

# 7 TIPS

## FOR ACHIEVING ENERGY JUSTICE



**READY FOR THE CHALLENGE?**



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# WHY WE NEED

# THESE TIPS?

Energy efficiency in your home is influenced by the EU energy policies and national regulations. Likewise for energy self-production, green spaces and transport policies.

Real estate lobbies, energy providers and businesses have a say on it. Are they protecting you, the interests of your community and the communities around the globe?

Your family, our planet, our communities need you to take action and your voice to be heard!

If you are ready to be one of the change agents, these tips can help you to achieve energy justice.

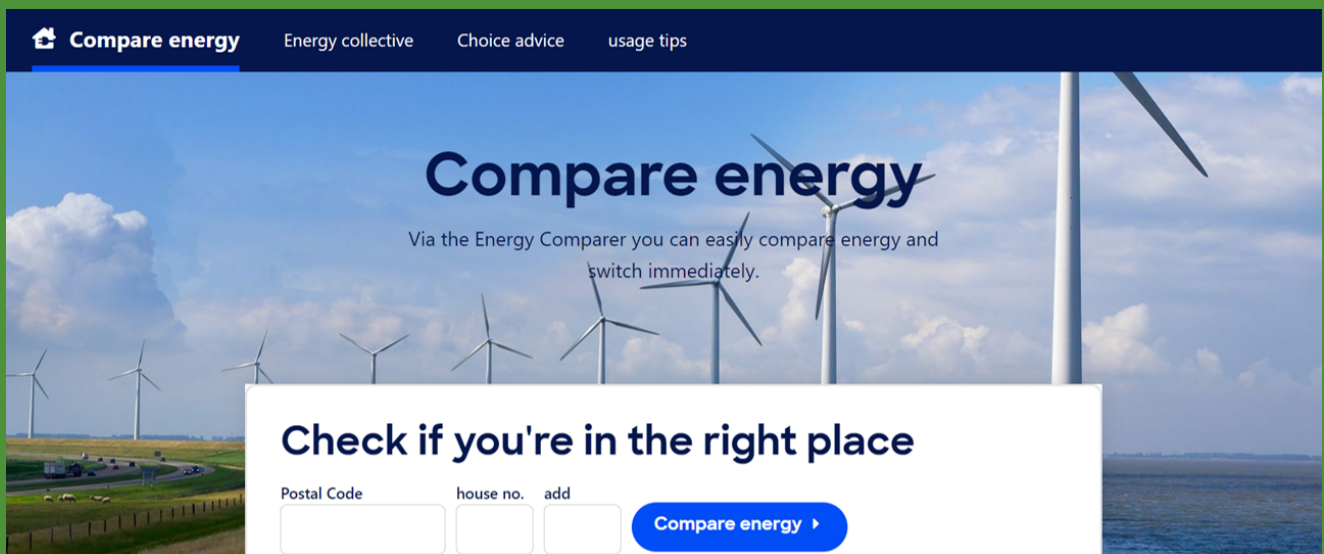


- 1. Reduce impact on the planet.**
- 2. Save you money.**
- 3. Good for your health.**



# TIP #1: CHOOSE A BETTER ENERGY SUPPLIER

We often think about the consequences of our energy use on other people or the planet, but feel powerless about the decisions made by energy companies on how the energy is produced and sold. One way to have an influence on this, is to buy from energy suppliers whose values are in line with yours.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Compare energy' website. The header is dark blue with the logo and navigation links: 'Energy collective', 'Choice advice', and 'usage tips'. The main banner features a background image of wind turbines and the text 'Compare energy' in large blue letters, followed by 'Via the Energy Comparer you can easily compare energy and switch immediately.' Below this is a white box with the heading 'Check if you're in the right place'. Inside this box are three input fields labeled 'Postal Code', 'house no.', and 'add', and a blue button labeled 'Compare energy >'.

Choose your own energy supplier to get better prices and to use more renewable energy.



# CHANGING YOUR SUPPLIER

## **1. Use an energy comparator:**

Energy comparators are a simple webtool that compares different energy suppliers in terms of the energy cost, based on your energy use patterns. Some comparators will indicate how green each energy supplier is. Many comparators also execute the switch – ending your current contract and starting a new one, so that the process can be easily finished in one website and one sitting.

## **2. Seek advice from consumer associations**

You can visit a local or national consumer association. There are consumer associations all over Europe such as DECO in Portugal and Consumenten bond in the Netherlands that provide reliable information about energy suppliers in the country.

