Citizen-led Renovation Phase III

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Clean Energy Transition Investment Forum (CETIF)

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Citizen-led renovation: What is it? And why?

CLR is an **EU-funded support service** designed to empower communities by placing **citizens at the forefront** of energy renovation efforts.

The initiative strengthens **community-based approaches** and supports the replication of renovation programmes for buildings.

It includes measures such as insulation upgrades, modern technical systems, and the installation of **renewable energy solutions**.

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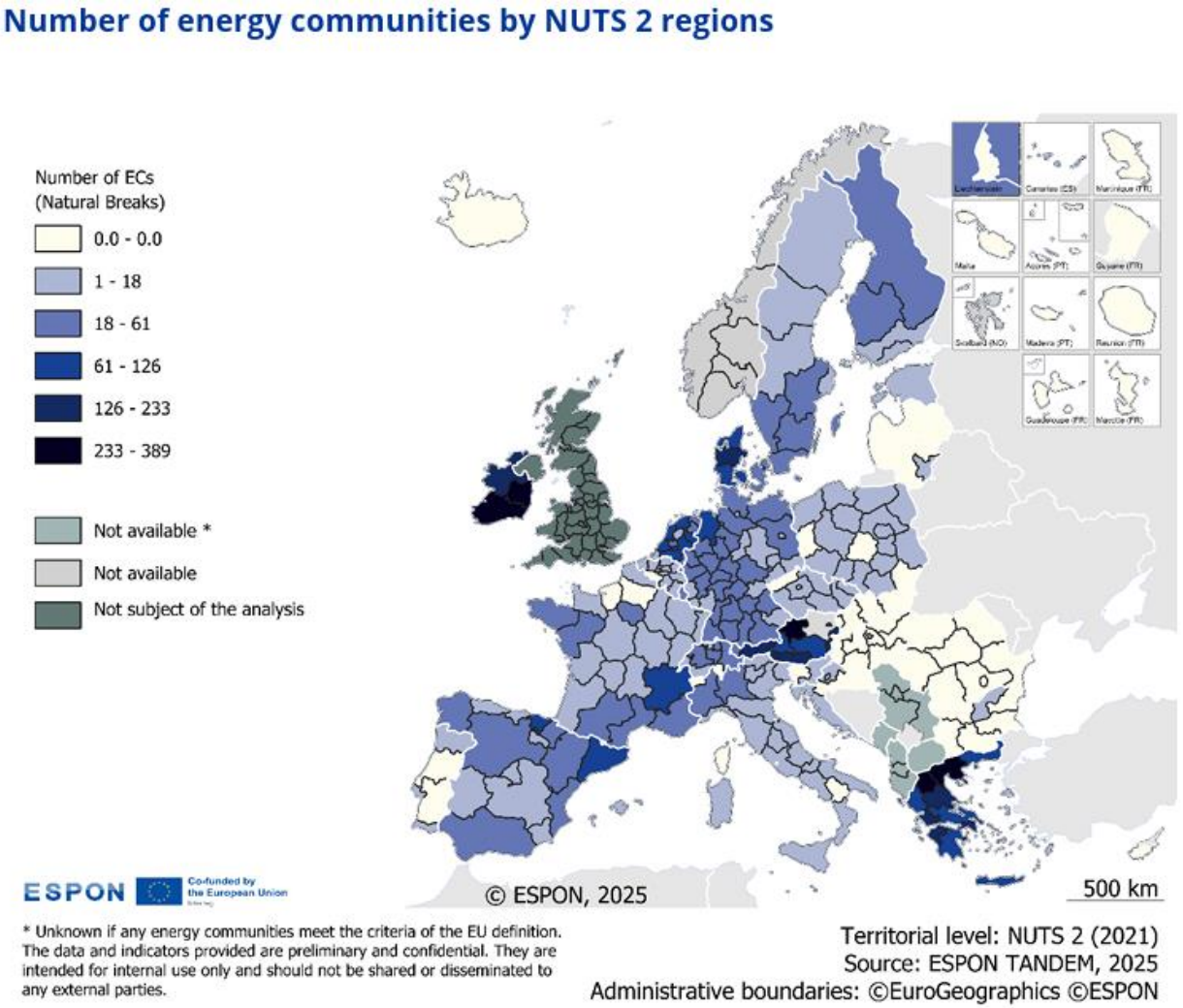
Citizen-led renovation: What is it? And why?

EU’s collective actions are proving what's possible when citizens lead their own building transformations.

