

Analysis of rSOC systems to support the energy supply of modern Positive Energy Districts

Christof Bernsteiner

4ward Energy Research GmbH

Graz, 16.04.2025



Agenda

- Motivation
- Method
 - Concept of the rSOC integration in PED
 - Operating models
 - Modelling approach (Python-simulation)
- Results
 - Dimensioning of the system components
 - Economic evaluation
- Conclusion

Motivation

- Support the European and national climate goals
 - Increase of renewable energy sources
 - Relief for the public (power) grid
- Paving the way for the wider roll-out of PED by investigating innovative energy supply options
- rSOC can act as a link between the electricity, heating and gas networks
- Possibility to increase the actual degree of self-sufficiency by storing energy seasonally

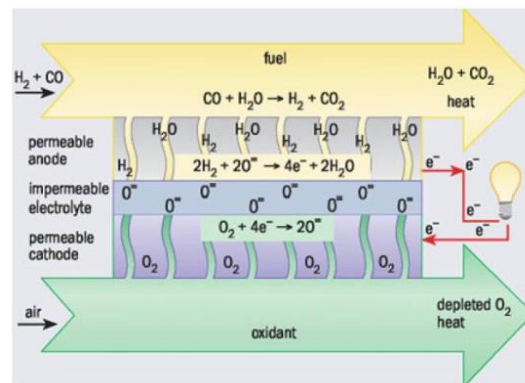
rSOC - Technology

Advantages

- Reversible operation
- no liquid electrolytes
- Wide power range
- Relatively high efficiency (el. ~ 55 %)
- Long service life

Challenges

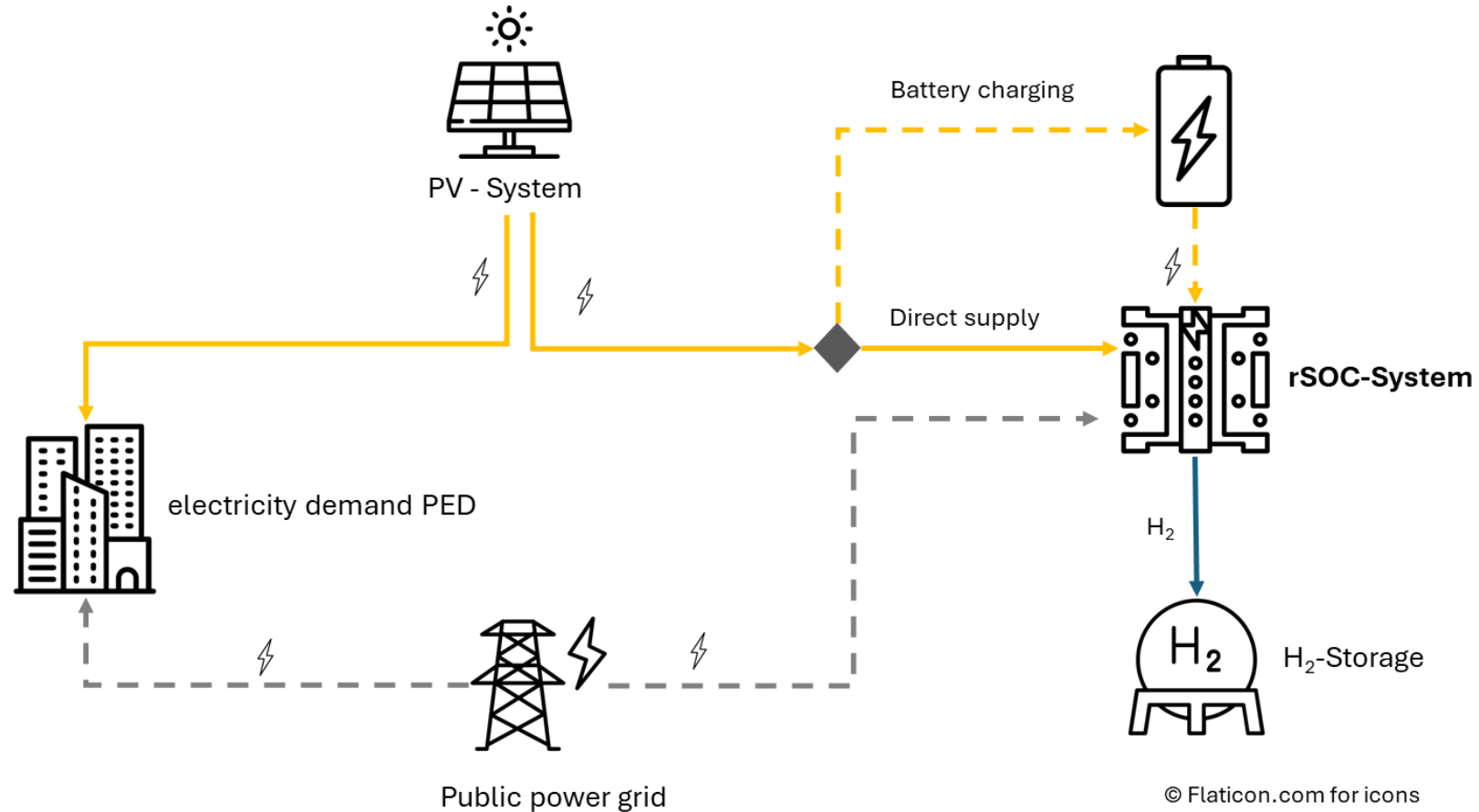
- high temperatures
- long start-up times
- Limited tolerance to thermal fluctuations
- Complexity and space requirements
- fuel flexibility



