

## **WP5 SOCIAL INNOVATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

### **Description**

The WP aims to reinforce the social dimension in renewable energy development, by promoting knowledge exchanges between business and CSO involved in RE planning and implementation and academic institutions that carry out research on social issues concerning energy. It aims to explore how resources from social research can be used to enhance the involvement of communities, to tap into local knowledge to create innovative solutions, to defuse potential causes for conflict around landscapes and cultural values. It has a strong training dimension, providing researchers and technicians from business and civil society organisations with information on cutting edge methodological tools for social research and participatory engagement emanated from academia. Nevertheless, secondments of academic social researchers in business and CSO will also raise their awareness of the needs, interests and specialised knowledge of non-academic partners, extremely fruitful for future collaborations. Finally, this WP also has a strong dissemination component, patent both in scientific outputs (article, report) and actions aimed at communities (exhibition) and the general public, as well as seminar that will include all WP participants.

### **WP Leaders**

ICSUL

### **Participants**

ICSUL, USE, AUTH, BGU, COOPERNICO, ENERCOUTIM, CLANER, TERRITORIA, GEOSYSTEM HELLAS, SP INTERFACE

### **Objectives**

01. To identify and replicate social innovations in the field of renewable energies in the consortium countries.
02. To appraise innovative practices in public engagement in renewable energies.
03. To strengthen the cultural dimension of renewable energy development processes.
04. To promote training and dissemination of methodologies for public engagement.

### **Framework**

The social innovations approach will focus on how communities can contribute to designing solutions for renewable energy acceptance and implementation that are novel, effective, efficient, sustainable, and fair. These solutions take into account a multitude of factors such as sense of place, quality of life, technology, territorial development, procedural and distributive justice, or collective aspirations (Devine-Wright & Devine-Wright, 2006; Devine-Wright, 2011;

Lévesque et. al., 2014; Delicado et al., 2014). The project will engage with the growing body of literature on this issue but also collect case study information in the participating countries through a multilevel approach. It will pay particular attention to key questions such as public engagement, innovation in social relations (social capital) and territorial capital, cooperation between agents on the basis of environmental reciprocity and solidarity, co-learning processes, knowledge co-production and bottom-up capacity-building. It aims to contribute to energy policy-making that is more open, citizen-minded and sustainable (Moulaert et al, 2013).

## **Concepts**

### **Social Innovation**

“social innovation refers broadly to innovation in meeting social needs of, or delivering social benefits to, communities – the creation of new products, services, organizational structures or activities that are ‘better’ or ‘more effective’ than traditional public sector, philanthropic or market-reliant approaches in responding to social exclusion. (...) it means innovation in social relations. As such, we see the term as referring not just to particular actions, but also to the mobilization-participation processes and to the outcome of actions which lead to improvements in social relations, structures of governance, greater collective empowerment, and so on. (...) three [are] generic and interrelated features of social innovation: satisfaction of needs, reconfigured social relations and empowerment or political mobilization.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Energy cooperative**

“Energy cooperatives are innovative social structures that find collective solutions to problems occurring during transition processes or provide testbeds for adapting low carbon energy technologies to local conditions and needs. Various forms of energy cooperatives exist and the energy services they provide are broad, ranging from electricity provision to district heating, IT solutions and energy efficiency consulting. Their organizational structures differ across Europe due to country-specific regulatory frameworks and local needs. However, there are common denominators which clearly distinguish them from established commercial actors in energy markets, such as energy utilities. Common characteristics include the involvement of the wider public (enabling the direct participation and ownership of members), the pursuit of non-commercial benefits (such as the fostering of community spirit) and the motivation to accelerate the transition to sustainable energy systems (e.g., phasing out nuclear power, regaining local ownership and control of energy provision).”<sup>2</sup>

### **Energy communities**

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<sup>1</sup> Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A. and Hamdouch, A. 2013. “General introduction: the return of social innovation as a scientific concept and a social practice”, in Moulaert, F. et al. (eds), *The international handbook on social innovation: Collective action, social learning and transdisciplinary research*. Elgar Original Reference, Edward Elgar Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> Herbes, C., Brummer, V., Rognli, J., Blazejewski, S., & Gericke, N. (2017). Responding to policy change: New business models for renewable energy cooperatives – Barriers perceived by cooperatives’ members. *Energy Policy*, 109(June), 82–95.

“Community energy activities have been commonly defined through their local participation: energy produced “by” and “for” local stakeholders. In this they have an open, participatory, and collective character (...). In the community energy context, community is often defined as a local unit, which operates inside a limited geographical area. The community typically features a shared ownership and financing structure as well as shared decision-making rules. Often, the maintenance and further development of the S-RET remains with the community, contributing to the upkeep and deepening of energy competences among the community members”<sup>3</sup>

### **Task 1** Case studies (CS) of social innovation and entrepreneurship in the energy sector

This task consists of the identification of relevant cases of social innovation regarding renewable energy (novel more sustainable solutions to problems such as community opposition, landscape impacts, underdeveloped RE generation potential) through document analysis and interviews with stakeholders. A common template will be designed for data collection in order to derive comparable information and best practices jointly with WP2 to WP4. Scientific paper on case studies of social innovation and entrepreneurship in the energy sector will be published.

