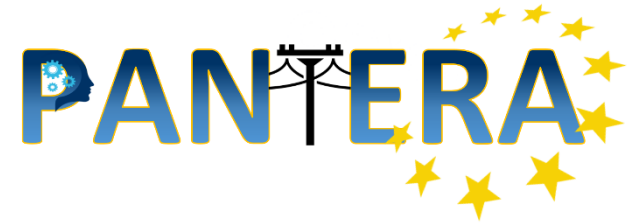




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# Increasing social acceptance through collaboration:

The emergence of Energy Communities –

Lessons Learned and replication routes for island communities

***Green Islands as a driver for the Energy Transition – Going Renewable  
and Smart***

Athens

13/02/2020

Dimitris Kitsikopoulos, ELECTRA ENERGY COOPERATIVE





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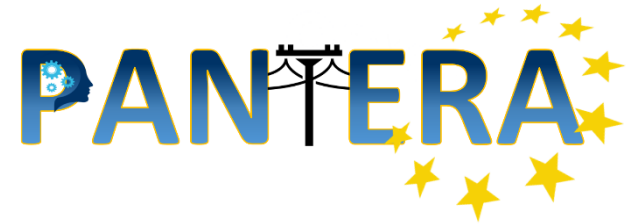
*We work for the development of  
COMMUNITY ENERGY  
in Greece*

*we put all the pieces together (citizens,  
engineers, supporters, funds, etc).  
We offer education, training, awareness  
raising, business modeling, consultancy etc*





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*It is all about synergies...*



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRETE (TUC)  
SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING  
RENEWABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY  
SYSTEMS LABORATORY



ΚΑΠΕ  
CRES



Climate-KIC



HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

THESSALONIKI

Greece



# Problems/needs we are addressing



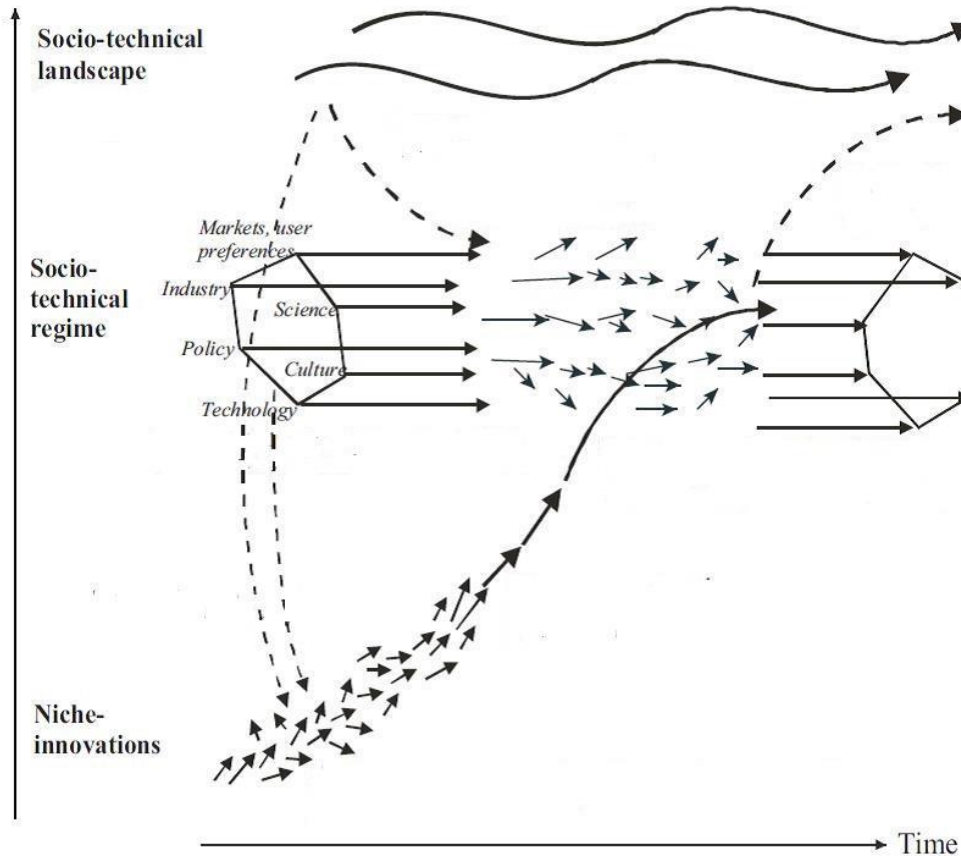
## FOCUSING ON COMMUNITY ENERGY

- Policies / regulations gaps
- Lack of awareness
- Education and Training
- Governance (of Energy Communities)
- Lack of expertise
- Lack of suitable financing tools
- Social resistance



