



# LATVIA COUNTRY DESK 2<sup>nd</sup> FOLLOW-UP MEETING ON 24 NOVEMBER 2022

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# THE HORIZON 2020 PROJECT COME RES

The Horizon 2020 project COME RES aims to facilitate the market development of renewable energies in the electricity sector through the dissemination of renewable energy communities (RECs) in eight EU countries and Norway. The project is coordinated by the Research Centre for Sustainability (previous Environmental Policy Research Centre, FFU) of Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) and the project consortium comprises 16 European partner organisations. COME RES partners in Latvia are Environmental Investment Fund (LEIF) and Institute of Physical Energetics (IPE).

## THE LATVIA COUNTRY DESK

Country or target region stakeholders' desks have been set up in COME RES partner countries. They serve as informal dialogue forums where, in addition to COME RES project results, current topics such as barriers, drivers and policies and recommendations for development of RECs are regularly discussed with relevant actors and stakeholders.

In Latvia, the COME RES project does not limit its focus on selected target regions but considers all of Latvia. For the time being there are no RECs in Latvia. However, several examples of citizen (flat-owners of multi-apartment building or owners of apartment row-house sections) cooperation on using rooftop solar PV and solar thermal installations can be found as the first pilots, which might provide important lessons for the development and promotion of RECs.

The Latvian Stakeholder Desk is composed of a core group of 15 stakeholders which is widened up to 30-40 stakeholders to be invited to the thematic workshops and policy labs. The core partners of the Stakeholder Desk are ministries (Ministry of Economics; Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development), planning regions, energy agencies, municipalities, the Latvian Association of Local Governments, as well as local partnerships and NGOs. The work of the Stakeholder Desk is coordinated by the LEIF in cooperation with the IPE.

The Desk supports the transposition and implementation of the provisions of the REDII<sup>1</sup> and IEMD<sup>2</sup> by input to the drafts of the national regulations and policy documents. The REDII and IEMD provisions regarding energy communities are included in the Amendments to the Energy Law and Amendments to the Electricity Market Law respectively, both adopted by the *Saeima* (Parliament) in 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Thus the general framework for the REC is in force from

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<sup>1</sup> Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources.

<sup>2</sup> Directive (EU) 2019/944 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on common rules for the internal market for electricity and amending Directive 2012/27/EU.

01.01.2023. However, the governmental regulations detailing the general framework, established by the Laws, for the time being are still under elaboration. Thus, the Desk activities in Latvia are in due time to provide the input for the draft governmental regulations as well as for such challenge as the RECs financial support instruments.

To provide valuable input for a REC enabling framework and viable REC models, the Desk organises solution-oriented stakeholder dialogues, disseminates the COME RES results and promotes their adaptation in Latvia, as well as promotes REC recognition in national renewable energy investment co-financing programmes.

The Latvia's Desk KOM took place in 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. This report contains short documentation of the Desk's second follow-up meeting held in 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## **PURPOSE of the 2<sup>nd</sup> FOLLOW UP MEETING of the LATVIA'S COUNTRY DESK**

The Latvia Desk 2<sup>nd</sup> follow-up meeting and Policy Lab was held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022, in Riga, in presence. The objective of the event was to present the main results and outcomes of COME RES project and to discuss in a non-biased the actualities of the REC development in Latvia. The particular tasks of the event were multi-fold:

1. as the COME RES project comes in its final phase, to present the main achievements of the COME RES, and promote the final stage of the project focused to the development of policy recommendations as well as to promote COME RES Final Event in Brussels, 31<sup>th</sup> January 2023;
2. to use the event as a platform for the public discussion on the draft governmental regulations regarding REC,
3. to provide information (by DSO) regarding the procedure for connection of micro-generators for the parallel work with the power grid and the DSO role in the current electricity accounting system for renewables self-consumers,
4. to learn on other energy communities development related activities in Latvia and COME RES countries,
5. to provide the non-formal networking of the Desk stakeholders.