**Deliverable:** D 5.1. Case studies: article in peer review journal Month 42 (January 2021). Public

### **Research questions**

**RQ1.** *What networks and practices are developing social innovation tools? What are their best practices?*

**RQ2.** *What social innovations exist to promote and support extended renewable energy landscapes?*

### **Methodology**

1. Literature review - Definition of “social innovation” in the context of RE (cooperatives, microgrids, community energy)
2. Policy review - Analysis of legislation and policy documents for assessing framework for social innovation in RE (cooperatives, microgrids, community energy)
3. Document and web analysis - Identification of social innovations in the partner countries (type, location, main actors), creation of an analytical grid, selection of case studies
4. Interviews with cooperative representatives - analysis of actors, networks, practices, connection to the policy and legal framework (barriers and incentives)

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<sup>3</sup> Hyysalo, S., & Juntunen, J. K. (2018). User innovation and peer assistance in small- scale renewable energy technologies, in Davidson, D. and Gross, M. (eds), Oxford Handbook of Energy and Society, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 361–380.



5. Interviews with promoters, authorities and residents of energy communities - analysis of actors, networks, practices, connection to the policy and legal framework (barriers and incentives), citizen participation
6. Identification of best practices

**Task 2** Landscape and cultural analysis (LCA).

This task consists of developing studies on landscape and cultural factors in potential locations for renewable energy. Researchers will gather information on local cultural valuations of landscape and heritage in order to assess and anticipate potential conflicts and resistance to renewable energy facilities and help devise alternative locations or mitigation measures (through visual tools and other planning devices in cross cooperation with WP4).

**Deliverable (non-mandatory):** D 5.3 Report; Month 40 (2021, May). Public

**Research questions**

**RQ4** *What values shape the implementation of spatial planning tools for renewable energy development e.g., economic, social, cultural?*

**RQ5.** *What are the significant dilemmas voiced in public participation e.g., sustainability issues, conflicts, employment opportunities?*

**Methodology**

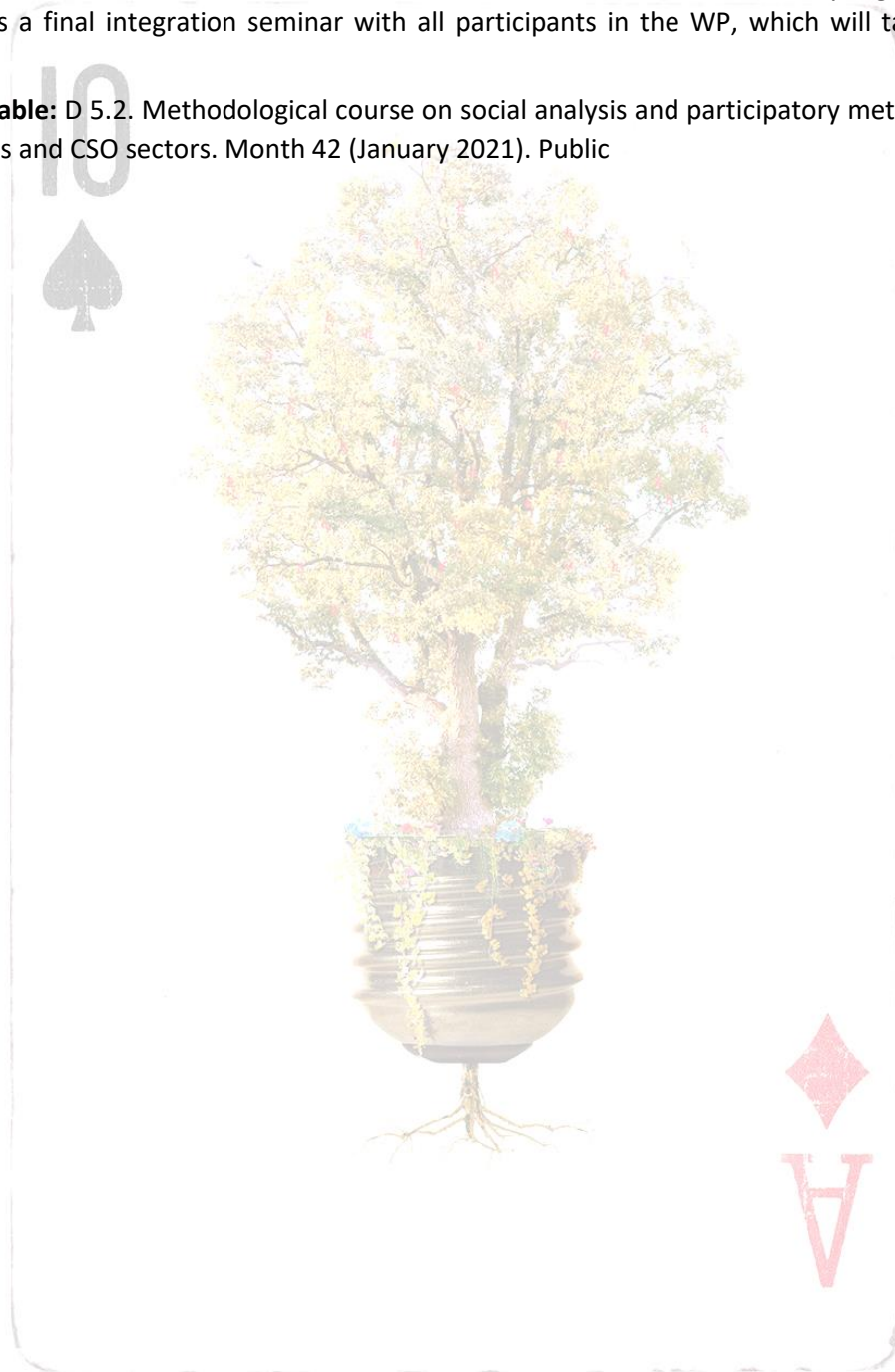
This task will be carried out on three WP4 case studies, one on urban zone and two on rural land (municipal scale and territorial scale):

