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and awards

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## 1 Introduction and clarification

The communication strategy supporting the promotion of the Citizenenergy platform includes a variety of activities in addition to the project website and identity – among them live events, the production of motivational videos, regular newsletters. While an overview of event-related activities is given by D6.6 (formerly D6.5 and D6.6) and D6.7 (formerly D6.8) provides a complete overview of all dissemination activities, this report focus on three activities or topics in particular: social media, key opinion leaders and awards.

## 2 Social media activities

As Citizenenergy is a web-based tool that caters to digital natives or at least people who are regularly online – it makes sense that a large part of the communication for the platform take place via social media. While there are a great many social media channels available, it is often best to focus on a small number and use them intensely to build and audience. Citizenenergy social media communication was thus focused on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. A social media management tool by the name of Buffer is being used to coordinate posts across channels and posters. While some posts, especially of live events, are done outside of the Buffer platform, Buffer as proven extremely useful throughout Citizenenergy’s social media communication.

To guide Citizenenergy’s social media presence, Climate Alliance deemed it important that a team of willing partners get access to Buffer, while the main posters remained Climate Alliance supported by Boa Energia. Climate Alliance issued and updated a social media posting strategy to help guide partners in their posts in which it was also stipulated that any questions or comments on any of the three channels should be responded to within 2 working days. In terms of content, the strategy states that all posts should “have a direct connection to Citizenenergy themes” and that there should be a “good mix of Citizenenergy news (things we do, blog posts, newsletters, new projects coming on board, new platforms, milestones, events...) and other people’s news (anything of relevance to our target groups on renewables, crowdfunding, energy cooperatives, etc.).” Climate Alliance made a point of posting every news piece to appear on the Citizenenergy site as well as every new project open for investment – both as soon as the project was published on Citizenenergy and one week before the project closed.

