

FINAL Report

CA-RES4

Interim Executive Summary



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Confidential document

Introduction: the Concerted Action on the renewable energy directive

The Renewable Energy Sources Directive (EU) 2018/2001

The recast RES directive (EU) 2018/2001 entered into force in December 2018 as part of the Clean Energy Package. The recast directive establishes a framework for renewables until 2030 by defining an EU binding target of at least a 32% RES share in gross final energy consumption, with a clause for a possible upwards revision by 2023.

In order to mainstream the use of renewable energy in the transport sector, each Member State shall set an obligation on fuel suppliers to ensure that the share of renewable energy within the final consumption of energy in the transport sector is at least 14 % by 2030 (minimum share).

In order to promote the use of renewable energy in the heating and cooling sector, each Member State shall endeavour to increase the share of renewable energy in that sector by an indicative 1.3 percentage points as an annual average calculated for the periods 2021 to 2025 and 2026 to 2030.

The RES Directive lays down rules on financial support for electricity from renewable sources, on self-consumption of such electricity, on the use of energy from renewable sources in the heating and cooling sector and in the transport sector, on regional cooperation between Member States, on guarantees of origin, on administrative procedures and on information and training. It also establishes sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass fuels. The latter include fuels produced from waste, from agricultural biomass, and from forest biomass.

Objectives of the Concerted Action on the RES directive

The main objectives of the Concerted Action on the renewable energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001 are as follows:

- Facilitate a structured exchange of information, experience and good practice regarding the implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001 between participating countries;
- Encourage dialogue between participating countries to develop common approaches for the implementation of particular (more complex) parts of the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001;
- Support the effective implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001 in participating countries.

The Concerted Action is a structured, confidential dialogue between national authorities implementing the RES directive. Through a Concerted Action, the participating countries exchange experience and best practices, participate in a cross-learning process, and develop common approaches.

A valuable network of experts

- A valuable network of experts has been created and consolidated in the CA-RES
- Participants share knowledge and experience for finding solutions
- Participants look for solutions or can offer solutions to others

The Concerted Action achieves its objectives through a series of plenary meetings. During each phase of the project, two plenary meetings per year (one in the spring and one in autumn) are organised, where participating countries choose relevant topics in response to the thematic needs and priorities of the participants, which change with the implementation progress of the RES Directive.

These plenary meetings provide a forum for discussions and cross learning between participants. This exchange of approaches and experience focused on key requirements of the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001, according to the needs of the participating countries and the European Commission. This exchange has given participants a better understanding of the RES Directive and of policy measures implemented by their peers in other countries in the framework of the implementation of the RES directive, the challenges they face and best-practice examples available, as well as possibilities for collaboration and mutual support. This has contributed to the implementation of the RES directive and the achievement of the EU RES targets.

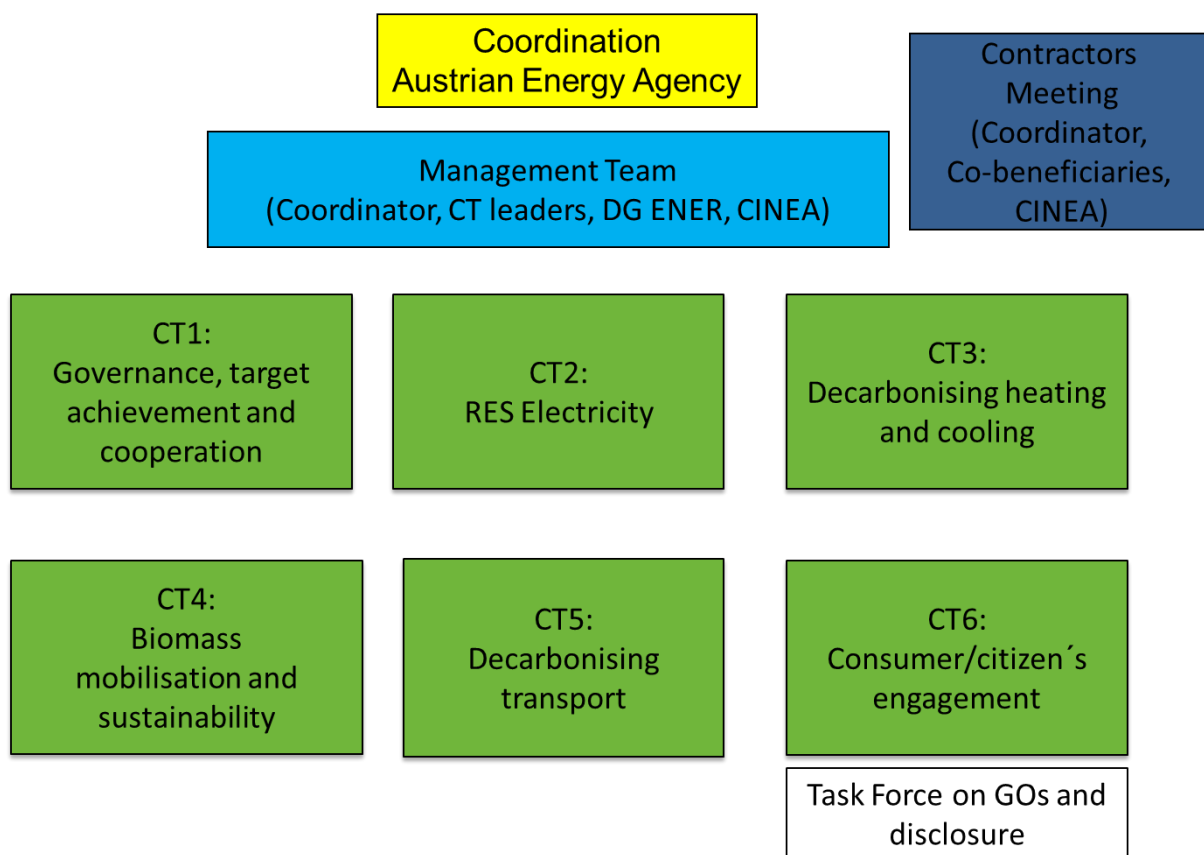
For the European Commission, the CA-RES4 provides an important forum to follow the implementation of the RES Directive by the Member States informally and to identify areas for convergence and EU-wide action on the implementation.

