

Fallen Legacy or New Hope?

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Energy Cooperatives as Means to Achieve Energy Justice in Poland

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Energy Cooperative

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise (ICA, 2015)

Energy cooperatives provide their members with a special type of service and goods, electricity and fuels.



Energy Justice

- *Energy justice has emerged as a new crosscutting social science research agenda which seeks to apply justice principles to energy policy, energy production and systems, energy consumption, energy activism, energy security and climate change (Jenkins et al., 2016);*
- *5 tenets:*
 - *distributive justice;*
 - *procedural justice;*
 - *recognition justice;*
 - *restorative justice;*
 - *cosmopolitan justice.*
- *Among solutions we propose more openness and real dialogue between key energy stakeholders... Naturally, this must not be a one-size-fits-all proposal that completely ignores national context (like political institutions, market structure, or social circumstances), but a way to include theories like energy justice in real policy making (Heffron, Sokołowski, 2024).*



Table 1
Energy justice articles on the rise 2013–2023.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. Of Articles	3	11	18	45	48	115	124	176	230	287	305

Table:2
The 5 Energy Justice Principles – Definitions, Application & Sources.

Energy Justice Principle	Countries that Apply this	Brief Summary Definition
Distributive	United States, Colombia and South Africa	Cost, finance and affordability should be fair
Procedural	United States, Colombia and South Africa	The legal system provides a platform for each stakeholder to be represented
Restorative	United States, Colombia and South Africa	Prevent and correct environmental impacts
Recognition	United States, and Colombia	Gives a voice to stakeholders (inc. indigenous people)
Cosmopolitan	None yet	Ensures obligations are met across regions and borders
Legislation & Policy Material for each Country: - United States: United States Department of Energy. 2022. Justice40 Initiative Fact Sheet. ¹ - Colombia: Colombian Ministry of Mines and Energy. 2023. Diagnóstico base para la Transición Energética Justa.² - South Africa: South Africa Presidential Climate Commission. 2022. Just Transition Framework for South Africa.³		

Source: Heffron, Sokołowski (2024)

Seven Pillars for Energy Cooperation

- Participation
- Independence
- Responsibility
- Solidarity
- Security
- Decentralisation
- Education

The presented framework of seven pillars for energy cooperation provides an analytical tool for researchers and lays down a useful guideline for legislators, policy-makers, and cooperative members themselves. This framework is derived both from general cooperative research and specific studies on energy justice. (Sokołowski et al.; unpublished)



Polish Cooperatives: Old Glory

1816 - Towarzystwo Rolnicze Hrubieszowskie
(*Agricultural Association of Hrubieszów*)

In 1937, there were 12.9 thousand active cooperatives in Poland with 3 million members — almost every tenth Pole belonged to a cooperative (Boczar, 1973).



Fallen Legacy

That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this “cooperative” socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organizing the population in cooperative societies.
(Lenin, 1965)



Moral Legitimacy

In Poland, cooperatives struggle with a lack of moral legitimacy, which reflects beliefs about whether the activity effectively promotes societal welfare, as defined by the audience's socially constructed value system.



New Hope?

Wherever self-help institutions and cooperatives develop... at the same time there must be, and are taking place, profound changes in customs and human souls, in the upbringing of children, in physical and moral hygiene, and in the understanding of the tasks of life and happiness... a feeling of independent creation and human solidarity emerges.
(Abramowski, 1938)



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Thank you for your attention!

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