EDDIE PROJECT CONTRIBUTED AT "PROMOTING COOPERATION BETWEEN DIGITALISATION OF ENERGY CENTRES OF EXPERTISE AND DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS" WORKSHOP

28th of February 2022, EDDIE Consortium

The representatives of EDDIE Project – „EDucation for Digitalization of Energy" participated and contributed at the Online Workshop *„PROMOTING COOPERATION BETWEEN DIGITALISATION OF ENERGY CENTRES OF EXPERTISE AND DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS"*, organized by the European Commission, on Friday, 25th of February 2022. The European Commission, namely DG ENERGY and DG CONNECT organized this dedicated Workshop as the first step towards the creation of a platform to support innovation ecosystems - gathering national, regional, local, European institutions and energy and digital players to support investments, skills and expertise of strategic digital technologies in the energy system, from innovation to deployment.

The **Workshop** who aimed at collecting further input from stakeholders and other relevant Commission services, was structured in two Sessions: "***The digitalisation of energy: Opportunities, challenges and needed actions for a EU-Local Innovation ecosystem***" and "***The way towards a European digital energy platform***". During the Workshop, EDDIE Project has been represented by Dr. Claudia BATISTELLI - Institute for Automation of Complex Power Systems of RWTH Aachen University. Ms. BATISTELLI addressed the important role of the Digitalization of the Energy Sector by sharing core insights about the digital energy technical topics, people's needs in terms of digital skills, as well as digital and energy local/regional innovation ecosystems.

Furthermore, opening **Session 1 – "*The digitalisation of energy: Opportunities, challenges and needed actions for a EU-Local Innovation ecosystem",*** Vincent BERRUTTO - Head of Unit, Research, Innovation, Digitalisation, Competitiveness, DG ENERGY, presented in its introduction the main five areas of the Digitalisation of the Energy Action Plan, namely Data Exchange Framework, Benefits for Consumers, Literacy, Skills and Digital Tools to Empower Citizens, Cybersecurity and Climate Neutrality of the ICT Sector. During the first panel, the assessments was for the need of horizontal and vertical sharing of best practices, the need for use-cases to be implemented into the real world, the need to coordinate the local realities and scale-up solutions that are developed at local and regional level.

The digitalisation of the energy system can boost the European Union (EU) competitiveness, drive innovative solutions, and even open new global markets for components and services. Meanwhile, the digital transformation should be an enabler for citizens, prosumers, and energy communities to play an active role in the energy markets. Digital solutions shall be seen as key enablers to accelerate the energy transition but also having an approach that is citizen and consumers centric. The main drivers shall be commitment, engagement, consensus, and awareness, not only when it comes to research and innovation or specific solutions but also on the need to integrate them in the energy system. The Digitalisation of Energy Action Plan, which will be adopted in June 2022, is therefore exploring actions to design an investment pathway targeting the entire energy value chain without neglecting the central role of citizens, prosumers, and energy communities.

„When it comes to local digital ecosystems, skills are very important. One of the top priorities for local digital ecosystems to be successful is to produce awareness of the opportunities that digital technologies offer and to ensure that the technological talent needed to cope with technological change is added to the local ecosystem. This means adding the required skills to the local labour market, but also beyond, to the society, to improve the lives of citizens. Another equally important thing is the capacity to attract talent and expertise, open talent networks to facilitate its awareness and also improve the quality of life for people, and in the end the customers' quality of life" highlighted EDDIE representative – Dr. Claudia BATISTELLI.

Moreover, during the discussions in **Panel *2*** – ***„The Way Towards a European Digital Energy Platform",*** the exchange of information was towards the features and characteristics of such platform, how to create synergies, how to create added value on top of existing solutions and what stakeholders to be involved. The main outcome was identified as the platform shall integrate other sector of activity, not only energy and digital sectors, but the platform would also help integrating multiple ecosystems, interaction with other platforms with the focus on creating an open environment for new players, new business models can emerge. The assessment was that the platform shall create a common language between energy, digital players, between different sectors and also involve small realities with the goal of accelerating innovation cycle and bringing digital solution into the energy sector. Professor Antonello Monti, Coordinator of OneNet and Platone projects, pointed out a long-term vision for engagement in digitalization**:** to create European-wide digital solutions, to create consensus from the beginning to establish a common way to keep solutions alive and locally engaged.

The role of Education in the Digital Era for Digitalization and the Development of synergies with other innovation projects funded by the European Commission (EC) through the ERASMUS+ program will create the framework for EDDIE Project to actively contribute to decisions in the process of Digitalization of the European Energy Sector (DEES).

EDDIE Project is funded by the European Commission (EC) under the ERASMUS+ Program and aims at creating a Sector Skills Alliance (SSA) by bringing together all the relevant stakeholders in the Energy value chain such as industry, education and training providers, European organizations, recruiters, social partners, and public authorities. The main objective of this SSA is to develop a long-driven Blueprint for the DEES to enable the matching between the current and future demand of skills necessary and the supply of improved Vocational Education and Training systems and beyond.