



LATVIA COUNTRY DESK MEETING, 6th OCTOBER 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 (previously - Environmental Policy Research Centre) 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 opportunities for development of RECs are regularly discussed with relevant actors and stakeholders. The Desks, by input to the drafts of the national regulations and policy documents, support the transposition of the provisions of REDII¹, as well as IEMD², and promotes the establishment of RECs' enabling framework. 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 yet RECs in Latvia. Currently the transposition of REDII and IEMD provisions regarding energy communities continues in Latvia. The general RES legislative framework (Amendments to the Energy Law and to the Electricity Market Law) has been adopted in July 2022 and the detailing of the procedures shall be provided by the relevant governmental (Cabinet of Ministers) regulations to be issued up to 28th February 2023, also in the first half 2023 it is planned to publish dedicated guidelines on energy communities including recommendations for public authorities.

However, several examples of residents (flat-owners of multi-apartment building or owners of 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

¹ 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.

² 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.

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.

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. In May/June 2022 the Desk stakeholders have been invited and actively participated in the COME RES dedicated stakeholder consultations organized in the form of on-line survey. At the end of June 2022, the particular stakeholders participated in the COME RES best experience (municipality-driven REC) transfer visit-workshop in Magliano Alpi municipality (Piedmont region, Italy).

PURPOSE of the Country Desk Meeting

The 1st follow-up meeting of the Latvian Country Desk was held in Riga, on 06th October 2022, in presence. The purpose of the event was to discuss in a non-biased way the range of key aspects of REC establishment & development in Latvia, thus, the meeting has served also as an interface between the lessons (recommendations) of the transfer activities performed in the frame of COME RES - Transfer Visit and Transfer Workshop devoted to the transfer and adaptation of the best practice of the first REC in Italy (Energy City Hall REC-1 in Magliano Alpi municipality) - and the practical activities to promote REC in Latvia, validating short-term action plan.

Particular objectives of the meeting were:

- to present the overall approach and drawn lessons of the REC development in Italy,
- to present the Riga city Energy Agency (REA) activities to support REC establishment in Latvia,
- to present the model for evaluating the performance (economic viability) of REC, acting in the electricity sector,
- to present the short term actions to be taken in Latvia,
- to promote the Desk's final event, planned in the 24th November 2022.

Each of presentations was concluded by the short interactive Q&A session.

The event was organized by the LEIF and IPE. In total, 35 participants had made the registration for the event and 28 participated in the event.

AGENDA

The workshop in presence, 6th October 2022

Place: hotel “Grand Poet”, Riga

TIME	PRESENTATION
14:10 – 14:40	Development of REC in Italy and contribution for sustainable local development (on-line) Sergio Olivero, President of the Scientific Committee of the REC of Magliano Alpi Luca Barbero, Coordinator of GoCER ³
14:40 – 15:10	The activities, planned by the Riga city Energy Agency, to promote and support the establishment of REC in Latvia Valdis Ratniks, REA
15:10-15:20	Coffee break
15:20-15:50	The model to evaluate economic performance of the REC Roberts Lazdiņš, IPE/RTU
15:50-16:20	Short term actions to promote REC in Latvia to be taken by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPE/LEIF • Latvian Rural Forum • REA • Ministry of Economics
16:20 – 16:30	Promotion of the Country Desk Final Event in November 2022. End of meeting. Short Final Networking Aija Zučika, Latvian Environmental Investment Fund, project manager

³ “Gruppo Operativo Comunita Energetiche Rinnovabili”

COMPOSITION of STAKEHOLDERS of the MEETING

Level	Type	Organisation
National level	state authorities	Ministry of Economics; State Construction Control Bureau of Latvia ⁴ ; Investment and Development Agency of Latvia
National level	national-wide associations	Latvia Association of Local and Regional Governments; The association “Latvian Rural Forum” (<i>Latvijas Lauku Forums</i>); The association “Green Liberty” (“Zaļā brīvība”)
National level	power distribution system operator	SC “Sadales tīkls”
National level	research and academia	Experts of Riga Technical University (RTU)
Regional level		Riga planning region; Vidzeme planning region; Zemgale region energy agency
Local	capital city Riga	Riga city Energy Agency;
Local	cities, & municipalities (novadi) and local initiatives	11 participants
COME RES partners	research and academia	Institute of Physical Energetics
COME RES partner	public authority	Latvian Environmental Investment Fund

