



INTER PARES

INovative Tools for Energy Regulations of Province Associations on Renewable Energy Sources

First Newsletter, July 2010

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1. Project description

INTER PARES (INnovative Tools for Energy Regulations of Provinces Associations on Renewable Energy Sources) is a project co-financed under the Programme Intelligent Energy Europe (2007-2013) of the European Commission. The project, started in September 2009, will last 34 Months (until June 2012), addressing the importance of ensuring increased market penetration of electricity produced from renewable energy sources (i.e. RES). In order to trigger new RES-e investments it is fundamental to reduce the regulatory and non-regulatory barriers which block the increase in electricity production from renewable energy sources. In the EU, many initiatives can be taken, especially by local authorities, in order to promote RES-e production and to accelerate the deployment of RES-e technologies. Nevertheless most of the local authorities' capacity of enabling policies and strategies on RES-e remains unexploited: pre-existing RES-e policies must be streamlined and accelerated, implementing in the meantime innovative local plans. INTER PARES aims at achieving concrete solutions with substantial impacts: its design teams up of three National Associations of Local Authorities representing 205 European Local Authorities, (107 Italian Provinces, 57 Greek Prefectures and 41 Romanian Counties); both the Associations and Local Authorities will be challenged to developing and implementing concrete solutions for enabling RES-e policies and strategies.

Objectives

- updating knowledge and competences on RES-e opportunities in local authorities administration;
- streamlining pre-existing RES-e regulatory framework and support schemes at local level, especially those regarding construction and planning permits for RES-e installations;
- supporting the implementation of guidelines for RES-e installations within the local authorities involved;
- supporting the development of innovative measures and initiatives aiming at removing administrative barriers.

Partnership

Lead partner: UPI - Union of Italian Provinces (Association that aggregates 107 Italian Provinces).

Partners:

1. S.D.I. e (Sustainability Development Innovation Europe),an European Economic Interest Grouping;
2. ENAE – Union of Prefectural Authorities in Greece;
3. UNCJR – National Union of County Councils of Romania.

For more information and for downloading the project documents, please visit the project Web Site: www.iee-interpares.eu

2.Result of the study on the promotion of Renewable Energy Sources at Provincial level

The study on the on the promotion of Renewable Energy Sources at NUTS-3 level encompasses partners' contributions regarding administrative barriers on RES development for each country concerned (Italy, Greece and Romania) and the analysis of the data collected through the Inter Pares survey. Scope of this study was to provide a comprehensive framework of competences and procedures – in the field of electricity production from RES – allocated to the NUTS-3 level in the countries concerned, highlighting the main non-technological – administrative – barriers and gaps. The study reveal two different permitting models: on the one hand, the decentralized model, represented by Italy, in which the permitting competence is transferred to the local level. On the other hand, the centralized model which belongs to Greece and Romania, where the RES permitting process is governed by a national Agency, and characterized by marginal contribution of the local level.

The **Union of the Italian Provinces (UPI)** contribution to the research provides a comprehensive overview of the Italian legislation on RES and the authorizations necessary to install RES-E plants. Moreover, it analyses the one-stop-shop procedure in force in Italy (the Single Authorization) and all the actors involved. The main administrative barriers have been substantially identified on the basis of the 62 out of 110 valid answers of the questionnaire sent to all Italian Provinces, which detain the RES-E permitting competence along with the Regions. As revealed by the survey the most incisive administrative barriers are: (i)lack of compliance with technical and administrative requirements for obtaining the consensus, (ii) the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure, and finally (iii) the lack of compliance with spatial planning.

The contribution to the research of **The Union of Prefecture Authorities of Greece (ENAE)** concerns the description of the authorization processes for the installation electricity generation plants form renewal energy sources in Greece and of the existing legal framework concerning RES. Moreover, the study clarifies the Prefectures' role and competences in the RES permitting process. The Inter Pares questionnaires, which has been sent to all the 54 Greek Prefecture Authorities (response obtained by 28 of them), helped for the identification of the main administrative barriers that hinder the sound development of RES technology in Greece. The survey results reveal that the participation of Prefectures in the process of RES-E Installation, Production and Operation Licenses is very limited. The questionnaire reveals also that the issue regarding the unification of the whole procedure has been partially solved by the newly adopted Law through the simplification of the license procedure that provides an unique authority for the RES production (under certain criteria, of course) and the involvement of only the Secretary General of the Region for the permit of RES plant installation and operation. The major persisting non-technological barriers in Greece are the large number of authorities involved and lack of coordination between them, the long lead times needed to obtain necessary permits, and the RES insufficiency taken into account during spatial planning.

