Country Sections

Belgium

Handbook Update CLR II

Support service for citizens led renovation projects - ENER/2023/OP/0036

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

Directorate B – Just Transition, Consumers, Energy Efficiency and Innovation Unit B1 - Consumers, Local Initiatives, Just Transition

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Introduction

This country section provides an overview of the Belgian context for citizen-led renovation (CLR) initiatives and for sharing locally produced renewable electricity among multiple users in buildings and neighbourhoods. It serves as a practical reference for citizen groups, co-owners and co-ownership associations, building managers/syndics, municipalities and local facilitators, and one-stop-shop actors involved in renovation decision-making, project preparation and implementation.

1 Aerial view of an urban area of Ghent, Belgium

Overview of Building Stock

Belgium's building stock creates a strong underlying need for renovation. According to Statbel, only 16% of occupied conventional dwellings were built from 2001 onwards, with the share lowest in Brussels (9%), compared with Wallonia (13%) and Flanders (20%). Belgium also has a mixed tenure structure: about 64.5% of conventional dwellings in Belgium are owner-occupied, while apartments are significantly less likely to be owner-occupied than houses. This has implications for multi-owner governance and "split incentives" between owners and tenants.

Status of Citizen and Renewable Energy Communities

A key feature shaping CLR is Belgium's multi-level governance. Many decisive rules for renovation and energy community operation are regional, including energy performance certification, renovation obligations, distribution network procedures, and the implementation of energy sharing. Certain fiscal

levers, such as VAT regimes, remain federal. As a result, CLR initiatives must adopt a region-aware approach from the earliest stages—particularly in multi-apartment buildings, where renovation measures and energy sharing arrangements must comply with both co-ownership decision-making rules and metering and grid requirements.

Energy performance certification and transparency are long established. In all three regions, certificates are mandatory in common real-estate situations and energy indicators must be included in advertisements. EPC systems in Flanders and PEB certificates in Wallonia and Brussels increasingly function as entry points into renovation support ecosystems, informing renovation planning and often playing a role in subsidy or compliance procedures.

Examples include Ecopower in Flanders and Energie2030 in Wallonia, both of which organise citizens around collective renewable energy production and local energy transition initiatives. Citizen energy cooperatives are active across the country and provide an organisational base that can be mobilised for CLR initiatives, including renewable energy projects and, in some cases, renovation support services.

From a practical perspective, Belgium offers significant opportunities to combine building renovation with local renewable electricity and collective organisation. Typical approaches include insulation and ventilation upgrades combined with rooftop PV in multi-unit buildings, neighbourhood-scale solar projects linked to local renovation programmes, and formal energy sharing schemes (under region-specific rules) that allocate locally produced electricity among multiple users. At the same time, CLR initiatives face recurring bottlenecks, including co-ownership decision-making, administrative complexity, and technical requirements such as digital metering and grid procedures.

Energy Communities in Belgium

2 Ecopower installation of 490 solar panels in Antwerpen

Energy communities in Belgium are best understood as an ecosystem of citizen ownership, cooperative development, and increasingly regulated energy-sharing practices shaped by regional transposition of the EU Clean Energy Package. At EU level, the Renewable Energy Directive (Directive (EU) 2018/2001, (as amended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2413) and the Electricity Directive (Directive (EU) 2019/944) define Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) and Citizen Energy Communities (CECs) in Belgium, the regions operationalise these concepts through electricity market rules and regulatory guidance, resulting in different pathways for citizen-led projects.

Building-level collective PV and internal allocation

For CLR initiatives, the most common entry point is building-level rooftop PV combined with renovation works. In apartment buildings and mixed-use blocks, the most straightforward application is supplying electricity to common services (such as corridor lighting, lifts, or ventilation systems), thereby reducing shared electricity costs. This model is generally feasible without formal energy sharing, although it still requires co-ownership decisions and compliance with DSO connection and metering procedures.

Where projects aim to allocate PV electricity to individual apartments, feasibility depends on the regional energy sharing framework and on the building's metering configuration.

In Flanders, energy sharing within an apartment or multifunctional building is based on quarter-hour measurement intervals and must be costless, meaning no remuneration is permitted for the electricity that is shared. This framework supports CLR mainly as a cost-avoidance and benefit-allocation mechanism within the co-ownership structure: households can reduce grid imports when consumption coincides with production, but projects cannot rely on internal per-kWh billing as a revenue model.

In Wallonia, energy sharing is possible either within a single building through collective self-consumption or within an energy community framework. It relies on quarter-hour simultaneity and allocation keys established in coordination with DSOs. For building-level CLR projects, this allows shared rooftop PV to deliver direct household benefits, provided the project complies with formal implementation procedures and documentation requirements.

In Brussels, energy sharing within the same building requires a formal sharing agreement and notification to the DSO. With smart meters, PV production can be allocated quarter-hour by quarter-hour according to an agreed allocation key. Participants retain their existing electricity supply contracts for residual consumption. The framework allows internal settlement arrangements, enabling co-ownership associations to recover costs from participants based on their share of locally consumed electricity. This creates an operational route for CLR projects that combine renovation investments with structured internal energy cost allocation.

Local energy cooperatives and collective renewable projects

Beyond individual buildings, Belgium has a mature cooperative landscape for solar and wind development. Citizen cooperatives have historically focused on enabling local ownership of renewable assets and returning benefits to members through dividends, local value creation, and community investment.

For CLR initiatives, cooperatives can play two important roles. First, they may act as trusted intermediaries or long-term asset owners for renewable installations linked to renovation programmes, particularly where citizen groups lack project development capacity. Second, they can support mobilisation and outreach, especially in areas with strong cooperative membership. Energy community structures may also align technical projects with broader social objectives, including addressing energy poverty.

Energy sharing and energy communities as regulated market actors

Belgium's most significant recent evolution for CLR is the shift from cooperative renewable projects toward structured energy sharing regimes that allow locally produced electricity to be allocated among multiple users under defined rules.

In Flanders, at system level, energy sharing operates on a quarter-hour basis and must be costless (no remuneration for shared electricity). Configurations cannot be freely combined with other forms of energy sale or sharing. Access to quarter-hour data requires digital meters configured accordingly. In practice, this means CLR projects should treat energy sharing primarily as a tool to increase self-consumption and optimise energy use rather than as a revenue-generating model.

In Wallonia, the legal framework for energy communities and energy sharing has been in force since 2022–2023. While building-level and community sharing are operational, peer-to-peer exchange is not yet operational (pending an implementing act). For CLR initiatives, this indicates that collective self-consumption and community-based models are the most practical options at present.

In Brussels, energy communities are recognised as formal market actors and require authorisation by the regulator. Participants remain free to choose their electricity supplier for electricity consumed

outside of the sharing arrangement, and statutes cannot restrict this right. For CLR initiatives, this means that projects combining building renovation with energy sharing must be designed as an additional arrangement alongside participants' existing electricity supply contracts rather than requiring members to use a specific supplier.

Country specific information on energy communities

CLR initiatives that combine renovation with shared renewable electricity interact with a defined set of public authorities, regulators and technical actors. Because operational rules differ between regions, an early step in project development is to identify the applicable regulatory framework and align renovation and energy components accordingly.

Institutional landscape and roles

At the federal level, the Commission for Electricity and Gas Regulation (CREG) is the federal regulator for the electricity and gas markets, while the high-voltage transmission network is operated by Elia Transmission Belgium. For CLR initiatives, federal actors are mainly relevant for overall market governance and system planning. Practical rules governing energy sharing and local electricity use are defined at regional level and implemented through distribution network operators (DSOs).

At regional level, energy sharing and energy communities are shaped by regulators and DSOs.

In Flanders, operational rules for energiedelen are defined by the regional regulator and implemented through DSO procedures. Energy sharing typically requires a digital meter capable of recording quarter-hour consumption and injection values. In many configurations, participants must enable a metering regime that allows these values to be used for settlement within the sharing group.

In Wallonia, the regulator provides guidance and standard procedures to support implementation. These include documentation requirements and standard allocation methods developed with DSOs to distribute shared electricity among participants. This framework helps translate the legal possibility of sharing into an administratively manageable process.

In Brussels, the DSO plays a central operational role. Energy sharing requires smart meters capable of quarter-hour measurement, and the DSO manages metering data and calculates allocation based on the agreed distribution method. Projects must establish a sharing agreement and designate a contact point responsible for coordination.

Beyond electricity actors, co-ownership governance is often decisive for CLR initiatives. The co-ownership framework was integrated into the reformed Civil Code (Book 3 "Property") in 2021, clarifying the legal status and governance of associations of co-owners (ACP/VME). This framework determines how common works — such as rooftop PV, façade insulation or shared technical systems — can be approved and financed. In practice, decisions within co-ownership associations are taken through formal general assemblies, with different majority thresholds depending on the type of intervention (e.g. simple majority, qualified majority, or unanimity for more substantial changes). The framework also defines cost allocation rules, voting rights, and the responsibilities of the syndic, making it a central element for structuring and implementing CLR projects in multi-owner buildings.

