



## Summary report of the 2nd COME RES Norwegian country desk meeting

Date: 26.01.2022

Hege Fantoft Andreassen, Karina Standal, Stine Aakre (CICERO)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 953040. The sole responsibility for the content of this document lies with the COME RES project and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.

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## **The Horizon 2020-Project COME RES**

COME RES - Community Energy for the uptake of renewables in the electricity sector aims at connecting long term visions with short-term actions to facilitate the market uptake of renewable energy sources (RES) in the electricity sector. The project has a specific focus on target regions in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, and Spain, where community energy has the potential to be further developed and model regions where community energy is in a more advanced stage of development. COME RES covers diverse socio-technical systems including community PV, wind (onshore), storage and integrated community solutions. The project is coordinated by the Environmental Policy Research Centre (FFU), Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) and with 16 European partners in the consortium.

## **The Norwegian Stakeholder desk**

Country desks have been set up in all COME RES partner countries to enable informal dialogue forums where, in addition to project results, current topics such as barriers, drivers and development opportunities for RECs are regularly discussed with actors and stakeholders. The Norwegian

country desk is coordinated by CICERO – Center for International Climate Research in collaboration with the regulator and COME RES partner the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE). The thematic focus in Norway is on solar PV, onshore wind, hydropower and integrated solutions (e.g. microgrids, virtual power plants).

## Agenda

Time	Program
12:00	Welcome and short introduction / Karina Standal, senior researcher CICERO Center for International Climate Research
12:20	Presentation of the COME RES case-studies on drivers and barriers in five selected target regions / Karina Standal, senior researcher CICERO Center for International Climate Research
12:40	Input from country desk participants on the Norwegian Water and Energy Resources Directorate's (NVE) proposition for new regulations relating to control of grid activities and regulations on power sales and grid services - Energi Norge (Energy Norway) / Jon Erling Fonnøløp - The Solar Energy Cluster / Ola Rostad - NBBL Norwegian housing developer association / Ketil Krogstad Open discussion
13:10	Coffee break
13:20	Examples of solutions and business models for renewable energy communities/consumers in the agricultural and public sectors / by Aksel Kverneland, CEO of Kverneland Energi
13:35	Drivers and barriers for local energy communities with bio-energy / managing director Erik Eid Hohle, ENERGIGÅRDEN AS
13:50	Discussion and questions
14:10	Summary of meeting / Karina Standal, senior researcher CICERO Center for International Climate Research
14:30	Meeting ends

## Result of meeting

### Introduction

The meeting was arranged by CICERO in collaboration with NVE, which is a partner in the COME RES project. Thirty-three participants were registered for the meeting, which took place at Zoom due to corona restrictions. Communications Adviser for COME RES, Hege F. Andreassen (CICERO) opened by welcoming new members of the country desk, as well as informing about the objectives of the project itself and the webpage [come-res.eu](http://come-res.eu) where all output are available (research reports, policy briefings, fact sheets, minutes, etc.), as well as the project's Twitter account. Further, Karina Standal, project manager for COME RES in Norway briefly recounted the completed COME RES studies and preliminary findings from the study of drivers and barriers for renewable energy communities in Norway, Latvia and selected regions in Poland, Portugal and Spain. Karina also briefly announced the next planned thematic workshop and policy lab at COME RES, which will be held in the early autumn of 2022. The tentative title is "Renewable energy communities – the road to the green shift". She also informed that the project will send out a survey to the participants in the country desk and other stakeholders. The survey is expected to be launched in April/May.

### Part 1: Presentation of COME RES case-studies on drivers and barriers in five selected target regions

During the ongoing study of drivers and barriers for renewable energy communities in Norway CICERO have conducted focus group interviews with twelve representatives from civil society organisations, municipalities and companies interested in local energy production during the autumn of 2021. The main focus has been on the role and motivation for local energy production, which technologies actors find relevant, what opportunities they see onward and how they work to impact the agenda concerning renewable energy communities, and what they see as the main barriers for their development.

When it comes to motivations and opportunities, the interview participants in Norway in particular emphasized the green shift, including visions and desire to take responsibility leading the way and testing new solutions. Economic profitability was also mentioned by several, both as a possible driver and barrier. While higher electricity prices and lower technology costs may be a driver, missing examples of successful

business models were mentioned as a possible barrier. Many of the people we have interviewed have engagement around the green shift as a starting point that, but competence and the local enthusiast have also been an important driver, both in housing cooperatives, in companies and in the municipalities. A lack of competence and a local leader who can run the process were mentioned as a significant barrier in all the countries in the study. The actors interviewed emphasise the importance of good information. Access to good partners was also mentioned as the key to success with initiatives for local energy production. An inclusive energy transition and local solutions were highlighted as a value in themselves and as a motivation beyond contributing to the green shift among several of the interviewees. At the same time, several of those interviewed emphasised that it is both challenging and important to make local energy production more mainstream. It can be difficult to justify the use of time and resources if local energy production remains a niche. More development requires that local energy production is facilitated for more people and that there are good support schemes available.

Several of those interviewed, particularly in Norway pointed out that current regulations constitute an important barrier. Existing regulations do not adequately facilitate local energy production, especially with regard to sharing self-produced electricity within local energy communities, as well as limitations on plant/production size as a prosumer. The new proposal to change regulations from the NVE was considered an improvement, but still not enough to really scale up local energy communities. In addition, predictable framework conditions and land-use planning were mentioned as possible barriers to investment in local energy production. In addition, lack of acceptance and interest in renewable energy communities as well as socio-economic factors (incl. investment capacity) was addressed. In summary, preliminary findings from the study of barriers and drivers show that the current focus and proposed changes in framework conditions do not reflect the importance of renewable energy communities in the green shift. We also find that several actors spend a lot of time putting local energy production on the agenda and communicating knowledge and needs to decision-makers, networks and others.