©Klamminger, 2018

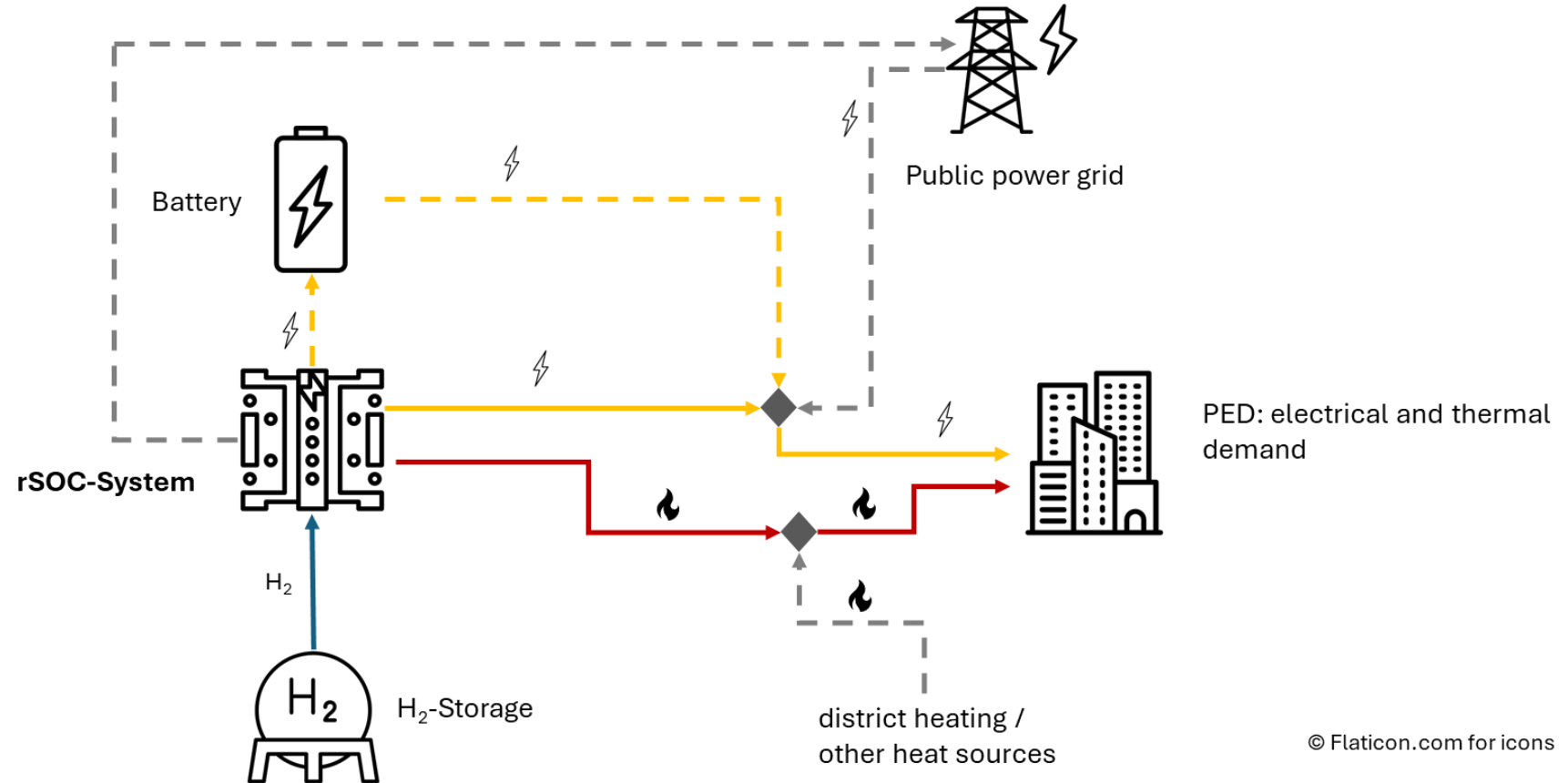
Concept of the rSOC integration in PED

Electrolyser mode



Concept of the rSOC integration in PED

Fuel Cell mode



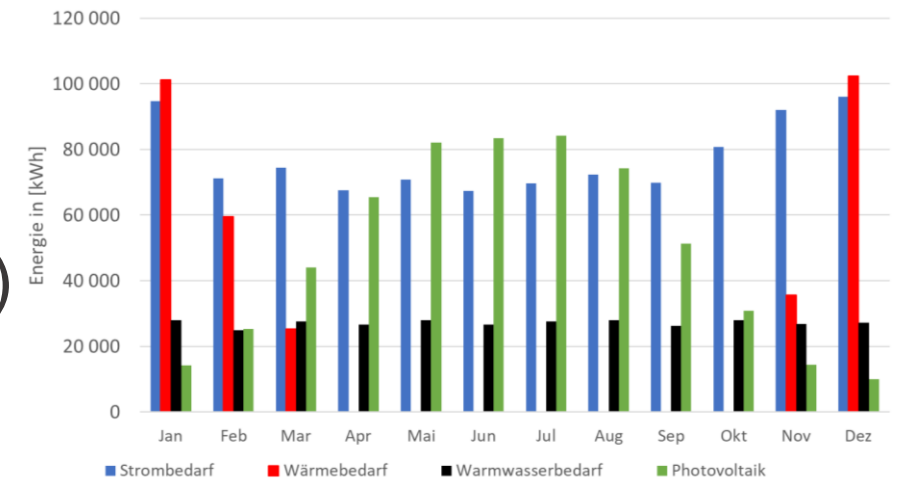
© Flaticon.com for icons

Operating models

- **Scenario I:**
 - Functionality as seasonal storage
 - Continuous operation 24/7
 - Summer: Electrolyser
 - Winter: Fuel Cell
- **Scenario II:**
 - Functionality as seasonal storage
 - Forecast based operation
 - Weather / PV-forecast
 - Demand forecast
- **Reference Scenario:**
 - PV-system without storage
- **Reference Scenario II:**
 - no PV-system
 - 100 % supply from public grid
- **(Reference Scenario III):**
 - PV-system with storage

Modelling Approach

- Simulation model: Household infrastructure and building simulator “hisim” (Python)
- Data based on a PED in Vienna (hourly fine)
 - Power Source: PV-System
 - Annual power demand corresponds to the annual PV-production
- Parameter study to dimension the main components:
 - rSOC power (1/14.....1-fold of PV_{Peak})
 - Battery capacity (1...15-fold of rSOC-system in electrolyses mode)
 - Inverter (1h – 24 hour operation of rSOC system in electrolyses mode)