Across all regions, grid capacity can affect project feasibility. In areas facing congestion, additional coordination with DSOs may be required. In practice, this involves early-stage contact with the

relevant DSO to request a connection study or capacity check, followed by technical assessment of the connection point, potential constraints on injection or consumption, and, where necessary, adjustments to project design (e.g. phasing installations, limiting peak injection, or integrating storage solutions). In multi-owner buildings, decision-making within co-ownership associations remains a recurring bottleneck, as also highlighted in regional renovation and housing policy discussions, where co-ownership decision-making is identified as a key barrier to energy renovation in multi-apartment buildings.

Overall, energy communities in Belgium operate within a mature but evolving environment, supported by strong cooperative traditions and active municipal engagement, while regulatory developments continue to clarify their role in renovation and local energy planning.

Relevant legislation

Citizen-led renovation (CLR) and energy communities in Belgium operate within a multi-level regulatory framework shaped by EU directives and implemented through regional legislation. While the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the Clean Energy Package set the overarching principles, most practical rules affecting renovation, energy sharing, permitting, and metering are defined at regional level. The tables below present the most relevant legislation and policy instruments for CLR initiatives in Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels, structured to highlight their purpose and practical implications for project development and implementation..

Flanders

Policy / Law / Programme	Purpose & Core Measures	Relevance to Citizen-Led Renovations
EPC obligation for sale or rent of a dwelling	Requires an EPC when a dwelling is publicly offered for sale or rent and requires EPC data to be shown in advertisements.	Gives CLR groups and co-owners a baseline indicator of building performance and a practical trigger for discussing renovation needs.
Residential renovation obligation	New owners of residential buildings with EPC label E or F must renovate to at least label D within six years of transfer.	Strong legal trigger for renovation. Particularly relevant for apartment buildings and newly purchased units where collective works may be needed to comply.
Belgian Civil Code – Book 3 "Property" (co-ownership framework)	Federal co-ownership framework governing associations of co-owners (VME/ACP), decision-making, common parts and cost allocation.	Central for CLR in apartment buildings: roof works, façade insulation, shared heating, ventilation and rooftop PV all depend on lawful co-ownership decisions and financing arrangements.
Energy sharing (energiedelen)	Operational framework for energy sharing using quarter-hour data from digital meters, with Fluvius managing registration, data and settlement support.	Enables building-level and group-based sharing of locally produced electricity. Important for CLR projects that combine rooftop PV with internal benefit allocation.
Omgevingsvergunning (environmental/ planning permit)	Integrated permit framework for building and environmental works in Flanders.	CLR projects should verify early whether façade works, major roof works, external units or other interventions require a permit, notification or are exempt.
Restrictions on oil boilers / fossil heating shift	Restricts installation and replacement of oil boilers and supports a shift away from fossil heating.	Important for sequencing renovation works and choosing future-proof heating systems in CLR projects.

Wallonia

Policy / Law / Programme	Purpose & Core Measures	Relevance to Citizen-Led Renovations
PEB certificate obligation (sale and rental)	Requires a valid PEB certificate for sale and rental and requires PEB indicators to appear in advertisements.	Provides a baseline for renovation planning and is a key practical entry point for discussing energy performance in CLR projects.
Belgian Civil Code – Book 3 "Property" (co-ownership framework)	Federal co-ownership framework governing associations of co-owners, decision-making and common works.	Central for CLR in apartment buildings and multi-owner projects, especially where renovation and shared energy investments affect common parts
Communities of energy and energy sharing within the same building	Explains the Walloon framework for collective self-consumption, energy communities and sharing within the same building; sets key conditions, conventions and procedures.	Highly relevant for CLR projects that want to combine rooftop PV with direct household benefits. It clarifies that sharing is possible but must follow specific administrative and metering rules.
Walloon Government Decree of 17 March 2023 on energy communities and energy sharing	Secondary legislation clarifying concepts such as "proximity", "building" and operational procedures for energy communities and sharing.	Important for legal certainty and for moving from broad eligibility to practical implementation in CLR-related energy sharing projects.
New permit exemptions for certain energy-related works (CoDT reform)	Introduces additional exemptions from urban planning permits for certain works, simplifying some citizen and municipal procedures.	Can reduce procedural burden for renovation and solar-related measures, although projects should still confirm local conditions with the commune.
Notification of small electricity production installations to the DSO	Requires notification of commissioning or technical modification of small renewable electricity installations to the relevant distribution network operator.	Important for CLR projects adding rooftop PV: even when works are simplified, grid and commissioning formalities still apply.