However, even the most determined pioneers hit walls (financial barriers, technical complexity, legal mazes). They shouldn't have to navigate this alone.

Citizens want to be in control of their renovation. The CLR exists for them: a support service funded by the European Commission, built specifically to serve these communities.

Energy Communities in the EU: The opportunities



[TANDEM] Territorial Analysis of Decentralised Energy Markets, ESPON 2025

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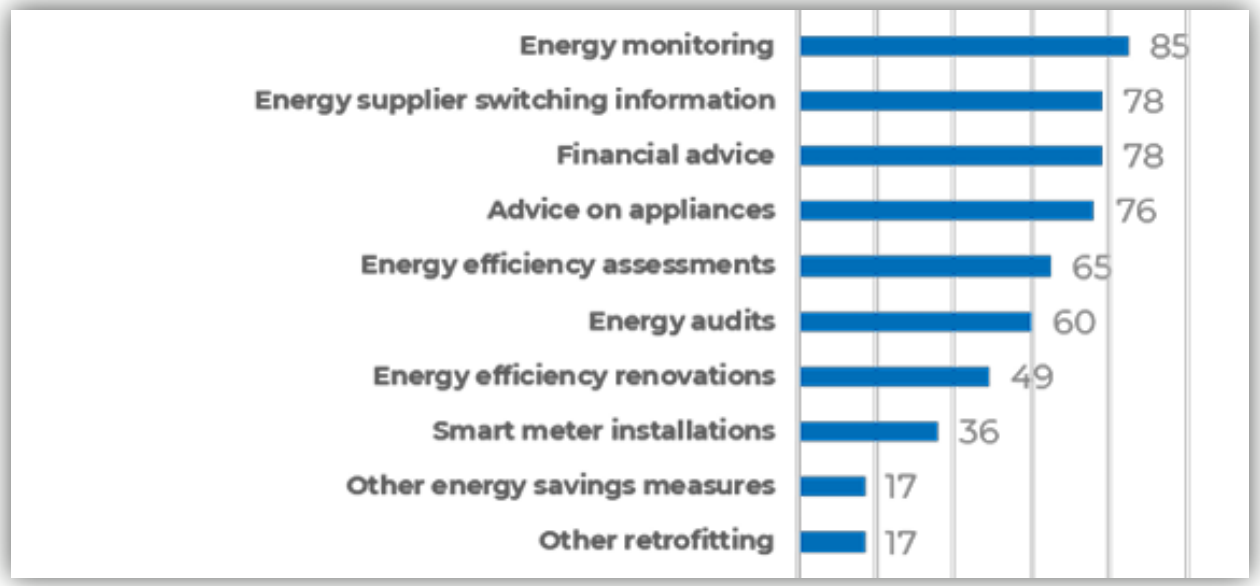
Energy Communities in the EU: The opportunities

Services offered by energy communities in Europe (N=347)



±15%

Already offer energy efficiency services (audits & renovations)

Source: ESPON TANDEM survey (2024)

The EU initiative: Citizen-led Renovation phases

From pioneers to a European movement

CLR 1 2021-2022 ∧ — **CLR 2** 2022-2025 ∧ — **CLR 3** 2025-2028 ∨

Phase I proved the CLR model

Phase II learned how to replicate it

Phase III builds the **enablers network** that turns isolated success into EU-wide movement.