A social media sheet with important hashtags and handles, for example of partners, featured platforms and related organisations/topics was also created and updated to help improve the efficacy of posting. When important Citizenenergy news broke such as press releases, newsletters and new platforms, Climate Alliance pre-formulated channel specific posts to be shared by partners and members of the Validation Board.

## 2.1 #YourPower!

The hashtag “#YourPower!” is almost always added to the end of posts on all channels (even LinkedIn, which doesn’t make use of hashtags). Partners and Validation Board members were also encouraged to use this hashtag on their posts in a sort of community building effort. This, at the very least, serves as an identifiable trademark for Citizenenergy-relevant posts, but also helps people to search for relevant topics and find others “community-members”. At the beginning of Citizenenergy’s social media campaigns, this hashtag was very little used – now it is used regularly by Citizenenergy partners, related projects such as CrowdFundRes, and validation board members and organisations.

## 2.2 Twitter

Ideal for quick messages, Twitter allows the most variety in terms of what to post. Citizenenergy posts on Twitter range from in depth reports to live tweeting of quotes at events as well as the sharing of interesting pieces of news from other mediums. Generally, everything Citizenenergy communicates on social media is also shared in some form on Twitter. A constant effort is of course made to follow important accounts and retweet/repost others posts.

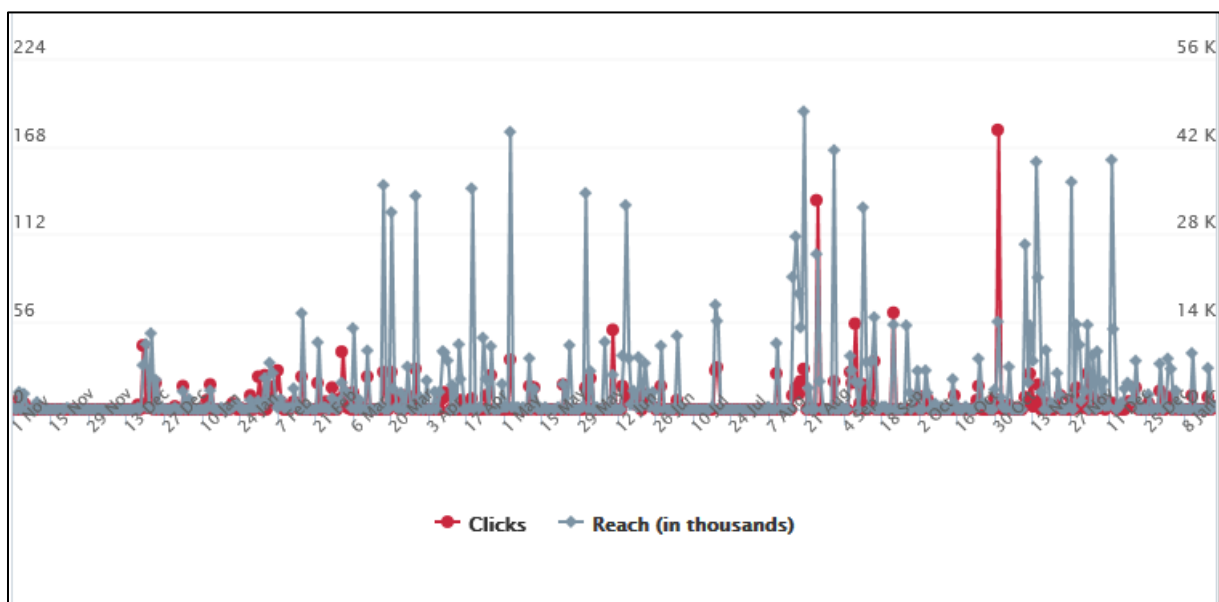
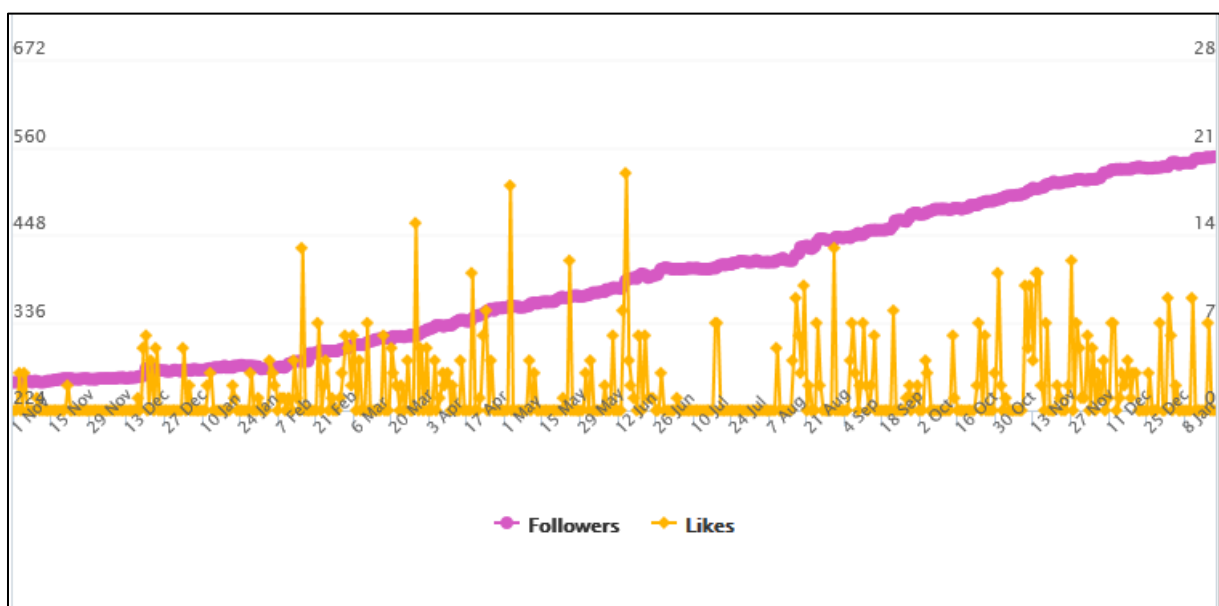
While Citizenenergy was of course active on social media before the platform official went online, it was as of Citizenenergy’s debut in November 2015 that social media really began to take on a key role. We can distinguish between social media activity pre-launch, from March 2014 through October 2014 and post launch, from November 2015 until the time of writing (February 2017). Below you can see some statistics on Citizenenergy’s twitter profile since November 2015 through February 2017. These statistics are courtesy of Buffer.