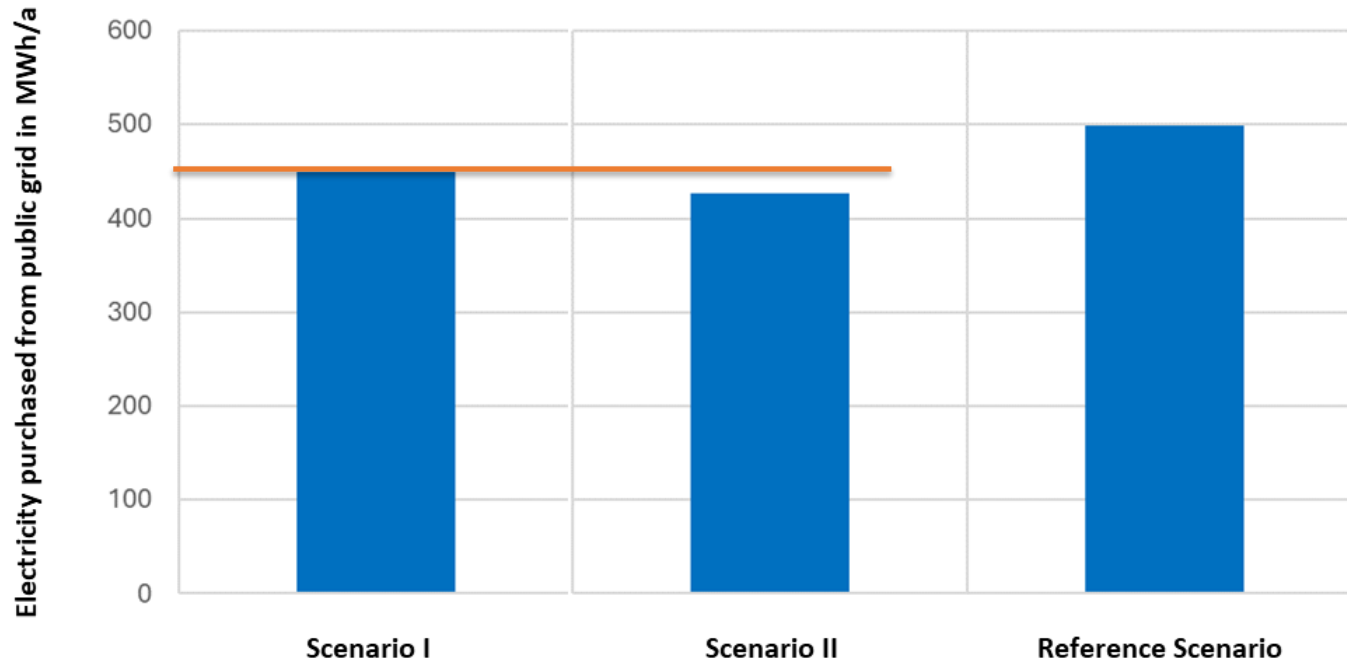
Energy & Design

- **Lowest grid electricity import**
Scenario 1 vs. Scenario 2: **418 MWh/a vs. 370 MWh/a** || PED elect. consumption: **930 MWh/a**

Design recommendations (to minimize relative grid consumption):

- **Power capacity of rSOC system (in electrolyser mode):**
 - Scenario 2: **10%–25% of PV_{peak}** (Forecast based rSOC-operation)
 - Scenario 1: **7%–12% of PV_{peak}** (Continuous rSOC-operation)
- **Battery capacity:**
Sufficient for **20 to 24 hours** of continuous rSOC operation in electrolyser mode
- **Battery inverter sizing:**
2 to 3 times the rSOC power in electrolyser mode
- **Hydrogen storage:**
Scenario 2 requires **less hydrogen storage** than Scenario 1 for the same system sizing

Energy & Design



Reference Scenario:

- PV system: 781 kW_{Peak}
- no energy storage system included

Scenario I & II:

- rSOC system in fuel cell mode: 26,6 kW
- rSOC system in electrolysis mode: 55,8 kW
- Battery capacity: 737 kWh
- Battery Inverter power: 122,7 kW
- Photovoltaic system: 781 kW_{Peak}

Same configuration for Scenario I and Scenario II

Configuration for economic evaluation

Best configuration for Scenario I and Scenario II

(PED elect. consumption: **930 MWh/a**)

		Scenario I	Scenario II	Reference Scenario I	Reference Scenario II
PV-System	kWp	781	781	781	-
rSOC System in fuel cell mode	kW	27	31	-	-
rSOC System in electrolysis mode	kW	56	65	-	-
Battery capacity	kWh	737	430	-	-
Batter inverter power	kW	122	215	-	-

Sensitivity analyses

		Basis Scenario
Investment costs		
PV-System	in EUR/kWp	900
Battery Storage	in EUR/kWh	800
rSOC-System	in EUR/kW	5000
Hydrogen Storage	in EUR/kWh	835
Funding options		
PV-System	%*	30
Battery Storage	%*	20
rSOC-System	%*	30
Hydrogen Storage	%*	30
Operation costs		
PV-System	%*	2
Inverter	%*	2
Battery	%*	2
rSOC-System	%*	3
Hydrogen Storage	%*	1.5
Compressor	%*	1.5
Electricity tariff	EUR/kWh	0.3
Feed-in tariff	EUR/kWh	0.08
Heat tariff	EUR/	0.13
CO₂ Price	EUR/t _{CO2}	55
* % of the related investment costs		

