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Energy Communities in Greece

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- The EU Clean Energy Package (RED II, Dir. 2019/944) transformed consumers into **active participants** in the energy market.
- Citizens, SMEs, and local authorities can now **jointly produce, consume, store, and share energy.**
- Energy communities embody this shift towards **decentralisation, solidarity, and market participation.**

Greece's Early Start

- Greece was an early mover with **Law 4513/2018**.
- Defined the **Energy Community (Ενεργειακή Κοινότητα)** as a civil cooperative with social orientation.
- Open to: natural persons, SMEs, municipalities, and other legal persons.
- Aimed at:
 - renewable energy development,
 - social solidarity,
 - local benefit,
 - combating energy poverty.

Greece's Early Start

Built upon grassroots initiatives:

- **Sifnos Island Cooperative** (hybrid RES station for autonomy),
- **Karditsa Energy Cooperative** (biomass-based local energy).

But **weaknesses** emerged:

- vague definitions → abuse by “**pseudo-communities**”
- speculative use of privileges
- **grid congestion** from mass applications

Reform with Law 5037/2023

Adopted in March 2023, the law introduced **two EU-aligned categories**:

- **Renewable Energy Communities (RECs)**
- **Citizen Energy Communities (CECs)**

It corrected the flaws of 2018, imposed clearer rules, and **restored legal certainty**, while anchoring the cooperative ethos.

Renewable Energy Communities

- Cooperatives with **exclusive renewable purpose**
- Membership: ≥ 30 members (or 15 if SMEs only)
- **Local control**: 50% +1 of the members locally anchored
- **One member = one vote** in the General Assembly, regardless of shares.
- Activities: renewable generation, storage, self-consumption, e-mobility, demand response
- At least **70% of surpluses** reinvested in community or social goals
- Prohibition of transfer of producer certificates or related approvals

Citizen Energy Communities

- Cooperatives, **technology-neutral** (not only RES)
- Activities: generation, supply, aggregation, storage, even distribution
- Membership: ≥ 30 (15 If at least 15 legal entities of public or private law participate)
- **Voting rule:** one member = one vote
- Obligations: balancing, network charges, consumer protection rules
- Surpluses: $\geq 70\%$ reinvested, limited distribution to members
- Prohibition of transfer of production licenses or related approvals

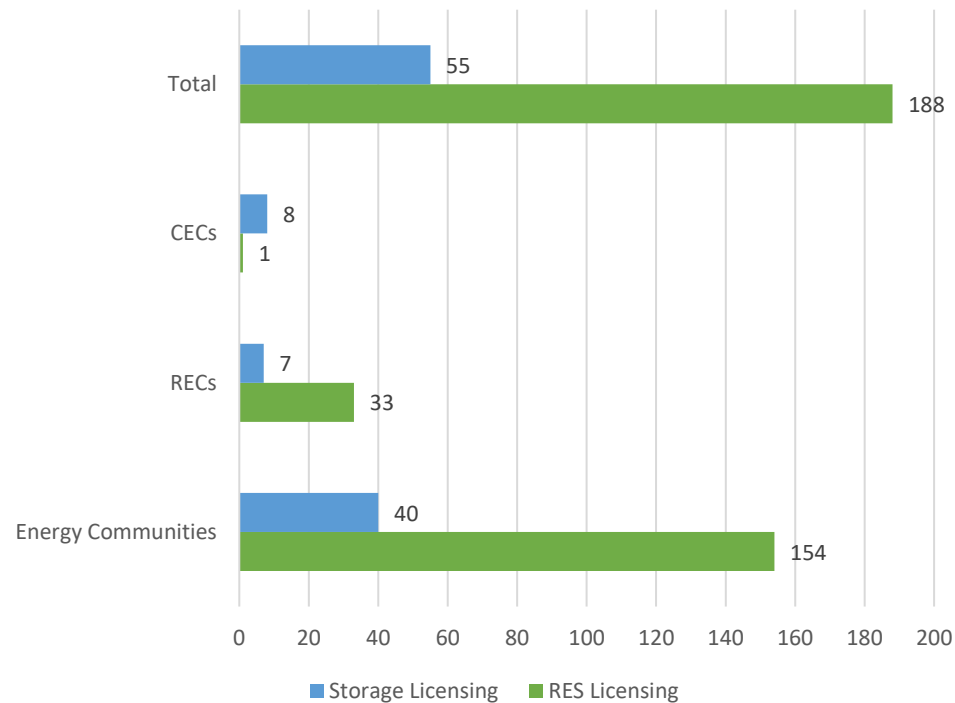
Transitional Rules

- Energy Communities under Law 4513/2018 **may continue existing projects**
- But since Nov 2023:
 - no new producer certificates
 - no new connection offers
- Conversion to REC or CEC is possible under new conditions

