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PROJECT FINAL PUBLICATION



REINFORCING THE EUROPEAN
NETWORK ON ENERGIES AND RENEWABLES

Prepared by: RENEW project's delegates and working group





RENEW: Building a European Network for Sustainable Communities

The RENEW project – Reinforcing the European Network on Energies and renewable – was conceived as a citizen-centred European initiative aimed at strengthening cooperation among local communities while promoting renewable energy, sustainability, democratic participation, and European values.

Funded under the CERV Programme, RENEW brought together municipalities, civil society organisations, local authorities, experts, and citizens from six European countries: Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, and Slovenia.

The project emerged from a common conviction shared by all partners: Europe's green transition cannot be achieved solely through technological innovation or national policies. Instead, it requires active participation from citizens, local authorities, and communities capable of translating European objectives into concrete local action.

RENEW was therefore designed around two complementary dimensions:

- strengthening citizens' involvement in democratic life and European decision-making processes;
- promoting awareness and knowledge about renewable energy and sustainable development through practical examples and international exchange.

Throughout its implementation, the project created opportunities for dialogue between different generations, cultures, and professional backgrounds, demonstrating how local communities can contribute to European priorities such as the European Green Deal, climate neutrality, social inclusion, and active citizenship.

The project was structured around two international events hosted in the Czech Republic and Malta. These meetings allowed participants to exchange experiences, learn from successful local initiatives, engage with experts, and reflect on the role of citizens in shaping Europe's sustainable future.

Beyond the events themselves, RENEW fostered long-term relationships among municipalities and organisations, creating a network of cooperation that extends beyond the project's formal duration.

At its core, RENEW demonstrated a simple but powerful idea: sustainable change becomes stronger when citizens are informed, connected, and empowered to act.

Chapter 2: Citizens at the Heart of the Energy Transition: From Participation to Action

The transition towards renewable energy is often discussed in terms of technology, infrastructure, and investment. However, one of the main lessons emerging from the RENEW project is that the energy transition is equally a social and democratic process. Renewable energy policies can only be successful when citizens understand their importance, participate in decision-making processes, and feel ownership of local sustainability initiatives.

Throughout the project, participants explored how local communities across Europe are already contributing to climate action through bottom-up initiatives.

Examples presented during the project included:

- photovoltaic installations on municipal buildings;
- energy-efficient public infrastructure;
- community gardens;
- participatory budgeting initiatives;
- sustainable urban mobility solutions;
- awareness campaigns on renewable energy;
- educational activities targeting young people and women;
- investments in smart grids and energy storage.

The project highlighted how municipalities can act as facilitators of change by creating opportunities for citizens to participate in sustainability planning.

An important theme emerging from discussions was the relationship between local actions and European policies. Participants recognised that major European initiatives such as the European Green Deal depend on thousands of local decisions made every day by municipalities, businesses, and citizens.

The Czech and Maltese events demonstrated that successful energy transition strategies often begin at community level, where local actors are able to identify challenges, develop tailored solutions, and build consensus among stakeholders.

Another key finding concerned the importance of education and awareness raising. Citizens are more likely to support renewable energy projects when they understand their environmental, social, and economic benefits.

The project also stressed the importance of inclusion. Women, young people, and underrepresented groups must be actively involved in sustainability processes to ensure that the transition remains fair and accessible to all.

Ultimately, RENEW confirmed that Europe's path towards climate neutrality depends not only on technological innovation but also on democratic participation, cooperation, and social engagement.

Chapter 3: What participants told us: survey results and reflections

First International Event – Czech Republic

Participants expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the first international meeting. The overall organisation received an average score of 4.8 out of 5, while the relevance of the main event theme received 4.7 out of 5.

The conference topic “Citizens at the Core: Inspiring Local Practices for Democratic Participation and Sustainability in Europe” was also highly appreciated, obtaining an average score of 4.55 out of 5.

A remarkable 85% of participants considered the workshops, visits, and presentations highly informative and engaging.

Similarly, the balance between learning activities, exchange of experiences, and cultural discovery received a positive evaluation, with an average score of 4.4 out of 5.

Logistical aspects, including accommodation, transport, meals, and scheduling, achieved an average satisfaction score of 4.45 out of 5.

