

# The Potential for Social Innovation in the Energy Sector

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## **Abstract.**

The issue addressed in this paper concerns social innovations related to the energy sector, which play an increasingly important role in the context of energy savings and increased use of renewable energy systems (RES). Social innovations are new solutions that meet social needs more efficiently than current solutions and lead to the development of new areas of cooperation and better use of resources (Caulier-Grice, 2012). They are derived from the quality of social dialogue of public, non-profit or private organizations contributing to the solution of social problems. Social innovation plays an important role in many areas including energy, especially in supporting a low-carbon society. The aim of this article is to identify initiatives related to social innovation in the area of energy. The rationale for undertaking research on this topic stemmed from the scarcity of scientific studies on social innovation in the energy sector. The research used qualitative research methods to verify information from various sources. For this purpose, a case study method was used, which is particularly important when researching complex phenomena. The results indicate that social innovations fit into the broadly understood concept of sustainable development, stimulating initiatives in the area of renewable energy sources, as well as contributing to energy savings, increased use of renewable energy systems, and improving the quality of life of residents.

**Keywords:** social innovation, renewable energy sources (RES), energy sector