

Conceptualizing Energy Citizenship



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Social innovation: next steps in the energy transition (SIET) conference

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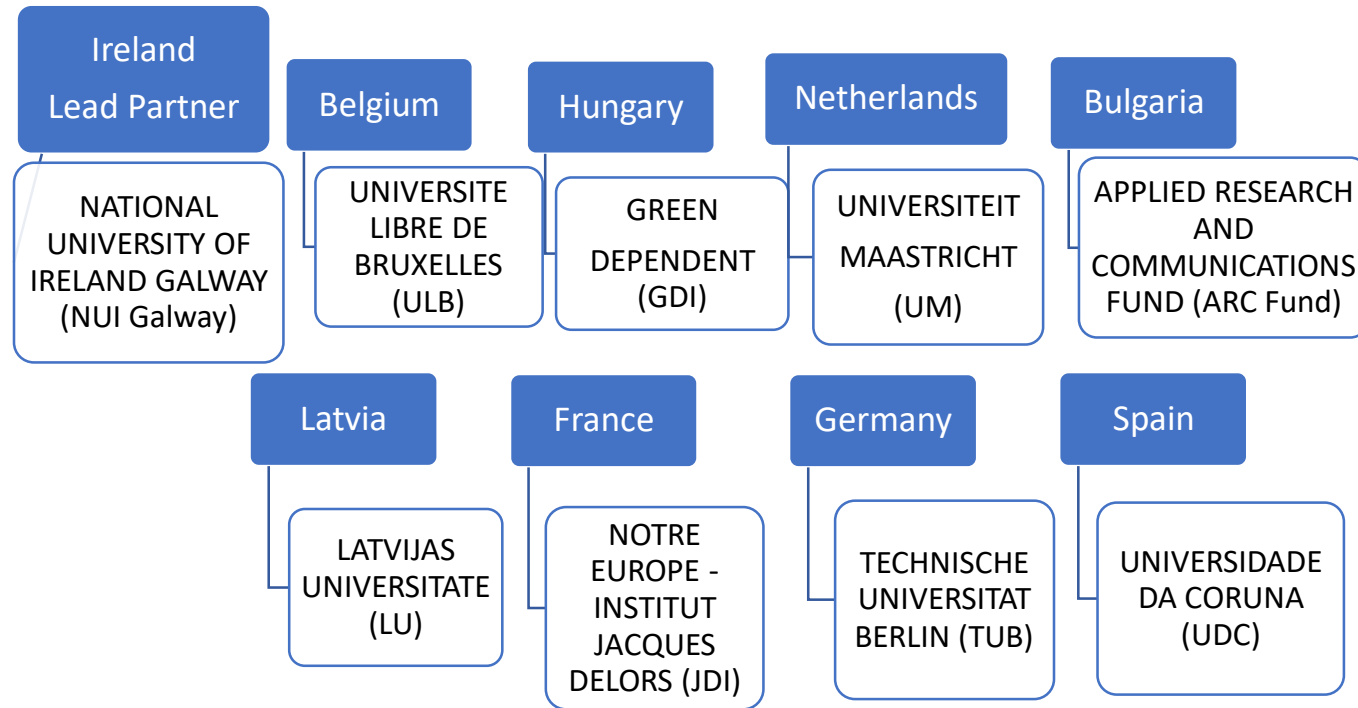
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EnergyPROSPECTS Partners



3 year €3m
H2020 project
with
9 Partners across
Europe



Aim of EnergyPROSPECTS

What is the main aim of our project?

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the conditions conducive to active energy citizenship



EnergyPROSPECTS Objectives



Develop an innovative conceptual framework for the understanding of energy citizenship (ENCI)



Identify a diversity of types and empirical manifestations of ENCI



Identify constraining and enabling conditions to active ENCI



Identify and assess the more and less favourable outcomes and impacts of different forms of ENCI



