

SSH Embedding in H2020 Energy Research

Horizon 2020 Energy
Virtual Info Day

#H2020Energy

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Empowering consumers ...

- *More information for consumers to make better energy choices*
- *A more active role for consumers: demand-response and smart technologies, but also prosumers and consumer associations*
- *Better protection of consumers: against unfair practices, against breaches of their privacy*

... but it's not just about more choice!

- *Giving consumers more choice is not enough; nor is better understanding why consumers don't always exercise the choices they already have. What is needed is to:*
- *Improve social acceptance of the energy transition (e.g. renewable energy installations, transmission lines)*
- *Encourage social innovation in the energy field (going beyond REScoop: greater role for municipalities, governance frameworks, etc.)*



The EU's energy policy making is focused on consumers - and citizens!

- *Energy Union: Citizen involvement, social dialogue, social innovation as enablers*
- *Energy Union Research, Innovation and Competitiveness Strategy (EURICS, building on the SET-Plan): Citizens and cities as hubs for innovation*
- *Research, innovation AND COMPETITIVENESS!: Creating jobs and growth*

Socioeconomic aspects are embedded in the EC's research and innovation support

- *Horizon 2020: Commitment to embed the social sciences and humanities ("SSH") across all the research support provided (including energy).*
- *Why? H2020 is challenge-based: the knowledge needed to address complex societal challenges is spread across multiple disciplines, including SSH*
- *Expected impact: R&I geared towards solutions that are relevant to societal needs, directly applicable or marketable, and cost efficient.*

Remaining Challenges ...

- *Much important work on SSH aspects of current energy research is already being done, BUT*
- *Relevant research communities are fragmented: differences among the various SSH disciplines, and between "social scientists" and "technologists"*
- *This works against stronger involvement by SSH specialists, and it diminishes the capacity of more technologically-oriented approaches to provide workable solutions to our present-day challenges.*

A new platform for SSH (LCE 32)

- *Reach out to existing energy-related SSH networks and bring them closer together;*
- *Propose a strategic research agenda to address remaining gaps for SSH in the energy field*
- *Strengthen dialogue among European energy-research stakeholders, and provide policy-related advice to European policymakers.*



Dedicated SSH support for the Energy Union (LCE 31)

- *In 2016, focus on energy-related choices and behaviour (individually and collectively)*
- *In 2017, focus on socioeconomic incentive structures, and political, institutional and organizational (i.e. governance) frameworks*

To sum up: SSH embedding is critical for delivering energy-research priorities

- *Addressing broad societal challenges requires a multi-disciplinary approach, including SSH*
- *Success of key policy initiatives rests on better understanding – and furthering – the involvement of European consumers and citizens*



Thank You!

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