

12th Renewable Energy Coordination Group meeting

Webex online meeting

Thursday, 9 December 2021, 10:00 – 14:00

Opening

Ms. Margalita Arabidze, Deputy Head of Energy Reforms and International Relations Department in the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia and Chair of the RECG, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Ms. Arabidze provided an introduction recalling a newly adopted Clean Energy package in the Energy Community.

The agenda of the 12th meeting was adopted. All members of the RECG were present during the meeting except representatives of Serbia and Ukraine.

Ms. Naida Taso, Electricity Market and Renewables Expert in the Energy Community Secretariat, presented the Third Report on the Progress in the Promotion of Renewable Energy in the Energy Community (2018/2019). The report showed the overall progress achieved in the transposition and, to some extent, in the implementation of several articles of the Renewable Energy Directive through Energy and Renewables Laws, Governmental Decisions, rules and regulations adopted in all Contracting Parties. However, transposition of provisions related to renewables in a transport sector is lagging in several Contracting Parties. In 2019, only three Contracting Parties (Kosovo*, Moldova and Montenegro) surpassed their planned trajectories as well as 2020 targets. However, this is mainly due to a revision of biomass consumption data.

A Deadline for the Fifth Progress report (for 2020/2021) is 31 December 2022.

Ms. Taso informed about the newly adopted Directive 2018/2001 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (REDII). The Directive was adopted on the 19th Ministerial Council held on 30 November 2021 in Belgrade (Decision of the Ministerial Council 2021/14/MC-EnC) with the transposition and implementation deadline of 31 December 2022.

Ms. Taso also announced the implementation of the regional system for guarantees of origin in the first half 2022. Members of the working group agreed that the Energy Community Secretariat should become observer in the Association of Issuing Bodies (AIB) with the aim to better support Contracting Parties on their access path.

Mr. Mathieu Ballu, Policy Officer in the European Commission (DG ENER), presented the adaptation of the Renewables Directive 2018/2001 in the Energy Community. The Directive includes a set of well-balanced measures across all sectors to make sure that the ambitious will be met in a cost-effective way. Some of them are investment certainty and stability of support, clear principles on support schemes for electricity to make support more cost-effective, streamlined administrative procedures, empowering consumers to become an active part of the energy transitions, enhanced regional cooperation. To make sure that all sectors are tackled, there are specific targets for heating and cooling and transport, along with strengthened rules on sustainability of biomass. Mr. Ballu explained that in the EU MSs, compliance assessment was done through a two-stage process: a transposition check starts once Member States have communicated to the Commission their national transposition measures transposing directives and conformity checks run after the transposition checks are finished.

1. Latest updates in the implementation of renewable energy acquis

The Contracting Parties' representatives in the meeting briefly presented a status of the implementation of Renewable Energy Directive.

Ms. Xhelilaj from Albania outlined that the RES Law is being revised in order to allow full switching from FiT to CfD (Contract for Difference); templates for CfD are being drafted and approval for establishment of Renewable Energy Operator (REO) is being prepared. A process for first wind auction (total capacity 130 MW) in Albania has started and ceiling price is set at 76 €/MWh. Ms. Kapetina announced that both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are working on new RES laws, and while there have been some delays in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, adoption in Republika Srpska is expected in the beginning of 2022. Ms. Kapetina raised the question of RES targets gap for years 2020-2025 (adopted Governance Regulation envisages finalization of NECPs in 2024 for the period 2025-2030) expressing concern on how quotas for the support scheme will be defined. Ms. Arabidze reported that Georgia continues drafting secondary acts: in July 2021, the updated minimum requirements for professional retraining of RES installers were adopted and in August, by-law on eco-labelling of heat pumps was adopted. In Georgia, a locational auction for 5 MW solar PV plant Udabno was finalized in August 2021. Ms. Qorraj informed that Kosovo* plans to work on a new RES law to enable market-based support scheme and in the meantime considering organizing an auction for one pilot project. Mr. Magdil informed that Moldova also reached its RES 2020 and is currently working on law amendments to provide details on PPA according to the best international practices. Ms. Damjanovic reported that, having in mind that the national target for the use of energy from renewable sources has been exceeded, the Government of Montenegro decided on 22 July 2021, in accordance with the Energy Law, to stop supporting the construction of new facilities for the production of energy from renewable sources. According to the representative of North Macedonia, Ms. Daskalova, the law on biofuels is being drafted. Ms. Daskalova also informed that amendments for Energy Law appointed market operator to be issuing body for guarantees of origin.

2. Citizens and Renewable Energy Communities

Ms. Biljana Grbić from the Energy Community Secretariat, provided a presentation on Citizen and Renewable Energy Communities. Citizen Energy Communities (CECs) are defined in the Article 2(11) of the newly adopted Electricity Directive 2019/944, while REDII defines Renewable Energy Communities in Article 2(16). Ms. Grbić provided key similarities and differences between two concepts comparing organisational form, possibility to participate in a community, governing of a community, activities that can be performed and purpose of its establishment.

Mr. Josh Roberts, Senior Policy Advisor from the REScoop presented drivers for success in the community renewable energy. In the presentation, incentives to invest are divided in operational and investment support. Key elements for success are addressing regulatory barriers, promoting inclusiveness, setting objectives, and developing a strategy.

Mr. Tomi Medved from the University of Ljubljana presented the COMPILER project. Through the COMPILER, five pilot locations in the EU MS were selected. Mr. Medved presented a pilot location Luče in Slovenia where 102kW of solar PV were installed on nine houses. Nine "Home Energy Management Systems" (HEMS) were developed and installed, dynamically limiting the PV output power according to the real voltage conditions in the network. The second presented pilot location was Križevci in Croatia. The main goal of Križevci pilot project was to establish an energy community that would replicate the success of crowdfunded PV plant on Technology Park and to use COMPILER tools to increase self-sufficiency of technology park and support the operation and management of energy community by blockchain technologies.

Upon the presentations of the speakers, participants initiated the discussion on the issue of whether communities can make a profit, and if yes, for which purpose they can use the profit. The speakers have explained that communities can make a profit, but it should primarily be re-invested for the community's activities, such as energy efficiency measures, addressing energy poverty, investments in new generation facilities, etc., and secondarily to be distributed to the members of the community.