

Brussels, 18.3.2015

REACTION TO THE ENERGY UNION PACKAGE OF THE EU COMMISSION OF 25.2.2015

reacted on the energy union communication:

“Most importantly, our vision is of an Energy Union with citizens at its core, where citizens take ownership of the energy transition, benefit from new technologies to reduce their bills, participate actively in the market, and where vulnerable consumers are protected.”

We, the organizations (Cooperatives Europe, REScoop.Eu, Enercoop, The Co-operative Energy, SomEnergia, ICLEI, Climate Alliance, Friends of the Earth Europe and Client Earth) strongly support the vision of the Commission’s Energy Union Package:

To have citizens at the core of the energy transition.

Indeed, millions of EU citizens already produce their own energy or are involved in Community Power Initiatives (CPIs), such as renewable energy cooperatives (REScoops). It is clear that involving citizens is the only way to make the energy transition succeed. This means to move from a centralized, oligopolistic energy system to a decentralized and above all democratically controlled and operated one.

Yet we see that the action points under the five dimensions of the Energy Union mainly refer to the current conventional market players.

For a stronger citizen focus, we need an Energy Union:

1. Where every citizen is encouraged and enabled to consume and produce their own energy with **renewable energy sources** either individually or together with others in CPIs, such as REScoops (production and supply);
2. Where citizens and their CPIs are encouraged to own and exploit local energy infrastructure (distribution and transport), which as natural monopolies are best user-owned;
3. Where **citizens** are encouraged to go beyond their own energy needs to also care for their local community (social cohesion, rural development), in particular vulnerable neighbours;
4. Where rules on priority grid access for renewables are properly implemented and enforced;
5. Where a clear and stable legislative framework reduces project complexity, cost and risk;
6. Where the internal energy market ensures a **level playing field** for new business models such as co-operatives or municipalities and protects against abuse of power by incumbents;
7. Where citizens get their energy at a transparent and fair price, with no hidden (social) costs or risks secretly passed on to future generations;
8. Based on solidarity and trust among all stakeholders including citizens, companies, member states, local governments and EU institutions, which requires transparency, minimal but essential regulation, effective governance, fair opportunities for participation and control.

Based on these eight points, we ask for a new deal between Europe and its citizens, not just in the Energy Union *vision*, but also in its strategy and actions.