The EU initiative: Citizen-led Renovation Phase 3

energy communities

NGOs

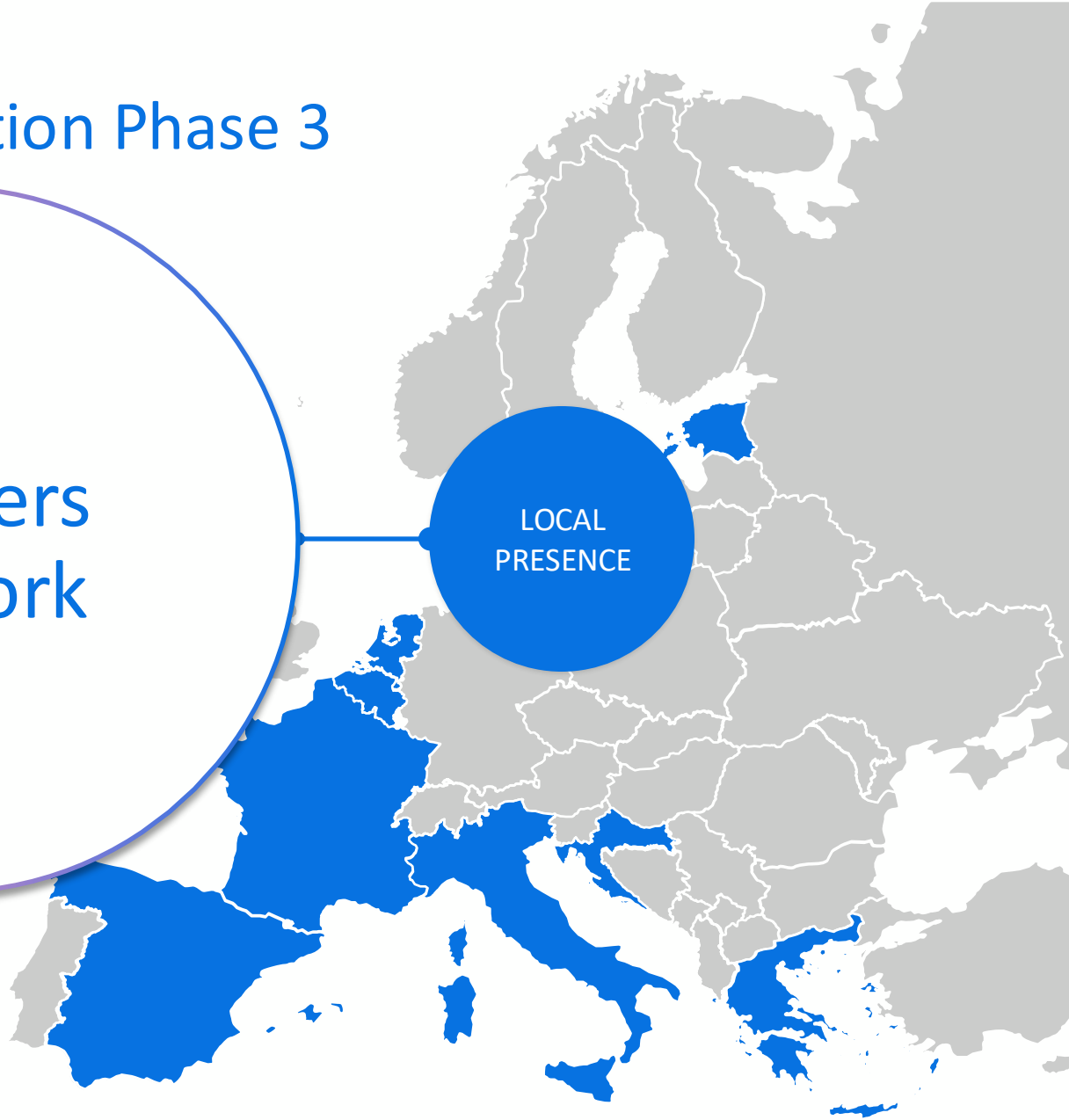
DIVERSE PARTNERS

energy agencies

… and more!