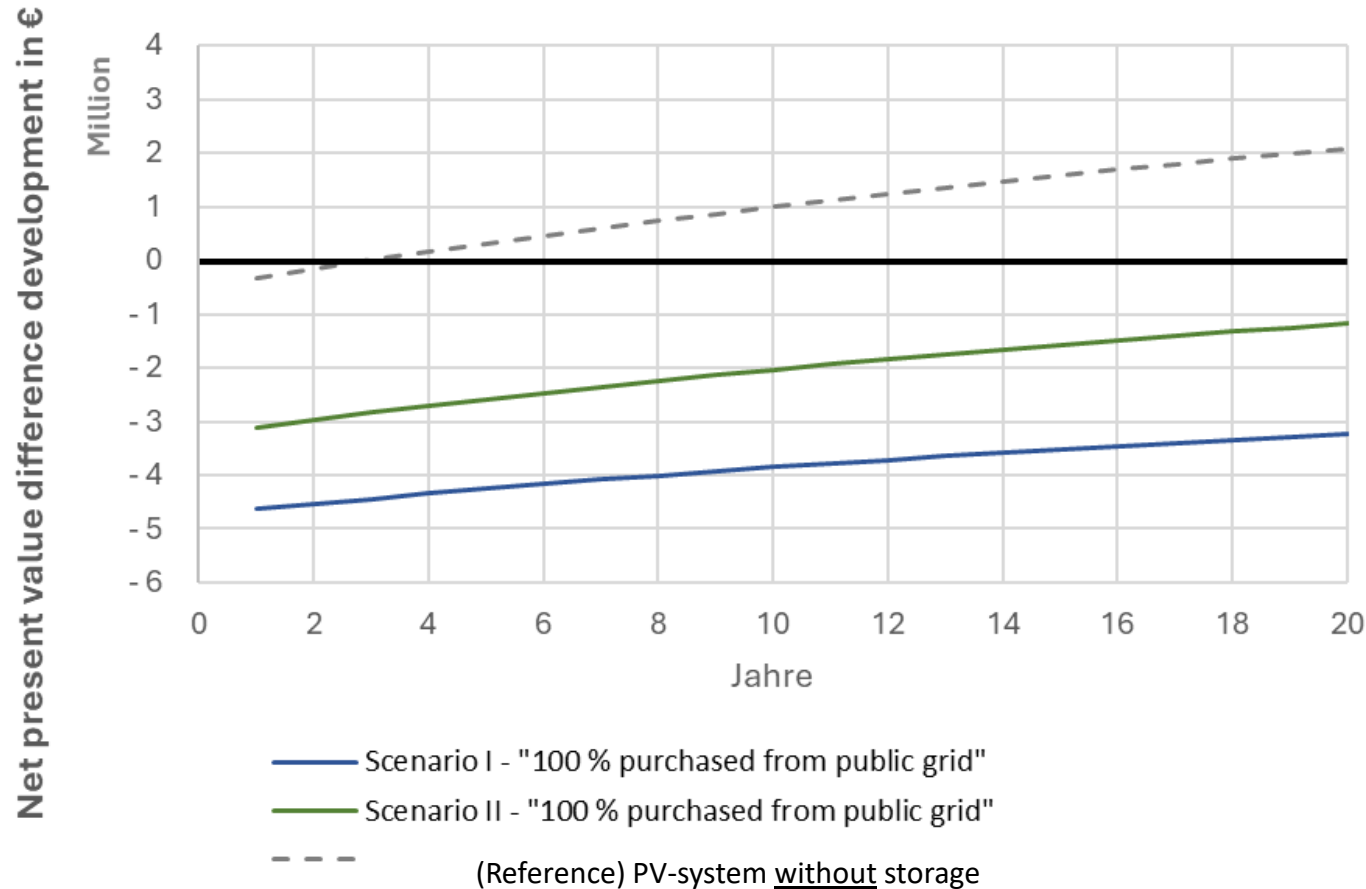
based on literature

based on funding from Austria, in 2024

assumptions

tariffs for Austria

Economic analyses – Basic



- **No** amortisation compared to Reference Scenario I
- **No** amortisation compared to Reference Scenario II
- Advantages due to the forecast-based operation