Core Themes

The CA-RES4 covers the following Core Themes (CT):

- CT1: Governance, Target Achievement, and Cooperation
- CT2: RES Electricity
- CT3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling
- CT4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability
- CT5: Decarbonising Transport
- CT6: Consumer/Citizen's Engagement

In addition, there is a permanent Task Force on Guarantees of Origin and consumer information.



CA-RES4 Core Themes address a number of aspects including governance, target achievement and transversal issues, renewable electricity, decarbonisation of heating and cooling, biomass mobilisation and sustainability, decarbonisation of transport, and consumer/citizen's engagement. Synergies are jointly examined by two or more Core Themes in joint sessions. The CA-RES4 builds on the experience and structures of the CA-RES3, taking due consideration of the new elements of the RES directive 2018/2001 (recast) and renewable-relevant provisions in other parts of the Clean Energy Package.

Core Theme leaders are responsible for coordinating the activities under their respective Core Theme, with the support of a technical assistant. They liaise with the Coordinator (AEA) on a bilateral and, if required, multi-lateral basis to ensure thematic and organisational coherence of their Core Themes. The Core Theme leaders propose discussion topics that are selected by the Management Team in cooperation with the European Commission (DG ENER and CINEA). Furthermore, they are responsible for the organisation of the Core Theme sessions taking place as part of the Plenary Meetings, which includes activities such as chairing the sessions, drafting and circulating the agenda, preparing questionnaires and analysing the respective answers, identifying external speakers, producing the CT reports, and ensuring the smooth running of the sessions.

The Coordinator (AEA) is responsible for chairing the Plenary Meetings, preparing the meeting agenda and overseeing CT sessions during the meetings. The Coordinator is also responsible for logistics and planning relating to the Plenary Meetings. The Coordinator ensures the thematic consistency of the topics chosen for discussion in the Core Themes, as

well as the organisational consistency of the Core Themes. It also supports the Core Theme leaders with the preparation of CT sessions.

Description of Core Themes

Core Theme 1: Governance, Target Achievement and Cooperation

This Core Theme facilitates the integrated governance for renewable energy under the energy union governance framework. This Core Theme addresses links between the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001 and the Governance Regulation. Those are also relevant to other Core Themes. Specifically, topics of this Core Theme are: integrated planning and reporting, regional cooperation (including where appropriate, links to cooperation mechanisms between Member States), including steps that could be taken to improve alignment of different governance levels (EU, national regional and local).

This Core Theme addresses Art. 3 (Binding overall Union target for 2030), Art. 7 (Calculation of the share of energy from renewable sources) of the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including interactions with the Governance Regulation, providing a framework for integration of strategic planning and reporting, multi-level energy dialogue and regional cooperation. Specifically, relevant aspects of the Governance Regulation such as Art. 4 (national objectives, targets, and contributions), Art. 9 (NECPs), Art. 12 (regional cooperation), Art. 20 (integrated reporting on renewable energy), Art. 25 (integrated reporting on research, innovation, and competitiveness) and Art. 27 (reporting on 2020 targets) will be addressed. These issues are also handled in the respective Core Themes (CT2, CT3, CT5, and CT6).

Regarding regional cooperation as per the Governance Regulation, potential topics could include regional cooperation to facilitate better coordination of national policies and measures, implementation of relevant policies and measures of the NECPs, joint approaches to renewable development, support to cross-border projects, and cooperation between subnational actors.

Core Theme 2: RES Electricity

Core Theme 2 addresses, among others, topics related to effective support schemes for RES electricity that provide incentives for greater integration of such electricity into electricity markets in a market-based and market-responsive manner, tendering procedures, opening of support schemes for electricity from renewable sources to producers located in other Member States, and cooperation mechanisms between Member States.