⁴ the authority responsible for the establishment of the Register of Energy Communities, its administration and maintenance

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

Presentation by Italian experts clearly demonstrated the role of municipalities in REC development and had provided the good bridge to the following themes of the Meeting. The presentation looked into the the first municipality-driven REC example in Magliano Alpi, the Piedmont region, the process of spreading the practice over Italy and presented the phases of REC development, as envisaged by the „Manifesto of the REC” promoted by the Energy Center, Politecnico di Torino. The presentation demonstrated the role of wide partnership for the development of the REC, based on which the local sustainable development is catalyzed. The REC means a new public-private partnership model, collaborations and synergies with the local socio economic system and is a technical-organizational enabling node to facilitate the allocation of resources and services to combat energy poverty. In Magliano the local supply chain is represented by the Go-CER (Community Operational Group) involved in the REC management.

The representative of the REA presented the point of view regarding the role of REC in Latvia. The existence of them will provide wider utilisation of renewable sources, cheaper, green and secure energy, support for vulnerable households. Wider impacts relate to promotion of society involvement in the processes of economics, possibility to widen social tasks performed by the municipalities. The new jobs will appear as the new economical niche will be created. REA is Latvia's contact point of the EU Energy Communities Repository and provides the informative support for the interested parties for the preparation of applications to be submitted to the Repository. Riga city has already installed several solar PV installations on the city-owned buildings rooftops which today has electricity production surplus (production is over self-consumption), thus these buildings may serve as the core for future municipality-driven REC, particularly involving vulnerable households.

Continuing the meeting, it has been presented the economic performance evaluation model for energy communities developed within the framework of the particular PhD study. The existing version of the model is designed to perform economic performance evaluation of small-scale RECs, which include active and passive renewables self-consumers. The model can be used to determine the investment payback period and economic efficiency of the REC within the different scenarios of the shared electricity price. In the first part of the presentation the audience was introduced to the algorithm of the model and necessary input data. In its turn, in the second part modeling results were presented, which showed the evaluation of the impact of distribution system services tariff's reduction different rates. on the economic indicators of RECs operation. Finalising the presentation, the author of the model has outlined the planned next steps in the development of the model.



Image of the Latvia Country Desk meeting at 6th October, 2022. Copyright A.Zučika

In the final part of the meeting the future plans to promote energy communities have been presented.

Short term actions to be taken to promote REC in Latvia will focus on five directions:

- ***Stakeholders input for the finalization of the REC legislative framework (Cabinet of Ministers regulations),***
- ***Promoting REC interests in solar PV investment co-financing programme.*** ERDF (Latvia's EU Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021-2027) includes the measure to co-finance solar PV technologies (including storage equipment) investment and states energy communities as one of the beneficiaries. Thus, it is necessary REC interests to be actively advocated by all interested stakeholders during the public consultation phase (preferably first half 2023) of the detailed particular governmental regulations,
- Continuation of the development of the presented ***Economic performance evaluation model*** to demonstrate the necessary pre-requisites for **the economic viability** of the REC,
- ***Promoting development of REC in rural areas.*** In Q4 2022, **Latvia's 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 of this feasibility study is to identify at least two pilot areas for first REC in Latvia, within the dialogues with interested in REC parties - such as municipalities, local communities (particularly LEADER groups), homeowners/homeowners associations, local residents, etc. This feasibility study will serve as a basis for preparing the future full-scale project.

- ***REA will invite, consult and provide assistance for the interested in REC establishment parties, including municipalities, to submit the Technical Assistance Application to the EU Energy Communities Repository*** (the deadline for the 2nd Call – 31 October, the 3rd Call – 31 December 2022). In a future perspective, as a REA already has the well-functioning Energy efficiency consulting centre, the functions of the centre might be extended to provided consultations for REC interested stakeholders, as municipalities, SMEs, residents.

Closing the Meeting, Aija Zučika (LEIF) on behalf of all Latvia COME-RES team thanked participants for their highly active participation and expressed strong conviction on the continuing fruitful cooperation within the final phase of the COME RES project. The final phase of the COME RES project will focus on the development of guidance for policy. This task derives overall and country-specific policy lessons, considering all COME RES project results, and translates them into practical proposals for EU, national, regional and local policy makers on how to effectively tap the REC potentials and facilitate uptake of RECs.

Aija Zučika invited participants to take the active part in the Country Desk Final Event in 24th November 2022.

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

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