The presentation of drivers and barriers for renewable energy communities was followed by a Q&A and discussion round. Among the comments given, it was pointed out that Norway has a long history of local energy communities ranging from Norway



hydroelectric power introduced. These local energy communities differ slightly from the definitions given in REDII. Another input that was addressed was what it takes politically to promote the growth of future renewable energy communities in Norway. This was further discussed in Part 2 and 3 of the meeting.

**Part 2: Input from Country desk participants on NVE's proposition for new regulations relating to control of grid activities and regulations on power sales and grid services**

The meeting continued with input from country desk participants on NVE's proposed new regulations on control of grid activities and regulations on power sales and grid services from three. The contributions came from Energi Norge (Jon Erling Fonnelløp), The Solar Energy Cluster (Ola Rostad) and NBBL (Ketil Krogstad). **Jon Erling Fonnelløp** opened up about proposed changes to the plus customer scheme. He pointed out that the plus customer scheme is consumer friendly and provides the opportunity to cover conflict-free areas with solar energy. From a consumer perspective, it is appropriate to equate housing companies with detached houses and individual customers. He also raised some concerns about the proposal, including the extra burden on grid companies and the redistribution of grid costs. Technology neutrality and the 500 kW limit and real estate (not buildings) are important. He then briefly presented his views on the proposed changes to grid rent. The new grid tariff may provide a more equitable distribution of the grid costs.

**Ola Rostad** emphasized the great potential of solar power and ground-mounted solar power plants, and regulatory conditions that can prevent this potential from being developed. It is important to dissolve these barriers in order to increase power production from solar. PV is part of the solution, and the technology is mature. Among the most important mentioned regulatory barriers for the development of solar power were the possibility and system limit for sharing self-produced electricity, lost profitability through the introduction of new grid tariffs, the amount of solar power for feed-in, and the notified requirement for turnover licences for plants producing more than 1 GWh. Finally, he stressed the importance of good planning processes for the development of ground-mounted solar power plants.

**Ketil Krogstad** shared his thoughts on solar production in the future, as well as regulations for grid rent and proposed regulations for the plus customer scheme. With regards to the plus customer scheme for housing cooperatives and condominiums, NBBL is positive to the present proposal. The limit of 500 kW for production is more

generous compared to the current limit of 100 kW. The proposed alternative model, with a limit of 500 kW that can be sent back to the grid is preferred over the alternative of 500kW installed capacity. It was pointed out that the demarcation of property can have a random effect, both positively and negatively. Opportunities must be provided to share between properties within the same housing company. When it comes to grid rent, NBBL is positive about grid rent that provides efficient utilisation of the grid, but they are also concerned with the profitability of solar and energy efficiency and that the grid tariff should be understandable to customers. The comments were followed by a round of discussion and questions. Among the input given it was emphasised that it is important to have a good delimitation (500kw and sharing within the same property) in the scheme. Several commented that they were positive about the proposal, but some stated that it also shows the challenges that are in relation to the current requirement for individual measurement of electricity. It was also asked about the timeline of the proposal and when a hearing could be expected. Previously, 2022 has been indicated in the revised government budget. Anton J. Eliston of the NVE thanked the participants for their input. He stated that the timeline of the proposed changes is uncertain and probably delayed due to the focus on support for households concerning the current exceptionally high electricity prices.

### **Del 3: Presentations from userpartners in the country desk**

In part 3 of the meeting, **Kverneland Energi by CEO Aksel Kverneland**) contributed with a presentation on solutions and business models for renewable energy communities/consumers in the agricultural and public sectors. Kverneland Energi develops technology and delivers solutions for renewable energy in the public sector, land and aquaculture, tourist cabins and Arctic regions. Aksel Kverneland shared his experiences from Sola airport, where they are in the process of setting up a solar plant and where the idea is that one should have sufficient electricity to supply electric domestic flights. The energy system may contribute to meeting its own power needs, reducing electricity costs, and reducing emissions. He also presented a concept sketch for a future energy system at the airport, which also includes wind, hydrogen, battery and a smart energy management system. The meeting's last presentation came from **Energigården AS by CEO Erik Eid Hohle**, who talked about drivers and barriers for local energy communities with bioenergy. Energigården was founded in 1991 and has since its inception been a driving force for the development of the bioenergy industry

nationally and internationally. Energigården is concerned that existing solutions and technology receive little focus. Erik Eid Hohle told about his work with Hadeland as a local energy community and pointed to the importance of the commitment from municipal politicians to achieve cooperation on developing renewable energy communities. Cooperation with other local energy communities and participation in international projects has also been of great importance. The Hadeland region has as a result experienced a growth in production and use of bioenergy.

### **Conclusion**

Karina Standal ended the meeting with a summary and a desire for the way forward. Here it was emphasised that framework conditions are important, but that crises such as electricity prices in the winter season 2021/2022 can be a catalyst for bringing about a change. There is much interest in electricity and decentralised solutions today, but that there is a lack of political involvement when it comes to seeing potential in local resources. The citizen-driven energy solutions must also be put on the agenda politically. Higher electricity prices and other crises can help in this endeavour, but this requires that some actors to take the lead and show the good examples.



# CONTACT

Karina Standal, [karina.standal@cicero.oslo.no](mailto:karina.standal@cicero.oslo.no) (prosjektleder)

Hege Fantoft Andreassen, [hege.fantoft.andreassen@cicero.oslo.no](mailto:hege.fantoft.andreassen@cicero.oslo.no) (ansvarlig for referansegruppen)

COME RES Project

[info@come-res.eu](mailto:info@come-res.eu)

[www.come-res.eu](http://www.come-res.eu)

# PARTNERS



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