

25th Environmental Task Force Group meeting

Contracting Entity:



Energy Community Secretariat
Am Hof 4, 5th floor
A-1010 Vienna, Austria

- **“Assessment of the permit-granting procedure for energy projects in the Energy Community”**
- **Reg nb: ECS_PN26-2022**

Consultant consortia:



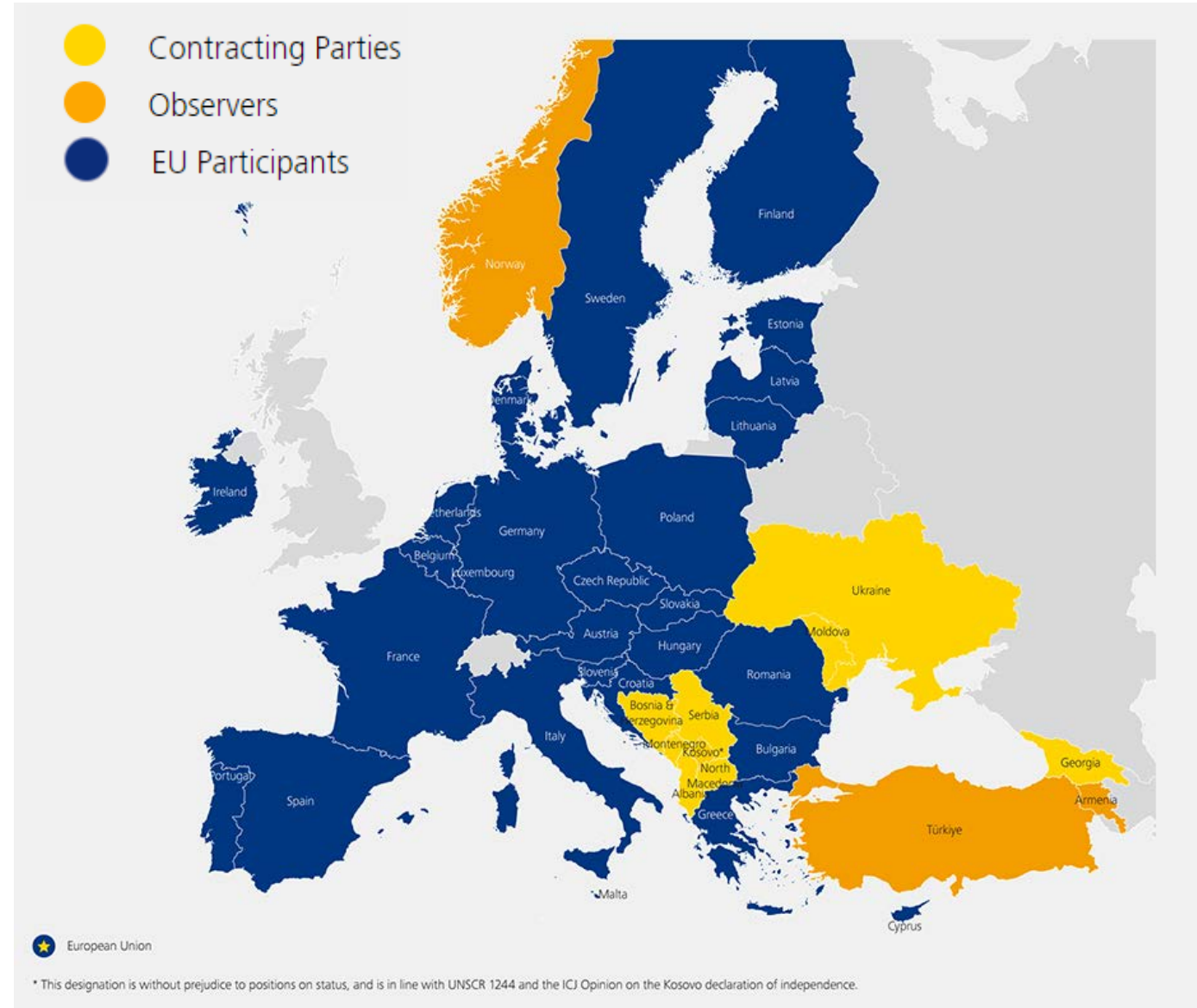
Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar



Oikon Ltd. – Institute of Applied Ecology

Aim of the Service

Assessment of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and permit-granting procedures for energy projects (with a focus on renewable energy projects (RE)), in each of the Contracting Parties (CP) of the Energy Community (EnC)



Task 1

Development of a specific questionnaire for each of the main stakeholder group (government, business sector, civil society) in order to gather input information on the practical implementation of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and the permit-granting procedures for energy projects, with a focus on renewable energy projects.



Task 1

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) permit-related procedures

- Number of projects made subject to an EIA per energy project categories set out in- Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive (excluding nuclear energy), focusing on renewable energy;
- number of energy projects made subject to a determination in accordance with Article 4(2) as refers to energy projects listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive (excluding nuclear energy) and focusing on renewable energy;
- average duration of the EIA process (each phase of the process, including the issuing of the development consent/s and other relevant permits) and the factors that cause the most significant delays including assessment of the complexity of administrative authorisations;
- identification of gaps in legal implementation that delay or halt the proper EIA permit-related procedures (e.g. lack of secondary legislation);
- staffing and skilling of permitting authorities;
- practices for streamlining of the EIA permit-related procedures with other environmental assessment procedures and permits

EIA procedure - Questionnaires

Authority:

- The total number of projects listed in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive that underwent an EIA and screening procedure in the period 2017-2022, broken down by year and by energy project category
- Average duration of EIA and screening procedures in months for the HPP, SPP and WF projects.
- The method of obtaining information for applying for the environmental decision/consent (one-stop shop).
- The availability of guidelines for the application process.
- The use of electronic communication.
- Involvement of other authorities and public bodies, "silence means consent" rule.
- Causes/obstacles affecting the duration of the procedure.
- Number and skills of staff involved.
- Factors that could increase the efficiency of the EIA procedure.

Business:

- Satisfaction with the current EIA procedures
- The method of obtaining information for applying for the environmental decision/consent (one-stop shop). Quality of available information and guidelines.
- Duration of the preparation of the documentation needed.
- E-communication.
- Delays in EIA procedures and factors causing delays.
- Proportion of the costs for the preparation of the EIA reports and the investigations carried out in the total investment costs.
- Factors that could increase the efficiency of EIA procedure.

Civil Society

- Public interest in participating in EIS procedures.
- Availability and accessibility of information on ongoing EIA procedures.
- Possibility and the conditions for public participation in EIA procedure.
- Timeframe for public consultations during the EIA procedure.
- Transparency of the process of review and acceptance/rejection of public comments.
- General public opinion on large-scale renewable energy projects.

Task 1

Permit-granting processes regarding renewable energy including repowering projects and renewable energy self-consumption projects

- Legislative, regulatory and other obstacles in all permit-granting processes;
- average duration of issuance of each permit and the factors that cause the most significant delays;
- identification of gaps in legal implementation that delay or halt the permit-related procedures (e.g. lack of secondary legislation);
- average direct costs of issuance of certain permit;
- staffing and skilling of permitting authorities;
- obstacles related to grid connection of renewable energy projects

Permit granting procedure - Questionnaires

Authority:

- Average duration of permit procedures in months for the renewable energy projects
- Number and skills of staff involved

Business:

- Duration of the preparation of the documentation needed
- One stop shop
- Timing to obtain building permit
- Average cost/MW as regards development of a renewable energy project

Civil Society

- Public opinion regarding large scale renewable energy projects
- Availability and accessibility of information on application for building permits of the renewable energy projects
- Possibility and the conditions for public participation in permit granting procedures for renewable energy projects

Task 1

Planning of spatial zones on a national level (in each EnC CP) as regards renewable energy projects

