ENERGY EFFICIENCY WATCH

D 3.1. Documentation of Methodology

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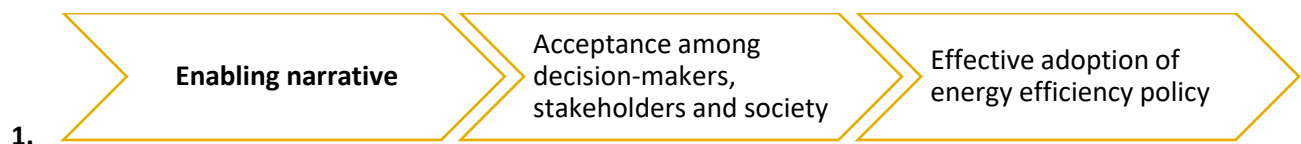| Participant No *	Participant organisation name	Short name	Country	Organisation type
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Introduction

Building on the experience of the previous editions of the Energy Efficiency Watch project, Energy Efficiency Watch 4 (EEW4) will go beyond the traditional approach of analysing policy instruments for their effectiveness. Indeed, a key finding was that a) energy efficiency targets are not achieved because societal benefit is not sufficiently recognized, and b) that successful implementation of energy efficiency policies depends to a great extent on the existence of underlying enabling narrative(s), spurring acceptance among decision-makers, stakeholders and also significant parts of the population. Where discourses are not structured by such enabling narratives, energy efficiency is often controversially debated or ignored, leading to frequent changes of policies and unambitious implementation of measures.

Against this backdrop, EEW4 endeavours to create a better understanding of the discursive conditions, motivations and dynamics of policy debates that enable the implementation of ambitious energy efficiency policies, or that succeed in transforming discursive frameworks in a way that supports energy efficiency. To this end, the project collects input from a wide range of actors, including national and EU parliamentarians, business stakeholders and energy experts. Feedback and good practices will be shared across the EU and national level, helping to leverage impact.

The purpose of this document is to provide a methodological framework for collecting, identifying and analysing enabling narratives that will guide the design and implementation of the input formats and subsequent analysis. Input formats in EEW4 comprise workshops with national and EU Members of Parliament as well as interparliamentary workshops, workshops with business stakeholders and a comprehensive survey of energy experts. In addition, a focus group will provide expert feedback, helping to structure the analysis of enabling narratives. While this document provides the methodological framework, the specific design of these input formats is outlined in the Event Storyline (Deliverable 2.1).

Intervention logic

The guiding question for our analysis in the framework of Energy Efficiency Watch 4 can be summarised as follows: **Which narratives enable the effective adoption and implementation of energy efficiency policies in the EU?** In a second step, we will also look at how adverse discourses can be transformed in a way that supports effective policy implementation. Counter-narratives preventing ambitious efficiency measures are thus also considered. In a schematic fashion, and bearing in mind the continuous dynamic of policy adoption, implementation and feedback, the analysis in EEW4 departs from the following working hypotheses regarding how narratives intervene in the policy cycle:

1.

| Enabling narrative | Acceptance among decision-makers, stakeholders and society | Effective adoption of energy efficiency policy |

Adoption of energy efficiency policy	**Enabling narrative**	Acceptance among stakeholders and society	Effective policy implementation

2.

The analysis will focus on the main structuring discourses and narratives around energy efficiency policies.

Methodological approach

Definitions and analytical concepts

The EEW4 approach to analysing discourses on energy efficiency is ground on relevant social and political science research. We understand **narratives** broadly as a set of consistent chain of statements or stories that typically have a beginning, a middle part and end. Importantly, these stories can be considered as political mechanisms themselves to build consensus among a group of actors, given that 'without stories no consensus' (Hajer 2002). As the constitutive elements of narratives, these stories are often told neither in chronological order nor in full length, but rather expressed in short **story lines**, presupposing specific background knowledge of the narrative in question (Hajer 2005). A common element of these stories are rhetorical figures such as metaphors, with the help of which structural problems are named and specific problems are connected to wider concepts (Hajer 2008).