Enablers network

LOCAL PRESENCE



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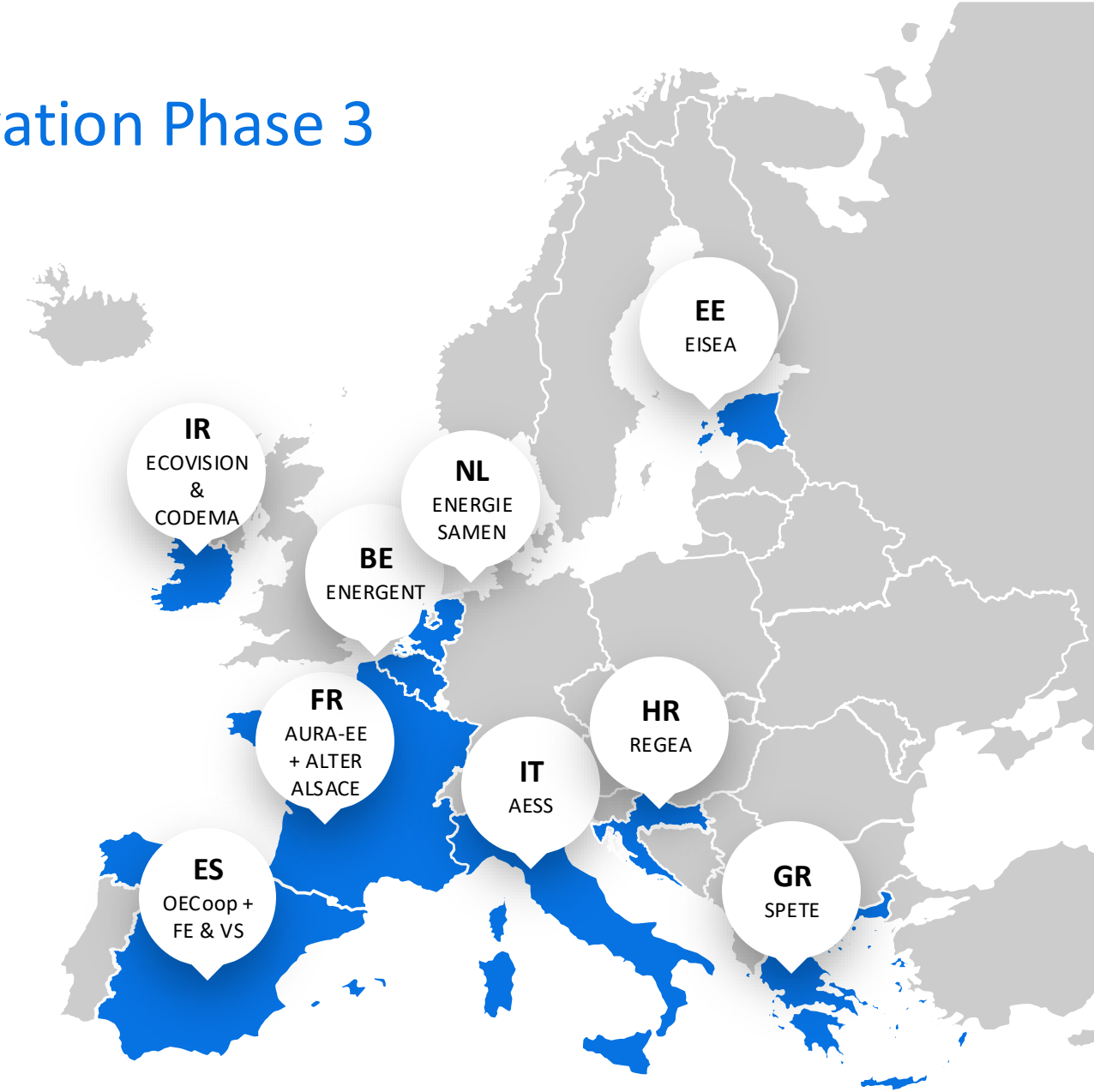
The EU initiative: Citizen-led Renovation Phase 3

11 organisations/consortia across the EU ("**enablers**") will:

- **Deliver support services** in their territories and create a favourable environment for at least **33 new Citizen-led renovation collectives** to emerge;
- **Assist and ensure the concrete implementation** of energy renovation projects;
- **Test innovative models** of local governance for the energy transition;
- **Upscale the projects** and make the concept more horizontal.



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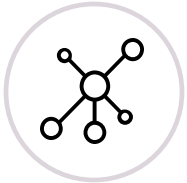
Citizen-led Renovation: Goals and opportunities

Supporting **the replication and scale-up** of CLR initiatives across Europe:

Increase awareness and credibility of the CLR model

by demonstrating its feasibility with the right support mechanisms, motivating citizens and organisations to adopt and replicate it.



Scale CLR initiatives across Europe

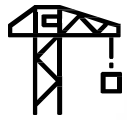
by developing a strong portfolio of success stories and practical tools that showcase the value and impact of CLRs and inspire replication by other communities.

Strengthen synergies with EU networks and initiatives

to enhance visibility, momentum, and cross-learning for CLR initiatives.

Citizen-led Renovation: Goals and opportunities

Supporting **policy changes** at national and EU level to support citizen-led initiatives:



Assessment of benefits and impacts

Regulatory and legislative impact analysis

Development of policy recommendations

Strategic policy engagement

Scalability and replicability

Services

Legal and governance support

Advice on community governance, condominium decision-making, shared ownership structures, contracting options, and compliance with national and EU directives.

Technical support

Helping communities refine renovation strategies, define intervention measures, and adopt tools such as building assessments, energy modeling, citizen engagement kits, and workflow templates.

Organisational coaching

Strengthening internal processes and helping define roles, workflows, and communication channels among local actors, municipal bodies, and citizens..

Services

Financial assistance

Supporting collectives in identifying financing instruments and helping them build bankable project pipelines.