Sensitivity analyses

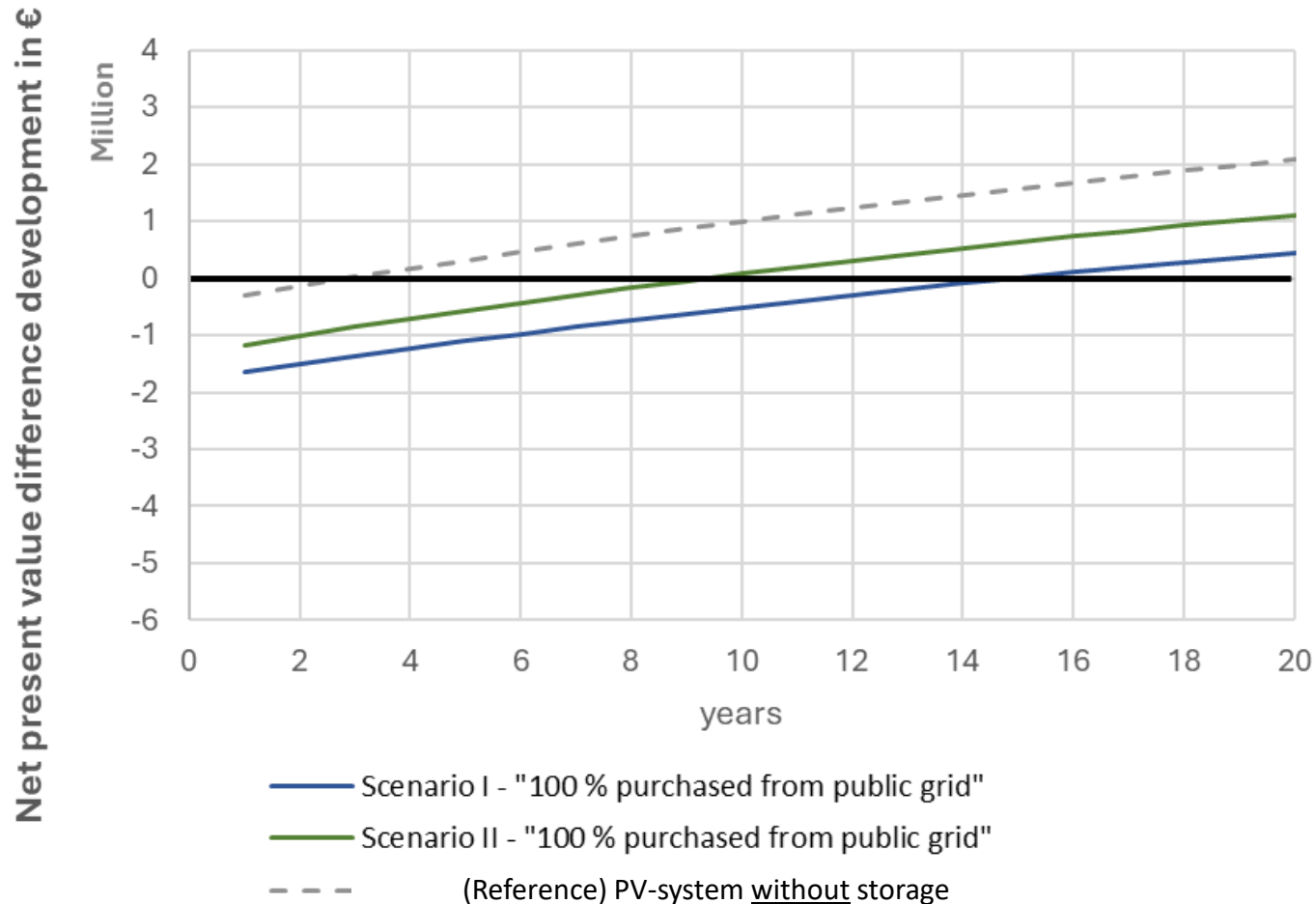
		Basis Scenario	Future Development
Investment costs			
PV-System	in EUR/kWp	900	855
Battery Storage	in EUR/kWh	800	680
rSOC-System	in EUR/kW	5000	2000
Hydrogen Storage	in EUR/kWh	835	334
Funding options			
PV-System	%*	30	30
Battery Storage	%*	20	50
rSOC-System	%*	30	50
Hydrogen Storage	%*	30	50
Operation costs			
PV-System	%*	2	1
Inverter	%*	2	0.5
Battery	%*	2	0.5
rSOC-System	%*	3	1
Hydrogen Storage	%*	1.5	0.75
Compressor	%*	1.5	1.5
Electricity tariff	EUR/kWh	0.3	0.3
Feed-in tariff	EUR/kWh	0.08	0.08
Heat tariff	EUR/	0.13	0.13
CO₂ Price	EUR/t _{CO2}	55	55
* % of the related investment costs			

based on literature **BUT**
optimistic evolution

Optimistic assumption
concerning fundings

Optimistic assumption
operational costs

Economic analyses – Future Development



- **No** amortisation compared to Reference Scenario I
- **Amortisation** compared to Reference Scenario II
 - Scenario I: 15 years
 - Scenario II 9 years
- Advantages due to the forecast-based operation

Conclusion

- Forecast-based operation improves economic efficiency
- rSOC system in PEQ uneconomical under current conditions
- “Future development”:
 - Advantages compared to pure grid supply
 - Amortization of Scenario I after 15 years
 - Amortization of Scenario II after 9 years
 - Disadvantages compared to Reference Scenario I
- rSOC-systems can be an interesting solution in PEQs in the future if real self-sufficiency plays a major role

Contact

Thank you for your attention!



DI Dr. Christof Bernsteiner
4ward Energy Research GmbH
Reininghausstrasse 13
8020 Graz
christof.bernsteiner@4wardenergy.at
+43 (0)664 107 77 63



DI Robert Pratter
4ward Energy Research GmbH
Reininghausstrasse 13
8020 Graz
robert.pratter@4wardenergy.at
+43 (0)664 88500337

Das Projekt wird innerhalb des Förderprogrammes „Stadt der Zukunft“ durch das Bundesministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt, Energie, Mobilität, Innovation und Technologie gefördert.

Es wird im Auftrag des BMK von der Österreichischen Forschungsförderungsgesellschaft (FFG) gemeinsam mit der Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft mbH (AWS) und der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Umwelt und Technik (ÖGUT) abgewickelt.