innovative passive and active systems co-designed with local citizens. The resultant retrofits will be implemented shortly after the end of LIFE LOOP. The Municipal Indoor Sports Hall of Leros, has already secured funding and is entering implementation (savings 1.2 GWh). Municipalities of Hersonissos and Rethymno plan to submit proposals under the Region of Crete's funding call (deadline 31/10/2025) to implement these interventions.

Thanks to LIFE LOOP, 10 new municipalities became members of the Minoa Energy Community. MEC will continue to actively engage these municipalities to explore new community energy opportunities in the future.

At the same time, Electra Energy Cooperative supported the establishment and development of 6 new energy communities in Greece, in V. Tzoumerka, Trikala, Chalandri, Fylis, Astypalaia, and Grevena, through the collaboration of local citizens, enterprises, and municipalities. Within the next 5 years, each of these

[1] More information about this first PV is provided in Deliverable D3.2.

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communities is expected to develop at least one PV project (with a minimum capacity of 200 kW each), aiming to self-produce the energy consumed by their members. This means that additional investments and GHG savings will be mobilised over the next five years, thanks to the support provided through LIFE LOOP tools and capacity-building activities.

Croatia (ZEZ Sun, municipality of Zagreb and REGEA)

Thanks to LIFE LOOP, ZEZ launched ZEZ Sun, Croatia's first operational community-owned energy cooperative. With strong support from the City of Križevci, a 200 kWp community solar plant was installed on the City Market roof, marking Croatia's first public tender to include social criteria –50% of points awarded for citizen participation and enabling ZEZ Sun to secure a 25-year lease by paying 7% of monthly revenue as rent. Operating under a 12-year feed-in tariff, ZEZ Sun projects 5% annual returns from 2026, with surplus profits directed to a Community Benefit Fund supporting energy poverty reduction, environmental protection, and local development, continuing LIFE LOOP's legacy into the future. ZEZ Sun is now set up as a pioneering, socially inclusive model that will continue to develop community energy in Croatia.

Romania (municipality of Bistrița, municipality of Tulcea, Cooperativa de Energie (CdE))

Bistrița has been the pioneer in retrofitting blocks of flats. In total thanks to activities under LIFE LOOP 9.42 GWh are now being saved annually. To achieve such high acceptance numbers by its citizens, under LIFE LOOP the municipality organised a series of community meetings and workshops to explain the long-term benefits of energy efficiency and community energy, especially in the context of rising energy prices. Out of the total investment, €103,361 was contributed directly by citizens, representing their co-financing share in the retrofitting of their apartment buildings.

Bistrița together with Cooperative de Energie, will continue to provide support for citizen-led retrofit and community energy through the One-Stop Shop, a key mechanism created during LIFE LOOP to centralise guidance for citizens, and the www.maiverde.ro platform, which will remain an active and growing resource hub.

Tulcea in collaboration with Cooperativa de Energie, installed one of Romania's first community energy installations, a PV system at Kindergarten No. 3 (20kW) in September 2025. This serves as a small but important flagship in Romania inspiring other cities and communities to install similar projects in the future. The city also promoted domestic solar and prosumership. This resulted in at least 200kW of domestic solar being installed, enabling citizens to reduce carbon and costs for the next 20 years and paving the way towards energy sharing as this becomes viable in Romania.

Italy (municipalities of Villanovaforru and Ussaramanna, Ènostra)

In Villanovaforru, 3 new PV plants were installed on public buildings: the equestrian center (15 kW), school gym 1 (27 kW), and school gym 2 (10 kW,) and will continue to run for at least 20 years. Thanks to LIFE LOOP the municipality of Siddi, located between Ussaramanna and Villanovaforru, participated in the merging of the 2 local RECs, to create an umbrella energy community which will enable further efficiencies and economies of scale. The REC plans to install a new 47 kW PV plant on a public building (auditorium), and is set up to attract new funds and to stimulate direct citizens' investment in the installations of PV plants and energy efficiency interventions.

