

Integrating Social Practices in Energy Models

Event: EMP-E Conference 2019, Focus Group in Parallel Session 2

Venue: European Commission DG RTD, CDMA building, 21 Rue du Champ de Mars, 1050 Brussels

Time: 11:45h - 13:30h (1 hour and 45 m)

Objective: This focus group's objective is to discuss how energy models deal with agency and social structures dynamics. The discussion will be fostered by the results of two Horizon2020 projects MAGIC and MEDEAS on how to study agency of individuals and institutions shaping human behaviour and social practices. The discussion will be organized on three main topics (threads):

1. **The challenge of modelling agency and social dynamics in energy models.** What are the main problems encountered in modelling agency across levels and scales in energy models? What are the challenges of anticipating the effects of causality when considering controls over human action across different scales?
2. **Methods and solutions for modelling agency and social dynamics in energy models.** How agency and social dynamics are dealt with in existing models? What are the pros and cons of available methods? Can we imagine improvements or synergies among the different methods?
3. **Governance implications of agency and social dynamics in energy model outcomes.** What is the relation between social practices and energy uses? How are social practices and technology related in energy models? How to integrate technological and social dynamics into energy modelling outcomes? How can energy models simultaneously explore scenarios driven by social changes and scenarios driven by technological innovation? What are the political implications of considering agency and social dynamics in energy models?

Expected outcomes:

- Identification of common **challenges** and problems when addressing agency and social dynamics in energy models.
- Possible **solutions** for a better analysis of agency and institutional effects in energy models.
- Suggestions for improving the policy relevance of energy modelling outcomes and avoiding the attractor of technocentric **governance**.

Format of the focus group:

Following short priming presentations on the challenges of introducing individual agency and the role of institutions defining social practices in energy models, the focus group will take the form of a world café: three twenty-minute rounds of small group conversation around three tables. Each table will be presented with a specific set of questions (primers) around one of three issues.



Time schedule:

Item	Who	Time allocation
Welcome & Introduction:	MAGIC & MEDEAS	5 min
Presentation of the questions fostering the debate, some examples from MEDEAS and MAGIC	MAGIC & MEDEAS	20 min
World Café	All participants (3 tables) Table hosts: - Wander Jager, Groningen Center for Social Complexity Studies, University of Groningen, NL - Nicola Labanca, EC-JRC, Unit C.2 Energy Efficiency and Renewables (tbc) - MEP (to be confirmed)	3 rounds of 20 min each Total: 60 min
Feedback from each table host and plenary discussion	Table hosts and all participants	15 min
Closing remarks	MAGIC & MEDEAS	5 min

Workshop requirements:

- 12-25 participants
- Projector for introductory presentations
- 3 flip charts, marker pens, post-its, tape
- Stickers for the names and for the formation of groups

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