

Energy Communities as trusted local intermediaries for flexibility

Unlike a standard aggregator, the Energy Community combines technical aggregation with a pre-existing relationship with members, making engagement, consent and fair benefit-sharing easier to organise. The pilot highlighted the relevance of energy communities not only as technical enablers, but also as socially grounded actors with strong potential for scale-up.

HOW DID WE DO IT?

Used the energy community as the entry point

The Energy Community is placed at the centre, so that flexibility is introduced through an organisation already known by members and able to manage information, trust-building, consent and support.

Engaged members through collective and individual communication

Communication combined group-level engagement with one-to-one follow-up. The initiative could be explained through the Energy Community channels such as information sessions, community meetings, workshops and direct messages, while interested members received individual support to understand what participation involved.

Onboarded members and clarified participation conditions

The Energy Community supported onboarding by explaining eligibility, collecting consent, confirming comfort or operational limits, and translating a technical flexibility service into

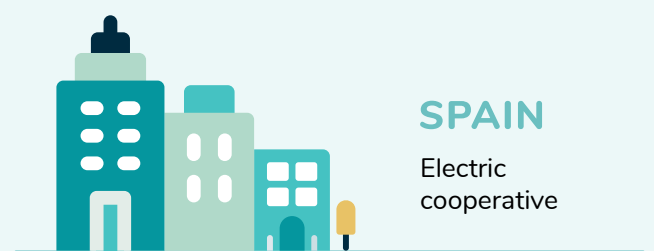
clear, practical commitments for households and prosumers.

Built a community-based flexibility portfolio

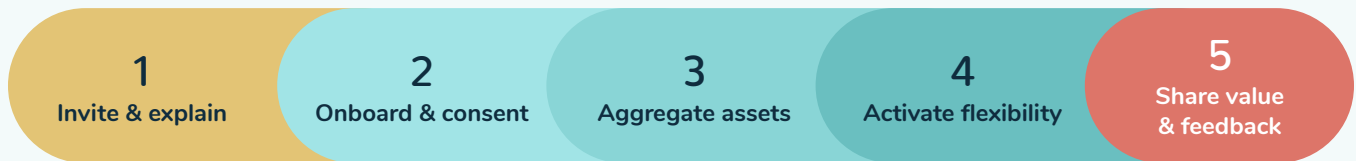
Member-owned resources were combined with medium and larger community assets. This created a portfolio large enough to be relevant for flexibility services without placing the burden of market participation on individual users.

Aggregated flexibility and tested activation

Using sENC and sFLEX as supporting digital tools, the Energy Community monitored, aggregated and prepared flexibility from its portfolio. The pilot tested the workflow from member engagement and asset aggregation through to bid preparation, activation and assessment of the value created for the community.



SIMPLE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT PATHWAY



LESSONS LEARNED

Trust is a flexibility asset

The Energy Community's existing relationship with members makes local flexibility easier to explain, lowers enrolment barriers and improves response rates compared with a purely transactional aggregator model.

Collective models still need individual onboarding

Even when flexibility is organised through an energy community, participation still depends on clear and practical onboarding. Members need to understand what is being proposed, how their assets may be used, what level of control they retain, and how potential benefits are shared. Combining community-level engagement with individual explanations helped make participation more accessible and reduced uncertainty around comfort, consent and practical implications.

Consent, comfort and simplicity determine participation

Members need to know what can be activated, when, under which limits and with what level of control. Clear opt-in processes and comfort safeguards are essential for turning technical flexibility potential into real participation.

Aggregation unlocks "small" LV flexibility assets

Many household resources are too small to participate alone. By pooling member-owned and energy community assets, the Energy Community can create a flexibility portfolio that is visible and operationally useful.

Fair benefit-sharing makes the model scalable

Transparent sharing of revenues, for example through availability payments, performance-based rewards and social criteria, increases member willingness to participate and can help fund community operation, digital tools and future shared assets.

**Why is it important?**

Local flexibility depends as much on citizen engagement as on technical aggregation. By acting as a trusted intermediary, the Energy Community can unlock LV flexibility that would otherwise remain inaccessible, help DSOs address congestion or voltage issues, and create a fair local value proposition for households and prosumers.