Stakeholder engagement and activation

Offering methods and tools to engage citizens, increase participation, run community workshops, and build trust.

Citizen-led Renovation

In practice

The renovation journey

1. Community mobilisation & early engagement

People tend to engage not out of climate ambition but practical needs, and meaningful action emerges only when these concerns are connected to local examples, trusted actors and shared problems.

2. Homeowner readiness & project preparation

There is a gap between interest and readiness. Many projects begin with strong engagement but fail to progress because they are not sufficiently defined.

3. From planning to delivery

Successful delivery depends on turning informal interest into structured commitment led by a core group with clear next steps and support, as projects without this strong structure tend to lose momentum and stall.

The renovation journey

4. Market engagement & contractor capacity

Demand must be credible before engaging contractors. Approaches such as grouped projects or coordinated procurement can improve viability but require preparation in advance.

5. Financing & funding

Progressing projects requires not just access to funding, but clarity on how different funding sources can be combined and applied at the right stage.

6. Role of support structures

Local authorities play an important role in providing legitimacy and coordination, while intermediary organisations guide projects and support delivery. Without these supports in place, most initiatives do not progress beyond early stages

The renovation journey

Where projects stall: Across the renovation journey, a consistent set of barriers was identified. These challenges are interconnected and occur at multiple stages:

- fragmented and complex support systems
- legal and financial constraints, particularly for multi-unit buildings
- lack of trust or unclear value for participants
- over-reliance on voluntary effort
- weak or inconsistent communication

These factors make it difficult to move from early engagement to delivery, even where interest is strong.

Emerging good practices: Effective initiatives tend to link engagement directly to **clear next steps**, build on **existing community structures**, and establish **small core groups** to lead early stages. They ensure projects are sufficiently defined before engaging the market and combine community leadership with professional support.

Enabler: AESS (Italy)

Characteristics

- Energy Agency supporting collectives with various legal forms to test the concept
- Focusing on single houses (rural areas) and condominiums (urban areas)
- Great potential for replication in the region & beyond through the network of Italian OSS - RENOSS

CLR collectives:

- *Valsamoggia:* cooperative, 80 members (citizen, SMEs), 460 kWp
- *Fidenza 2030:* association, 4 founding members including the Municipality of Fidenza, ACER, multi-sports club and a public providing personal services (ASP), 60 kWp
- *Castel Maggiore:* association, 23 founding members, including the Municipality, ACER, companies, private citizens and condominiums, 40 kWp
- *Alto Vicentino:* foundation, 112 members (16 municipality, citizens and companies), 800 kWp

Highlights

- Increases the **trust** of the community in CLR collectives and
- Improves the **capacity** of CLR collectives to manage renovation projects
- Addresses single houses and condominiums in the renovation journey piloting **different business models** for the building renovation
- Activates **buying clubs** to facilitate the access of citizen to the renovation market

Enabler: AESS (Italy) - Ambassador LAB

- Target: CLR ambassador and REC board members
- 20 hours of training
- Mix of online sessions & in-person workshop
- Certificate of participation

14 ambassadors trained!

M1 — **20 Feb · Grassroots Renovation**
EU/national policy (EPBD, Case Green), REC role, energy poverty