Pre-launch Twitter activity (March 2014 – October 2015):

**120 Posts | 959 Interactions | 369 Followers**

Post-launch Twitter activity (November 2015 – February 2017):

**319 Posts | 6,617 Interactions | 580 Followers**



During this period, the highest performing Citizenenergy posts showed reaches of almost 48 thousand showed reaches of 35 to 48 thousand; one post received 179 clicks. Likes were relatively evenly distributed over the period, with numbers typically ranging from 2 to 20 for any given post.

## 2.3 Facebook

While Citizenenergy always had more followers on Facebook than on Twitter, the social media strategy called for a bit more selectivity with Facebook posts. The idea is that people are looking for longer, more in depth posts on Facebook. This strategy thus results in fewer posts despite the higher number of followers. Again, it was as of Citizenenergy's debut in November 2015 that social media on Facebook really began to take on a key role.

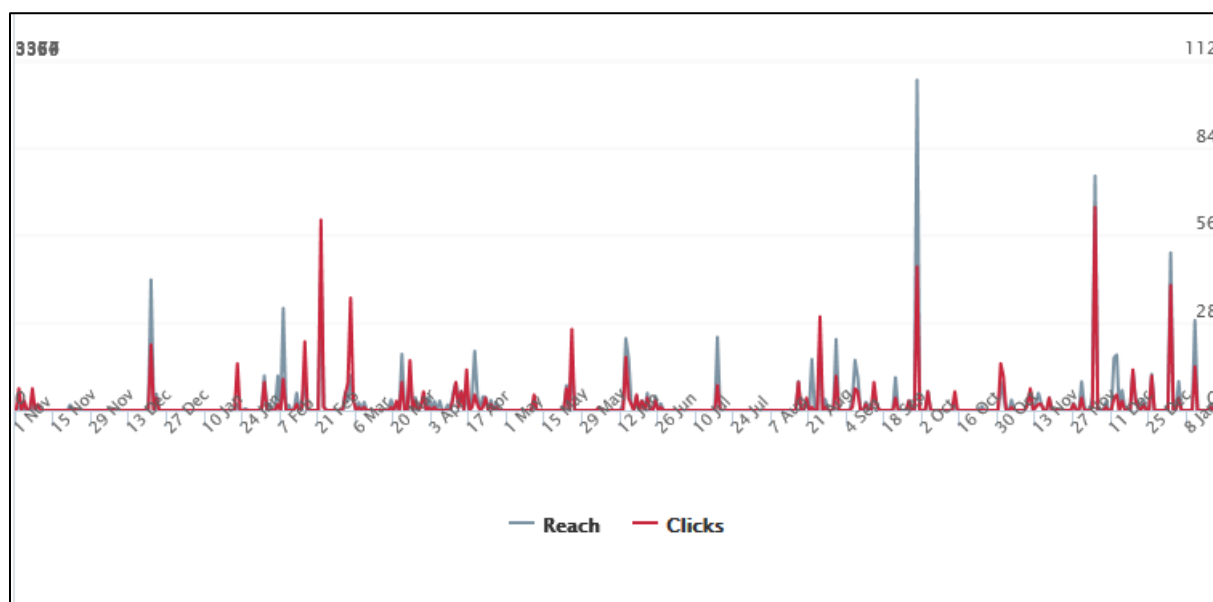
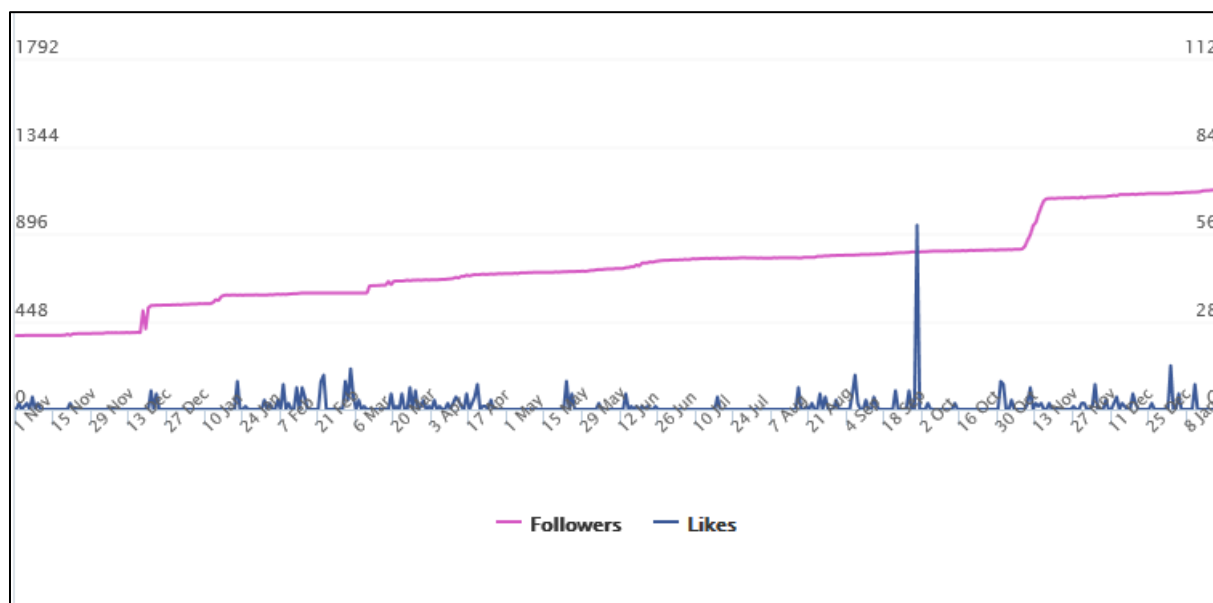
Pre-launch Facebook activity (March 2014 – October 2015):

**24 Posts | 269 Interactions | 376 Followers**

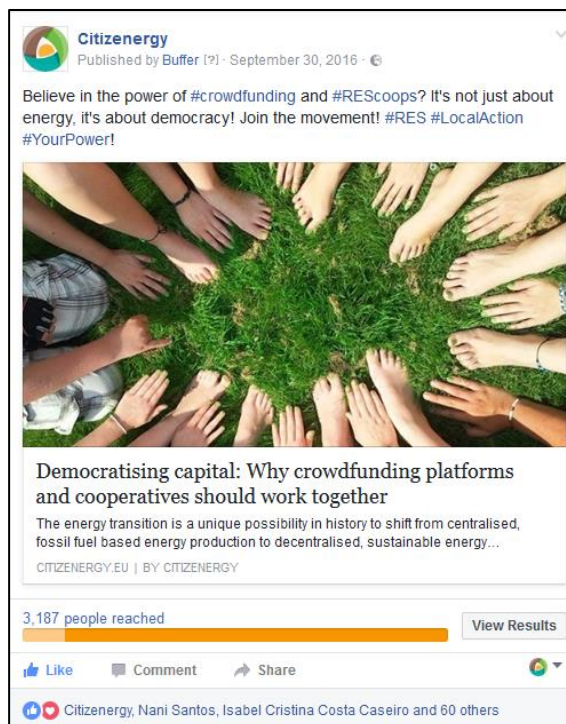
Post-launch Facebook activity (November 2015 – February 2017):

**143 Posts | 1,428 Interactions | 1,165 Followers**

Activity in the post-launch period is visible in the graphics below.

