

**mgr Karolina Chról, Energy Communities in EU and Polish Legal Regulation, ORCID:
0000-0002-6202-7634**

Abstract in English:

The dissertation focuses on the legal framework governing energy communities in Poland and in the European Union, as well as on the role of local government units in establishing and operating them. The analysis explores the impact of law on the development of distributed energy systems, energy security, and citizens participation in the energy transition process. The research primarily employs the dogmatic–legal method, complemented by elements of historical and comparative analyses. The research material includes EU and Polish legal acts, case law, and relevant literature.

The first chapter presents the axiological and definitional foundations of key concepts such as energy democracy, energy security, distributed energy, and community. The second chapter discusses the development of regulations on distributed energy and the shift away from the centralized energy market model. The third chapter analyzes legal regulations concerning various forms of energy communities at the level of the European Union and Poland. The fourth chapter focuses on the tasks of local government units in the field of energy and their cooperation in this area. The fifth chapter examines energy communities at the intersection of public and private law. The conclusion contains findings and proposals for legislative changes.

The findings demonstrate that, in the context of the evolving regulation of distributed energy, energy communities can be regarded as the next stage in the evolution of the energy market, promoting its decentralisation and the growing participation of local governments and private local actors. At the EU level, the legal framework for Citizens Energy Communities (CEC) and Renewable Energy Communities (REC) has been established, while in the Polish legal system three main forms have emerged: energy clusters, energy cooperatives, and citizens energy communities. Particular attention is devoted to the role and competences of local government units, including the concept of “energy self-governance”, as well as to the legal forms of cooperation between local governments and external entities. The analysis also highlights the difficulties in classifying energy communities within a single branch of law due to their hybrid legal nature.

The final part of the dissertation proposes directions for legislative reform, including the elimination of unnecessary territorial and organisational restrictions and the creation of a new type of energy community better suited to cooperation between local government units and

local stakeholders. The study emphasises that energy communities operate at the intersection of public and private law, enabling the combination of social objectives with market mechanisms. Their further development is presented as a key component of a modern and sustainable national energy policy.