# TIP #2: FIND SUPPORT FOR YOUR ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLAN

Many of us know that taking advantage of energy efficiency technologies, such as better insulation, highly efficient appliances, or placing solar panels, can make our homes more comfortable and contribute to protect the planet. However, the high costs of these devices may make these changes out of our reach.

The screenshot shows the RVO website page for the Investment subsidy for sustainable energy and energy saving (ISDE). The page has a blue navigation bar with links: Home, Topical, subjects, Grants & Financing, and About us. A search bar is located on the right. The main heading is "Investment subsidy for sustainable energy and energy saving (ISDE)". Below this, a paragraph explains that homeowners can apply for a subsidy for a solar boiler, a heat pump, insulation measures, and connection to a heat network. Business users are eligible for a subsidy for a solar boiler, a heat pump, connection to a heat network, and for small-scale wind turbines and solar panels. A note states: "Use the blocks below to check for which measures you can apply for a subsidy. This differs per target group." The page is divided into two main sections: "See if you qualify for the ISDE" and "Questions about the ISDE?". The "See if you qualify for the ISDE" section has two columns: "Homeowners" and "Business users". The "Homeowners" section includes an image of a man installing solar panels and text stating: "You are the owner of an owner-occupied home and this home is your main residence." The "Business users" section includes an image of a house with a wind turbine and text stating: "Business users are companies, housing associations, associations, Owners' Associations, governments and private landlords." The "Questions about the ISDE?" section has a "Contact us" link. The "Stay informed" section has links for "News ISDE", "Agenda ISDE", and "Newsletter RVO".

Your local or national government may subsidize or offer tax breaks for your next energy-efficiency home renovation. Go to look for it.

# LOOKING FOR SUBSIDIES

## **Searching for subsidies on the internet:**

Search terms such as “energy poverty”, “energy saving subsidies”, “energy saving subsidies 2021” in one of the official languages of your country.

The search gives you various pages with helpful information and the relevant government department.

The search engine may also lead to online calculators that estimate the costs and benefits of an energy retrofit project.

## **You do not like using computers?**

Don't worry! Go to the nearest city council offices or social services and ask for information and assistance.



## TIP #3: JOIN THE HEAT PUMP BANDWAGON

Gas will become increasingly scarce and more expensive. Along with the need to phasing out fossil fuels, the energy systems for winter comfort will be electrified . Besides, Europe will be increasingly hot during the summer, especially in the Southern Countries. Hotter temperatures will increase the need for summer thermal comfort, which releases CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.



Mount a last generation heat pump. It is a device that uses a small amount of energy to move heat from one location to another. Heat pumps can also use electricity from renewable energy for heating, cooling and have hot water all year around. Over its lifetime, a new air-source heat pump can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 46 to 54 per cent compared to natural gas alternatives.

# MOUNTING A HEAT PUMP

## **Do you have savings?**

Heat pumps might have high installation costs, but the reduced operation costs make it an excellent investment, depending on your existing heating system. They can deliver up to 3 or 4 times the energy that they are consuming. They can extract heat from cold air or water.

Make some calculations or ask a heat pump's provider for a quotation.

## **You don't have enough savings or want to save money?**

Often local or national governments provide tax breaks, fiscal advantage or subsidies.

Do an internet search for potential subsidies or go to One-stop-shops in your city .

## TIP #4: ACTIVATE YOUR MOBILITY PLAN

Have you ever dreamed of a city that has mobility options responsive to different people's needs, while also respecting the environment?



Sharing Mobility is a concept that responds to the ever-growing demand of using greener modes of transport and only when necessary. Increased digital infrastructure and investment in these new modes of transport is allowing citizens to travel more conveniently, respectful of the environment.

Sharing Mobility Options include:

- Bike sharing,
- Electric scooter sharing,
- Motorcycle sharing,
- Carsharing.



# HOW TO ACTIVATE YOUR SHARED MOBILITY PLAN

## **Is there shared mobility in your city?**

Try looking up shared mobility solutions here:

<https://civitas.eu/mobility-solutions>

If there is, join it!

## **Do you find these initiatives unavailable, inaccessible or unaffordable to you or other citizens in your area?**

You can write your complaints to the city council or the transportation company via their online contacts information.

## **Socialise!**

You can tell your neighbours to do the same.

## **TIP #5: START A COMMUNITY GARDEN**

The urban heat island effect is an area considerably warmer than the surrounding rural areas. Lack of green space and excessive use of air conditioning are the main causes. These islands are an increasing concerns due to the increase of the temperature.