Brussels

Policy / Law / Programme	Purpose & Core Measures	Relevance to Citizen-Led Renovations
PEB certificate obligation and PEB objectives for dwellings	Requires a PEB certificate and links buildings to a staged regional trajectory, including the 2033 objective for dwellings.	Provides a strong planning signal for CLR: renovation projects should be designed with the regional PEB targets in mind rather than only short-term upgrades.
Belgian Civil Code – Book 3 "Property" (co-ownership framework)	Federal co-ownership framework governing associations of co-owners, decision-making and common works.	Central for CLR in Brussels apartment buildings, especially where common technical systems, façades, roofs or rooftop PV are involved.
CoBrACE (Brussels Code for Air, Climate and Energy Control)	Main legal framework for energy and climate rules in Brussels, including long-term building performance targets and permit-linked energy requirements.	Important for understanding the broader legal basis behind PEB targets and the long-term regulatory direction of renovation in Brussels.
Energy sharing within the same building (BRUGEL)	Specifies the Brussels rules for sharing onsite generation within the same building, including smart-meter use, agreed allocation methods, a formal sharing agreement, and continued individual supply contracts.	Relevant for CLR projects combining rooftop PV with co-ownership structures, as it provides a practical route to allocate locally produced electricity among participants while keeping separate supply contracts.
Urban planning / PEB work requirements	Explains the PEB requirements and procedures that apply when works with a permit are carried out, including rules for technical installations.	Relevant where CLR projects involve major renovation, heavy renovation, or collective technical systems that trigger permit-linked PEB obligations.
Restrictions on oil boilers and fossil heating	Sets out the prohibition on installing oil boilers from 1 June 2025 and related heating/climate requirements.	Important for CLR sequencing and heating choices, especially where projects combine renovation with system replacement.

Funding bodies and schemes

Funding for citizen-led renovation (CLR) in Belgium combines federal fiscal incentives with regional grants, loans and advisory networks. In practice, most renovation support instruments are determined at regional level, while certain fiscal measures — most notably the reduced 6% VAT rate for eligible renovation works on dwellings older than 10 years — apply across the country. As a result, CLR initiatives need to combine region-specific support schemes with federal tax rules and local advisory structures when planning renovation and shared-energy projects.

Flanders

Programme / Instrument	Purpose & Funding Mechanism
Funding bodies in Flanders	
Federal Public Service Finance (FOD Financiën)	Federal public authority responsible for taxation and fiscal policy in Belgium. Administers the reduced 6% VAT rate for eligible renovation works on private dwellings older than 10 years, a key fiscal incentive supporting renovation across all regions.
Vlaams Energie- en Klimaatagentschap (VEKA)	Flemish public authority responsible for energy and climate policy design and implementation. Oversees key renovation support instruments (e.g. Mijn VerbouwPremie and Mijn VerbouwLening) and broader policy frameworks shaping renovation and energy transition..
Energiehuizen	Local advisory and facilitation network supported by the Flemish government. Energiehuizen help households and co-owners with renovation advice, premiums, loans, fiscal support and administrative procedures. Particularly relevant for early-stage CLR mobilisation and beneficiary guidance.
Funding schemes in Flanders	
Reduced VAT rate (6%) for eligible renovation works	Federal fiscal incentive applying to qualifying renovation works on dwellings older than 10 years, subject to conditions. Often one of the most important cost-reduction measures in CLR projects involving professional contractors.
Mijn VerbouwPremie	Main Flemish renovation grant instrument. Supports energy-efficiency and renovation works such as insulation, windows and doors, solar water heaters, heat pumps and certain quality improvements. Relevant for both individual units and apartment/block contexts, depending on eligibility rules.
Mijn VerbouwLening	Flemish renovation loan for eligible households, VME/VME-type entities and certain non-commercial actors. Can support larger renovation packages where grants alone are insufficient. Particularly useful for collective renovation in apartment buildings.
Mijn EPC-labelpremie	Premium linked to improving the EPC label of a dwelling or apartment. Can support step-by-step or bundled renovation strategies aimed at achieving a better energy label after renovation

