

Sustainable Communities Programme

Rebuilding Citizenship and Democracy for a Sustainable and Resilient Europe

Citizens worldwide are self-organising and transforming their fears and frustrations in the face of unprecedented global ecological and social challenges into positive action at local, community level.

In Europe, thousands of communities are actively engaged in a rich diversity of activities from community energy to local food production, sustainable mobility, the solidarity economy and much more.

Research shows they are making a difference - reducing carbon emissions, promoting sustainable lifestyles, building social cohesion, reviving local economies and modeling new ways of decision-making. Indirectly they are nurturing active citizenship, a cornerstone of healthy, functioning democracies.

However, real progress in tackling climate breakdown, and in achieving long term social, economic and environmental goals, will only happen when citizen initiatives are connected to, and become drivers of, mainstream policy processes.

The **Sustainable Communities Programme (SCP)** will help do just this by developing a collaborative approach to supporting the mainstreaming of community-led action on climate change and sustainability in Europe.

What is the programme addressing?

The SCP aims to address the disconnect between communities who are taking action on the ground for a sustainable resilient future and mainstream policy processes.

The Sustainable Communities Programme supports increased citizen engagement in local, community-led action within and across European regions, in helping to meet global climate and sustainability goals.

How will it work?

The SCP will create a Europe-wide platform to support collaborative design of programmes that encourage and enable community-led action, mutual learning and exchange across regions. It will strive to mainstream the processes and results of the platform's work through policy integration at national and EU levels.

Who is involved?

ECOLISE, the European network for community-led initiatives on climate change and sustainability, provides overall coordination. Regional partners from the community, public and other sectors will oversee development and implementation at regional level.

Communities as drivers of a societal transformation

The SCP will bring together the main movements of community-led initiatives, together with researchers, educators, public sector partners and other stakeholders. The programme has three main elements:

- **Europe-level coordination and technical support**, including promotion of the programme, as well as the gathering, synthesis, evaluation and sharing of data, good practice and methodologies.
- **Regional sub-programmes**, co-created and implemented by regional partners including ECOLISE members, other community and third sector initiatives and public sector bodies.
- **Europe-wide networking and mutual learning** in which participating regions are part of an expanding 'community of practice' for sharing and adapting to new contexts, knowledge, experience and insights into good practice derived from the regional sub-programmes. Lessons and experience will also be shared, and recommendations made, to support improved policy making at national and EU levels.

When is the Sustainable Communities Programme happening?

Initially the programme is being launched with selected pilot regions in the autumn of 2018. Further actions and regional roll-out will follow in 2019, depending on the availability of resources.

Getting involved

ECOLISE invites the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders interested in contributing to different aspects of the programme.

- European partners: networks, associations, funding bodies and other organisations interested in providing European-level support.
- National partners: national level networks, associations, NGOs and governments interested or already engaged in facilitating and supporting regional level collaboration.
- Regional (sub-national) partners: community initiatives and networks, regional authorities, NGOs, research institutes and others who are interested or already engaged in facilitating or supporting a collaborative process within their region.

For further information contact: markus.molz@ecolise.eu
www.ecolise.eu/sustainable-communities-programme/
[Twitter](#) [FB](#) [LinkedIn](#)

