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Dissertation Title: Citizen Engagement Perspectives within Local Energy Transitions**Date:** 23/01/2026 10:30**Location:** University of Porto | FEUP | DMEC | Sala de Atos**Higher Education Institution:** University of Porto**Doctoral Programme:** Doctoral Program in Industrial Engineering and Management (FEUP)**Abstract or Public Summary:** Citizen engagement is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of sustainability transitions, particularly in advancing local energy transitions. This thesis investigates underexplored perspectives on citizen engagement by integrating both individual and organization-level analyses.

The first part adopts the perspective of citizens at the individual level, examining how different perceived values of energy solutions (utilitarian, social, and environmental) influence distinct engagement behaviors such as information seeking, proactive management, feedback sharing, helping, and advocating. It also addresses energy vulnerability by segmenting citizens based on energy poverty conditions and assessing variations in engagement levels across these groups.

The second part shifts focus to the organizational perspective, exploring the point of view of engagers, actors who design and facilitate engagement processes. It includes a case study of transition intermediaries as agents of change working to counteract citizen disengagement by improving access to electricity in isolated communities. Furthermore, through a multi-case study grounded in Social Practice Theory, the last part of this thesis project investigates how digital technologies are embedded within engagement practices and how the socio-digital interplay contributes to the construction, reproduction, and long-term maintenance of these practices. Overall, the project advances the understanding of citizen engagement by bridging insights from service research, transition studies, and the social sciences. It offers theoretical and empirical contributions that support the development of more inclusive, adaptive, and context-sensitive engagement strategies, while informing the design of tailored energy solutions that reflect diverse citizen needs.

Principal Supervisor at INESC TEC: Lia Patrício**Scientific Domain:** [Systems Engineering and Management]**Keywords:** citizen engagement; energy transition; engagement behaviors; energy poverty; transition intermediaries; agency.