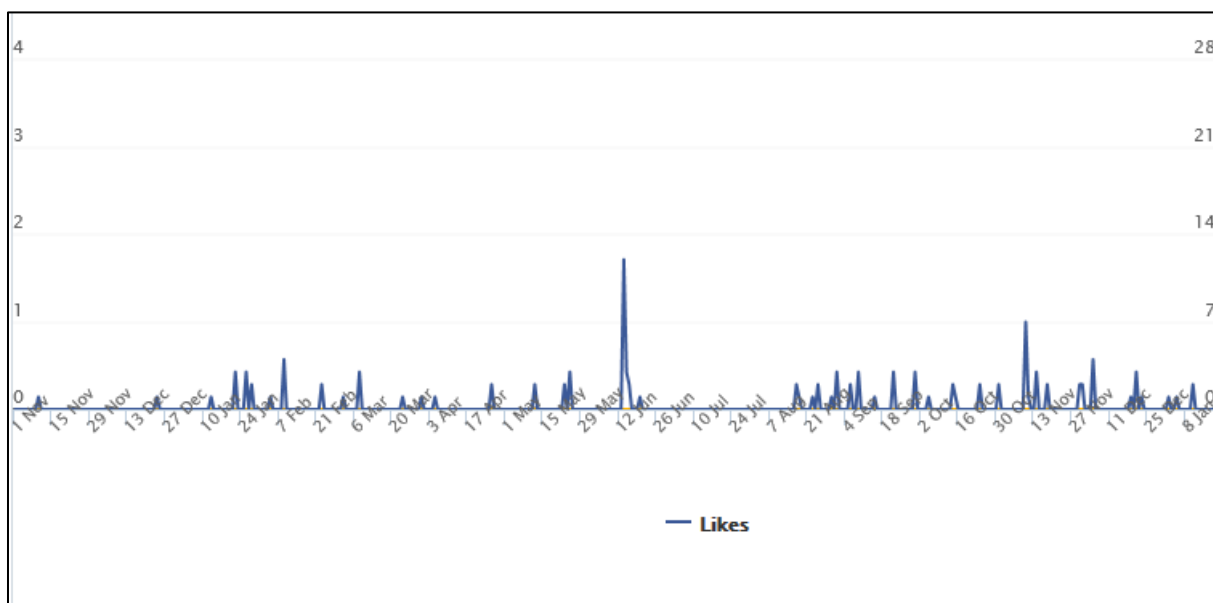


One post in particular received over 60 likes, 46 clicks and had a reach of 3,187 people – a post linking to the Citizenenergy blog post called Democratising capital. Generally Citizenenergy blogs posts received quite some amount of attention on Facebook.



## 2.4 LinkedIn

Citizenenergy made sparing use LinkedIn for its communication as the platform favors more in depth posts that have a definite business orientation. Posts linking to studies or hard-hitting articles are ideal for this channel.





Performance on LinkedIn was more modest for Citizenenergy, but we can again distinguish between social media activity pre-launch, from March 2014 through October 2014 and post launch, from November 2015 until the time of writing (February 2017).

Pre-launch LinkedIn activity (March 2014 – October 2015):

**10 Posts | 5 Interactions | 5 Connections**

Post-launch LinkedIn activity (November 2015 – February 2017):

**74 Posts | 467 Interactions | 92 Connections**

While modest, the number of interactions in the post-launch period skyrocketed in comparison to the pre-launch period.

### 3 Key opinion leaders

Trust is an important factor when it comes to encouraging people to engage in alternative forms of investment such as crowdfunding and cooperative models. Good, clear descriptions of projects and the risks involved in investing as well as the benefits are key, as are examples of successfully funded projects – as visible on Citizenenergy. From a purely communications point of view, the opinions of thought leaders can also help lower barriers to investment and promote trust. The recruitment of key opinion leaders was this planned to aid in this pursuit.

Citizenenergy employs three key opinion leaders in three places throughout its web presence.

- On the bottom of the [start page](#), a series of statements can be seen coming from leaders in the field.
- On the [How it works page](#) as well as on Citizenenergy's [YouTube channel](#), motivational videos can be seen. Many of the contributors here are the same as those that delivered written quotes for the start page.
- Our [partners page](#), members of the Validation Board comment on their background and connection to topics to Citizenenergy.

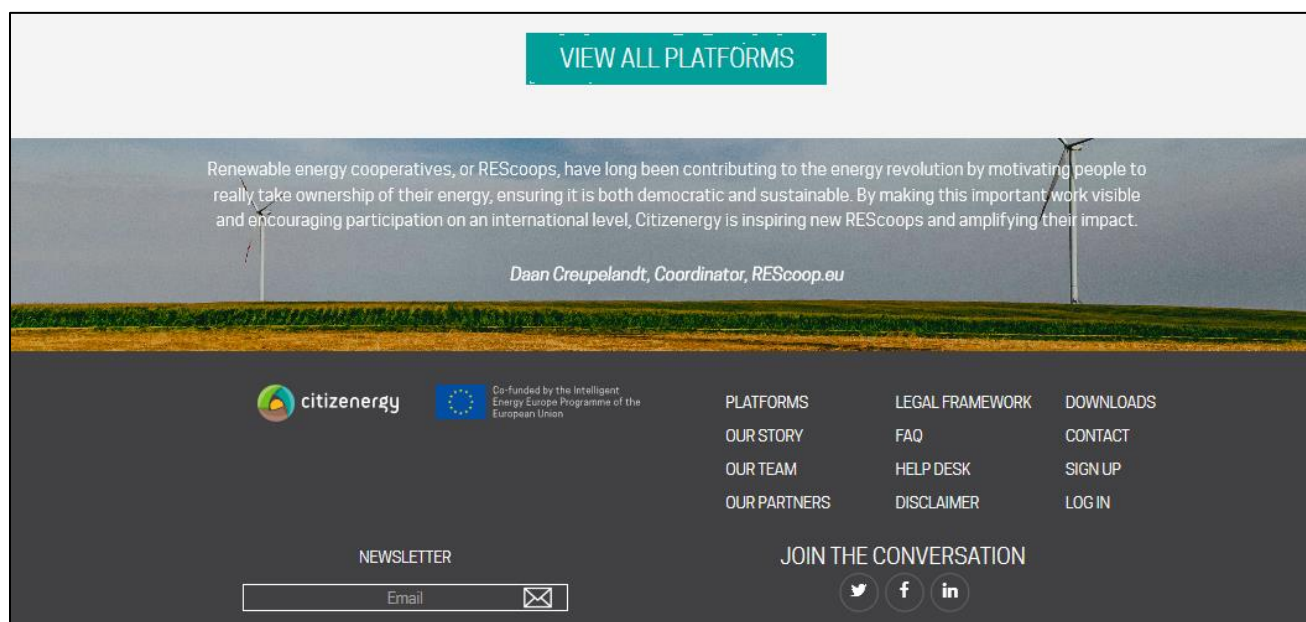
Today Citizenenergy counts **24 key opinion leaders working across 10 European countries:**