Beyond these achievements, LIFE LOOP has also catalysed further investments: in 2026, Ènostra will install a 999kW collective PV plant in Arborea, generating an estimated 1,287 MWh/year with an investment of €1 million, to supply a newly established REC in the area, securing benefits for at least two decades.

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Cyprus (Center for Social Innovation –CSI)

Nicosia launched Cyprus' s first energy community "Lefkothea": with LIFE LOOP support in September 2025. The community plans to install the first 500 kW community-owned solar-plus-storage system by 2027, targeting expansion to 1-2 GWh/year by 2030. CSI is a founding member of the board and will continue to guide membership and fair billing and actions on energy efficiency well beyond the end of LIFE LOOP.

LIFE LOOP also triggered a wave of transformative initiatives in 3 additional Cypriot municipalities who will continue to explore and support community energy opportunities:

1. In Aradippou a solar PV park generating 2GWh was installed and plans to support vulnerable households in the long term. This new initiative will operate as an energy community, where residents will hold shares. Despite the legislative barriers, a 2nd community PV park, which already has permits and land secured, is expected to serve 500 vulnerable households and generate an additional 3-4 GWh of energy annually by 2028.
2. The municipality of Strovolos signed a Local Green Deal with nine partners in December 2024, establishing a public platform for energy communities that offers information, training, and digital tools for efficiency.
3. Limassol advanced its Climate Neutrality Plan through preparatory work for municipal retrofits and a citizen-owned energy community.

The project' s efforts have catalysed a new movement for citizen-led energy communities in Cyprus, partially thanks to CSI' s 'Energy Cafes' . In total, 8 Energy Cafés (Nicosia & Limassol) were hold, resulting in 2 groups expressing interest in forming their own cooperatives. These activities have strengthened the replication and long term impacts of LIFE LOOP, paving the way for a strong community energy movement in Cyprus.

Bulgaria (municipality of Gabrovo)

The creation of the Energy Community Gabrovo – OPT marked a milestone in citizen-led renewable energy generation in Bulgaria, with 59 members. The project foresees the installation of a 150 kWp rooftop PV plant on the premises of the Municipal Public Transport company in Gabrovo, with an estimated annual generation of 188,000 kWh. As of September 2025, all procurement and delivery of components had been completed and the PV system had been installed. However, an unexpected regulatory decision by the distribution system operator (ERP Sever) to move the grid connection from low to medium voltage reclassified the project, triggering new permitting and design requirements and delaying full commissioning to early 2026.

Through its One-Stop-Shop (OSS), the municipality supported multiple housing associations in preparing and applying for Bulgaria' s national programme on energy efficiency of multifamily buildings. Gabrovo' s OSS has become a national reference point, ranking second in Bulgaria after Sofia in approved buildings, proving the model' s effectiveness in mobilizing citizens and enabling financial participation. As of October 2025, 15 buildings had signed financing agreements, with a 20% citizen contribution and 80% state support. Although political turbulence and delays in national funding slowed implementation, 7-8 buildings are technically ready to begin renovations: 2 with detailed designs and 2 with signed construction contracts. Once completed, these projects are expected to deliver 4,400 MWh/year of primary energy savings.

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4. Sustainability and replication through policy and best practice

4.1 Policy Recommendations

The LIFE LOOP activities and experience fed into a range of policy outputs. Policy recommendations were compiled throughout the project and were summarised in two reports which were widely disseminated through LIFE LOOP's networks, sister projects and beyond.

Report D3.3, examines explores the policy landscapes, challenges, and opportunities for community energy development across the 3 LIFE LOOP pilots. The recommendations outlined in this report emphasize practical steps to enhance local policy frameworks, including dedicated municipal funding programs, streamlined administrative procedures, enhanced technical support services, and improved grid access provisions for community projects.