Finally, the Inter Pares questionnaire has been sent to all 40 County Councils of Romania represented by **National Union of County Councils of Romania (UNCJR)** and 23 of them answered the survey. Although the National Energy Regulatory Authority (ANRE) exercises a prominent role in issuing RES-E authorizations, the County Council's role is considered very important because of legislative requirements for issuing two permits, namely the construction permit and the zoning permit. The main findings are the clear need for additional expertise in RES procedure through further training in the field. Only a marginal number of Councils declared their interest for the establishment of a county Energy Office due to the lack of funds and specialised

personnel. Although many responding County Councils have implemented RES promotion activities, very few of them see the importance of providing information on the field. Moreover, the County Council is involved from the administrative point of view at the stage of issuing the certification but it has no competence in the implementation of RES private projects.

The National reports are available in www.iee-interpares.eu web site

3. Capacity Building Workshop

The Capacity Building Workshop Meeting held in Brussels, on the 7th and 8th June 2010, has as main aim to training central associations staff on RES policies. As foreseen by the project, 2 representatives from each Central Association attended the sessions that addressed:

- specific administrative barriers and challenges linked to the different renewable technologies
- administrative procedures in the participants' countries
- best practice-solutions developed and applied in the participating countries so far

The European Renewable Energy Council and the coordinator of the IEE-project Support-ERS presented relevant experiences and give suggestions/advice to Inter Pares partners on how to address the main topic of the project.

Training materials (texts and presentations) have been also published on a dedicated section of the web site (INTER PARES Web Library). Other relevant speakers, besides the EACI project officer, that took part to the training sessions, contacted by the coordinator UPI were:

- Representative from the European Commission (DG ENER)
- European Photovoltaic Industry Association (presentation of PV Legal project)
- European Solar Thermal Industry Association (presentation of Pro STo project)
- ENEL green power

UPI and UNCJR have forwarded the invitation the CEPLI (Confederation of European Intermediate Local Powers) members. CEPLI (the European Confederation of Intermediate Local Authorities), which groups together the 10 national intermediate local authority associations, will be actively involved in the project activities.

CEPLI, created voluntarily in 2008, has had an important role in encouraging cooperation between Provincial, Prefectural and County Associations at European level.

The training seminar opened with the intervention by Professor Samuele Furfari, from the European Commission Directorate-General for Energy, who reminded everyone that energy is a priority sector for the European Commission.

In regards to Renewable Energy Promotion, the Commission has prepared a Directive laying down Binding Targets for every country. The targets set down in this new European Directive are very ambitious. Every country is required to draw up its own Renewable Energy Action Plan for the production of energy from renewable sources. The Directive does not however specify any priorities in the choice of the type of renewable energy preferred.

It is not possible to develop RES without involving the local authorities. Directive 28/2009 explicitly indicates the need for close cooperation between local authorities and central government in order to reach RES targets.

The objective is not to transform the local authorities into producers, but to make them become facilitators of RES production.

Prof. Furfari closed his intervention by affirming the great promotional role performed by the Commission in favour of the new technologies and by making assistance programmes available.

Nicolas Février, Project Officer for the INTER PARES Project co-financed by the European Commission's EACI (Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation), briefly outlined the European Commission's main financial instruments and policies on renewable energy sources. In particular he referred to:

- 1) The Intelligent Energy - Europe Programme 2007-2013 which funds actions aimed at increasing and implementing RES and at adopting measures to increase energy efficiency in Member Countries. The Programme makes 730 million euros available over the 2007-2013 period. Février also gave examples of RES projects that have already received funding.
- 2) ManagEnergy, a Commission database in which it is possible to find partners with whom to present energy projects and to obtain information about European policies on energy;
- 3) ELENA, a financial instrument of the EIB and DG ENER to fund technical assistance for large-scale investments in the energy sector by European local authorities.
- 4) The EU Sustainable Energy Campaign, which is a promotional tool helping Local Authorities to organise events, exhibitions and conferences on the subject of energy, under the auspices of the European Commission.
- 5) BUILD-UP www.buildup.eu, a Commission database in which it is possible to find useful information and tools for builders, local authorities and the general public in relation to the use of RES and energy-saving techniques in the building sector.