In the context of EEW4, we can thus conceptualise **enabling narratives** as a set of story lines about accepted benefits of energy efficiency in a country or a region. In addition to energy or climate related benefits, these can be economic benefits (e.g. saving money for energy users), social benefits (e.g. fewer unhealthy buildings) or political benefits (e.g. decreasing import dependency).

Key for the adoption and effective implementation of policies in that sense is how narratives structure the actor landscape of decision-makers, stakeholders and civil society into **discourse coalitions**. As discursive phenomena, these coalitions are understood as a group of actors that 'shares the usage of a particular set of story lines over a particular period of time' (Hajer 2005). In that sense, policy coalitions are 'reproduced and transformed through a variety of political actors that do not necessarily meet but through their very activities reinforce a particular set of story lines in a given policy domain' (Fischer 2003). How energy efficiency policies are adopted and implemented can thus be analysed in light of coalition structures shaped by competing narratives. Against this backdrop, the dominance or **hegemony of a narrative** would be conditioned on: 1) the bandwidth and kind of actors reproducing it, 2) the degree of institutionalisation and 3) the capacity of the narrative to adapt over time to accommodate new evolutions (Hajer 2005).

Drawing on Kingdon's (1984) multiple streams approach to agenda-setting and policy change, prospects for new narratives to alter the political agenda should be the greatest when they are able to use/ create **windows of opportunity**, i.e. by framing salient issues in the public debate and linking them to the dynamics of institutional politics. Typical examples for such opportunities are election periods, at a time when a running policy is up for renewal, or when certain issues suddenly gain public salience due to unexpected focussing events (e.g. catastrophes etc.).

Conceptual approach

For the collection and analysis of empirical material, EEW4 follows a combined inductive and deductive approach, building on grounded theory. The design of the EEW4 setup along its 1) input, 2) testing and 3) dissemination phase allows to derive hypotheses from collected empirical material (induction) and to test those hypotheses against empirical evidence (deduction) so as to avoid influencing research with our own set of predefined interpretations to the extent possible. In the process, EEW4 will analyse enabling narratives and suggest ways on how to develop new ones to support ambitious energy efficiency policies in the EU.

The discourse universe to be analysed in EEW4 centres on the adoption or reform and implementation of EU and national energy efficiency policies and the key debates around them, resulting in a focus on national and EU lawmakers, business stakeholders and the energy expert community. Narratives will mostly be analysed at the national and EU level, yet regional narratives with a strong impact might also be considered.

Operationalisation

The methodology for the collection and analysis of the input will in its practical implementation consist of two phases (**input** and **analysis**), each of which following a tailored approach for the respective task and stakeholder group.

1) Input phase:

The aim of the input phase is to reach out to the broadest possible range of stakeholders to report their experience on energy efficiency policies impacted by narratives. Each of these groups adds a different perspective, and for each of them, input is gathered in a different way, whilst ensuring good comparability of the results. In this task, individual agendas, question lists and moderation concepts for the respective input gathering formats (events, survey etc.) will be prepared. These will be embedded in the event storyline documents and preparation efforts (according to WP2.1).

At the input events, the EEW4 objectives will be clearly outlined to participants to focus discussions on energy efficiency. The design of the input format will be tailored to the respective target group, so will be the set of guiding questions to steer discussions and focus input, such as:

- How come that energy efficiency policies were successfully adopted?
- What have been reasons that initiatives to adopt energy efficiency policies were not successful?
- Which are the factors for the successful implementation of previously adopted energy efficiency policies?
- Which factors led to policy failure?

Participants will be asked to identify and document key themes and factors themselves so as to avoid framing the empirical material with pre-determined interpretations. Workshops will be documented with minutes in a way that provides a consistent basis for subsequent discourse analysis.

Policy makers from national and EU level will be addressed in the context of the **National Parliamentary Workshops** (WP 3.2). A moderated format with a brief key note and guiding questions for the discussion will be developed, to ensure that within a tight time frame as much high-level input can be gathered. Intense parliamentary events are always a challenge, and therefore focused preparation of each event is crucial in order to start the debate from the respective national background, understand the atmosphere in each country and to be at the frontline with the discussions and questions in order to harvest quickly the right arguments and narratives prevailing in each country and group. All results will be kept in minutes.