- Processes (criteria and methodology) and their average duration for site selection and planning of land/sea space use for specific renewable energy projects;
- strategic environmental assessment conducted and average duration of the procedure;
- legislative and implementation gaps that delay or halt the developing of zone layering for specific renewable energy projects);
- potential obstacles in the adoption/execution of land/sea zone layering space use for specific renewable energy projects

Spatial planning- Questionnaire

Authority

- Status of plans (is there a National spatial plan, are all spatial plans on regional/local level adopted)
- Quality of plans (are information in documents up to date, are the spatial plans of different level compatible)
- Preparation of plans (who initiates the preparation, who provides specialistic studies, etc.)
- Potential obstacles (what causes the delay in adoption of spatial plans and is it relevant in overall permitting process)
- Project compatibility (average timeframe to assess the compatibility of project with plan and what are levels of spatial plans to assess, etc)
- SEA (certification of experts and/or companies)

Business:

- Potential obstacles (what causes the delay in adoption of spatial plans and is it relevant in overall permitting process)
- SEA (average cost)
- Public participation (general opinion on renewable projects, availability of spatial plans, public consultation)

Civil Society:

- Public participation (general opinion on renewable projects, availability of spatial plans, public consultation)

Task 1

Grid connection permit procedure

- Procedure for connection to both transmission and distribution grid: required documentation, criteria, methodology of assessment, transparency requirements, request refusal
- prescribed and achieved average duration for permit issuance
- application of simplified procedure for grid connections
- renewable self-consumption state of play (emphasis on grid integration)
- methodology for determining the fee for connection and/or connection costs;
- legislative and implementation gaps that delay development of grid (reinforcements and new assets related to the connections)
- potential obstacles in the grid integration of new connections (country grid specifics, e.g. obsolete assets, lack of balancing capacity,..)

Grid connection permit procedure - Questionnaire

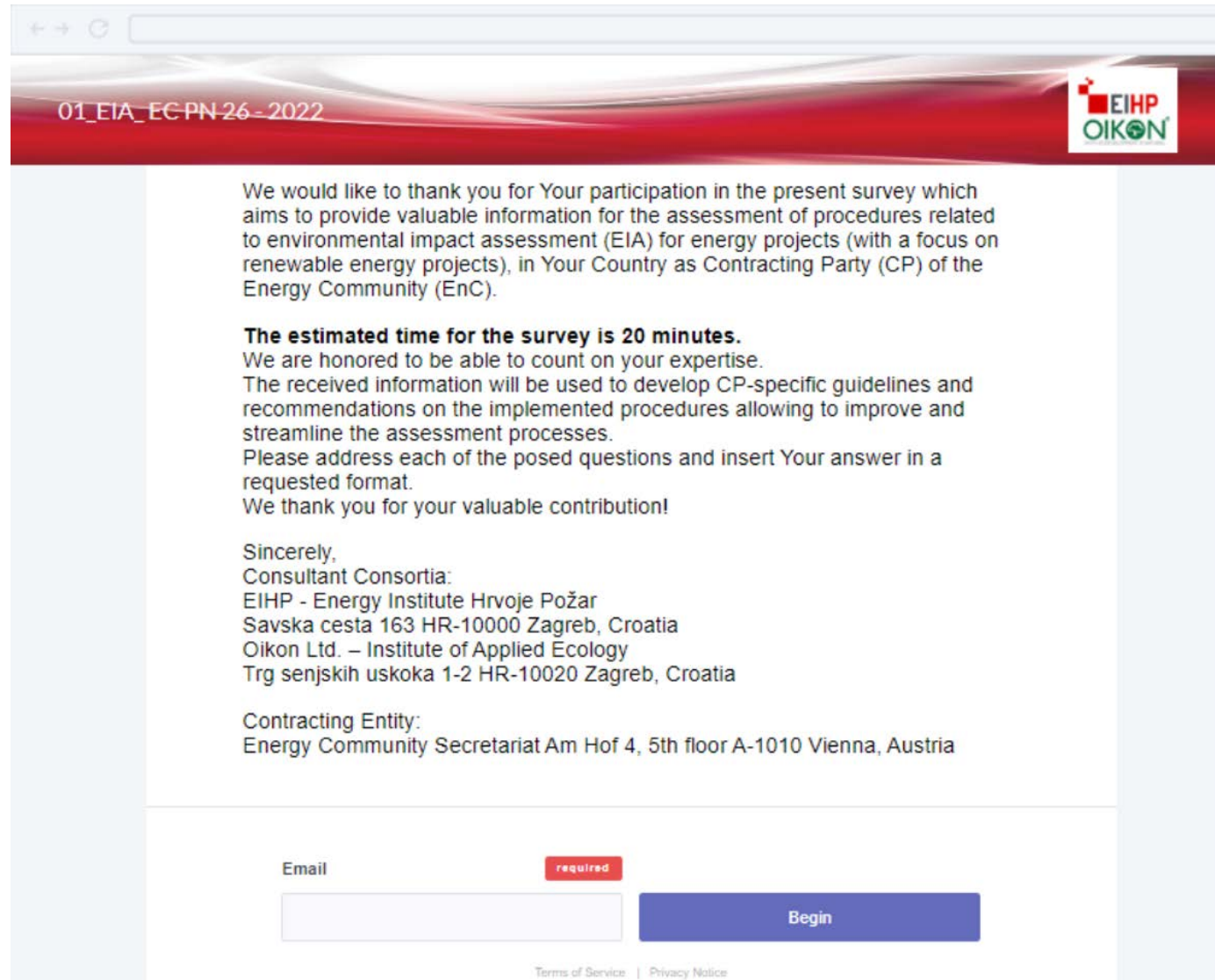
TSO / DSO:

- Number of requests for connection temporarily or permanently rejected (2018-2022)
- What is the most often reason for RES connection request denial
- How long does it actually take on average, from when a RES connection application until the final energization (operation)
- Average duration (*in days*) of the connection study preparation
- The main elements or reasons that result in the most extensive delays in getting the connection permit
- Requirements for the TSO/DSO to publish hosting capacity


Regulatory authority (RA):

- Complaints received related to delays in getting the connection permit from TSO/DSO (2018-2022)
- Complaints received regards to the TSO's/DSO's connection offer or other aspects throughout the connection procedure (2018-2022)

<https://srvy.onl/eia>



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We would like to thank you for Your participation in the present survey which aims to provide valuable information for the assessment of procedures related to environmental impact assessment (EIA) for energy projects (with a focus on renewable energy projects), in Your Country as Contracting Party (CP) of the Energy Community (EnC).

The estimated time for the survey is 20 minutes.
We are honored to be able to count on your expertise.
The received information will be used to develop CP-specific guidelines and recommendations on the implemented procedures allowing to improve and streamline the assessment processes.
Please address each of the posed questions and insert Your answer in a requested format.
We thank you for your valuable contribution!

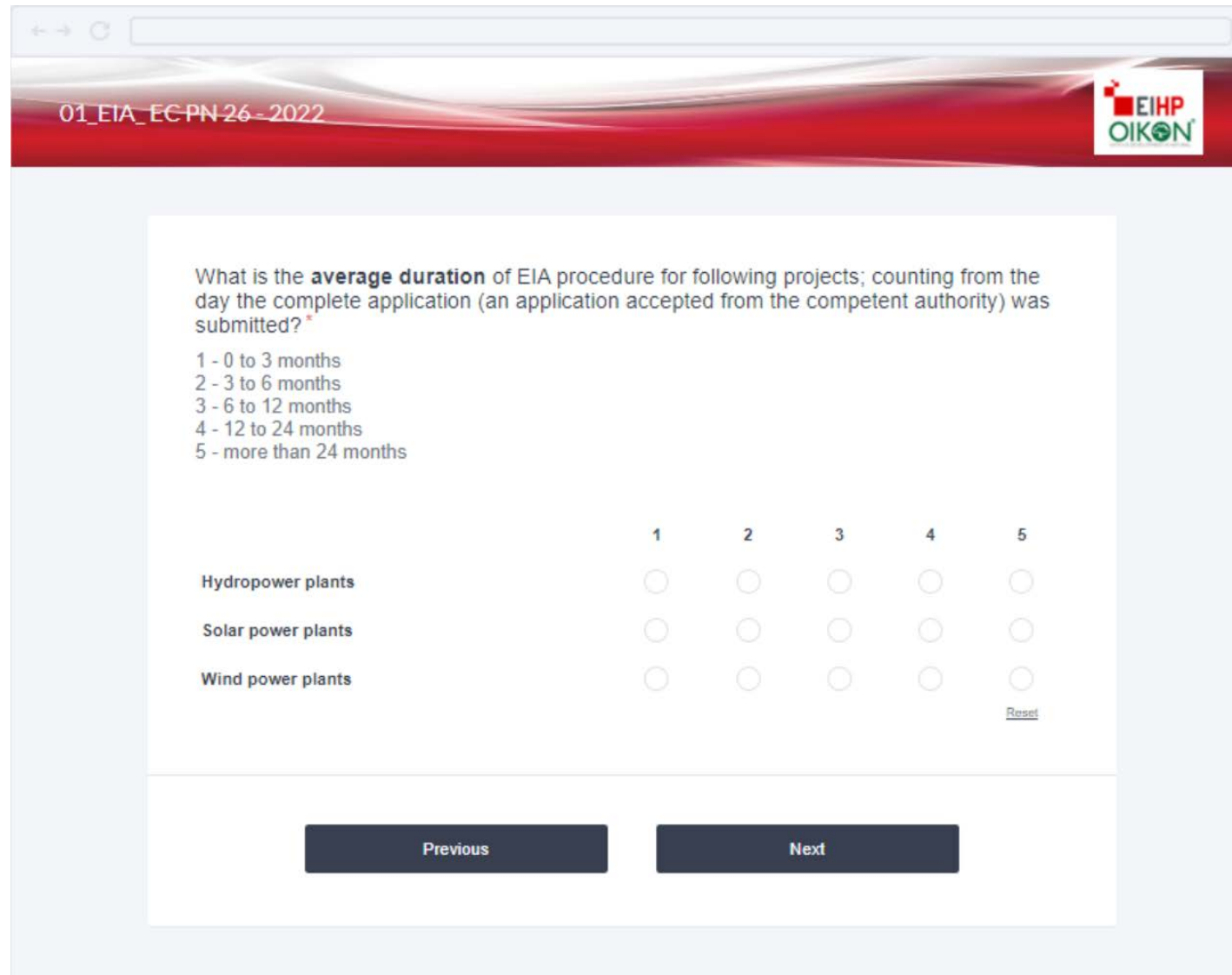
Sincerely,
Consultant Consortia:
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Email required

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What is the **average duration** of EIA procedure for following projects; counting from the day the complete application (an application accepted from the competent authority) was submitted? *

1 - 0 to 3 months
2 - 3 to 6 months
3 - 6 to 12 months
4 - 12 to 24 months
5 - more than 24 months

	1	2	3	4	5
Hydropower plants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solar power plants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wind power plants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Task 1

