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Valencia (Spain)

Social procurement of municipal rooftops for energy communities

Valencia shows how cities can use public procurement and municipal assets to empower citizen-led renewable energy communities, while integrating social benefits such as energy access for vulnerable households and gender mainstreaming.

The challenge

The challenge was to enable energy communities to access municipal rooftops in a legally sound and transparent way while ensuring social impact.

Valencia has committed to reaching climate neutrality by 2030 as part of the EU Mission “100 Climate-Neutral Cities”. Expanding local renewable energy production is therefore a key priority.

At the same time, the city has seen increasing interest from citizens willing to set up renewable energy communities. Through its Energy Offices, Valencia has been supporting the creation of energy communities for several years now. These initiatives often face barriers such as lack of access to rooftops, complex regulatory frameworks, and limited experience developing energy projects. Meanwhile, municipalities often own buildings with large unused rooftop potential. Valencia identified an opportunity to provide roof access to citizen-led renewable energy projects.

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| Valencia Spain ~800,000 inhabitants |
| Readiness level: Implementation |
| Energy sector: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electricity Type of plant(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solar PV |
| Energy activity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Production <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy sharing |
| Who was in lead: City of Valencia – València Sostenible |
| Key partners: Municipal departments: energy, legal, buildings/heritage, architecture, social services, procurement Local Energy Communities (CELs), citizens, neighborhood organisations |

The local solution

Valencia reformed its public procurement rules by adding social criteria: now the municipality can provide energy communities long-term access to public roofs through a public tender.

The selected energy community finances, installs, owns and operates the photovoltaic installation for collective self-consumption. It receives a 25-year concession (extendable up to 30 years) to operate the installations. The concession does not involve any financial fee to the municipality. Instead, the chosen energy community must provide energy benefits for the public:

- At least 10% of installed capacity must supply municipal buildings
- At least 5% of installed capacity must be reserved for vulnerable households identified by municipal social services

Candidates can score additional points during the tender if they increase these shares beyond the minimum requirements.



Credit: Ayuntamiento de Valencia

Selection criteria in the tender prioritize social value with evaluation criteria such as:

- Additional energy supplied to vulnerable households
- Additional energy supplied to municipal buildings
- Gender balance in the energy community governance
- Training of board members on energy communities
- Support letters from local organisations
- Quality of the implementation plan

Role of the municipality and partners

València Sostenible (formerly Valencia Clima i Energia), the city's sustainability agency, together with the municipal Climate Improvement Service acted as planners, facilitators and regulators: they created the legal and procurement framework that allows energy communities to operate renewable installations on municipal assets.

Together with other departments, the energy team:

- Identified suitable municipal rooftops
- Prepared technical project documentation for each building
- Designed the public procurement framework
- Defined social and governance criteria for selecting energy communities
- Ensured legal compliance with local, regional and national legislation
- Created a transparent bid procedure, allowing any eligible local energy community to apply.

Municipal services involved

Cross-department collaboration ensured that energy policy, procurement and social policy objectives were aligned. Several municipal departments were involved:

Energy and climate team - led the initiative and designed the programme

- Identified rooftops
- Supported energy communities
- Coordinated the legal work
- Prepared the tender model.

Procurement and legal services

- Structured and validated the tender process
- Ensured compliance with public asset regulations

Social services: Identified vulnerable households benefiting from the projects

Architecture: Validated building suitability and technical feasibility

Heritage: Validated the legal framework for granting use rights to municipal assets.

What changed in practice?

- **More renewable energy in the city:** More than 230 kWp of solar PV capacity will be installed on municipal buildings.
- **Equipped local energy communities:** The initiative gives energy communities their first operational assets, helping them grow.
- **Social inclusion in the energy transition:** Part of the energy produced is allocated to vulnerable households, directly addressing energy poverty and lowering electricity costs for participating households
- **Institutional innovation:** The city now has a replicable procurement framework for mobilising municipal infrastructure in the energy transition.



Implementation insights: how it was grown in practice

The first call launched in 2026 includes three municipal rooftops, divided into three lots:

- A former municipal vehicle depot – 95.6 kWp
- Santa Teresa primary school – 48.9 kWp
- Rosa Llàcer special education centre – 88.5 kWp

In 2025 the City Council approved the concession of public roofs to energy communities safeguarding parts of the produced energy for vulnerable households. But the journey to get there took over two years: The initiative was prepared through a legal and administrative study carried out in 2023–2024 with support from the administrative and environmental law department of the University of Valencia. This work clarified how regional legislation allows municipalities to tender rooftop access to energy communities and produced a model set of procurement specifications.

What was harder than expected

Developing such an innovative procurement model requires overcoming both technical and institutional challenges.

Legal novelty

One of the main challenges was updating public asset law to make it fit with community energy projects. The leading team had to navigate internal concerns and resistance to change. Some municipal departments initially expressed concerns about granting long-term access to municipal rooftops as the municipality could lose PV potential to achieve own goals. A technical study simulating all municipal buildings' PV potential provided reassuring data. Also, as the concession grants rights for up to 25 years, questions about maintaining control over public assets were raised. To address this, the climate and energy team clarified the public value of the initiative and ensured the concession framework included clear safeguards and responsibilities.

Technical documentation
Technical information on buildings was scarce. To reduce uncertainty for applicants, the municipality commissioned detailed photovoltaic feasibility studies for the selected roofs. These studies provided clear technical guidance for energy communities and ensured installations would comply with structural and electrical requirements.

Capacity in energy communities

Another challenge was ensuring that energy communities were sufficiently mature to manage installations. To address this, the call required:

- Proof of legal constitution,
- evidence of local members, and
- a detailed work plan covering financing, governance, and community engagement.

Conditions to grow something similar in your place!

Inside the municipality

- Strong political backing
- Openness to new internal procurement practices
- Early coordination between different municipal teams
- Strong engagement with local community organisations
- Additional legal and technical external support

Favorable legal and regulatory context

- Regional law allowing municipalities to grant use rights for public assets
- Energy communities are recognised in national energy legislation
- Collective self-consumption frameworks exist

Local context

- Local players interested in establishing energy communities
- Financing for community energy projects/ regular regional subsidies
- Access to solar installers



> Valencia's city-wide support to community energy featured by the [EU Covenant of Mayors](#)

≥ The journey to social public procurement was part of the [POWER UP project](#)

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