Following the well-established format of EEW2 and EEW3, the expert community, consisting of over 1,000 stakeholders (from research / scientific institutions, associations and NGOs, agencies / administration etc.), is approached via a comprehensive online survey (WP 3.3), combining quantitative and qualitative elements of assessing the impact of narratives on EE policies.

The **business stakeholder** community is addressed in ten separate **workshops** (WP 3.4) in ten selected EU MS. These half day workshops will be facilitated by local network partners and will work as moderated discussions with pre-defined guiding questions for discussions in smaller groups (tables of 4-6 participants exchanging experience with narratives), which then will be merged into a final plenary

discussion. The format is based on successful experience from EEW3. All results will be kept through

flipchart documentation and a final written summary.

Input from the networks (WP 3.5; eceee via Borg&Co, FEDARENE, Energy Cities) is gathered via their general assemblies, meetings, events, and through 7 webinars by Energy Cities.

The **Focus Group** (WP 3.6) acts as an additional soundboard for those inputs which are considered of particular relevance / which need some further deepening.

Composed of experts from diverse backgrounds, the focus group is established to provide secondary input and review for the analysis, i.e. helping to analyse the empirical material collected and to distil and the story lines into narratives by helping to identify the structuring themes. As a basis for review and discussion, Navigant could provide the focus group with an overview on the state of the EEW4 research, e.g. in the form of a draft narrative structure. This is part of the combined inductive and deductive approach and will provide for an initial test and refinement of the hypotheses generated.

As it may happen that some of the input from other groups needs further sharpening, a mode of effectively consulting the members of this group of selected experts will be developed (e.g. interview style, group commenting, live discussion, written input) depending on the respective need.

2) Analysis:

For analyzing the findings of the input phase, a synthesis of the inputs will be produced and clustered, according to the above described conceptual approach (inductive and deductive).

The inputs are analysed along the following criteria:
- General relevance for the project
- Exemplary interdependence of EE policy instrument and narrative
- Coverage of the various situations in different EU-MS
- Coverage of various sectors relevant for EE policy making
- Key aspects of narrative for well-functioning of the policy instrument
- Learning effects / transfer of knowledge to other contexts
- general rules recognizable how to convey a negative narrative towards positive perception
- overarching patterns recognizable which key benefits have the highest effect in specific country contexts
- further observations to be taken into account.

The skills of the experts in the project team cover political / social science and economy, combined with extensive experience on energy efficiency related policy analysis and related political communication in the respective stakeholder contexts. In case of specific additional requirements on neighbouring subjects such as e.g. psychology of communication / political marketing, selected experts will be invited to advise the project team on incorporating these aspects in the analysis.

Case study development

Applying the methodological concepts outlined above, ten case studies on of energy efficiency narratives will be developed based on collected and reviewed empirical material. Starting with a kick-off at a separate session attached to one of the project meetings, representative cases will be discussed, out of which ten will be selected and elaborated. Deliverables will be a written case study and ppt presentation for each narrative, which will be used in the subsequent testing phase. The case studies will each deal with one narrative per country/ region or, where applicable, city. The case studies will aim at a good balance not only on regional distribution, but also regarding the different sectors (e.g. building or industry related policies and respective narratives), referring to the relevant EU directives (e.g. EPBD, EED). The case studies will be built up in a standard pattern, describing

1) A selected EE policy instrument / policy package
2) a supportive narrative leading to robust implementation, providing also some country, sector, and instrument specific background
3) the key success factors of this combination and possible lessons learned.

Narratives will be contextualised with available information from secondary sources, e.g. regarding the quantified co-benefits of energy efficiency policies from the COMBI Horizon 2020 project.

Conclusions

The approach and steps outlined above provide the methodological basis for carrying out the key activities of EEW4 through the project's input, testing and dissemination stages. In doing so, the framework provides guidance on how to proceed to identify and analyse the narratives that enable the effective adoption and implementation of energy efficiency policies across the EU.

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