It addresses the RES electricity aspects of Art. 4 (Support schemes for energy from renewable sources), Art. 5 (Opening of support schemes for electricity from renewable sources), Art. 6 (Stability of financial support) and RES electricity aspects in Art. 7 (Art. 7(2), Calculation of the share of energy from renewable sources). This Core Theme addresses RES electricity related issues of the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001 in Art. 15 (Administrative procedures, regulations, and codes) and Art. 16 (Organisation and duration of the permit-granting process) focusing on the simplification of permit-granting procedures. In addition, the Guidelines on State aid for Environmental Protection and Energy (EEAG) and the role they play in the legal design of national RES electricity support schemes will also be addressed.

Moreover, RES electricity relevant provisions in the Electricity Regulation (EU) 2019/943 (applied in the Member States as of 1 January 2020), and Directive (EU) 2019/944 on the internal market for electricity (to be transposed until the end of 2020) are also discussed. Both legal acts contain provisions with high relevance for RES electricity, in particular on priority dispatch for RES Electricity, curtailment of RES electricity in case of redispatch, balancing responsibility for RES electricity, and rules on energy communities and active customers.

Core Theme 3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling

CT3 addresses frameworks for the development of renewable heating and cooling and the use of waste heat and cold in the heating and cooling sector. On-site generation of heating or cooling, including heat pumps, as well as renewable district heating and cooling in buildings, are covered. This Core Theme encompasses, among others, analysis of statistics on renewable energy levels for these areas, to policies to address financial barriers, non-financial barriers, and regulation.

This Core Theme addresses Art. 7(3) (Calculation of the share of energy from RES in the heating and cooling sector), Art. 15(3) to 15(7) (Administrative procedures, regulations and codes, including district heating, heating and cooling, etc.), Art. 18 (Information and training), Art. 23 (Mainstreaming renewable energy in heating and cooling), Art. 24 (District heating and cooling), as well as Art. 20.3 (Access to and operation of the grids for district heating and cooling). Regarding calculations of the share of energy from renewable sources (Art. 7, 23 & 24(4)) and accounting of heat and cold in Arts. 23 and 24 of the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001, cooperation with the Eurostat and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) will be pursued, where appropriate.

Links between the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001 and the Energy Efficiency Directive 2012/27/EU and amending Energy Efficiency Directive (EU) 2018/2002 (EED), as well as the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2010/31/EU and amended Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2018/844/EU (EPBD) are becoming more important and are addressed by CT3, in cooperation with the CA EED and the CA EPBD, where appropriate.

Core Theme 4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability

Core Theme 4 focuses on policies and measures to achieve a more efficient and increased mobilisation, use, production and trade of sustainable biomass sources, as well as measures for the sustainability of biomass produced and used. The Core Theme discusses, among others, strategies for mobilisation and efficient use of biomass, sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for agriculture and forest biomass, and verification of compliance with the sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria.

This Core Theme addresses Art. 3 (Binding overall Union target for 2030), Art. 26 (Specific rules for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels produced from food and feed crops), Art. 29 (Sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass fuels), Art. 30 (Verification of compliance with the sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria), Art. 31 (Calculation of the greenhouse gas impact of biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass fuels), Art. 32 (Implementing acts), and any relevant delegated acts,

Core Theme 5: RES in Transport

This Core Theme addresses the use of renewable energy in the transport sector, including renewable liquid and gaseous transport fuels of non-biological origin, renewable electricity in the transport sector, and low carbon fuels in aviation and maritime.

The Core Theme covers Art. 7(4), 7(5) (final consumption of energy from renewable sources in the transport sector), Art. 25 (Mainstreaming renewable energy in the transport sector), Art. 26 (Specific rules for biofuels, bioliquids and biomass fuels produced from food and feed crops), Art. 27 (Calculation rules with regard to the minimum shares of renewable energy in the transport sector), Art. 28 (Other provisions on renewable energy in the transport sector), Art. 29 (Sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria for biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass fuels), Art. 30 (Verification of compliance with the sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions saving criteria), Art. 31 (Calculation of the greenhouse gas impact of biofuels, bioliquids, and biomass fuels), Art. 32 (Implementing acts), and relevant delegated acts.

Relevant links between the RES Directive (EU) 2018/2001 and the Governance Regulation are also discussed.

Core Theme 6: Consumer/Citizen's Engagement

This Core Theme will address measures to empower individual consumers and renewable energy communities to participate in renewable energy markets. It examines market and regulatory incentives to renewables self-consumers and renewable energy communities, as well as barriers and opportunities for various RES self-consumer models.

Specifically, this Core Theme facilitates the understanding of renewable energy communities (definitions, legal structure, and models) and the barriers for their uptake and measures to overcome those barriers. The Core Theme discusses enabling policy and regulatory frameworks and legislation to facilitate renewable energy communities, renewables self-consumers (including jointly acting renewables self-consumers).

The Core Theme also facilitates sharing experience on successful approaches for community/citizen engagement. This Core Theme addresses Art. 21 (Renewables self-consumers), Art. 22 (Renewable energy communities), Art. 15(3) (integration and deployment of renewable energy, including for renewables self-consumption and renewable energy communities), Art. 17 (Simple-notification procedure for grid connections) and, where appropriate, Art. 18.1 and 18.6 (Information and training).