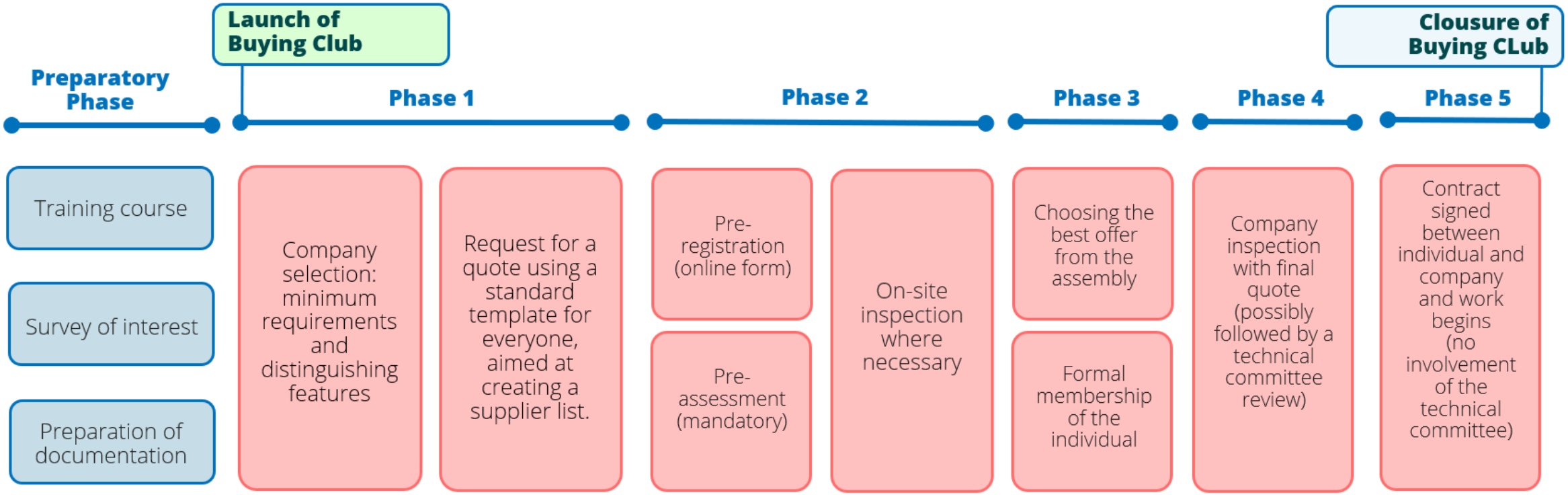
M2 — **27 Feb · REC Operations**
Governance, risk, data compliance, digital tools, communication

M3 — **13 Mar · CLR Projects**
Group purchasing, self-renovation, EPC, citizen engagement

M4 — **20 Mar · Managing a Group Purchase**
Project phases, documentation, roles, monitoring tools

M5 — **10 Apr · Applied Workshop (Bologna)**
Full-day simulation: economic, legal & technical case study

Enabler: AESS (Italy) - Buying clubs model



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Enabler: AESS (Italy) - Collective projects managing platform

