



European Energy Network

A voluntary network of European energy agencies

Energy agencies and renewable energy communities

A new path for energy decentralization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

November 2022

Participating Agencies

Study Lead

ADENE, Portuguese Energy Agency



Agência para a Energia

Steering Committee



AUSTRIAN ENERGY AGENCY

AEA, Austrian Energy Agency



ADEME, French Agency for Ecological Transition



dena, German Energy Agency



EST, Energy Saving Trust, United Kingdom



CRES, Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, Greece



Netherlands Enterprise Agency

RVO, Netherlands Enterprise Agency

Surveys



Italian National Agency for New Technologies



Institute for the Diversification and Saving of Energy, Spain



National Agency for the Promotion of the Transition to Sustainable Energy, Luxembourg



Motiva, Sustainable Development Company, Finland



Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency



Swedish Energy Agency



Sustainable Energy Development Agency, Bulgaria

Executive Summary

The present study was carried out by the European Energy Network, EⁿR, under the Presidency of ADENE in 2022. The study, lead by ADENE under the direction of its Steering Committee, composed of six other EnR member agencies (AEA, ADEME, dena, EST, CRES, RVO), focused on the role of national energy agencies in the deployment of Renewable Energy Communities.

Energy Communities are defined in two separate legislative acts of the Clean Energy Package – the revised Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001 and the revised Internal Electricity Market Directive (EU) 2019/944. With the transposition to national law of the first of those Directives, there was an expectation of growth in the share of Renewable Energy Communities (REC) in the European energy systems and an increase of their contribution for the boost of the renewable energy market to meet the national and EU energy & climate targets.

The objectives this study were:

- to know the current legislative and regulatory status regarding REC, as a result of the transposition of the RES Directive into national legislation (or by national initiative in the case of non-EU member states), in the sample of countries from which EnR Member Agencies participated;
- to identify the main actors involved in policy implementation;
- to identify the main obstacles or barriers that hinder REC development;
- to identify solutions for the removal or mitigation of such barriers;
- to identify the role of national energy agencies in REC policy and implementation and how this role can be improved for an added value in this field;
- to collect and process existing information on good practices and case studies of specific REC, identifying possible replication opportunities in the different sectors of activity; and,
- to propose monitoring tools and/or changes in the legislative frameworks for the evolution of the REC market, with a particular focus on the role that EⁿR Member Agencies may have in these projects and in the desired REC implementation.

The study involved the participation of 13 countries (12 EU-member states + 1 non-EU member state) - Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The information for the study was gathered through a 1st survey carried out with the EⁿR Member Agencies of these countries (AEA, SEDA, Motiva, ADEME, CRES, ENEA, Klima-Agence, RVO, ADENE, SIEA, IDAE, SEA and EST), followed by a collection of fact sheets on specific projects/good practices (case studies) developed in these countries.

The information gathered in the survey included details about:

- transposition of the Renewable Energy Directive 2018/2001, specific legislation on REC and its revisions and details;
- the working definition for REC in the current legislation;
- characteristics of REC in each country (actors that can participate as members in a REC, details regarding REC management, services provided, licensing procedures and entities involved, operational aspects of the licensing process and restrictions/obligations imposed by the existing legislation);
- the existing facilitating instruments for REC implementation;
- the existing barriers to REC implementation, as identified by the EⁿR Agencies;
- the current role of the EⁿR Member Agencies in REC policy and implementation; and,
- the solutions proposed by EⁿR Agencies to overcome existing barriers.

The information obtained from the case studies, complemented as much as possible, with collection of data from other sources, allowed for a benchmarking analysis that is presented in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the report.

The collected information about specific case studies included:

- legal structure (ownership model), number of members and year of implementation;
- the objectives and drivers associated to the REC creation;
- the types of REC projects in terms of complexity and services provided;
- the sectors of activity involved and types of renewable energy / technologies;
- the perceived socio-economic benefits;
- the role of the EⁿR Member Agencies in the implementation of the project.

The study allowed for a general overview of implementation of REC in the analyzed countries and to recommend pathways to improve it. Main conclusions and recommendations are summarized below:

- The current geopolitical and energy market contexts require a drastic acceleration towards clean energy. Renewable Energy Communities present an excellent opportunity to deliver affordable zero carbon energy.
- Renewable Energy Communities can have a wide application, covering practically all sectors of activity, which is an inspiring motivation and opens multiple replication opportunities.
- However, there are still several bottlenecks in the countries involved in the study, which create relevant difficulties or barriers for a wider deployment of Renewable Energy Communities. Many of these barriers are related to the existing legislative frameworks (with significant differences between countries) but there are also other issues hindering wider adoption.

- EⁿR Member Agencies propose several solutions to overcome identified obstacles and promote Renewable Energy Communities on a larger scale, in order to have a more meaningful impact on the energy transition goals, with all the inherent socio-economic and environmental benefits.
- So far, the contribution of the EⁿR Member Agencies for REC policy development and implementation, is not significant. But, EⁿR Member Agencies have the expertise to assist in the promotion/implementation of REC creation in the 13 countries analyzed and could have a more proactive role in this process.
- EⁿR Member Agencies, as pivotal organizations in the energy sector, can be enablers of REC. Several recommendations are presented to strengthen national agencies' participation in the promotion/dissemination of REC, thus fostering their increased adoption as a powerful tool for the energy transition.