Task Force on Guarantees of Origin and Disclosure

Art. 15.8 (regulatory and administrative barriers to long-term RES PPAs) and Art. 19 (Guarantees of origin for energy from renewable sources) fall within the scope of this Task Force. Provisions of the internal market for electricity Directive (EU) 2019/944 on common rules for the internal market in electricity (recast) that are relevant for Guarantees of Origin, and specifically Annex I.5 (disclosure of energy sources), are taken into account.

Plenary Meetings

The CA-RES4 has held four plenary meetings so far as follows:

- The first Plenary Meeting was held virtually on 17th - 18th November 2021;
- The second Plenary Meeting was held virtually on 18th - 19th May 2022;
- third Plenary Meeting was held physically (hybrid) in Athens, Greece on 9th - 10th November 2022;
- The fourth Plenary Meeting was held physically (hybrid) in Vienna, Austria on 24th – 25th May 2023.

These Plenary Meetings enabled a structured sharing of information and experience, encouraged dialogue between the participating countries, and facilitated cross-learning through the presentation of country examples and discussions with participants, invited speakers, and Commission representatives.

First Plenary Meeting was held virtually on 17th - 18th November 2021.

The following topics were discussed:

CT1: Governance, Target Achievement and Cooperation

- Governance: integrated planning and reporting and the mechanisms for EU RES target achievement;
- Regional Cooperation: Policy instruments as tools for keeping the 2020 targets as baseline and achieving the trajectory to 2030 (e.g. new Union Renewable Development Platform and the RES Financing Mechanism) and Offshore RES cooperation (esp. regional 2050 targets, EC guidance);
- Joint Session CT1/CT2: CEEAG: Reconciling competition and target achievement in times of higher ambition.

CT2: RES Electricity

- Administrative barriers;
- Joint Session CT1/CT2: CEEAG: Reconciling competition and target achievement in times of higher ambition.

CT3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling

- Comprehensive assessment (focusing mainly on renewables);
- Renewable cooling.

CT4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability

- Sustainability for biomass fuels, state of play policy and implementation RED II;
- Ensuring reliability and sustainability information of biomass fuels.

CT5: Decarbonising Transport

- Lessons learned: RED I experiences, opportunities, and challenges and its influence on the RED II implementation;
- Promoting renewables in international mobility sectors (aviation/sea shipping/inland shipping); Interaction between sectors within the RED II and possibly other (upcoming EU) legislation (for example FuelEU Maritime, ReFuel Aviation, EU-ETS).

CT6 Consumer/Citizen´s Engagement

- The development of RE communities in Members States: European & MS legal and regularity frameworks, transfer of experience
- Addressing the future of RE Communities. Analysis of existing barriers and potential of RE Communities development

A total of approximately 260 participants attended the first Plenary Meeting (including 18 invited speakers).

The first Plenary Meeting included a joint session between Core Theme 1 (Governance, target achievement, and cooperation) and Core Theme 2 (RES Electricity) entitled “CEEAG: Reconciling competition and target achievement in times of higher ambition”.

Second Plenary Meeting was held virtually on 18th - 19th May 2022

The following topics were discussed:

CT1: Governance, Target Achievement, and Cooperation

- Two instruments to speed up the development of RE - Acceleration of planning and permitting procedures and PPAs;
- Regional Cooperation: Implementation Issues.

CT2: RES Electricity

- Power Purchase Agreements – focus on sellers and purchasers;
- Administrative procedures – good practice examples.

CT3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling

- Status of the implementation of the minimum level for renewable energy in major renovation of buildings (RED art. 15.4);
- Renewable heating and cooling in the industrial sector.

CT4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability

- Availability of sustainable forest biomass: Impacts of the new EU forest strategy and the new operational guidance on forest biomass criteria on national bioenergy targets and policies and Impacts of the new EU forest strategy and the new operational guidance on forest biomass criteria on national bioenergy targets and policies;

- Sustainable biogas production: Impacts of new EU policies on the development of biogas production, Compliance of biogas pathways with REDII sustainability criteria (e.g. intermediate energy crops) and Tools developed by Member States and/or Voluntary Schemes for GHG emissions savings calculation;
- Joint Session CT4/CT5: Verification of Compliance: Supervision by Member States and relation with voluntary schemes: impacts of the implementing act, cooperation between Member States.

CT5: Decarbonising Transport

- Possibilities for integrating electricity into national systems as contributor to the national RED transport target;
- Assessing the possibilities and challenges to the incorporation of RFNBOs into national systems as contributors to the RED transport targets.

CT6 Consumer/Citizen's Engagement

- Transposition of Art. 21 (Renewable self-consumers)
 - Legal interpretations and share of experience on the enabling process;
 - Frameworks put in place among Member States.
- Renewable Energy Communities
 - Legal challenges for the transposition of Article 22 of RED;
 - Exchange of experience on supporting policies and measures.

A total of approximately 260 participants registered for the 2nd virtual plenary meeting

Third Plenary Meeting was held physically (hybrid) on 9th - 10th November 2022.

The following topics were discussed:

CT1: Governance, Target Achievement, and Cooperation

- Upcoming progress reports according to Article 17 of the Governance Regulation;
- NECP updates according to Art. 14 of the Governance Regulation.