Wallonia

Programme / Instrument	Purpose & Funding Mechanism
Funding bodies in Wallonia	
Federal Public Service Finance (SPF Finances)	Federal public authority responsible for taxation and fiscal policy in Belgium. Administers the reduced 6% VAT rate for eligible renovation works on private dwellings older than 10 years, a key fiscal incentive supporting renovation across all regions.
L'Énergie en Wallonie / Service public de Wallonie (SPW)	Main regional portal for Walloon renovation and energy support. Provides official information on primes habitation, energy audits, energy sharing and regional energy policy.
Guichets Énergie Wallonie	Regional advisory network providing free, neutral advice on renovation, energy planning, administrative procedures and applicable support measures. Useful for project preparation, citizen mobilisation and early-stage CLR support.
Funding schemes in Wallonia	
Reduced VAT rate (6%) for eligible renovation works	Federal fiscal incentive reducing the cost of eligible contractor-led renovation works on private dwellings older than 10 years. Relevant to CLR budgeting across Belgium.
Primes Habitation	Main Walloon support regime for housing renovation as currently described by the regional administration. Includes grants for renovation/energy works, often linked to an audit pathway, with specific exceptions for certain roof works and roof insulation.
Rénopack	Zero-interest renovation loan instrument for eligible works in Wallonia. Can include pre-financing of works and may interact with the prime regime. Particularly useful where households or co-owners need to spread costs over time.
Rénoprêt	Complementary Walloon financing route for renovation works, including situations where projects proceed without the full audit-linked prime route. Relevant where CLR projects need flexible financing solutions

Brussels

Programme / Instrument	Purpose & Funding Mechanism
Funding bodies in Brussels	
Federal Public Service Finance (SPF Finances / FOD Financiën)	Federal public authority responsible for taxation and fiscal policy in Belgium. Administers the reduced 6% VAT rate for eligible renovation works on private dwellings older than 10 years, a key fiscal incentive supporting renovation across all regions.
Brussels Environment / Bruxelles Environnement	Main regional administration for environmental and energy support in Brussels. Provides official information on RENOLUTION premiums and broader building energy policy.
Homegrade	Free housing renovation advice and support centre for the Brussels-Capital Region. Advises owners, tenants and co-owners on renovation, energy, urban planning, heritage and practical project choices. A key facilitation actor for CLR..
Funding schemes in Brussels	
Reduced VAT rate (6%) for eligible renovation works	Federal fiscal incentive reducing the cost of eligible contractor-led renovation works on private dwellings older than 10 years. Relevant to CLR budgeting across Belgium.
RENOLUTION	Main Brussels renovation premium framework. Supports renovation and energy-saving works for a wide range of building types and applicant profiles, including owners, syndics and co-owners. Applications are made after works and can be grouped.
ECORENO	Preferential renovation credit route linked to the Brussels renovation support ecosystem. Homegrade explains that the credit is provided by the Fonds du Logement and supports renovation works aiming at safety, habitability or energy savings.
Fonds du Logement – ECORENO loans	Official Brussels public finance route for ECORENO credits. The Fonds du Logement announced the reopening of ECORENO applications from 1 January 2026, which is important for current planning.

Useful tools

Belgian CLR initiatives can rely on a range of public portals, advisory services and regulatory guidance resources. Because operational rules differ by region, the most useful toolkit combines renovation funding and advice portals, energy sharing implementation guidance, and permit and feasibility tools.

Renovation planning, advice and funding navigation

In Flanders, key starting points include the Mijn VerbouwPremie and Mijn VerbouwLening portals, which provide information on eligible renovation measures and financing options. The local Energiehuizen network offers practical guidance on grants, loans and renovation planning and can help citizen groups navigate changing eligibility rules and administrative requirements.

In Wallonia, the regional portals for Primes Habitation and renovation financing instruments such as Rénopack provide authoritative information on eligibility conditions, procedures and deadlines. The Guichets Énergie Wallonie network offers free, hands-on advice and helps households and co-owners translate technical requirements into workable applications.

In Brussels, the RENOLUTION portal and the IRISbox submission system are the main references for renovation premiums, while ECORENO loans provide financing options. Homegrade functions as the central advisory service for private housing renovation, offering free guidance to owners, tenants and co-owners.

Energy sharing implementation guidance

In Flanders, the regional regulator's guidance on energy sharing explains the operational rules, including quarter-hour measurement and the cost-neutral sharing requirement.

In Wallonia, the regulator provides guidance, standard allocation methods and administrative templates to support energy sharing. Using these standardised tools simplifies implementation and reduces administrative complexity.

In Brussels, guidance from BRUGEL explains the procedures for energy sharing within buildings or energy communities. These resources clarify smart meter requirements, data management responsibilities and allocation methods, ensuring compliance and operational readiness.

Permitting and solar feasibility tools

In Flanders, the omgevingsvergunning portal helps determine whether renovation works or solar installations require a permit, a notification or qualify for exemption.

In Wallonia, official guidance on permit exemptions for certain energy transition measures, including solar installations, can reduce administrative burdens where conditions are met.

In Brussels, permits are generally not required for solar panels that are not visible from public roads or that are integrated into the roof plane, although heritage or listed buildings may require approval. Regional tools such as solar potential maps can support early feasibility assessments and stakeholder communication