

Promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources. Recast

2016/0382(COD) - 17/01/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 492 votes to 88, with 107 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast).

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations.

The main amendments adopted in plenary concern the following issues:

Union's binding target and national targets: Parliament proposed setting a binding EU-wide target of at least 35% share of renewable energy (the Commission proposed a target of 27%). For the transport sector, at least 12% of energy consumption in each Member State shall come from renewable sources.

These Union objectives should be collectively achieved by the Member States through national targets taking into account the obligations arising from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In cases where a Member State is not on track to meet its foreseen target due to exceptional and duly justified circumstances, it may deviate from the foreseen level of its target by a maximum of 10%.

Support for energy from renewable sources: Members proposed laying down common general principles for renewable energy support schemes. Support schemes for electricity from biomass sources shall be designed to avoid unnecessary distortions of material markets.

To avoid unnecessary distortions of raw material markets, support schemes for renewable energy from biomass shall be designed to avoid encouraging inappropriate use of biomass primarily for energy production if there exists industrial or material uses providing higher added-value, which could include giving priority to the use of wastes and residues.

Member States may provide for exemptions benefiting small-scale installations of less than 500 kW and demonstration projects.

Member States may adapt financial support for projects located in the outermost regions and small islands.

In addition, no support scheme shall be granted for municipal waste which does not comply with the separate collection obligations.

Financial stability: in order to enhance legal certainty, Members stated that the Directive shall apply to both current and future investments.

Renewable support policies shall be predictable and stable and shall avoid frequent or retroactive changes.

Member States shall publish a long-term schedule in relation to the expected allocation of support, covering at least the next five years and including the indicative timing, including frequency of tenders where appropriate, the capacity, the budget or the maximum unitary support expected to be allocated and the eligible technologies.

Member States shall announce nine months in advance any changes to the support and consult with stakeholders.

Where regulatory or network changes have a negative impact on the economy of the projects supported, the projects concerned shall be compensated.

Duration of the licensing procedure: while the Commission's proposal stipulated that the permit granting process shall not exceed a period of three years, Members stated that for installations with an electricity capacity between 50kW and 1MW, the permit granting process shall not exceed one year.

Consumer involvement in energy transition: the new Directive shall not only allow the development of self-consumption and renewable energy communities, but also encourage it while averting discrimination or overly cumbersome procedures or burdens.

The consumption of self-generated renewable energy remaining outside the grid shall not be subject to taxes or charges of any kind.

Member States shall ensure that final customers, particularly household customers, are entitled to participate in a renewable energy community without losing their rights as final customers and without being subject to unjustified conditions or procedures.

Member States shall assess the barriers to and development potential of self-consumption in their territories in order to put in place a framework to promote the development of renewable self-consumption.

Heating and cooling installations: each Member State shall endeavour to increase the share of renewable energy supplied for heating and cooling by at least 2 percentage points (pp) every year (against 1 pp in the Commission proposal), expressed in terms of national share of final energy consumption and calculated according to the methodology set out in the Directive.

Members introduced provisions to ensure that measures taken in this sector give special attention to vulnerable households at risk of energy poverty.

Transport: the proposal establishes an EU obligation for fuel suppliers to provide a minimum share (6.8% in 2030) of low-emission fuels produced from renewable sources (including electricity generated from renewable sources and advanced biofuels).

In order to reach the target of 12% of the final consumption from renewable sources, Members proposed that this minimum share shall be at least equal to 1.5 % in 2021, increasing up to at least 10 % in 2030.

The contribution of biofuels, so-called first generation (feed and food crops) shall be at 2017 levels with a maximum of 7 % of gross final consumption in road and rail transport. The contribution from biofuels and bioliquids produced from palm oil shall be 0 % from 2021.

Lastly, Member States shall ensure via their permit or concession granting processes that, by 31 December 2022, 90 % of fuel stations along the roads of the TEN-T Core Network are equipped with public accessible high-power recharging points for electric vehicles.

