

Promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources. Renewable Energy Directive

2008/0016(COD) - 01/02/2017 - Follow-up document

In line with the requirements set out in the Renewable Energy Directive, this report provides a comprehensive overview of the deployment of renewable energy in the EU. It also includes an assessment of the administrative obstacles and the environmental sustainability of biofuels.

The promotion of renewable energies is an essential part of the EU's energy policy, which plays a leading role in the implementation of the strategic framework of the [energy union](#).

Progress made by the EU-28: the report shows that with a 16% share of final energy consumption in 2014, the EU and the vast majority of its Member States are on track in terms of deploying Renewable energy sources. Projections show that the EU as a whole should reach its 20% target by 2020.

However, estimates for 2015 indicate that some Member States (notably France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) will have to increase their shares in 2016 in order to maintain their respective trajectories.

In addition, countries such as Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom may need to strengthen their cooperation with other Member States using the mechanisms provided for this purpose, such as statistical transfers to meet their binding national targets in a timely manner.

Progress was most rapid in the electricity sector, with the largest contribution in absolute figures recorded in the heating and cooling sector. Progress in transport has been the slowest so far.

Heating and cooling: this sector accounts for about half of final energy consumption at EU level and remains the most important sector in terms of energy consumption. In 2015, about 18.1% of the heat and cold produced in the EU came from renewable sources, with solid biomass being by far the most important (82%). Production from heat pumps also steadily increased, exceeding the indicative trajectory indicated in the national action plans.

Electricity: this sector has experienced the strongest growth in the share of renewable energies, which currently accounts for 28.3% of total electricity generation. By 2015, hydropower still accounted for the largest share of renewable electricity (38%). The deployment of wind power has more than quadrupled over the period 2004-2015. This technology currently accounts for about one-third of renewable electricity. Photovoltaic solar power has grown rapidly and in 2015 represented 12% of electricity from renewable sources. In 2015, 38% of photovoltaic electricity in the EU-28 was produced in Germany, Italy and Spain.

Transport: the share of renewable energies in this sector was 5.9% in 2014 (estimated at only 6% in 2015), while the specific target for 2020 is 10%. Biodiesel (the main biofuel used in transport in the EU) and bioethanol (the second renewable energy source used in transport) have not reached the expected level of use. This is due to a number of difficulties, including regulatory uncertainty and the delayed adoption of advanced biofuels.

Administrative obstacles: Member States have made progress in reducing the administrative burden since the entry into force of the Renewable Energy Directive. However, this progress is uneven and improvements are possible with regard to the automation of licensing after the expiry of the deadline for the administrative procedure and the setting up of one-stop shops.

Sustainability of biofuels: the risks of impacts associated with indirect land use change (ILUC) remain a cause for concern. The most recent CIAS modelling analysis indicates that by 2020 EU biofuel policy could lead to an expansion of cultivated land of 1.8 Mha in the EU and 0.6 Mha in the rest of the world, with 0.1Mha to the detriment of forests. The Commission has adopted proposals to gradually reduce the share of biofuels obtained from food crops after 2020, while promoting their gradual replacement by advanced biofuels and renewable electricity.

The report concludes that the existence of significant unexploited potential in the heating and cooling and transport sectors calls for greater action as set out in the [proposal to recast the renewable energy directive](#) for the period after 2020, in the framework of the Clean energy for all Europeans package, presented in November 2016.

This package confirms the European Commission's commitment to make the European Union the world's leading provider of renewable energies and to offer equitable conditions for energy consumers.