

On February 17, 2025, representatives of the Mazovian Office of Regional Planning participated in the Mazovian Energy Communities Forum in Warsaw, organized under the patronage of the Marshal of the Mazovian Voivodeship, Mr. Adam Struzik, and the XOOG Energy Clusters P.S.A. energy group. The event gathered representatives of local governments, industry experts, government agencies, and the scientific and business sectors. The meeting focused on energy transition, distributed energy and the challenges local municipal units face to improve energy mix. Among the key priorities of forum was introducing the planned Mazovian Instrument for Supporting Energy Communities.

The forum was opened by the Marshal of the Mazovian Voivodeship, Adam Struzik, the Vice President of the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management , Józef Matysiak, and the President of the Bank for Environmental Protection (Bank Ochrony Środowiska S.A.), Bartosz Kublik. The speeches emphasized that meeting the energy transition is a challenge that requires interdisciplinary cooperation at the local level. Due to the current geopolitical issues, European and national climate and energy policies changes, new technological trends, and evolving social attitudes, the role of local energy communities has increased. Marshal Adam Struzik highlighted that energy efficiency measures at the local level is crucial for the energy transition process and one of the goals of the „Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030+. Mazovia as on Innovative Region”.

The Marshal’s Plenipotentiary for Investment and Economic Affairs, Mr. Mariusz Rukat, presented the assumptions of the Mazovian Instrument for Supporting Energy Communities . The program aims to support organizational and technological processes related to developing local renewable energy sources, including balancing, producing, and storing electricity at the municipal level in the Mazovian Voivodeship. The Mazovian Voivodeship government allocated PLN 5 million to support initiatives improving energy security, combating energy poverty through energy price stabilization, and sustainable management of natural resources. The funds, provided as grants, will support the development of local energy clusters and energy cooperatives. The instrument will be launched in the second quarter of 2025.

During the forum, the Mazovian Voivodeship Government and the Bank Ochrony Środowiska S.A. announced a strategic partnership to support the energy transition. The agreement will facilitate access to financial resources necessary for implementing pro-ecological solutions in the local energy sector.

The event featured two discussion panels. The key discussion topics included energy security and the transformation of the energy sector. The first panel focused on the

organizational challenges and needs of local governments regarding distributed energy. Panelists discussed how energy communities can support decentralized systems to improve local energy security and reduce energy costs. Experts emphasized the urgent need to simplify administrative procedures and support local energy communities and enterprises. Local governments face challenges related to structural constraints (take-up of the electricity by Distribution System Operator). Additionally, expanding specialized knowledge on energy management and trading, particularly in the field of renewable energy sources, is necessary within local government structures. A transparent and stable legislative system supporting investors and energy cluster members was also identified as crucial for effectively implementing projects that promote the development of energy communities.

The second discussion panel addressed legislative, technological, and financial aspects of local energy systems. The primary discussion topic was funding and financing opportunities for renewable energy investments. Panelists highlighted the significant role of biogas, biomethane, and hydrogen technologies in improving energy security. Modern renewable energy-based technologies, electrification, and energy storage solutions were also presented as means to support the transition of local energy systems towards zero-emission solutions. Funding sources were discussed, emphasizing the need for a thorough analysis of local governments' needs and proper investment planning to prevent projects from being tailored to available funds rather than the real energy needs of the respective communities.

The Mazovian Energy Communities Forum underscored the importance of cross-sector cooperation and the necessity of a stable legislative environment for developing renewable energy sources. Key challenges include optimizing energy cluster and energy cooperatives, measuring energy efficiency, storing energy, and securing funding for local projects. Strengthening the role of local governments and their collaboration with the scientific and industrial sectors can accelerate the energy transition, leading to a more efficient and sustainable energy system in Poland.

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