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New Horizon 2020 project: The Challenge of the Social Impact of Energy Transitions

Funded by the European Commission's Framework Programme Horizon 2020, the ENTRANCES project recently closed its kick-off meeting with a high scientific and institutional participation, and taking on the challenge of modeling the social impact of the energy transition.

The meeting was held from May 5th to 7th, 2020. The opening session was attended by Mrs Laura Martín, member of the Office of the Vice-Presidency of the Government of Spain, Professor Amparo Casares, Vice-Chancellor for Sustainability of the University of A Coruña (Spain), host of the coordination team, Gerd Schonwalder, Policy Officer of the 'SSH aspects of energy transition' within the DG of Research and Innovation of the EC, Manuela Conconi, Project Officer at the INEA, EC, as well as more than 50 researchers connected from 14 European research organisations in twelve European countries.

In a globalised context, many European regions are exposed to the deep and sometimes painful transformation of their social, economic and cultural life. The clean energy transition, if not properly managed, may become an additional and decisive factor of "deterritorialisation" for those regions that are still heavily dependent on fossil-fuel-based industries or the extraction of fossil fuels themselves, i.e. coal and carbon-intensive regions.

A new three-year project, ENTRANCES ("ENergy TRANSitions from Coal and Carbon: Effects on Societies"), will investigate the challenges facing carbon-intensive regions in transition – hinging on the idea that the transition to clean energy should not be considered only as a technological change or an industrial shift but also a socio-economic-psychological process that affects the daily life of local communities. The project will integrate, in a single research framework and in a cross European study focused on 13 coal and carbon-intensive regions, socio-economic factors, political dynamics and deep territorial transformations linked to the energy transition. The Halle Institute for Economic Research (IWH) contributes to the project a quantitative model and a simulation of the socio-economic effects of decarbonisation in the affected regions and case studies for the coal regions Rhineland and Central-Germany.

The project follows the European strategy to reduce emissions by up to 40% from 1990 levels and pursues the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, as a frame of reference. It will analyse **processes of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation** in 13 European mining regions from a **socio-economic, socio-technical, socio-cultural, socio-political, socio-ecological, socio-psychological and gender perspective**. It will develop understanding from scientific evidence and knowledge based on interdisciplinary and inter-organisational dialogue, in which

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more than 3,000 people will participate, including scientists, organisations and stakeholders from all over Europe. The ENTRANCES consortium is formed by 14 high quality groups with excellent theoretical and methodological expertise, as well as an **International Scientific Advisory Board** for specific expert advice.

IWH expertise on lignite coal phase-out:

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Oei, Pao-Yu et al.: Klimaschutz und Kohleausstieg: Politische Strategien und Maßnahmen bis 2030 und darüber hinaus, Abschlussbericht für das Umweltbundesamt (Forschungskennzahl 3716 41 1210), in: *Climate Change 27/2019*, <https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/publikationen/klimaschutz-kohleausstieg-politische-strategien>.

List of organisations members of the ENTRANCES consortium

- University of A Coruña (UDC), Spain (coordinator)
- Agenzia nazionale per le nuove tecnologie, l'energia e lo sviluppo economico (ENEA), Italy
- Knowledge and Innovation – Rome (K&I), Italy
- Halle Institute for Economic Research (IWH), Germany
- Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER), Germany
- Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI), Austria
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Norway
- European Association of Development Agencies (EURADA), Belgium
- Instytut Gospodarki Surowcami Mineralnymi i Energią PAN (IGSMiE PAN), Poland
- Faculty of Psychology and Education – University ‘Alexandru Ioan Cuza University’ of Iasi (UAIC), Romania
- Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação (SPI), Portugal
- Women Engage for a Common Future, France
- Center of Social and Psychological Sciences, Slovakia
- Cardiff University, United Kingdom

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The IWH [list of experts](#) provides an overview of IWH research topics and the researchers and scientists in these areas. The relevant experts for the topics listed there can be reached for questions as usual through the IWH [Press Office](#).

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