CT2: RES Electricity

- Impacts of the revenue cap on PPAs;
- Impact of the Ukraine war on support schemes for renewable electricity.

CT3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling

- Statistics for waste heat;
- The role of renewable H&C to reduce the need for natural gas in the building sector.

CT4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability

- Sustainable Forest biomass mobilisation;

- Biomethane roadmap to 2030;
- Joint Session CT4/CT5 - Verification of compliance sustainability biomass.

CT5: Decarbonising Transport

- Feedstock definitions and the effect on fuel availability;
- Joint Session CT5 / Task Force GOs - Implementation issues regarding streamlining data on (1) biofuels and (2) RFNBOs;
- Joint Session CT4/CT5 - Verification of compliance sustainability biomass.

CT6 Consumer/Citizen´s Engagement

- Lifting the barriers for self-consumption - Contribution to RePowerEU plan;
- Renewable Energy Communities – Creation of an effective supporting framework.

Task Force on Guarantees of Origin and Consumer Information

- Implementation of GO for other renewable gases (including renewable hydrogen);
- Joint Session CT5/Task Force GOs - Implementation issues regarding streamlining data on (1) biofuels and (2) RFNBOs.

A total of 90 physical participants were present for the 3rd plenary meeting, and 90 participants attended the plenary meeting online.

Fourth Plenary Meeting was held physically (hybrid) on 24th - 25th May 20223 in Vienna.

The following topics were discussed:

CT1: Governance, Target Achievement, and Cooperation

- Cross-border energy planning;
- Joint Session CT1/CT2: Effectiveness of support schemes.

CT2: RES Electricity

- Joint Session CT1/CT2: Effectiveness of support schemes;
- Session 10: Effects of the Ukraine war on support schemes – part 2.

CT3: Decarbonising Heating and Cooling

- Heat pumps in existing buildings;
- Updates of the national climate and energy plans (NECPs).

CT4: Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability

- Sustainable Forest biomass mobilisation;
- Joint Session CT4/TF-GO: Biomethane and renewable gas with the focus on gas market development;

- Joint Session CT4/CT5: Verification of compliance with RED II criteria – Final results of the Task Force on supervision by Member States.

CT5: Decarbonising Transport

- EC policy update on transport related issues;
- Session 9: Potential impacts of RFNBO legislation on decarbonizing transport: RED versus sector regulations (Fit for 55 package);
- Joint Session CT4/CT5: Verification of compliance with RED II criteria – Final results of the Task Force on supervision by Member States.

CT6 Consumer/Citizen´s Engagement

- Integration of self-consumption into the electricity grid (Art. 21);
- Methodologies for Barriers Assessment. Exchange of experience for the involvement of municipalities in RECs (Art. 22).

Task Force on Guarantees of Origin and Consumer Information

- Article 19.2 (RED II);
- Joint Session CT4/Task Force GO: Biomethane and renewable gas with the focus on gas market development.

A total of 110 participants were present for the 3rd plenary meeting and 106 participants attended the 4th plenary meeting online.

Task Forces

Within the CA-RES4, two non-permanent Task Forces were established in the framework of CT4 and CT5:

- **Task Force 1: Task force on supervision of sustainability schemes**

This task force focusses on the discussion of the different options for coordination of supervision of Sustainability Certification to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria set out in the RED II for biomass used for energy purposes, as required by the implementing regulation. Specifically, the task force deals with the following aspects of supervision:

- The tasks as defined in the implementing regulation and their current status;
- The existing actors and forums in the field, their current role and interaction, (Committee on sustainability, CA-RES, REFUREC, etc.);
- Options for organising coordination of the supervision between Member States.
- **Task force 2: Task force on grid injected biomethane, accounting rules, mass balance, and international trade**

The main objective of the task force will be to give an overview of:

- Existing rules for accounting in relation to the different targets of the RED II;
- Existing mass balance rules in relation to the gas grid and the relation to greenhouse gas emission reduction calculations;
- How Member States could organise contribution to national (and sectoral) targets and their support system in cases of international transport of gas through the grid (blending obligation or subsidy) and where compliance with sustainability is governed.

Highlights

The CA-RES publishes highlights from the plenary meetings on its website. Some excerpts of the highlights of plenary meetings are provided below. All highlights of the Core Theme sessions held can be found here:

<https://www.ca-res.eu/highlights>

1st Plenary Meeting, 17th-18th November 2021, Online Session 3: Administrative Barriers (Core Theme 2)

The session was focused on barriers related to administrative procedures and experiences with the reduction of barriers and the optimisation of procedures in Member States. The duration of administrative processes is often influenced by conflicts between the project applicants and the public (e.g. local initiatives and action groups) during the public participation process. Public concerns are often caused by a lack of transparency and information regarding the intended projects. An early, transparent, and appropriate communication process, which goes beyond basic formal requirements and which addresses existing concerns, can contribute to a settlement of conflicts and can support the acceleration of administrative procedures.

Another important basis for the reduction of administrative barriers is the appropriate staffing and funding of the authorities, which are responsible for the administrative procedures. The authorities need sufficient staff, with appropriate expertise, who can manage the processes in due time. This needs steady training and personnel development.

In general, it can be noticed that a reduction of administrative barriers does not necessarily mean a reduction of administrative procedures but more effective procedures, which can be reached in a cooperation between authorities and project applicants.

2nd Plenary Meeting, 18th-19th May 2022, Online Session 13: Renewable heating and cooling in the industrial sector

Mainstreaming renewable energy in heating and cooling is the topic of the Art. 23 of the directive. In particular, Art. 23.4 makes express reference to the use of renewables in the industrial sector, when mentioning possible measures to reach the objectives.

The goal of the session was to acquire knowledge of current state of play on renewable heating and cooling in the industrial sector, and the different options and experiences by

Member States on how to decarbonise the industrial sector, both from the regulatory and incentive perspectives.

Participants from the European Commission started by setting the general framework and showing the opportunities brought by REPowerEU to decarbonise the industrial sector, with reinforced targets of using renewable fuels of non-biological origin.

Participants discussed, among others, current and foreseen shares of RES consumption in the industrial sector in 2030, regulatory and financial measures in place, and potential barriers that could prevent the deployment of renewable energies in the industrial sector.

Experiences with financial measures already in place were presented by Germany and Spain. These measures have been running for a couple of years now, and so far, have been most successful in implementing bioenergy projects, although other technologies (solar, heat pumps) have also been developed.

The European Heat Pump Association also made a presentation on the specific potential for heat pumps to deliver and their use cases in different industrial sectors.

All the participants agreed that it is a good time for industry to replace fossil fuels with renewable energies, and most of the participants indicated that the estimated payback time expected from industrial managers for these kinds of investments is 3-5 years. Most participants also thought that energy services companies can play a relevant role (instead of the industrial company making the investment directly himself) and, when asked about what specific measures Member States could take, most of the answers targeted the financial side of the problem (e.g. tax exemptions, financing support, and attractive funding schemes).

3rd Plenary Meeting, 9th-10th November 2022, Athens, Greece Session 12: Renewable Energy Communities - Creation of an effective supporting framework - Contribution of RECs to energy poverty alleviation

During this session, participants gained a close insight into challenges surrounding the transposition of Art. 22, focusing on both, the legal interpretation, as well as the creation of a supporting framework in each Member State.

The specific discussion topics for this session were:

- The contribution of RECs to the ‘EU Solar Strategy’ and the presentation of European Initiatives and projects;
- The contribution of Renewable Energy Communities in energy poverty alleviation and the presentation of best practices;
- The investigation of the main barriers for RECs deployment acceleration.

The CT6 leader presented a short analysis of the responses to the questionnaire completed by national representatives. The questionnaire aimed to profile the development status of Art. 22’s transposition in each Member State, while removing the most significant barriers.

Specific questions for the contribution of RECs in energy poverty alleviation stimulated the discussion that followed.

An officer from the European Climate Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) presented the outcomes of significant projects supporting the promotion of RECs funded by LIFE and Horizon 2020 programmes where ‘involving and empowering citizens in the clean energy transition’ is among their fundamental priorities. These projects facilitate the exchange of experience and provide best practices and innovative ideas for the implementation of RECs in all Member States.

Following this discussion, a European expert presented the experience, the practices and the business models used so far, by innovative efforts undertaken by existing RECs aiming to support for energy poverty alleviation. The four models introduced were:

- Providing a share in the Energy Community for vulnerable consumers;
- Sharing the RES electricity produced by energy communities with vulnerable communities nearby;
- Providing energy savings improvements and advice to vulnerable consumers by RECs;
- Adoption of a donation & solidarity model among energy community members.

The participants then broke into three separate discussion tables in order to discuss their experience, ideas and proposals to strengthen the role of RECs in energy poverty alleviation.

The three discussion tables, together with online participants who posted their ideas on the project’s online tool (used as a virtual board), discussed the following questions:

- How could vulnerable consumer citizens be engaged in RECs?
- How can REC activities, services, and profits best support vulnerable groups?
- What are the groups that need our special attention and require further actions for their engagement?

Finally, all participants concurred on three policy priorities that need to be further promoted. The immediate alignment of national policies with ‘RePowerEU Solar Strategy’, is a necessary step that would provide the policy background for the acceleration of RECs deployment efforts. The promotion of RECs actions to support vulnerable consumers is essential for the strengthening of their role as actors working for local development, social cohesion, and RES acceptability. Meanwhile, the lifting of barriers for the active involvement of local municipalities in REC creation and operation will provide robust support for their operation.

Testimonials

Interviews with NCPs and Participants

A questionnaire for interviews with selected National Contact Points (NCPs) and participants was prepared by the Coordinator to measure the impact of the CA-RES4. These interviews helped to identify the impact of the CA-RES4 in terms of value added, impact and overall

usefulness of the Concerted Action as a policy instrument that strengthens the implementation of the RES Directive at the Member State level. Using concrete examples, the interviews demonstrate how the CA-RES has helped in the implementation process.

Some highlights from the interviews are as follows:

Country: Portugal;

“Looking back, I would like to confirm the beneficial and vital role of Concerted Action in the policy implementation process. As we strongly believe in the process, we also try to catalyse and boost the Portuguese participation to learn and to share, which I think converges with the CA-RES mission. Based on this, we are trying to implement internal processes to optimise the concerted action.

The usefulness of the CA-RES as a tool for policy implementation is crucial. No one has a better overview and options to create synergies with internal processes, reporting policies, emerging tech, knowing state of the art, and complement work.

The concerted action is not just helpful but strategically important. It is a tool that should be replicated in different areas as well. The resource intensity is moderate, especially concerning how well it structures internal processes. This is good for the operations of the individual Member States and the commissions: a win-win-win situation.”

Country: Spain

“The final reports help a lot. Especially the views of the other Member States as filled out in the key questions. The discussions during the sessions are also beneficial, as other participants may point out aspects you have overlooked in your work. Despite the particularities of each member state, this kind of direct feedback from each other is beneficial.

Knowing other countries' strategies and positions has helped the EU Council negotiations.”

Study tours

During the 4th Plenary Meeting in Vienna, a study tour for about 20 participants to the Austrian Power Grid (Austrian electricity Transmission System Operator, APG) and the energy park in Bruck an der Leitha was conducted. The participants received a presentation and guided tour of the main control centre of the APG. In addition, they had the opportunity to visit a wind turbine, biomass, biogas/biomethane and photovoltaic plants in Bruck an der Leitha.



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Cooperation with other concerted actions

The CA-RES4 benefits from results and proven practices of the Concerted Action on the Energy efficiency Directive (CA EED) and the Concerted Action on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (CA EPBD). The CA-RES4 coordinator meets regularly with the coordinators of the CA EED and the CA EPBD in order to exchange experiences and discuss synergies between topics. Presentations from good-practice examples and results from the other Concerted Actions have been given at CT3 sessions (decarbonising heating and cooling), specifically about the comprehensive assessments for heating and cooling in the framework of Art. 14 of the EED. In addition, joint activities are pursued to utilise synergies

when appropriate. Currently, a joint workshop on green skills is under preparation and will be held in Madrid on 28-29 September 2023.

Cooperation with other initiatives

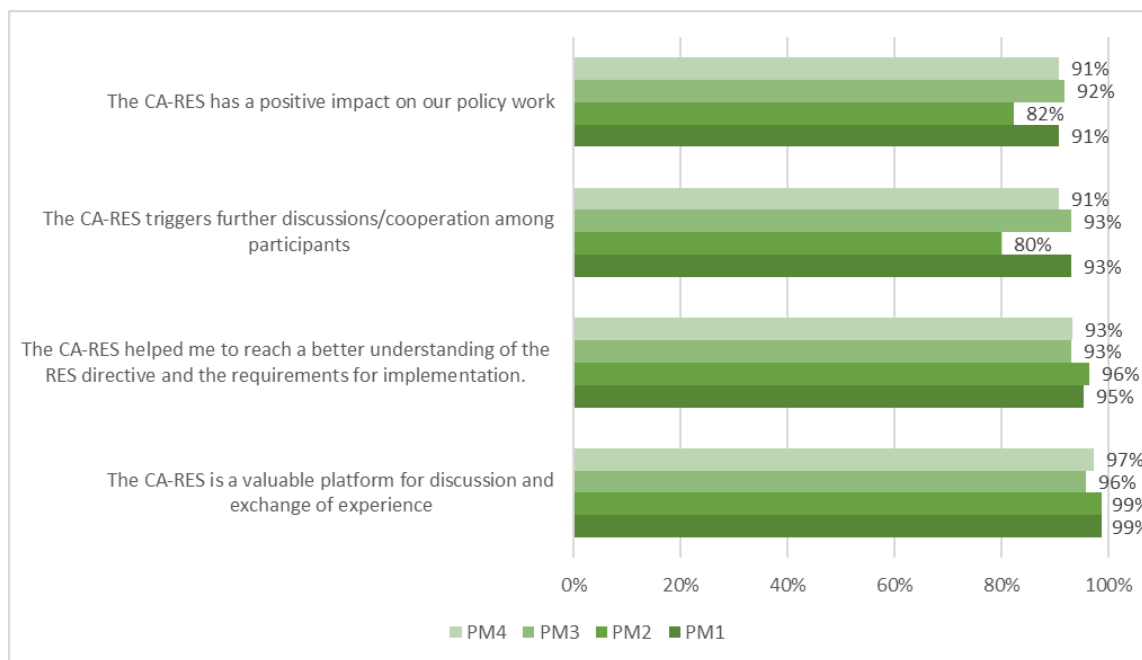
Cooperation with the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector Phase II (CF-SEDSS II)

The CA-RES Coordinator attended the Conference of the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector Phase II (CF-SEDSS II) that was held on 29th – 30th November 2022 in Prague, and provided presentations on renewable transport and renewable heating and cooling. Potential links to the working Group on RES of the CF-SEDSS II were explored. The Working Group on RES of the CF-SEDSS focuses on the implementation of renewable energy solutions by EU Ministries of Defence (MoD) addressing various aspects, such as suitability of technology solutions, procurement rules, financing mechanisms, and required skills, as well as the identification of potential joint projects, while considering defence capability and cost efficacy as key drivers.