Start a community garden to create green spaces and raise awareness in the larger community and the local authorities. These interventions to reduce UHI include reducing air conditioning usage, promoting cool pavements, and other green infrastructure, such as green roofs.

# HOW TO START A COMMUNITY GARDEN

- **Form a committee- essential steps:**

**1-**Understand the need and desire for green infrastructures. **2-**Identify short and long term objectives. **3-** identify sources of finance and initiate fundraising activities.

It is fundamental to involve everyone living in the area in all phases.

- **Choose a site - essential steps:**

**1-** Identify sites: roofs, abandoned lands, pavements and bioswales. **2-** identify owners' of the sites and make agreement for their use. **3-** Consider contamination, adverse effects from having plants and roots, and water availability

- **Build the community garden - essential steps:**

**1-** Design collectively the infrastructures with the help of experts. **2-** Find resources: tools, plants and seeds and expertise. **3-** Organise work crews.



# **TIP #6: SHARE RENEWABLE ENERGY IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

There is a great untapped solar and wind energy potential. Many EU countries have already allowed households to generate their own energy. Can the revenue for self-consumption and the surplus of energy be used for social and environmental purposes?



New and innovative ways to share energy resources are emerging and being adopted by consumers, for instance by consumer via energy Communities . They are a way to organize collective energy actions in an open, democratic way. Energy communities can be financially beneficial, strengthen community ties and have environmental benefits.

# HOW SET-UP A RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITY

**Define the form you want your community to take:** cooperative, clubs, trusts, and if you want to involve the municipality.

**Set-up the group.** Get involved with existing networks that share energy in your local area or gather a group of interested neighbors to discuss about the idea.

**Choose your activity:** Energy generation, distribution, electro-mobility or energy efficiency, educational and environmental protection projects.

**Choose your technology:** what is the renewable technology generating the shared energy? What needs to be considered and what can be set-up in your local area? Maybe there are already energy communities to join.

## **TIP #7: HAVE A SAY IN EU ENERGY POLICIES**

The EU energy policies influence local and national regulations, including on housing energy efficiency. However, citizens gave little voice in these regulations.

Make your voice heard via policy feedback, public consultations, and citizens' initiatives at the EU level.



Alternatively, think about starting an European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). This allow to propose law and policies to the European Commission directly from the citizens.



# HOW DO YOU GIVE FEEDBACK ON EU ENERGY POLICIES?

## **Writing online feedback**

1- Create an EU account at

<https://ecas.ec.europa.eu/cas/eim/external/register.cgi>

2- Go to Have your say -> Published initiatives at

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives_en)

3- Write your feedback. Be concise and clear, try to state precisely what the problem is or what you want to be done. Avoid angry, sarcastic or threatening comments. You can write in any EU recognised language.

In the case the consultation stage is closed, you can wait until the next round.

## **Troubles with the internet connections or to register?**

Go to your citizen's shop or bureau and ask for support!

# APPENDIX

## RESOURCES FOR ALL TIPS

### **Tip #3:**

The European Heat Pump Association (EHPA):

<https://www.ehpa.org/about/>

<https://www.renewableenergyhub.co.uk/main/heat-pumps-information/>

<https://www.bchydro.com/powersmart/residential/building-and-renovating/considering-heat-pump-info-tips.html>

<http://hpc2017.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/O.2.1.3-The-Role-of-Heat-Pumps-in-Renewable-Heating-and-Cooling.pdf>

### **Tip #4:**

<http://ebma-brussels.eu/bike-sharing-in-europe/>

### **Tip #5:**

<https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/reduce-urban-heat-island-effect>

<https://www.moneycrashers.com/start-community-garden-benefits/>

<https://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/community-gardening>

### **Tip #6**

Community Energy: A Practical Guide to reclaiming power”:

<https://energy-cities.eu/publication/community-energy/>

“Financial Handbook for REScoops”:

<https://www.rescoop.eu/toolbox/financial-handbook-for-rescoops>

“Compile Toolkit: Stakeholder Engagement Guide”:

<https://www.rescoop.eu/toolbox/compile-toolkit-stakeholder-engagement-guide>

### **Tip #7:**

The revision of energy performance of building directive

Practical steps for setting up a successful European Citizens’

Initiative: [https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/how-it-works\\_en](https://europa.eu/citizens-initiative/how-it-works_en)





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