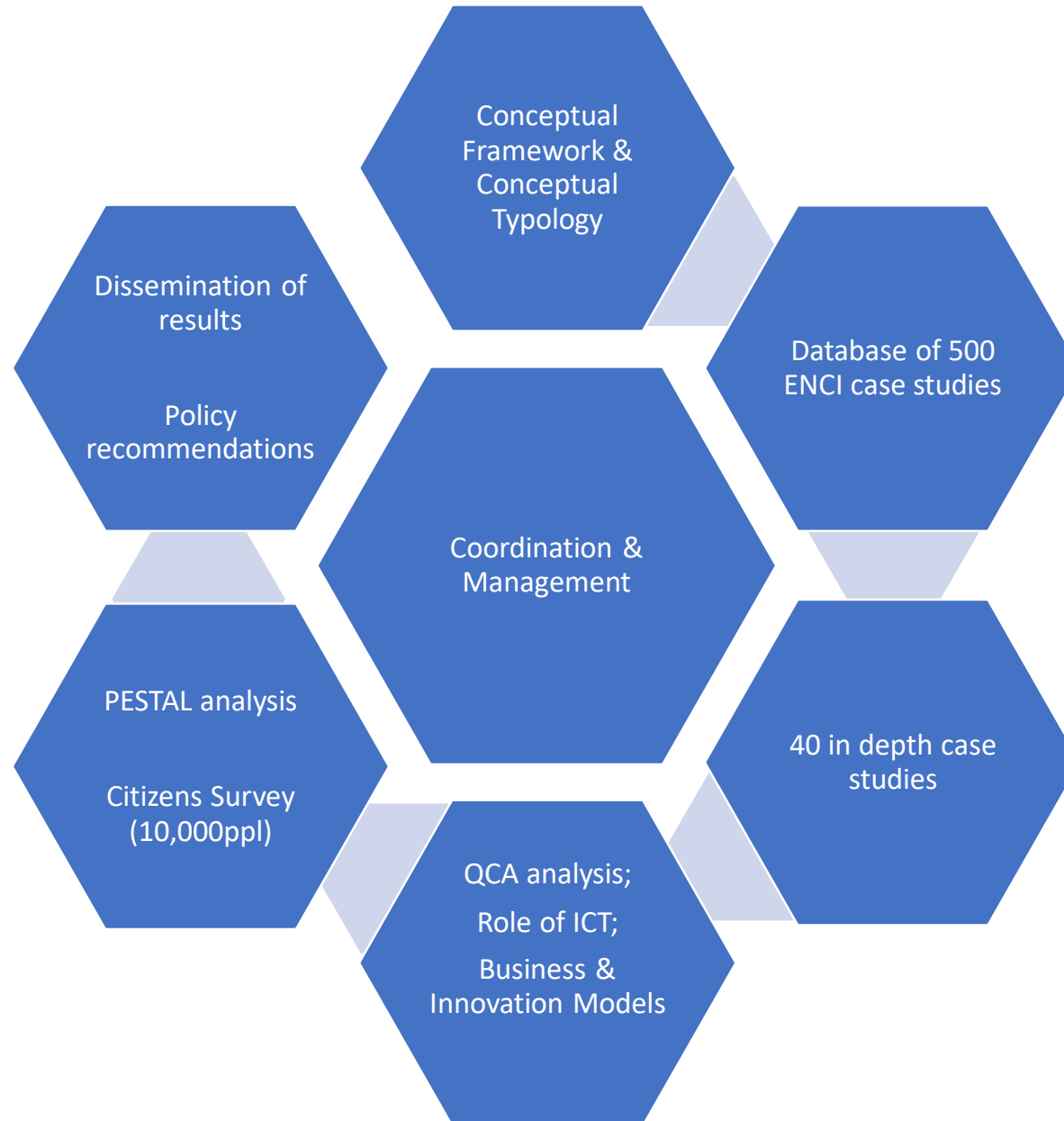
Enhance engagement with citizens, practitioners and policy-makers



Translate findings and insights into tools and interventions, new business and service models in the energy sector



