

Governance | Individual communication

IC - (20887) - INCLUSIVE LOW-CARBON TRANSITIONS? POSITIVE ENERGY DISTRICTS AND ENERGY POVERTY

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Background and objectives

Energy poverty affected at least 34 million Europeans in 2018. The COVID19 pandemic and subsequent energy price rises across Europe have further highlighted this problem for policymakers.

Positive Energy Districts (PEDs) are innovative urban areas that aim to produce more renewable energy than they consume, contain highly energy efficient buildings and actively encourage citizen participation. They are meant to be guided by principles of inclusivity, affordability and sustainability, allowing for a high quality of life. But how is energy poverty perceived by stakeholders in different PEDs across Europe? What steps are being made towards ensuring PEDs are inclusive? What are the perceived barriers to PED creation?

Process and methods (for empirical research)

This research is based on both relevant literature and semi-structured interviews conducted with key stakeholders from diverse PEDs, carbon-neutral and smart city districts. Using energy vulnerability factors and an energy justice framework, this research sheds light on how the topic of energy poverty mitigation is experienced and picked up by PED stakeholders. Stakeholders from PEDs in Belgium, Czechia, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Spain, Finland, the Netherlands and Italy, were interviewed in order to determine how and to what extent they approached the topic of inclusivity, with a focus on energy poverty reduction.

Main results (or main arguments in the case of critical reviews)

Results show that responses vary widely, with some urban areas working to make sure that participatory processes are inclusive, whilst others focus purely on the technical aspects of PED creation. Most stakeholders agree that there is potential for PEDs to reduce energy poverty, but there are concerns regarding funding inclusive PEDs.

Implications for research and practice/policy | Importance and originality of the contribution

The contribution of this talk is towards the framing of energy poverty in European urban areas, also informing policymaking for inclusive PED replication.

Palavras-chave : Smart cities and communities, positive energy districts, PEDs, energy poverty, energy justice, energy vulnerability, fair transition, governance, inclusiveness,