As the part of the meeting, the Policy Lab presented the key outcomes and results of the Comparative assessment of enabling frameworks and support scheme designs for RECs and discussed on interim Latvia specific policy lessons and recommendations.

The event was organized by the LEIF and IPE. 23 participants (including COME RES partners) have attended the event. The meeting has been moderated by the highly professional moderator of the Latvian TV. Each of presentations was concluded by the interactive Q&A session.

The summary article on the event and the presentations slides can be found in the LEIF website section devoted to the COME RES project: [http://www.lvif.gov.lv/?object\\_id=136737](http://www.lvif.gov.lv/?object_id=136737)

## AGENDA

**The workshop in presence, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**Place: hotel “Grand Poet”, Riga**

| 09:30 – 10:00 | <b>Registration of participants</b>   |
|---------------|---|
| 10:00 – 10:15 | <b>Opening and purpose of the meeting</b><br>Aija Zučika, Latvian Environmental investment fund, project COME RES manger<br><b>Key results of the dedicated stakeholder on-line consultation.</b><br>Ivars Kudrenickis, IPE . |
| 10:15 – 10:40 | <b>The draft governmental regulations regarding energy communities</b><br>Einārs Cilinskis, Ministry of Economy, senior expert  |
| 10:40 – 11:00 | <b>Microgenerator connection process and applying of net accounting system</b><br>Edgars Matulis, DSO SC “ Sadales tīkls”   |
| 11:00 – 11:15 | <b>Collective innovative activities for reducing energy poverty</b><br>Elvis Ērmanis, Zemgale Regional Energy Agency, PowerPoor project manager   |
| 11:15 – 11:30 | <b>Activities for energy communities funded by the German Environmental Foundation</b><br>Ilvija Asmane, Latvian Rural Forum  |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | Coffee break  |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | <b>Findings of the Dutch/German transfer activities in COME RES. The Best Practice of “Energy Gardens”</b><br>Michael Krug, Freie Universität Berlin  |
| 12:30 – 12:50 | <b>Energy Community Platform (<a href="https://energycommunityplatform.eu/">https://energycommunityplatform.eu/</a>).</b><br><b>Sustainability Scorecard for RECs</b><br>Stavroula Pappa, REScoop.eu                          |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 12:50 – 13:30 | <b>Lunch</b>  |
| 13:30 – 14:30 | <b>Policy Lab.</b><br><br><b>Introduction: Results of the Comparative assessment on enabling frameworks.</b><br><br>Michael Krug, Freie Universität Berlin<br><br><b>The discussion on interim Latvia specific policy lessons and recommendations</b><br><br>All participants |

## COMPOSITION of STAKEHOLDERS of the MEETING

The composition of the stakeholders represents the different levels of public administration – local municipalities, planning region, national authorities. It also includes national-wide NGO, actively promoting the RECs concept implementation in Latvia.

| Level          | Type                                     | Organisation  |
|----------------|--|---|
| National level | state authority                          | Ministry of Economics   |
| National level | national-wide association                | Latvia Association of Local and Regional Governments:                         |
| National level | national-wide association                | Latvia Rural Forum  |
| National level | national-wide association                | Alliance for Cross-Sectorial Sustainable Development/ Smart Villages movement |
| National level | national energy association              | Latvian Renewable Energy Federation   |
| National level | energy policy expert                     | High level energy policy advisor  |
| National level | nationally active NGO                    | The association “Green Liberty” (“Zaļā brīvība”)                              |
| National level | power distribution system operator (DSO) | JSC “Sadales tīkls”   |
| Regional level | regional authority                       | Riga planning region  |
| Regional level | regional energy agency                   | Zemgale region energy agency  |



|                         |                                    |  |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Local</b>            | <b>capital city Riga</b>           | Riga city Energy Agency;<br>Riga Chamber of Commerce and Industry  |
| <b>Local</b>            | <b>municipalities</b>              | Valka municipality ( <i>novads</i> )                               |
|                         | <b>business</b>                    | SMEs (2)   |
| <b>COME RES partner</b> | <b>research and academia</b>       | Research Centre for Sustainability, Freie Universität Berlin (FFU) |
| <b>COME RES partner</b> | <b>citizen energy cooperatives</b> | European federation of citizen energy cooperatives REScoop.eu      |
| <b>COME RES partner</b> | <b>research and academia</b>       | Institute of Physical Energetics                                   |
| <b>COME RES partner</b> | <b>public authority</b>            | Latvian Environmental Investment Fund                              |

## SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

In the Introductory part of the meeting, the COME RES partners – LEIF and IPE - had presented the main achievements of the COME RES. Aija Zučika (LEIF) listed the COME RES key deliverables and shortly outlined the objectives and main contents of them as well as outlined the following presentations of COME RES partners – FFU and REScoop.eu. Particularly she underlined the COME RES transfer Italy-Latvia activities held in 2022. She also listed the COME RES dissemination materials - Policy Briefs and Fact Sheets - and underlined these materials are translated in national languages, including Latvian. In its turn, Ivars Kudrenickis (IPE) gave short presentation regarding the key results of the dedicated stakeholder on-line consultation<sup>3</sup>, particularly – what role the RECs will play in the energy transition towards low-carbon society, in what fields the RECs activities will be most relevant or promising, what technologies have the relevance for the RECs, what aspects are most needed to facilitate the development of the RECs. He also retrospectively returned to the evaluation of the COME RES potential in Latvia<sup>4</sup>, underlining the key assumptions and results of it. Finalizing the introductory part, Aija Zučika promoted the final stage of the project to be focused to the development of policy recommendations as well as promoted COME RES Final Event in Brussels, 31<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

COME RES particularly seeks to support the implementation of the REDII provisions related to RECs and promote the establishment of RECs enabling framework. In such a sense, the COME RES activities in Latvia are in due time to provide the input for the draft governmental regulations

<sup>3</sup> COME RES Deliverable 3.4 "Consultation Series of the Eight Country Desks. Summary Report".

<sup>4</sup> COME RES Deliverable 2.2 "Assessment Report of Potentials for RES Community Energy in the Target Regions"

detailing the general legislative framework of the energy communities in Latvia as well as for such challenge as the RECs financial support instruments.

The representative of the Ministry of Economics dealt with the current state of the draft governmental regulation regarding the requirements for the energy community and its registration and invited all participants to submit their proposals for this draft. He underlined, in addition to this regulation, the Ministry has started to develop the governmental regulations related to the delegation provided by the Electricity Market Law, these regulations will regulate the REC operation in electricity sector, including electricity sharing issues.

He also presented the current state regarding the envisaged REC support programmes. Regarding the RECs enabling financial instruments, it is envisaged that two programmes could contribute for it. First of all, Latvia's EU Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021-2027 includes the particular measure to co-finance (by the ERDF) solar PV technologies (including storage equipment) investment and states energy communities as one of the beneficiaries, also consulting and capacity building is envisaged<sup>5</sup>. The elaboration of detailed governmental regulation for this measure is envisaged to start in 2023. Secondly, for the time being the responsible Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development has published the draft governmental regulation regarding the priority directions of Modernisation Fund in Latvia for 2023-2025<sup>6</sup>, one of them includes also energy communities as the beneficiaries. Participants of the meeting were invited to submit the proposals regarding the formulation of the particular priority direction of the Modernisation Fund to advocate the interests of the RECs.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> presentation (by power DSO JSC „Sadales tīkls“) the main steps to be taken by active renewables consumers, including RECs, in the installation of micro-generation equipment, the requirements for connecting this equipment to the grid and their operation in parallel with the grid were presented. The audience was introduced to the current procedure for the accounting for the renewable electricity produced by active users.

To learn on other energy communities promoting activities in Latvia, two presentations were included:

- PowerPoor project activities and lessons in Latvia,
- Latvian Rural Forum activities.

