

Needed Capacities

In order to get civic energy initiatives off the ground, certain capacities are needed among the stakeholders involved. 5 different capacity needs were identified and ranked by the COBEN project partners according to the priority of their relevance for civic energy developments:

1. Engagement
 - Capacities to actively engage and mobilise citizens for the initiation of civic energy projects
2. Space / resources
 - Availability of development space for civic energy must be given. Opportunities for development space might be made accessible through the spatial planning process.
3. Knowledge & expertise
 - Often civic energy initiatives lack the needed expertise to get their project off the ground. Needed capacities could relate to management, business and legal systems, as well as technological expertise.
4. Financial
 - Financial capacities are especially crucial at the onset of a civic energy initiative, as seed capital might be needed to get the initiation phase of the planned development going.
5. Legal and political framework
 - A favourable legal and policy support framework is a crucial prerequisite for the successful organisation of civic energy structures. Those can, however vary on regional and national levels and additionally can be volatile.

Here the link to existing risks and risk management comes into play.

Some capacities are intrinsically linked to corresponding risks:

- Risk: Operational & technology ⇔ Capacity: knowledge and expertise
- Risk: Financial ⇔ Capacity: Financial
- Risk: Community ⇔ Capacity: Acceptance
- Risk: Regulatory ⇔ Capacity: Legal and political framework

Therefore, addressing those risks at the onset through targeted risk management can facilitate the capacities needed.

Capacity building programmes should therefore be made accessible on the regional level to address and enhance specific needs of key stakeholder groups for the uptake of civic energy.

Examples of consortium competences and needed capacities are included in the “Forerunner” profiles.