Report, D4.7, published in June 2025, takes stock of legislative progress in 11 EU countries. Where do we stand in the implementation of EU legislation relating to energy communities? What remaining challenges and barriers remain at national level? What policy change is needed? It was written collaboratively by four LIFE ENERCOM sister projects, LIFE LOOP, COMANAGE, Tandems and ConnectHeat, totalling 44 partners. The report includes 64 evidence-based policy recommendations for 11 EU countries and 16 policy recommendations for improved EU legislation.

These high profile reports have helped to raise the awareness and importance of favourable legislation and policy for energy communities and have been used by national and European partners to lobby for continued improvements. These policy resources will continue to support positive change towards more supportive legislative frameworks, further enhancing the sustainability and replication of LIFE LOOP.

4.2 Sharing Best Practice and linking with sister ENERCOM Projects

As well as sharing best practice during the capacity building programme, LIFE LOOP technical partners, pilots and satellites participated in a wide range of best practice sharing events. In 2023 this included showcasing LIFE LOOP at EUSEW, including a LIFE LOOP presentation by Minoan Energy Community, as well as at REScoop's Spring Gathering in Athens, attended by over 150 people, and Energy Cities annual conference in Modena attended by over 350 municipalities and elected officials. This culminated in the shared policy document and EUSEW workshop with three sister projects, in June 2025.

In addition to sharing best practice experiences in external events, LIFE LOOP's coordination team also organised a programme of collaborative meetings with LIFE ENERCOM sister projects that were funded under the same cohort as Life LOOP. This included LIFE Tandems, LIFE Beckon, LIFE COMANAGE, LIFE ConnectHeat. The aim of such collaboration was to explore possible geographic and activity synergies in order to avoid working in silo and maximise the impact of projects and resource savings. A collaborative folder was created to exchange contacts and materials and regular monthly cross-pollination meetings were established:

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- Every 4 months: Project coordinators and communication referents meet to share updates on projects and discuss possible joint actions and cross-promotion.

- Every 8-10 months, a large meeting including consortium members from all partners is organised with a specific objective, such as sharing best practices on capacity building. So far, two meetings have been organised: one on June 15, 2023, focussed on a general presentation of projects, and the second on February 1, 2024, with a focus on capacity building.

This has helped to enhance partnership working and synergies, enhancing communications, increasing replication and exploitation. This resulted in a joint policy report outlining national and EU-wide recommendations (D4.7). The report was coordinated by LIFE LOOP with collaboration from three LIFE sister projects, COMANAGE, Tandems, and ConnectHeat, covering 11 countries with input from 44 multi-sector organisations. The policy report was presented at LIFE LOOP's joint sister project conference in EUSEW 2025 (273 participants).

In the final year LIFE LOOP also linked with more recent LIFE ENERCOM projects, including LIFE COMET, DISCOVER, ECOEMPOWER, ENCOM Hub and Islet, to share learnings, tools and help strengthen replication and exploitation of LIFE LOOP's resources and activities.

In addition to the shared EUSEW event, **a shared policy event** was organised bringing together the 4 LIFE sister projects and French representatives of local authorities (80 participants), providing a basis for workshops to brainstorm strategy and future areas for collaboration.

Figure 3 Joint policy event in parallel to EUSEW 2025

5 SHINE project

A wide range of opportunities to ensure the long term sustainability, replication and exploitation of LIFE LOOP were explored. Through these activities, additional funding was identified and secured for several partners including Minoan Energy Community. The collaboration with the 'sister' ENERCOM projects culminated in the successful ENERCOM 2024 proposal. The resultant project, SHINE, builds on the strengths, resources & innovations of four LIFE ENERCOM projects: LIFE LOOP, ConnectHeat, LIFE Beckon and Tandems, to accelerate the energy community movement across Europe.

SHINE will equip **Local and Regional Authorities** with the skills and tools they need to maximise opportunities and support for community energy. Tangible results will be achieved through delivering

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operational support services in **4 national pilots** in **Spain, Italy, Belgium, and Poland**, with **replication in 11 additional Ambassador countries**.