*Marilyn Heib, Bettervest (DE), Sam Manaberi, Trine (SE), Siward Zomer, De Windvogel (NL), Coenraad De Vries, Start Green (NL), Alex Raguet, Lumo (FR), Karl Harder, Abundance Generation (UK), Alix Bolle, Energy Cities (BE), Claude Turmes, Member of the European Parliament (LU), Robert Pasicko, UNDP Croatia (HR), Julia Groves, UK Crowdfunding Association (UK), Stefano Cruccu, Solar Plaza (NL), Daan Creupelandt, REScoop.eu (NL), Matthias Klaes, University of Dundee (UK), Sarah Mekjian, Climate Alliance (DE), Nuno Brito Jorge, Boa Energia (PT), Alexandre Filipe Matos Varela, AdEPorto (PT), Aneta Skubida, Wola Zmian (PL), Bart Dooms, Vito (BE), Dorina Iuga, WindEurope (BE), David Donnerer, Energy Cities (BE), Dirk Vansintjan, REScoop.eu (NL), Karsten Wenslaff, Institute for Communication for Social Media (DE), Thomas Maidonis, WIP Renewable Energies (DE), Françoise Coutant, Vice*

*présidente Climat et Transition Énergétique du conseil régional ALPC - Nouvelle Aquitaine (FR)*

### 3.1 Key opinion leaders on the start page

The key opinion leaders featured on the start page are visible in a running slide show just above the footer and just below the view all platforms button:



The quotes visible in the section are as follows:

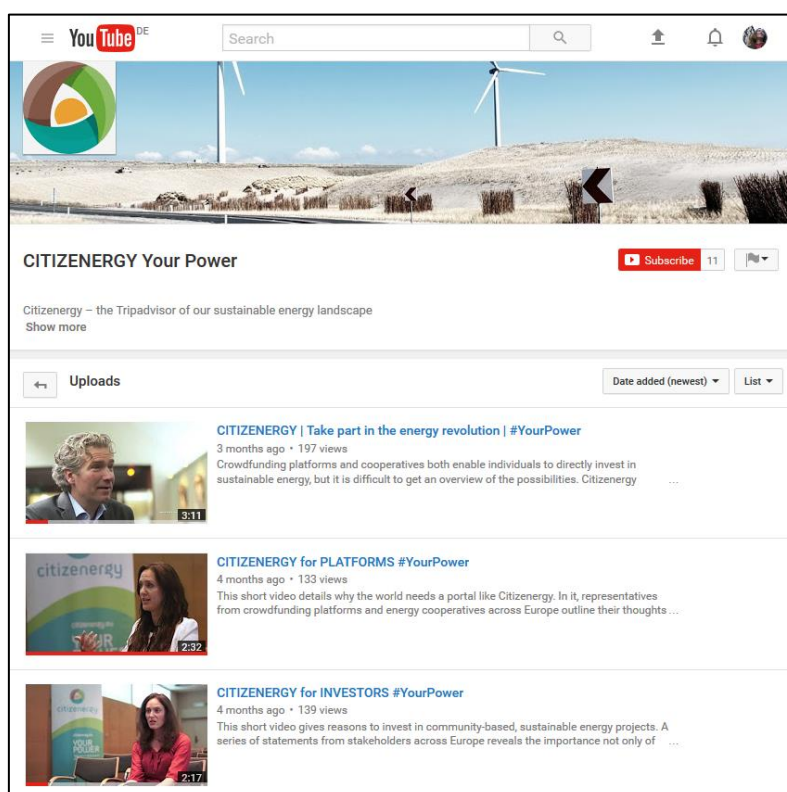
Country	Name	Title	Organisation	Quote on site
<b>Germany</b>	Marilyn Heib	CEO	Bettervest	Crowdfunding is still a very new market and there are still so many obstacles that we have to overcome in Europe. If we work together, we are so much stronger. Citizenenergy helps crowdfunding platforms and cooperatives work together and support one another.
<b>Sweden</b>	Sam Manaberi	Founder and CEO	Trine	It's important to have channels to get out to larger communities. By aggregating many different projects, Citizenenergy can attract a larger audience and help platforms that are just starting up reach out beyond country borders.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Siward Zomer	President	De Windvogel	Citizenenergy is a place where stakeholders from the worlds of crowdfunding and cooperatives meet. It brings added value to energy cooperatives by showing the breadth of energy initiatives and projects across Europe. Cooperatives scaling up and wishing to go beyond regional boundaries, especially with larger projects, can make use of Citizenenergy to attract broader-based support.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Coenraad De Vries	Founder	Start Green	Crowdfunding is about giving people to the power to decide what their money should support. Citizenenergy gives individual investors access to more projects than any one platform can and thus gives them the power to develop their own diversified

				portfolios of decentralised energy projects.
<b>France</b>	Alex Raguet	President	LUMO	Citizenenergy is a great tool to help people find investments that are both in line with their beliefs and with the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate change.
<b>UK</b>	Karl Harder	Co-Founder	Abundance	Crowdfunding platforms have expertise in recruiting investors from their home countries - that is their core focus. Citizenenergy provides a place where we can build our profile with a wider European audience and start to attract different types of investors.
<b>Belgium</b>	Alix Bolle	EU Campaign Manager	Energy Cities	The European project is going through a crisis of trust at the moment and we urgently need a new narrative that unites all Europeans. The energy transition is a great opportunity to build a common vision to which everyone can subscribe; platforms like Citizenenergy are a tremendous opportunity to reinstate this sense of feeling European.
<b>Belgium</b>	Claude Turmes	Member of the European Parliament	Luxembourg Green Party	The future of energy is renewable energy and energy efficiency. We need to move fast. We still have too many barriers in the system. The new world is solar energy, wind energy, biogas... investing in these is good for the planet and builds up a community that will help us move to the world of the future.
<b>Germany</b>	Sarah Mekjian	Communications Director	Climate Alliance	Our energy landscape is increasingly become decentralised and decentralised energy, be it in the form of renewables or energy efficiency, requires decentralised finance. Citizenenergy is promoting just this approach, giving ordinary people the power to directly support the change we need to see in our energy landscape.
<b>Croatia</b>	Robert Pasicko	Team Leader Low Carbon Development	UNDP Croatia	For renewables to really change our lives, we need innovation in how we use energy but also how we finance energy. Citizenenergy gives people the ability to invest in different ways and in different countries so that they can shape our common future and change peoples' lives even with a small amount of money.
<b>UK</b>	Julia Groves	Director of UK Crowdfunding Association		With the need to accelerate our transition to a clean energy system, Citizenenergy is a welcome addition to the world of sustainable energy crowdfunding.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Stefano Cruccu	Senior Project Manager	Solar Plaza	It's great to see Citizenenergy be such a driving force, banding together the financing of sustainable energy projects across borders. This initiative is a great tool for people to find reliable projects they want to support.
<b>Netherlands</b>	Daan Creupelandt	Coordinator	REScoop.eu	Renewable energy cooperatives, or REScoops, have long been contributing to the energy revolution by motivating people to really take ownership of their energy, ensuring it is both democratic and sustainable. By making this important work visible and encouraging participation on an international

