ENGINEERING

COMPUTER SCIENCE

POLITICAL ECONOMY

URBAN, SOCIAL,
AND MEDIA STUDIES

LAW AND POLICY

ECONOMICS

NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE AS COMMONS

For the people by the people

For self-determination, resilience,
sustainability, democracy, sovereignty,
alternatives, social integration

netCommons.eu

NETCOMMONS: NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE AS COMMONS

netCommons is a transdisciplinary project for understanding, promoting, and supporting community networks as a common infrastructure.

For resiliency, sustainability, democracy, self-determination, sovereignty, alternatives, social integration.

Disciplines involved:
Engineering, computer science, law and policy, political economy, urban, social, and media studies, economics.

Community networks are wired and wireless network infrastructures owned and operated by the community members.

COMMUNITY NETWORKS: A SUCCESS STORY

In Europe there are many successful community networks with hundrends or thousands of nodes that span the whole region or even country (e.g., Guifi.net, Freifunk.net, Ninux.org).
They provide affordable Internet connectivity and/or local services in a participatory and sustainable way.
A remarkable case study of self-organization, social inclusion, engineering excellence, collective action, commons-based peer production, socio-economic development.

COMMUNITY NETWORKS: CHALLENGES

Community networks are not well understood neither by the general public nor by local authorities and often operate more like clubs of like minded people than open infrastructures.
Inadequate legislations can undermine their legal sustainability and of the free software produced by them.
The management of network infrastructures as a commons requires sophisticated organizational structures and local institutions.
Governments may not realize the potential of community networks for social inclusion and socio-economic development.

NETCOMMONS: WHO IS INVOLVED

netCommons partners will work together on specific examples of community networks, aiming to promote and support their cause through a large variety of skills, and expertise from different disciplines.

Engineering
Free and open source distributed applications: clouds, video-streaming, crowd-*.

Computer science
Performance, optimization, data analysis.

Political economy
Sustainability, self-organization, governance.

Urban, social, and media studies
Emancipatory communications practices, right to the hybrid city.

Policy
Ethical guidelines, advocacy, policy recommendations, governance.

Law
Liability, privacy, licensing, legislation.

Economics
Business models, co-operative management, incentive mechanisms, community currencies, crowdfunding.

Transdisciplinarity
Internet science, commons, participatory design, boundary objects.

NETCOMMONS: WHO IS CONCERNED

Scientists: innovative research work that can bring closer disciplines from different "cultures of science".

Designers and developers: open/free software and hardware.

Policy makers and politicians: regulations for defending the digital rights of the local population.

Civil society and local authorities: empowering grassroots initiatives.

Citizens: access to more equitable and affordable Internet access, and a suite of local services.

A community owning its network infrastructure is not a revolution: it is simply progress, democracy and sustainability.

Partners:

UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO - Italy

UPC

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

NetHood

Cnrs

ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ — ATHENS UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

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