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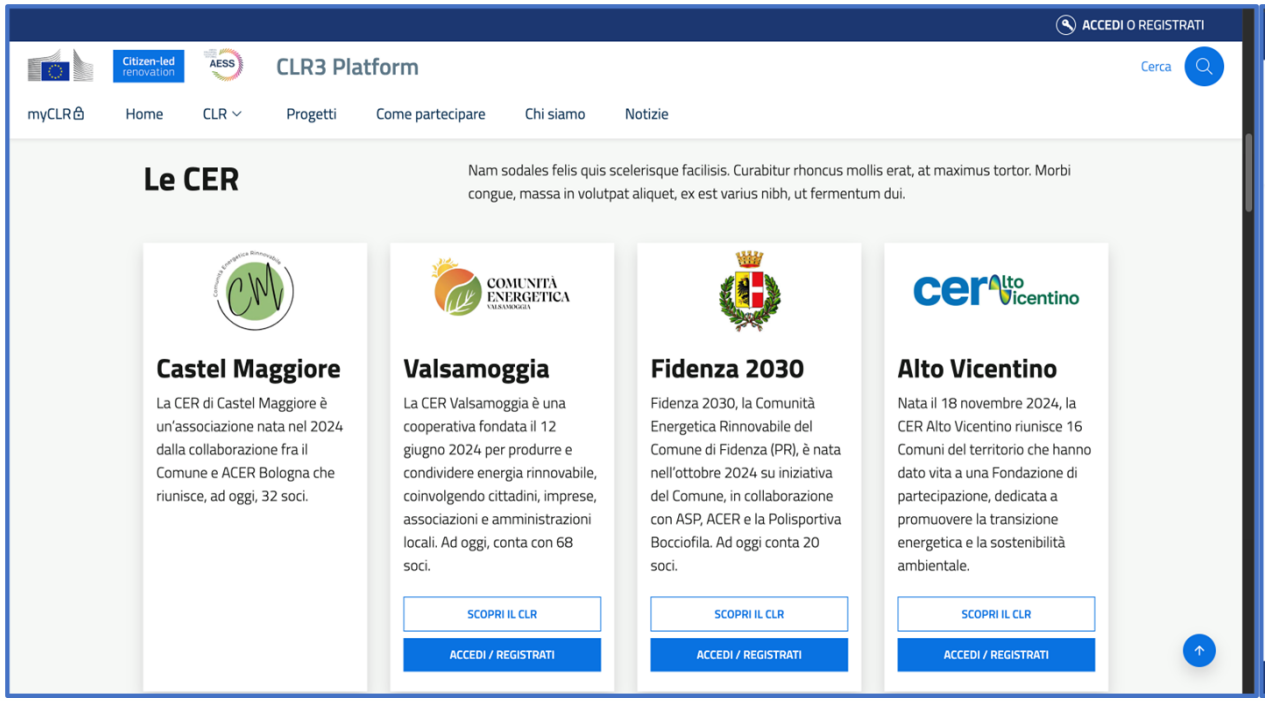
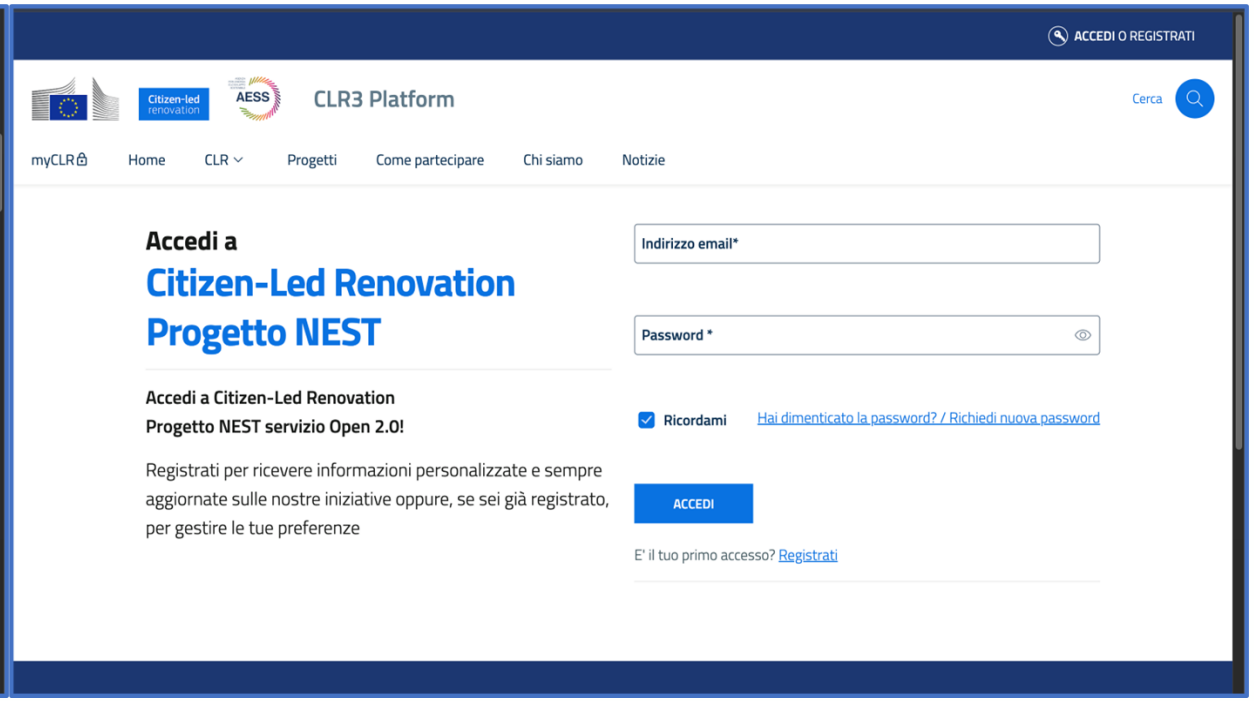




Enabler: EcoVision (Ireland)

West and Mid-Southwest of Ireland

Community-led Renovation, Energy Poverty Actions, Energy Clinics

Characteristics

- One-Stop-Shop support tailored to community groups
- Assistance with grant applications and administrative processes
- Technical advice on renovation planning and energy-efficient measures
- Coordination of contractors and project delivery

Highlights

- Innovative **community-led model** combining retrofit, housing reuse, and local development to democratise the clean energy transition
- Targets **energy poverty** through coordinated upgrades (insulation, windows/doors, ventilation) improving efficiency and comfort
- Addresses **rural depopulation** by refurbishing vacant homes and enabling downsizing, freeing up family housing
- Creates a **scalable rural regeneration approach** linking finance access, skills, and sustainable housing solutions

Enabler: SPETE (Greece)

Athens, Ioannina and Chios

Community-led Renovation, Energy Poverty and Energy Efficiency

Characteristics

- Consortium of Hellenic Passive House Institute (HPHI), EKPIZO & Electra Energy that blends technical expertise, consumer advocacy and community action
- Collective renovation in different contexts: urban community in Athens, suburban neighbourhood and island

Highlights

- Targeted buildings depending on the context: multi apartments to single houses
- Various socio demographics to test conditions for success
- Renovation to **passive house** standards

Enabler: València Sostenible (Spain)

City of València

Climate Change and Energy Transition Awareness, Citizen Engagement

Characteristics

- Municipal agency responsible for driving climate action, energy transition, and environmental awareness across the City of València
- Public services include the Energy Office, the Climate Change Observatory, and CEMAS (World Sustainable Urban Food Centre)

Highlights

- Activates **buying clubs** to facilitate the access of citizen to the renovation market (windows & awnings)
- Technical analysis and assessment to speed up **refitting works**
- Increases the **trust** of the communities in CLR collectives

Enabler: Energie Samen & Energie Samen Rivierenland (Netherlands)

Geldermalsen and Utrecht

Community-led Renovation, Energy Efficiency

Characteristics

- Consortium of Energie Samen and Energie Samen Rivierenland, representing more than 450 energy communities
- Support to community-owned renewable energy projects, the development of local energy communities, and smart-grid integration

Highlights

- Testing **district heating** network scenarios
- Supporting the **renovation** of a community centre and rental & owner-occupied homes that currently have a **poor energy label** (C to F)
- Joint communication initiatives with the **municipality** and **housing association**

Enabler: **Energent (Belgium)**

Flanders

Community-led Renovation, Energy Efficiency

Characteristics

- Starting with local initiatives such as Zonnestad (solar installations) and Groepsaanbod Renovatie (renovation guidance), Energent has over a decade of expertise and inspired numerous Flemish energy cooperative

Highlights

- Collaboration with regional **municipalities**
- Offers **group purchasing** for insulation, glazing, and solar panels; services are expanding to include heat pumps, wall and roof insulation
- **60+ buildings** to be renovated in the next 3 years

Citizen-led Renovation

Resources & next steps

Discover our resources available online

Handbook on how to support CLR projects across Europe

[Practice-oriented Handbook - Citizen-led renovation - European Commission]

Case studies from previous phases

[Inspiring Cases - Citizen-led renovation - European Commission]

Enablers' factsheets

[Enablers - Citizen-led renovation - European Commission]

European Commission

CLR analytical work: Next steps

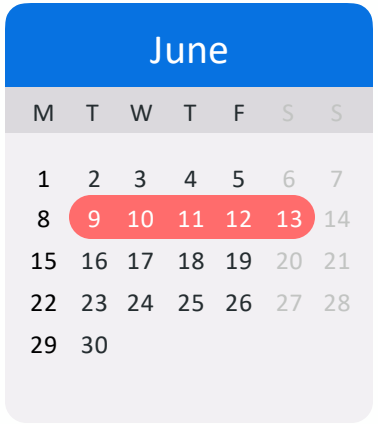
Assessment of the benefits of CLR: The objective is to test and validate the assumed benefits of CLR compared with conventional/traditional renovation schemes, particularly by:

- Identifying and testing CLR's assumed added-value (trust, inclusion, skills) → Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and thematic analysis → *Under which (combinations of) conditions did CLR collectives succeed in delivering renovated homes?*

- Testing CLR's benefits against individual renovation → Comparative benchmark

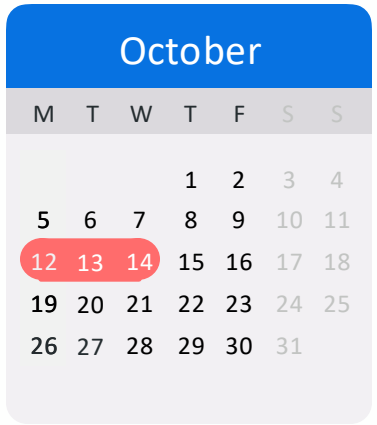
Country factsheets: Description of how the current **national** legal, regulatory and institutional framework enables or constrains CLR initiatives → to be published on our website

CLR at EU events: 2026 calendar



10 June, 16:30 CEST: European Sustainable Energy Week (Brussels, Belgium) – Policy session – **EU's powerhouse: energy communities and affordable housing for a just Energy Union**

9-13 June: New European Bauhaus Festival (Brussels, Belgium) – **Come and play at our stand!**



12-14 October: EU Week of Regions and Cities (Brussels, Belgium)

20-21 October: CLR3 in-person consortium meeting (Brussels/Ghent) – Exchange of best practices among enablers

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Thank you!

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