

BORDERS TO CROSS

Title:	
Name workshop:	3.2 Citizen involvement in the market
Projects presented:	1. SOM energía 2. Provincie Overijssel 3.
Workshop director(s):	?
Name rapporteur(s):	Florentine Wolters & Maxime Molenaar
Date and time of workshop:	30-10-2013, 14.30-16.00

Heading: three lines leading the reader into the topic:

The workshop on citizen involvement in the market focused on cooperative initiatives in the energy market across countries. The cases presented were a Spanish cooperative and some examples of Dutch cooperatives. The task was to look for differences between those cases, but it turned out to be a bigger challenge to find similarities.

What triggered me: 5 lines:

What triggered us most, was how different the motivations of the cooperatives in Holland and Spain were. Although, it seemed, most cooperatives are established either for sustainability or pricing reasons, the Spanish case has grown into a whole different cause.

Description and elaboration of observations and reflections of projects and/or things that happened and/or were discussed during the workshop: 10-20 lines:

Initially constructed to make the Spanish energy market more sustainable, SOM Energía is now more of an anti-oligopoly movement. It is interesting to see this in a broader perspective of political activism, and many people noticed that the Spanish case growing into an 'anti-establishment' cause fits well into the southern European political activism style. This in contrast to the Dutch case, where energy is seen as almost a-political and the people do not really seem to care in whose hands it is, as long as it is delivered.

The fact remains that similar initiatives are raised in both countries, although there is a big difference in size, motivation and ambitions. We couldn't help to involve the economic crisis in this story, and wonder whether the growth of cooperatives is caused by an increased distrust against conglomerates (including banks) and governments. Again, we had to conclude that these feelings seem to be much stronger in southern Europe than in their northern counterparts, proven by the fact that SOM Energía is turning into a national project, whereas the Dutch cooperatives remain small and very local. Then again, they might start growing like weeds once the Dutch government starts taxing the sun like in Spain..

Reflection, possibly linking up to the leading questions and threads: 5-10 lines:



Extra information:

