

# Highlights CT6

## Citizen's Engagement

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### 1st CA-RES IV Plenary Meeting

17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Core Theme 6 "*Consumer/Citizen's engagement*" addresses measures to empower individual consumers and renewable energy communities to participate in renewable energy markets, these topics covered mainly by Art. 21 (Renewables self-consumers) and Art. 22 (Renewable energy communities) of RED II

This particular Core Theme 6 was introduced for the first time and will focus on the national enabling policy and regulatory frameworks renewable energy communities and renewables self-consumers. Moreover, CT6 aims to support the sharing of experience on successful approaches for community/citizen engagement in MS.

The two sessions related to the CT6, were dedicated to the assessment of potentials and barriers for Renewable Energy Communities uptake, as well as the transposition of article 22 of RED II into the national framework. Moreover they facilitated the participants to exchange information on the national enabling policies, the transposition process, and the obstacles recognized so far.

#### Session 5: The development of RE communities in Members States: European & MS legal and regulatory frameworks, transfer of experience.

Four speakers, representing experienced stakeholders or experts on the RE Communities schemes, shared their experience and stimulated further discussion.

A Senior Policy Advisor representing the European association of Energy Cooperatives REScoop.eu, shared his experience and proposals regarding the potential and barriers for RECs uptake, as well as the creation of an enabling framework for their development at EU level. He recommended that Member States should enable their framework by exercising Strategic Planning in order to provide carefully designed incentives to support for grid connection & administrative issues, while they should also address the regulatory barriers and promote inclusiveness.

An expert from ThInkE group and coordinator of H2020 DECIDE project, presented a *'basic observation and findings list for RECs development'*. She referenced the strategic directions that we need to follow, especially, in the analysis of costs and benefits, the assessment of energy cost reduction, the need for grid infrastructure, the importance of good communication and the deep understanding of energy poverty. She proposed that business models that provide realistic replicability potential should be promoted.

An expert from the Irish Department for Environment, Climate and Communications, presented the Irish Support Scheme and RED II Enabling Framework for Renewable Energy Communities. He outlined the national commitments for RECs as well as the four pillars of the supporting operating framework, i.e. the definition of a specific *'community category'* so as RECs do not compete with traditional market actors, the specific enabling framework, the community benefit fund and the specific investment opportunities that are provided by the scheme.

An expert from the Austrian Coordination Body for energy communities provided information on the existing framework for RECs in Austria and presented the experience of the *'one-stop-shop'* structure that has been established in 2021. Its tasks include the Provision of quality-assured Information, the support for Projects and the communication with stakeholders.

### Session 11: Addressing the future of RE Communities. Analysis of existing barriers and potential of RE Communities development

This session aimed at the analysis of existing barriers and potential of RE Communities development. During that session, experts discussed on *assessment of enabling policies and measures as well as the identified barriers*.

The CT6 leader issued a short analysis of the responses to the questionnaire filled by national representatives. The questionnaire aimed to profile the development status of RECs and Article 22 transposition in each Member State, by collecting information regarding, the national legislative framework, the transposition status, the national targets set so far, the identified barriers as well as the procedures for their assessment, the requirements of information exchange, and the legislative issues that need to be further clarified.

A policy expert from DG ENER, presented the European framework for Energy communities and analysed the purpose and the existing legal models for energy communities. She clarified also the classification into Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) and Citizens Energy Communities (CECs) the implementation pathways including *'proximity'* issues and the advisory and support mechanisms offered by the Commission. The policy expert expressed the RES policy priorities of EU by emphasising the need for proper transposition of RED II into the national framework.

IDAE (Spain) and CRES (Greece), presented the national experience from Spain and Greece respectively, providing the opportunity to dive into the national experience and current activities.

Finally, a *'Round table'* discussion among the participants followed the presentations, while the session ended by giving to the participants the opportunity to vote on the most important barriers for RECs uptake.