				level, Citizenenergy is inspiring new REScoops and amplifying their impact.
<b>UK</b>	Matthias Klaes	Professor of Commerce	University of Dundee	Cooperatives and crowdfunding platforms are social innovations uniquely positioned to help reform how civic society engages in financial markets. Citizenenergy has helped realise important first steps towards marshalling this potential in the sustainable energy sector, reminding us of the advantages of aligning activities across Europe as a whole, rather than fragmentation.
<b>France</b>	Françoise Coutant	Vice présidente Climat et Transition Énergétique	Conseil régional ALPC - Nouvelle Aquitaine	Citizenenergy is very relevant to the Region of New Aquitaine's own clean energy transition goals. The Region is convinced that crowdfunding platforms and energy cooperatives empower citizens to co-develop renewable energy sources - Citizenenergy supports this and has the potential for wide ranging positive impacts: from environmental issues to driving local economies and proposing new economic models to promoting territorial energy resilience and regional energy self-management.

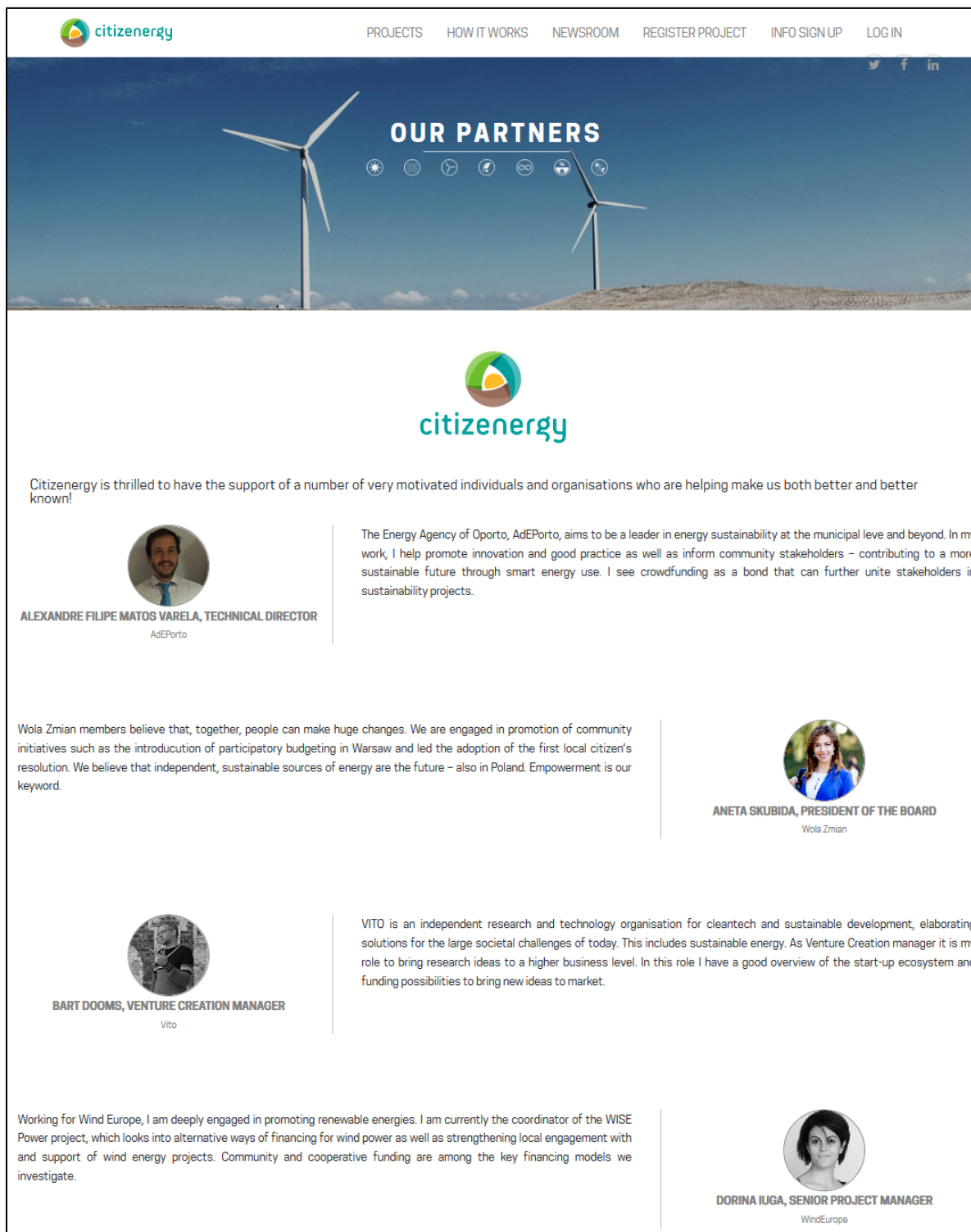
### 3.2 Key opinion leaders by video

Videos with live statements from many of Citizenenergy's key opinion leaders can be seen on the Citizenenergy "How it works" page as well as Citizenenergy's Facebook page. All videos featuring key opinion leaders – six in total: three short clips, one main video and two target group oriented videos for platforms and investors respectively – can be viewed on Citizenenergy's YouTube channel:



### 3.3 Key opinion leaders as on the partners page

Further players who have publicly committed to being Citizenenergy partners and standing by the platform's ideal with their names, can be seen on the Citizenenergy "Our Partners" page:



The screenshot shows the 'Our Partners' page on the Citizenenergy website. The page features a header with the Citizenenergy logo and navigation links: PROJECTS, HOW IT WORKS, NEWSROOM, REGISTER PROJECT, INFO SIGN UP, and LOG IN. Below the header is a large banner image of wind turbines with the text 'OUR PARTNERS' and a row of icons representing various energy and sustainability themes. The main content area is divided into sections for different partners, each featuring a circular profile picture, the partner's name and title, and a brief description of their role and commitment to sustainable energy.

**Citizenenergy**

PROJECTS HOW IT WORKS NEWSROOM REGISTER PROJECT INFO SIGN UP LOG IN

## OUR PARTNERS

Citizenenergy is thrilled to have the support of a number of very motivated individuals and organisations who are helping make us both better and better known!

**ALEXANDRE FILIPE MATOS VARELA, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**  
AdEPorto

The Energy Agency of Oporto, AdEPorto, aims to be a leader in energy sustainability at the municipal level and beyond. In my work, I help promote innovation and good practice as well as inform community stakeholders – contributing to a more sustainable future through smart energy use. I see crowdfunding as a bond that can further unite stakeholders in sustainability projects.

Wola Zmian members believe that, together, people can make huge changes. We are engaged in promotion of community initiatives such as the introduction of participatory budgeting in Warsaw and led the adoption of the first local citizen's resolution. We believe that independent, sustainable sources of energy are the future – also in Poland. Empowerment is our keyword.

**ANETA SKUBIDA, PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD**  
Wola Zmian






**BART DOOMS, VENTURE CREATION MANAGER**  
Vito

VITO is an independent research and technology organisation for cleantech and sustainable development, elaborating solutions for the large societal challenges of today. This includes sustainable energy. As Venture Creation manager it is my role to bring research ideas to a higher business level. In this role I have a good overview of the start-up ecosystem and funding possibilities to bring new ideas to market.

Working for Wind Europe, I am deeply engaged in promoting renewable energies. I am currently the coordinator of the WISE Power project, which looks into alternative ways of financing for wind power as well as strengthening local engagement with and support of wind energy projects. Community and cooperative funding are among the key financing models we investigate.

**DORINA IUGA, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER**  
WindEurope



 <p><b>DAVID DONNERER, COMMUNICATION AND POLICY OFFICER</b> Energy Cities</p>	<p>Energy Cities is a European association of local authorities. Here I support advocacy work for sustainable, innovative financing schemes to fund local energy transition. Many of our member cities such as La Rochelle or Pamplona work closely with crowdfunding platforms or cooperatives such as Lumo (France) or SomEnergia (Spain).</p>
<p>I have dedicated the better part of the last 30 years to renewable energies, having been involved in a vast number of hydropower, wind, PV and biomass projects. In 1991, I founded Ecopower, an energy cooperative that now boasts about 50,000 members, €50 million in equity and some 100 GWh of green electricity production, and currently serve as the president of REScoop.eu.</p>	 <p><b>DIRK VANSINTJAN, PRESIDENT</b> REScoop.eu</p>
 <p><b>KARSTEN WENSLAUFF, FOUNDER</b> Institute of Communications for Social Media</p>	<p>Crowdfunding has long captivated me. I authored the first European and German Crowdfunding Surveys and have been nominated as a member of the European Crowdfunding Stakeholder Forum, an advisory body to the European Commission. Founder of the German Crowdfunding Network, I also serve as Secretary-General of the German Crowdfunding Association and am currently writing my PhD thesis on Civic Crowdfunding with the University of Hamburg.</p>
<p>I am passionate about crowdfunding, solar energy and especially the combination of these two topics. I was involved in on the first crowdfunded solar projects in the Netherlands and have also acted as a crowdfunding consultant. As business developer involved in the global PV industry, I specialise in the operational phase of PV assets.</p>	 <p><b>STEFANO CRUCCU, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER</b> Solar Plaza</p>
 <p><b>THOMAS MAIDONIS, PROJECT MANAGER</b> WIP Renewable Energies</p>	<p>An energy economist by background, I completed my post graduate studies in energy and environmental resource management and also have considerable experience on RES project financing. As a project manager, I have been involved in various EU projects dealing with a range of technical and non-technical energy related aspects. I currently coordinate the CrowdFundRES project on Crowdfunding for renewables.</p>

## 4 Awards

Citizenenergy's innovative approach to sustainable energy financing and to uniting community energy movements across Europe makes it an ideal candidate for various awards, whether regional, national or international. These, in turn, can lend increased visibility to the platform. Applying to such awards, however, only made sense as soon as Citizenenergy was up and running with good examples to show. As such, the Citizenenergy team could really only apply for awards well after the platform's launch in November 2015, which was delayed for various reasons.

