

## RECOMMENDATION OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY

### **2024/1/MC-EnC on accelerating the deployment of renewable energy projects and implementing the energy efficiency first principle**

The Ministerial Council of the Energy Community,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the Energy Community ("the Treaty") and in particular Articles 2, 24, 25, and 79 thereof,

Having regards to the proposal of the European Commission

Whereas:

- (1) One of the main objectives of the Treaty is to improve the environmental situation in relation to network energy and related energy efficiency and to foster the use of renewable energy;
- (2) The acceleration of domestic renewable energy projects and the full implementation of the energy efficiency first principle will enhance security of energy supply and reduce demand in the Contracting Parties, and help them in achieving their respective targets for 2030, set by Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, as incorporated and adapted by Ministerial Council Decision 2021/14/MC-EnC of 30 November 2021 and amended by Ministerial Council Decision 2022/02/MC-EnC of 15 December 2022 ("the EnC Governance Regulation");
- (3) With regard to renewable energy, the European Union, by adopting Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources ("Directive (EU) 2023/2413"), recently committed to facilitating the deployment of renewable energy projects, namely through (1) mapping RES potential and available areas for the deployment of renewable energy and the necessary grid and storage infrastructure, designating renewable acceleration areas, while excluding high-value environmental areas such as protected areas for nature and biodiversity conservation under national and international legislation and ensuring public participation and acceptance as much as possible, and (2) introducing fast permit-granting procedure for renewable energy projects and repowering, minimizing complex and lengthy administrative procedures in favour of stringent timelines for project permitting especially within renewables acceleration areas, digital single point of contact in support of the applicants and the presumption that RES projects are of overriding public interest for the purposes of the assessments foreseen in three Directives (Habitats, Birds and Water framework).;
- (5) With regard to energy efficiency, the European Union, by adopting Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency ("Directive (EU) 2023/1791") reinforced the application of the energy efficiency first principle as introduced in the Energy Community by the EnC Governance Regulation. Directive (EU) 2023/1791 follows a holistic approach taking into account the overall efficiency of the

integrated energy system, security of supply and cost effectiveness by suggesting that energy efficiency solutions, including demand-side resources and system flexibilities, are assessed in planning, policy and major investment decisions;

- (6) A Recommendation to the Contracting Parties to the Energy Community to start implementing the relevant provisions of the latest Directives adopted within the European Union will help them tapping into their significant potential for fast deployment of renewable energy projects in line with high environmental standards and to reduce overall demand for energy in a more holistic manner at a crucial point in time of their energy transition, without prejudice to a full implementation of those Directives at a later stage;
- (7) This Recommendation was discussed at the meetings of the Renewable Energy Coordination Group, the Energy Efficiency Coordination Group and the Environmental Task Force, and endorsed by the Permanent High Level Group at its meeting on [xx.xx.2024]

HEREBY RECOMMENDS:

Article 1  
**Directive (EU) 2023/2413**

1. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of the provisions of Article 1 of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 related to the mapping of areas for the deployment of renewable energy and the necessary grid and storage infrastructure in their jurisdictions, as well as designating renewable acceleration areas, namely Articles 15b, Article 15c, Article 15d and Article 15e.
2. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of the provisions of Article 1 of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 related to the permit-granting procedure in their jurisdictions, namely Articles 16, Article 16a, Article 16b, Article 16c, Article 16d, Article 16e and Article 16f.
3. The Secretariat should assist the Contracting Parties' efforts in this respect. It should report to the Ministerial Council on the progress annually.

Article 2  
**Directive (EU) 2023/1791**

1. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of the provisions of Article 3 of Directive (EU) 2023/1791 related to the energy efficiency first principle.
2. The Secretariat should assist the Contracting Parties' efforts in this respect. It should report to the Ministerial Council on the progress annually.

Article 3  
**Entry into force**

This Recommendation enters into force upon its adoption by the Ministerial Council.

Article 4  
**Addressees**

This Recommendation is addressed to the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat.

Done in Vienna, on [xx] December 2024

For the Ministerial Council

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Presidency