

Coopérnico, PORTUGAL

Coopérnico is a renewable energy cooperative, the only one operating at a national level with several regional groups. Founded in 2013, Coopérnico has more than 4,250 members and its energy retail service has more than 3,500 customers. Coopérnico has invested around €2 million in decentralised solar PV, mostly in the social sector. Coopérnico's members have shown interest in setting up citizens' initiatives at local level for the collective self-consumption of electricity generated by PV panels, which is provided for in Portuguese law under the Renewable Energy Communities scheme from 2022.

Coopérnico has identified 6 citizen-led initiatives (Renewable Energy Communities, RECs) that need support to implement collective self-consumption through PV and building renovation. This support includes:

- Technical dimensioning of energy systems and renovation solutions;
- Legal support to formally set-up the REC and internal regulations; and
- Communication support to attract new members to the REC and promote awareness and visibility of the initiative, to inspire citizen-led renovation

To support such energy communities, the Citizen-led renovation (CLR) initiative offers a comprehensive suite of services. From project management, ecosystem building, and business plan drafting to the technical design and community communication and engagement strategies, they provide holistic support.

Portugal offers subsidies and grants to support energy efficiency measures and renewable energy installations. In August 2023, the Portuguese government has allocated €30 million for citizen-led renovation and renewable energy production at domestic level. This funding is expected to be increased and will be available until the summer of 2024. As part of the CLR service, Coopérnico will support the identified RECs to apply for the renovation grants in order to scale up the investments made during the pilot period. Coopérnico aims to use the support of the CLR initiative as internal capacity building to establish a national one-stop-shop for CLR in Portugal.

Pilot information	Coopérnico
Location	Lisbon (with regional groups)
Legal form	Cooperative
Established in year	2013
Members	4353

Activities

- Investment Opportunities in renewable energy projects (already raised 2M€)
- Energy Credits: In return for their investments, members receive energy credits
- Community Engagement
- Education and Awareness
- Support for Renewable Energy Projects: Coopérnico supports the development, financing, and implementation of renewable energy projects, making it easier for these initiatives to come to fruition
- Access to Green Energy (electricity commercialisation)

Future aims/ perspectives

- Establish a One-Stop-Shop for citizen-led renovation
- Define a scalable model for supporting the implementation of Renewable Energy Communities in Portugal, starting with collective self-consumption of PV