While the first application for which Citizenenergy was applied had its deadline in 2014, the next was submitted after the platform's launch in February 2016. In the 11 months that followed, a further five applications were completed. Two final awards will be applied to in February 2017, just before project end. In total, Citizenenergy will have applied to nine awards; five international and four national. An overview of the awards to which Citizenenergy has applied with links follows:

Name	Type	Partner	Due date	Result	About the award
<a href="#">ANJE – entrepreneur-ship award</a>	National	Boa Energia	30.09.2014	<b>Reply pending</b>	The Portuguese Association of Young Business Men award for innovative projects.
<a href="#">The Sustainable Energy Awards</a>	International	Climate Alliance	22.02.2016	<b>Rejected</b> , Citizenenergy featured platform Coopernico won	The EUSEW Awards honour outstanding investments promoting energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies in the commercial, residential and municipal sectors.
<a href="#">Momentum for change</a>	International	Climate Alliance	25.04.2016	<b>Rejected</b> , Highly rated with follow up requested.	Spearheaded by the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat, Momentum for Change shines a light on the most innovative, scalable and replicable examples of what people around the world are doing to tackle climate change.
<a href="#">Green Project Awards 2017 Energy Globe Award</a>	National	Boa Energia	31.05.2016	<b>Reply pending</b>	Portugal's most relevant award for sustainability and green innovation.
	International	Greencrowding	06.12.2016	<b>Reply pending</b>	With 177 participating countries, Energy Globe is the biggest platform for sustainability and the world's No 1 environmental award. Our most important goal is to introduce and award innovative showcase projects and smart technologies from all over the world that are capable of creating sustainable change.
<a href="#">Green Apple Awards</a>	International	Abundance	30.06.2017	<b>Reply pending</b>	The Green Apple Environment Awards is a well-established (launched in 1994) international awards scheme and an accredited feeder scheme into the European Business Awards for the Environment. Citizenenergy ticks both the environmental and sustainable boxes.
<a href="#">Label COP22</a>	International	Climate Alliance	Late 2016	<b>Reply pending</b>	The COP22 label for projects allows demonstration of the support of the COP22 Steering Committee for innovative projects in line with COP objectives.
<a href="#">Solar awards EU</a>	International	University of Santiago	Submission after 15.02	<b>Submission pending</b>	These awards honour innovative projects and initiatives that make use of renewable energies.

EUSEW  
awards

Inter- national	Boa Energia	Sub- mission after 01.02.	<b>Submission pending</b>	The EU Sustainable Energy Awards recognise outstanding innovation in energy efficiency and renewables. Nominees/finalists are chosen from a shortlist of the year's most successful projects for clean, secure and efficient energy.
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Many of the award applications are outstanding; submissions for the Solar Awards EU and of the 2017 EUSEW awards are only possible as of February 2017. The Momentum for Change Award claimed to have rated Citizenenergy very highly and requested further information so that Citizenenergy could be posted on the Momentum website – unfortunately, despite various emails and the provision of information, this request was never followed up on by the Momentum team. The COP22 label award application seemed to experience technical difficulties as no confirmation was sent upon application and contact details were available on the application site to follow up. The ANJE Award (Portugal), submitted in 2014 also did not receive any official rejection, but given the amount of time that has passed, it is unlikely that Citizenenergy won.

The Citizenenergy team remains hopeful that there will be a win or two in store for the remaining 4 awards in the table above.

## 5 Citizenenergy Project of the Year Award



In addition to applying for awards, Citizenenergy launched an award of its own. The 2016 Project of the Year Award celebrates Citizenenergy's first year online, honouring the project on Citizenenergy that best contributes to a sustainable energy future.

All projects posted on Citizenenergy after its launch in November 2015 and by 20 November 2016 were eligible for the award – whether open for investment or

already closed at the time. The Citizenenergy team conducted brief a pre-selection to ensure only projects with complete descriptions entered the final voting. This made for a total of [14 candidate projects](#). Voting then took place during one week in early December 2016. People were invited to vote via mails and social media – a total of 430 people ended up submitting their ranking of the projects.

The winner, Spanish crowdfunding platform ECrowd! and the Mar de Fulles energy-independent eco



complex project won by a veritable landslide. Both ECrowd! and representatives of the Mar de Fulles project were invited to an awards ceremony held at the EU Parliament, in which they each received a plaque of recognition.

The 2016 Project of the Year Award ended up attracting a lot of attention and is something Citizenenergy will surely turn into an annual tradition.

See links for more information:

[Call for projects](#) | [14 candidate projects](#) | [Award voting launch](#) | [Award ceremony announcement](#)

## 6 Indicators

This section gives a brief overview of project success indicators that are related to social media, key opinion leaders and awards. Indicators related to other communication and dissemination activities including events are not included here as they are covered in other reports. Important changes to some deliverables and indicators were made as per the contract amendment; this section refers to the amended success indicators.

**Indicator:** At least 1,000 social media followers gathered within project duration

**Result:** As of February 2017, Citizenenergy has a total of 949 followers on Twitter, 1,541 likes on Facebook and 97 contacts on LinkedIn for a total of 2,587 social media followers.

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**Indicator:** At least one internal award

**Result:** One internal award for 2016 Project of the Year delivered

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**Indicator:\*** Application to at least one EU level award and 6 others

**Result:** A total of 7 international award applications (2 of which to be submitted in February) and 2 national awards

\* This indicator was stated in the text only, not in the list of smart indicators.

....

**Indicator:** At least 12 key Opinion Leaders coming from at least 6 countries featured on the platform

**Result:** 24 key opinion leaders working across 10 European countries featured on the platform

## 7 Conclusion

It can truly be said that Citizenenergy surpassed all communication goals relative to social media, key opinion leaders and awards. The success of these important parts of the communications strategy can be attributed both to the hard work of certain partners as well as the appeal of the Citizenenergy itself – something that will surely not stop at the project's end.