EnergyPROSPECTS Key Tasks



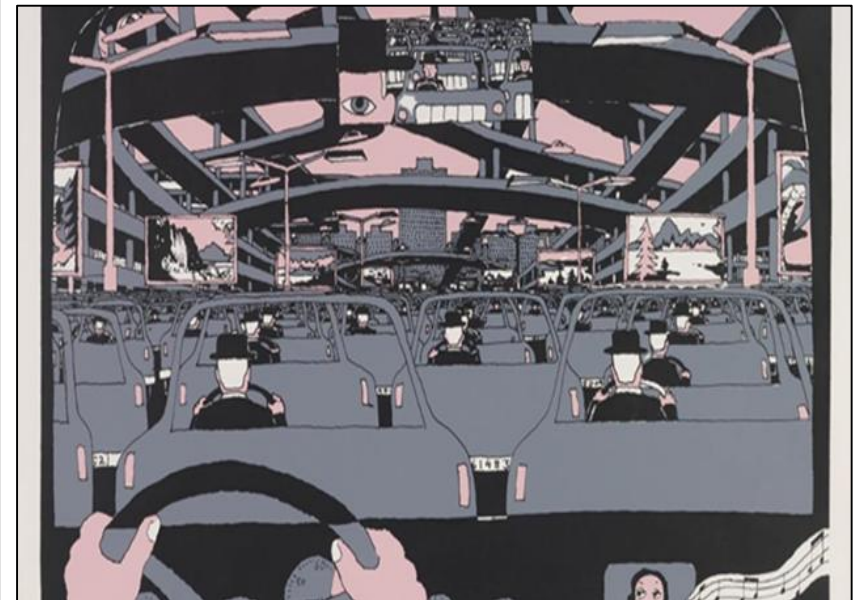
ENCI – a social construction

Energy citizenship (ENCI):

- Citizens leading/following 'the next steps in the energy transition'?
- How to empower energy citizens?
- Where to find the energy citizens?
- How could I become an energy citizen?
- How could I teach my neighbours to become energy citizens?

What is energy citizenship?

Challenging assumptions of 'deficient' citizens and *passive* energy consumers (Devine-Wright 2007)



ENCI – as social construction

Critical-social theoretical perspective on ENCI:

- ENCI as social construction (indicating political ideals of sustainable, democratic energy systems)
- Co-produced 'imaginary' of involved citizens
- Knowing-of-governance (Voß & Freeman 2016)
- Ideology of empowerment (Swyngedouw 2005; Lennon et al. 2020)

*"Energy citizenship refers to forms of civic involvement that pertain to the development of a more sustainable and democratic energy system. Beyond its manifest forms, ENCI also comprises various latent forms: **it is an ideal that can be lived up to and realised to varying degrees**, according to different framework conditions and states of empowerment."* (Pel et al. 2021:64)