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<sup>5</sup> Latvia's EU Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021-2027 (*Eiropas Savienības kohēzijas politikas programma 2021-2027.gadam*): <https://www.esfondi.lv/planosana-1>

<sup>6</sup> The draft governmental regulation „Modernisation Fund Operational Rules and Multi-year Operational Programme“ („Modernizācijas fonda darbības kārtības noteikumi un daudzgadu darbības programma“): the national portal of draft legislative documents, [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/0e48e31d-c3f1-47a7-9e1d-d6bd8c2a3e24](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/0e48e31d-c3f1-47a7-9e1d-d6bd8c2a3e24)



PowerPoor (“Empowering Energy Poor Citizens through Joint Energy Initiatives”) is the CSA (coordination and support action) project of Horizon 2020 programme, ongoing in September 2020 – August 2023. The activities and lessons of PowerPoor in Latvia were presented by the representative of PowerPoor Latvia’s partner – Zemgale region energy agency. Power Poor develops support schemes for energy poor citizens and encourage the use of alternative collective financing instruments, such as energy communities, energy cooperatives, etc. as well as crew funding. The advising system are provided by the project. The project implementation in Latvia shows the necessity for education about energy community term and working principles.

Promoting development of REC in rural areas. In its turn, in Q4 2022, Latvian Rural Forum seeks for interested partners for RECs development, within the feasibility study financed by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (*Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, DBU*). The task is to identify at least two pilot areas for first RECs in Latvia, within the dialogues with interested in REC parties - such as municipalities, local communities (particularly LEADER groups), homeowners/homeowners associations, local residents, etc. Thus, the feasibility study serves as a basis for preparing the future full-scale project of the REC.

As invited by the meeting organizers, Michael Krug (FFU, in presence) presented the Netherlands – Thuringia (Germany) Transfer Case “Energy Gardens” as the concept case of multi-stakeholders cooperation. This is a particularly important issue, as the interest for large scale ground mounted solar PV parks constantly grows in Latvia as well. The “Energy Garden” model provides effective tripartite (project developer, municipality, local community) cooperation model to promote local sustainable development. Energy Gardens, as a concept of the Dutch Nature and Environmental Federation (NMF), are multifunctional and biodiverse energy parks for and with the local community. They are open to the public, offer recreational and educational services, involves the local community from design to exploitation and maintenance. The management and maintenance of the Energy Garden is allocated to a management foundation in which the developer, the NMF and the local community are represented.

In its turn, Stavroula Pappa (REScoop.eu, on-line) presented the key features of the new energy community platform, <https://energycommunityplatform.eu/>, It was underlined, in the final phase of COME RES, the *Sustainability Scoreboard for RECs*, developed by the COME RES, will be integrated with the platform.

The meeting was followed by the Policy Lab. Starting it, Michael Krug (FFU) presented the key outcomes and main conclusions of the comparative assessment of enabling frameworks and

support scheme designs for RECs<sup>7</sup>. It cannot be denied that several COME RES countries increasingly recognize the rights of RECs as energy market players although many barriers remain. Energy sharing, key cornerstone of allowing REC members to directly enjoy their produced energy, are on the rise, but not everywhere. . It is taking a significant amount of time in the COME RES countries to make the required changes to their energy markets. Afterwards the discussion on interim Latvia specific policy lessons and recommendations were done summarising findings and conclusions resulting both from the event's day presentations and COME RES results. The discussion provided the input for the final recommendations within the Deliverable 7.3, to be developed in the COME RES final stage.

Finalising the event, Aija Zučika (LEIF) on behalf of all Latvia COME-RES team thanked Desk participants for their highly active participation and expressed strong conviction on the continuing fruitful cooperation in the frame of COME RES final phase, by contributing to the success of the project with their impulses for policy recommendations, She particularly thanked FFU and the REScoop.eu for their highly valuable presentations.

Letter of Thank You for participants was sent by Aija Zučika, with the link to LEIF web-page containing summary article of the event and links to presentations.

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<sup>7</sup> COME RES Deliverable 7.1 "Comparative Assessment of Enabling Framework for RECs and Support Scheme Designs"

# CONTACT

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# PARTNERS



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