1. Analysis of the energy planning in force (or being drafted), and the landscape studies on which it is based.
2. In coordination with WP4, analysis using the web-GIS platform methodology.
3. Citizen participation. Review of studies.
4. Comparison between the landscape study and derived planning in force (1) and the study based on PEARLS methodology, including participation (2-3).
5. Proposal of criteria and measures for landscape mitigation.

**Task 3** Training (T) in social analysis and participatory methods according to WP1 communication and dissemination strategy.

This comprises the organisation of a methodological course on social analysis and participatory methods aimed at researchers and technicians from business and civil society organisations. It includes a final integration seminar with all participants in the WP, which will take place at ICSUL.

**Deliverable:** D 5.2. Methodological course on social analysis and participatory methods for the business and CSO sectors. Month 42 (January 2021). Public



**Annex**

**List of secondments WP5**

Start Month/year	Duration (months)	Sending	Receiving
July 2019	1	Territoria	ICS
August	1	USE	ENERCOUTIM
August 2019	2	CLANER	ICS
November 2019	1	CLANER	UH
January 2020	3	ICS	Territoria
June 2020	1	COOPERNICO	USE
July 2020	1	Territoria	ICS
August 2020	1	Territoria	ICS
August 2020	1	USE	ENERCOUNTIM
April 2021	2	GSH	ICS
May 2021	2	AUTH	COOPERNICO
June 2021	1	AUTH	ENERCOUTIM
July 2021	1	Territoria	ICS

**Potential case studies WP5 Task 1**

	Energy cooperatives	Energy communities
Spain	Som Energia Sevilla ...	Crevillent ( <a href="https://www.compile-project.eu/">https://www.compile-project.eu/</a> )? ...
Portugal	Coopernico	Culatra ( <a href="#">Clean Energy for EU Islands</a> ) Valverde ( <a href="#">SENSIBLE</a> ) Lisboa ( <a href="#">COMPILE</a> )
Greece	...	Rafina ( <a href="#">COMPILE</a> )?
Israel	...	Kibutz (to be defined)

**Information to be collected in the case studies: energy cooperatives**

- Name

- Location
- History (foundation, founders)
- Barriers and support
- Size (number of members, number of clients, social profile, workers, volunteers)
- Energy commercialisation activities
- Energy generation activities/infrastructures – planning, citizen participation
- Other activities
- Management – participation, decision-making
- Dissemination and recruitment
- Connections with local/regional/national authorities
- Connections with private actors (profit and non-profit)
- Connections with other energy cooperatives (local/regional/national/international)
- Cooperatives and social acceptance of RE
- Cooperatives and local development
- Cooperatives and RE impacts

**Information to be collected in the case studies: energy communities**

- Name
- Location
- Aim/objectives
- Promoters
- Actors/stakeholders involved
- Technologies (energy generation, energy storage, heating, mobility, others)
- RE Technologies (wind, solar, biomass, hydro, wave/tide, other)
- Action areas (energy, waste, transport, education, etc.)
- Political/legal framework
- Funding
- Community participation and engagement
- Acceptance of RE/resistance and opposition
- Landscape impacts
- Socioeconomic impacts (local development, energy poverty)
- Barriers to the development of community energy
- Factors promoting the development of community energy