

Publication

Innovative but unjust? Analysing the opportunities and justice issues within positive energy districts in Europe

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The current energy transition focuses on decarbonisation through the use of renewable energy sources, coupled with improvements in efficiency by means of technological innovations. However, there is also a clear call for realizing a just transition. The implementation of smart technology-led transitions and low-carbon energy system innovations is increasingly urged to become more people-centred by taking energy poverty and other justice related issues into account. Energy justice and energy poverty debates already transcend narrow foci on income and energy expenditure ratios and have moved towards multidimensional approaches (Bouzarovski and Petrova, 2015) [1]. In addition, the capability approach (CA) has been used to understand energy deprivation (Day et al., 2016) [2]. We further develop these approaches to better understand justice relevant issues within Positive Energy Districts, especially by looking at how opportunity spaces for realizing wellbeing are created. The primary goal is to establish a CA-informed framework for analysing justice-relevant issues within the development of Positive Energy Districts, based on a systematic literature search. Hereby we contribute to the discussion on usage of the CA within the field of energy and to the debate on how to frame technological innovations, such that they can contribute to a just transition.

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