Looking back, looking forward

Building on the work achieved throughout the three phases of the Concerted Actions, in the fourth phase of the CA-RES participating experts are provided with an overview of policy instruments and measures promoting renewable energy sources (RES). They also discuss approaches to develop solutions to a number of challenges with the implementation of the directive.

Participants have expressed their satisfaction with the CA-RES. This includes the creation of a platform for discussion and a wide network of European experts, awareness raising on good practice examples, as well as the chances and opportunities that lie in joint approaches.



Based on the evaluation questionnaire of the first four plenary meetings:

- 89% of the participants believe that the CA-RES has a positive policy impact on the work in the respective countries.
- According to 89% of the participants, the CA-RES is a point of departure for further discussion/cooperation among the experts.
- 95% of the participants think that the CA-RES has helped them to reach a better understanding of the RES directive and its implementation.
- 98% of the participants think that the CA-RES is a valuable platform for discussion and exchange of experience between public authorities and relevant actors responsible for the implementation of the RES directive.

Over the next couple of years and looking ahead to the complexities presented by the revised Renewable Energy Directive, it is expected that the implementation of the RES Directive will continue to be highly relevant for the EU Member States. The revised RES directive (RED III) will pose a number of challenges. The officials in each Member State responsible for implementing the RES Directive will continue to work as closely as they have done thus far in the CA-RES. The Concerted Action will continue paving the way toward the long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral EU economy by 2050.

In addition, facilitating exchanges with other Concerted Actions, namely the Concerted Action on Energy Efficiency (CA EED) and the Concerted Action on the Energy Performance of Buildings (CA EPBD) will continue to be useful.

Core Theme Leaders

Core Themes and Core Theme Leaders and technical assistants of CA-RES4 are as follows:

Abbreviation	Core Theme	Core Theme Leaders
CT1	Governance, Target Achievement and Cooperation	Niels Anger (BMWK, DE) Melina Suckow (BMWK, DE) Nils May (BMWK, DE) Lara Paetsch (BMWK, DE) (from May 2019 until September 2022) Anja Nitschke-Hoffmann (BMWK, DE) (until February 2023)
CT2	RES Electricity	Günter Pauritsch (AEA, AT) Martin Baumann (AEA, AT)
CT3	Decarbonising Heat	Miguel Rodrigo (IDAE, ES) Lex Bosselaar (RVO, NL) Peter van Vugt (RVO, NL) Carlos Alberto Fernandez Lopez (IDAE, ES)
CT4	Biomass Mobilisation and Sustainability	Olivier Squilbin (Climact, BE) Timo Gerlagh (RVO, NL) Rene Wismeijer (RVO, NL)
CT5	Decarbonising Transport	Mark Macare (Minienw, NL) Marco Ubeda (Minienw, NL, until January 2023) Jose Muisers (RVO, NL) Paul Sinnige (RVO, NL) Oskar Dijkstra (RVO, NL)
CT6	Citizen's Engagement/Consumer Information	Vassilis Kiliadis (CRES, GR) Effie Korma (CRES, GR)
Task Force GOs		Michael Lenzen (RVO, NL)

CA-RES4 Coordination Team

Coordination Team	Institution
Leonardo Barreto Gómez (Lead of the coordination team)	AEA, AT
Denise Eck	
Rudolf Köstler	
Eva Janechova	
Valerie Braterschofsky	
Ines Kindermann-Zeilinger (until January 2023)	

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AEA	Austrian Energy Agency
AIB	Association of Issuing Bodies
APG	Austrian Power Grid
Art.	Article
CA EED	Concerted Action on the Energy Efficiency Directive
CA EPBD	Concerted Action on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
CA-RES	Concerted Action on the Renewable Energy Sources Directive EU 2018/2001
CEEAG	Climate, Environmental Protection and Energy State Aid Guidelines
CINEA	European Climate Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
CF-SEDSS	Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector
CT	Core Theme
DG ENER	Directorate General for Energy of the European Commission
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
ETS	Emissions Trading System
EU	European Union
FuelEU Maritime	The FuelEU Maritime initiative proposes a common EU regulatory framework to increase the share of renewable and low-carbon fuels in the fuel mix of international maritime transport without creating barriers to the single market
GO	Guarantees of Origin
GOV	Governance Regulation 2018/1999/EU
H2	Hydrogen
H2020	Horizon 2020 Programme
LIFE programme	EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action

Abbreviation	Meaning
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MS	Member States
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
REC	Renewable Energy Communities
RED II	Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001
RED III	Revision of the Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2018/2001
ReFuelEU Aviation	ReFuelEU Aviation initiative
REFUREC	Renewable Fuels Regulator Club
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
RFNBO	Renewable Fuels of Non-Biological Origin

Participating Country	Country Code
Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Croatia	HR
Cyprus	CY
Czechia	CZ
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	GR
Hungary	HU
Iceland	IS
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Norway	NO
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE

This is a confidential CA-RES report

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For further information please visit www.ca-res.eu