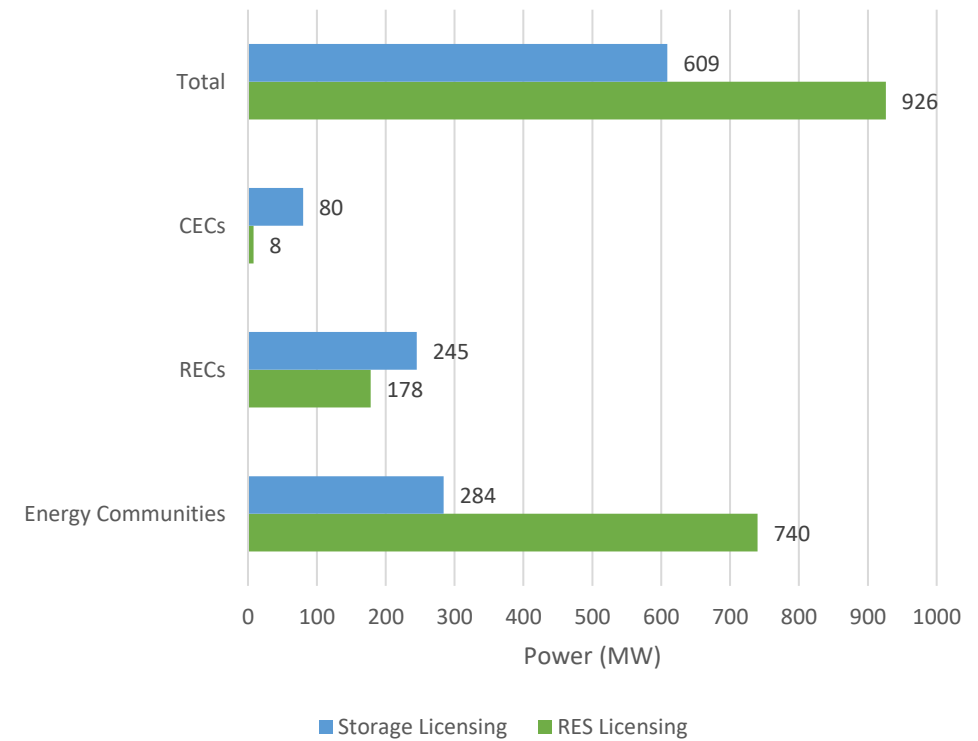
- Ownership concentration → undermines cooperative & non-profit character, local benefits
 - risk of abuse of privileges (priority licensing, reduced guarantees, public funding)
- Regulatory interpretation (RAAEY's Formal Statement)
 - Minimum membership of 15 SMEs: **independent** entities
 - Ensures pluralism, autonomy & alignment with EU Directives (RED II, Dir. 2019/944)
 - Prevention of **pseudo-communities**
- Enforcement
 - Revoke licenses in case of non-compliance

Energy Communities in numbers

Storage/RES Projects



Storage/RES Power



Achievements

- Full alignment with EU law
- Stronger cooperative & social character
- Closure of loopholes (no transfer of permits, stricter governance)

Challenges

- Frequent legislative changes create **uncertainty**
- Membership thresholds may **exclude smaller citizen groups**
- Enforcement tools still **unclear**, secondary legislation needed

Lessons for Regulators

Precision matters: vague definitions invite abuse

Stability is key: protect legitimate expectations of investors & citizens

Balance is delicate: too permissive → opportunism, too strict → exclusion

Support mechanisms (financial & technical) essential for vulnerable citizens

Conclusion

The Greek case shows the **evolution from pioneer to correction.**

RECs and CECs now provide a framework that is **socially anchored and EU-compliant**, but their success depends on:

- regulatory clarity,
- enforcement capacity,
- and real support for citizens.

For regulators, the challenge is to design frameworks that are **fair, stable, and empowering** for the energy transition.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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