# Problems/needs we are addressing

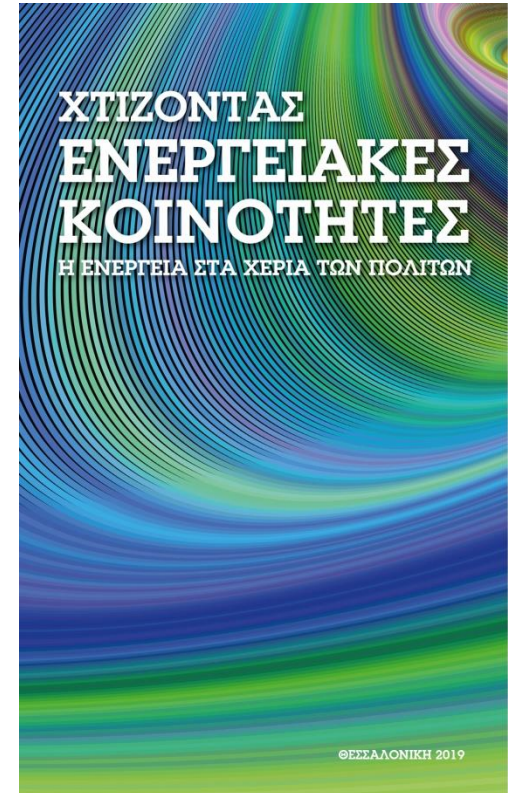
## Structuring Community Energy



# How we address the problem



- Policies / regulations gaps: Policy making actions, synergies with other organizations in Greece and Europe (eg RESCOOP)
- Awareness raising : Events, Guidebook “Building Energy Communities - energy in the hands of citizens”, media, articles, etc
- Education and Training : Workshops
- Governance (of Energy Communities) : Research, synergies with IT companies
- Lack of expertise : Networking, consultancy
- Lack of suitable financing tools : Mobilize conventional banks and cooperative banks, develop a community energy financing tool





# How we address the problem



PILOT PROJECT: **HYPERION**

Virtual net-metering / 45 households / 180 kw / Photovoltaic park / Athens



# Barriers faced, Lessons Learned and future challenges



## *HYPERION:*

- *Financing*
- *Expertise*
- *Access to land*
- *Governance tools (decision making, voting, ease of joining and leaving, billing, transparency)*
- *Public reluctance to cooperative models*
- *Social resistance to RES*





# Barriers faced, Lessons Learned and future challenges



*Transform SOCIAL RESISTANCE to SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE*

- Citizens, municipalities, local SMEs become co-owners of RES projects*
- Strategic partnerships with local actors and stakeholders are required*
- A good business plan and a feasibility study are required in order to convince local communities*
- Environmental Assessment Study is required*
- The start-up phase is usually a long process / a seed capital is required*
- Transparency is a crucial factor*
- Generating benefits for the members must be a continuous process*



# Barriers faced, Lessons Learned and future challenges



*Transform SOCIAL RESISTANCE to SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE*

- *Collaborate with other cooperatives*
- *Build a local “ecosystem” / follow a holistic approach*
- *Networking with other Energy Communities at national and international level is crucial – Join 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3d level organizations*
- *Size: the bigger the better.*
- *Flexibility (decision making, products and services design)*
- *Fintech and smart funding*
- *Maintain low operational costs*
- *Communication/promotion/branding: 2-way (the Message and the Identity)*



# Challenges in Resources



**Do you have sufficient expertise/staff to undertake R&I activities within your organisation? (NO)**

- Lack of resources
- External experts

**Does your organisation have adequate funding to engage in R&I activities? (NO)**

- Synergies
- EU Projects capitalization
- Voluntary work (a lot!)

**How can R&I collaboration be supported?**

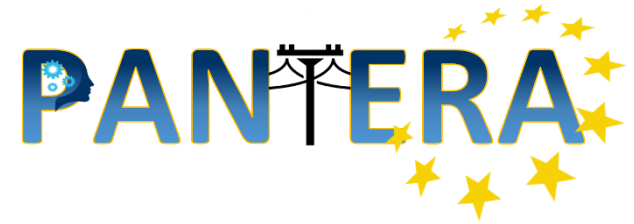
- Participate in national and EU funded projects
- Better networking, more effective synergies, collaboration with academic institutions

**Which areas of Smart Grid R&I pose the biggest challenges?**

- Management / demand-supply
- Energy storage
- Collective virtual-net metering
- Collective ownership of micro-grids



# Challenges in Governance



**What are the main challenges regarding energy-related innovation governance?**

1. Resistance from local communities (energy communities secure an active role for local communities)
2. Energy Communities governance :
  - Decision making
  - Voting
  - Ease of joining and leaving
  - Communication
  - Billing



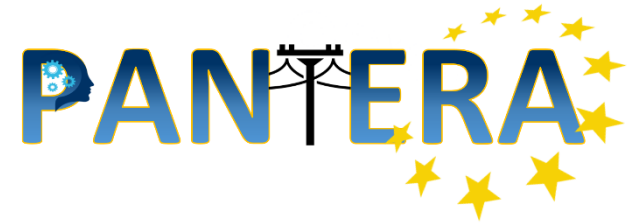
# Gaps in Networking



- Between existing Energy Communities
- Between community energy initiatives
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>d</sup> level organizations
- Between other types of cooperatives (farmers cooperatives, housing cooperatives, workers cooperatives for services)
- Civil society organizations



# Gaps in Regulations



Land use
Virtual net-metering + energy communities
Grid connection priority for Energy Communities / Distribution Network Operator
Limited liability – financing
Special tools and/or guarantees are required





# PANTERA support



## What are your expectations from the PANTERA project?

- Visibility
- Networking
- Knowledge transfer
- Share best practices
- Connect us with experts
- Support community energy transition to smart grids





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cooperative  
enterprises  
build a  
better world