Main activities include:

- Optimising Europe's One-Stop Shop (OSS) for Energy Communities: SHINE will review and enhance existing ENERCOM tools, integrating them into REScoop.eu's Energy Community Platform to create a new, comprehensive portal for LRAs. These tools, including LIFE LOOP's community energy accreditation scheme for municipalities, a match-making tool, business models, and adaptable templates, will be translated and shared on four national OSSs tailored to local contexts.
- Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building: The project will foster collaboration between LRAs, communities, and experts through peer-to-peer exchange, training, and technical support. The establishment of Europe's first international working group on community energy OSSs will ensure the sharing of best practices, improving the sustainability and scalability of community energy support services, and boosting the evidence base on their impact.
- Implementation of Local Support Services: In each pilot area, LRAs will establish in-person OSSs to directly support community-led projects focusing on district heating, cooling, retrofitting, and renewable energy generation. These services will be designed with sustainability and local needs at their core.
- Dissemination and Replication: The developed tools, services, and methodologies will be disseminated through a strong Ambassador network, emphasizing replicable, sustainable models, and embedding inclusion, gender, and energy equity.

As with LIFE LOOP, Energy Cities is managing the overall coordination of SHINE. Energy Cities will organise capacity building activities, local peer-to-peer exchanges and provide support to the pilot areas in the four stages of the community energy accreditation process, building on the experience, tools and resources from LIFE LOOP. LIFE LOOP pilots, satellites and associated partners will continue to be involved through an active network of 34 Ambassadors in 11 countries. More information about the project can be found on the project's webpage: https://energy-cities.eu/project/shine/

Figure 4 LIFE SHINE Consortium, including members of 4 ENERCOM sister projects

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Summary and Conclusion

The LIFE LOOP project has delivered substantial and lasting advances in the development, replication and sustainability of community energy across its pilot and satellite regions. Over the three years of implementation, the project successfully combined technical assistance, targeted training, community engagement, and practical demonstrations to create the conditions under which community energy initiatives can grow and be sustained over the long term.

67 new projects were triggered and supported, whose impacts will benefit cities and citizens for decades to come. 1,447 municipal officers were trained and 53 municipalities became accredited, equipped with the skills and knowledge to enable community energy in their localities, Over 10,800 citizens were actively engaged through the project and at least 1,126,203 people were informed about LIFE LOOP and the benefits of community energy, forming a strong, motivated basis with which to further develop citizen-led initiatives in the pilot, satellite and replication countries.

In addition to this, the establishment of One-Stop Shops, the preparation of community energy roadmaps, and the creation of durable governance and financing models have ensured that LIFE LOOP's benefits will extend well beyond the project lifetime. The development of pioneering community energy initiatives in Greece, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Romania and Bulgaria has already inspired follow-on investment, mobilised new actors, and opened pathways for continued expansion. Importantly, several pilot actions—such as the ZEZ Sun cooperative in Croatia, the municipal retrofitting programme in Bistrița, the first energy community in Cyprus, and the newly merged REC in Sardinia—provide replicable models that other municipalities can adopt.

The LIFE LOOP toolkit, templates and accreditation scheme form a long-term resource for cities and communities wishing to develop energy partnerships, and their integration into the upcoming LIFE ENERCOM SHINE project guarantees continued support, maintenance and expansion into additional languages and countries. Cross-project collaboration with sister LIFE initiatives has further extended the reach of LIFE LOOP materials and helped create a sustained European ecosystem for knowledge-sharing and policy learning.

Overall, LIFE LOOP has established a robust foundation for the continued growth of community energy in Europe. Through its tools, training, pilot outcomes and partnerships, the project has created durable capacities that will persist after project closure and continue to support municipalities, citizens and energy communities in accelerating the energy transition. The replication already observed during the project period suggests that the long-term impact of LIFE LOOP will continue to expand in the years ahead enabling community energy to flourish in the Adriatic, Balkans and beyond.

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