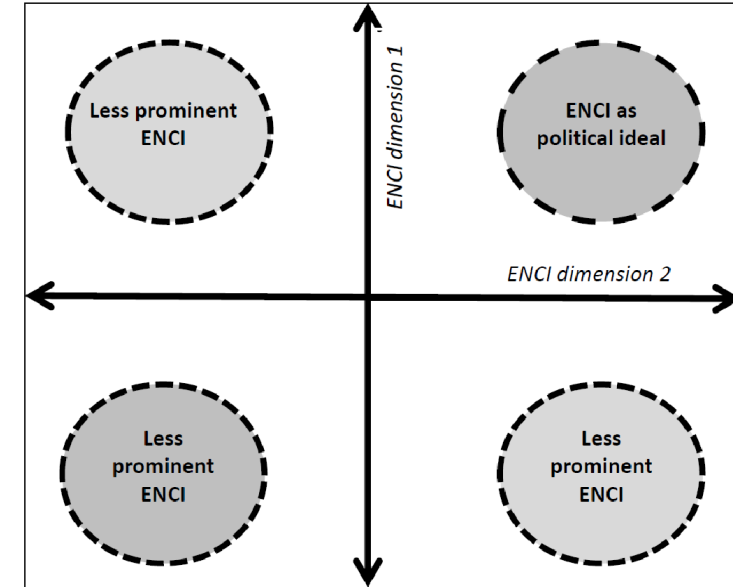
Beyond Manifest ENCI

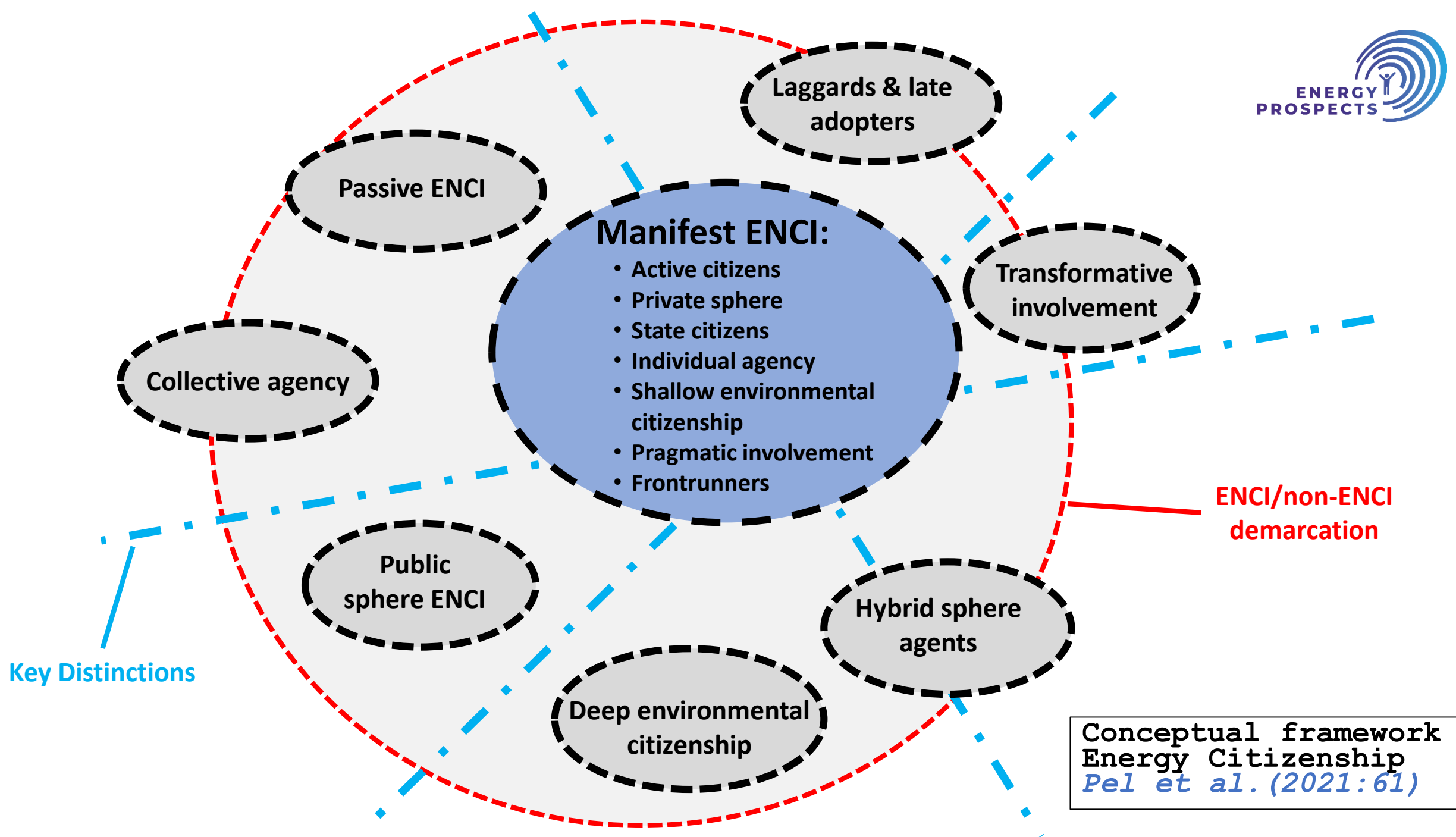
ENCI, political ideal of active citizens

From idealism to balanced social-scientific insight:

Looking beyond the *manifest* sides of ENCI

- Celebrated, idealized examples as manifest sub-set of social innovation 'niches' (Pel & Kemp 2020)
- Active, innovative, successful ENCI as 'tip of iceberg'
- Manifest/latent political participation (Ekman & Amnå 2012)
- Opening up imaginaries of the public (Chilvers & Longhurst 2016; Rodhouse et al. 2021)
- Next phase of the energy transition: Everybody's business, beyond early adopters and 'frontrunners'





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THANK YOU!

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