Expected results

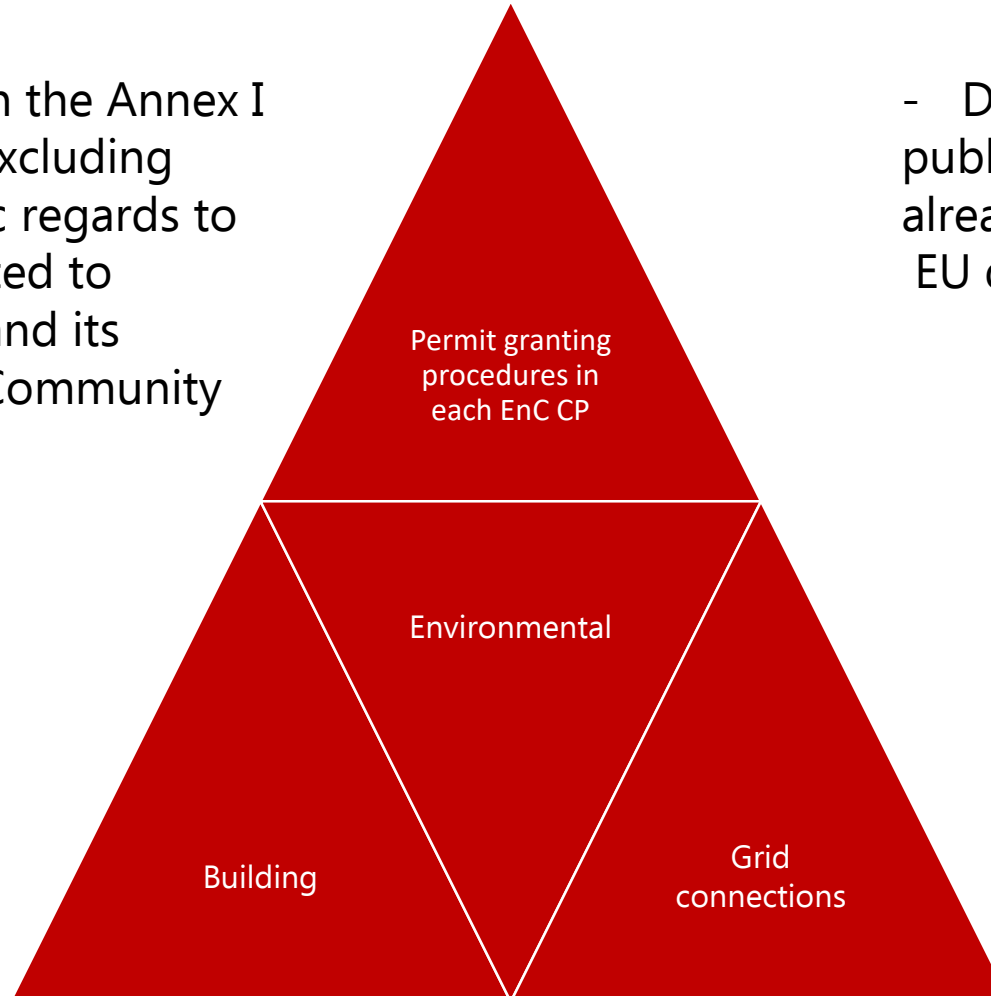
Gathering of filled in
questionnaire providing quality
input data from each
stakeholder group



Task 1

Desktop assessment

- Energy Projects included in the Annex I and II of the EIA Directive (excluding nuclear energy) with specific regards to highlight particularities related to renewable energy projects and its alignment with the Energy Community acquis



- Different sources: public databases in CP countries; info already in possession to the Consultant; EU databases etc)

Task 2

GOAL



- identify and assess the *EIA procedure, permit-related (development consent) and spatial planning* administrative barriers for energy projects with specific focus on renewable energy projects, highlight bottlenecks and propose set of options to address the identified gaps, barriers and bottlenecks

Analysis based on the input information gathered from Task 1 (questionnaire and desktop) based on a defined methodology and benchmarks.

Task 2

Assessment and knowledge for each EnC CP:

- on the implemented procedures and existing barriers and bottlenecks in EIA procedure for energy projects as listed in Annex I and II of the EIA Directive (excluding nuclear energy);
- on the permit-related (development consent) administrative procedures applicable to renewable energy projects;
- on the planning and programming of spatial zones in national spatial plans of renewable energy projects

Task 2 Results



- Recommendations how to address the identified gaps, barriers and bottlenecks as regards the above mentioned EIA and permit related procedures including the option on “One-stop-shop” approach
- Definition of options to streamline the development of zone layering for specific renewable energy projects.

Thank You!

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