The following speakers contributed to the Workshop:

Marie Latour (European Photovoltaic Industry Association), National Policy Advisor on presenting the PV Legal Project, co-funded in the context of the IIE Programme. The Project, which sees the participation of 13 associations of renewable energy producers, aims to lower the administrative and bureaucratic barriers that hinder the spread of energy produced from solar panels in Europe (www.pvlegal.eu). The Project has created a database for the solar panel sector, explaining and illustrating the procedures required in the various States for obtaining authorisations to build photovoltaic power plants.

The database also details the major barriers and obstacles to obtaining authorisations. So far, the Project has shed light on the crucial part played by administrative barriers in blocking the development of new installations. The majority of time and resources are used in applications and in the preparation of the documentation required for obtaining authorisation. The Project also aims to identify ad hoc solutions in every State for simplifying administrative procedures.

Celia Galeotti, Project Manager of the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF), then presented the ProSTO Project (www.solarordinances.eu), which aims to provide support to local authorities in planning, developing and managing ordinances on solar thermal power. The Project has created a series of tools to help local authorities achieve specific targets in the use of solar thermal energy, and has developed 5 pilot projects in the territories of the various Partners (the Lazio Regional Authority, and the Councils of Lisbon, Murcia, Stuttgart and Giurgiu). Through a specific training programme for technicians, ProSTO has created guidelines and specific recommendations that have been adopted by the Partners.

Roberto Zangrandi from the Brussels office of ENEL Green Power presented a research study conducted by ENEL in Italy on the administrative barriers that stand in the way of implementing RES. The study report, about 2,000 pages long, shows the fragmentation of responsibilities in Italy, and reveals how the legislative framework for renewable energy varies from Region to Region,

Province to Province, and Municipality to Municipality. There are about 255 regulations at national level and more than 120 laws that govern investments in RES. Many of these regulations contradict one another. The length and fragmentary procedures substantially limit RES investments, especially given the uncertainties surrounding how long any approval process will take. ENEL has therefore put forward some recommendations to central government for simplifying procedures.

In a now open and competitive market, it is necessary to create in Italy too a uniform and simplified framework to support RES development. Furthermore, renewable energy sources are costly and subject to continuous technological change.

A simplified legislative framework is certainly the point of departure for increasing investment. The ENEL study analysed 4 levels - Governmental, Regional, Provincial and Municipal. The study also analysed possible solutions for limiting the time taken in issuing authorisations, and the attitudes of local administrators (e.g. the political will and commitment to work on RES); campaigns to raise awareness; territorial planning (the existence or otherwise of plans to construct electricity networks); and problems related to connection with the grid.

Lucie Tesnière, the representative of the EUROPEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY COUNCIL, then spoke, explaining to those present the REPAP Project, co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme. (www.repap2020.eu) The Project, begun in April 2009, has as its objective the facilitation of implementation of the EU Directive on RES at national level. In particular, the Project concentrates on the National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAP) which all Member States are bound to notify to the Commission by 30 June 2010. The Project aims to put ambitious plans in place to ensure that Member States meet the 20-20-20 targets. REPAP has set up an online platform and provides basic information for policy-makers and European stakeholders. The speaker gave examples of recommendations for policy-makers that have been drawn up as part of the Project.

Ulrike Leis from GTZ, Project Manager of the Support-ERS Project, co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme. The Project, concluded in May 2010, aimed to lower the administrative barriers impeding RES development in new Member States and Candidate Countries. Support-ERS aimed to optimise support mechanisms to accelerate the development of the market for RES and to intensify cooperation between national policy-makers and technical experts/stakeholders in order to meet 20-20-20 targets. The Project organised regional seminars in countries in the process of joining the European Union, to educate local administrators in RES policies. The speaker then cited some examples of administrative barriers encountered and of the solutions proposed to overcome them. (www.support-ers.eu)

This workshop will be replicated in Autumn (October-November 2010) in Greece, Romania and Italy and will be opened to all Greek Prefectures, all Romanian Counties and all Italian Provinces.



Photos of Inter Pares partner during the workshop's meeting

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