The survey revealed significant learning outcomes:

- 90% reported increased knowledge about renewable energy;
- 90% stated that the event improved their understanding of European values such as democracy, inclusion, and sustainability;
- 85% felt more motivated to engage in local or European civic activities after the event.

Most meaningful experiences

Participants frequently mentioned:

- the international conference and exchange of good practices;
- presentations delivered by partner delegations;
- discussions on sustainability and citizen participation;
- the visit to Dukovany Nuclear Power Plant.

The latter was repeatedly identified as one of the most impactful experiences due to its educational value and the opportunity to explore energy production systems through simulations, training facilities, and direct interaction with experts.

Final Project Survey

The second survey focused both on the Malta event and on the overall project experience. The overall organisation of the Malta event achieved the highest possible evaluation, with an average score of 5 out of 5.

Participants identified the following themes as particularly relevant:

- Renewable energy solutions (100%);
- Citizen participation in sustainability (100%);
- Energy efficiency (83.3%);
- Local community initiatives (83.3%).

The survey confirmed that the project successfully increased awareness of European sustainability policies:

- 83.3% reported a significant improvement in their understanding of EU renewable energy and sustainability policies;
- 83.3% stated that the project strongly encouraged international cooperation and exchange;
- 83.3% agreed that citizens and local communities play a decisive role in Europe's energy transition.

Sustainability of results

Participants clearly expressed their desire for the continuation of several project elements. The aspects most frequently identified for future continuation were:

- international cooperation;
- exchange of good practices;
- workshops and conferences;
- renewable energy awareness activities;
- networking among organisations.

Importantly, 83.3% of respondents believe that RENEW has created long-term partnerships and connections between organisations and participants.

Similarly, 83.3% consider it extremely important to continue promoting sustainability, renewable energy, and citizen participation through future European projects.

Participants consistently highlighted:

- the value of cooperation among different European countries;
- the exchange of practical solutions and experiences;
- learning how different communities address sustainability challenges;
- increased awareness regarding renewable energy and climate action.

These results demonstrate that RENEW successfully achieved its objective of combining knowledge-sharing, citizen participation, and international cooperation.

Chapter 4: Good practices and recommendations for the Transition to Renewables

Throughout the project, numerous good practices were presented and discussed. Several common recommendations emerged.

1. Start Local

The most effective sustainability initiatives often begin at community level. Small-scale projects can generate visible results and encourage wider citizen participation.

2. Combine Technology and Participation

Renewable energy investments are more successful when accompanied by public consultation, awareness campaigns, and citizen engagement activities.

3. Invest in Education

Schools, municipalities, and local organisations play a crucial role in building knowledge about sustainability and renewable energy.

4. Promote Inclusive Participation

Women, young people, and vulnerable groups should be actively involved in planning and decision-making processes.

5. Support Municipal Leadership

Local authorities can become catalysts for innovation by promoting renewable energy projects and facilitating collaboration among stakeholders.

6. Encourage Knowledge Exchange

International cooperation allows communities to learn from successful experiences and adapt solutions to local realities.

7. Develop Integrated Approaches

Renewable energy should be connected with broader objectives such as sustainable mobility, circular economy, biodiversity protection, and social inclusion.

The experiences shared during RENEW demonstrate that sustainable development is most effective when environmental, social, and democratic dimensions are addressed together.

Chapter 5: Towards future cooperation and project sustainability

Although RENEW formally concludes in June 2026, the relationships and knowledge generated through the project continue to provide a basis for future cooperation.

One of the most important outcomes is the creation of a transnational network of municipalities, organisations, experts, and citizens committed to sustainability and active European citizenship.

The signing of the RENEW Friendship Declaration symbolises the partners' commitment to maintaining cooperation beyond the project lifetime.

Partners expressed their intention to:

- continue exchanging good practices;
- develop future European initiatives;
- promote citizen participation;
- support renewable energy awareness;
- strengthen local and international cooperation.

The RENEW Final Publication itself contributes to sustainability by preserving and disseminating the experiences, reflections, and lessons learned throughout the project.

The project demonstrated that local communities can become powerful drivers of change when provided with opportunities to cooperate, learn, and participate.

The future of Europe's energy transition depends not only on technological innovation but also on empowered citizens, active local communities, and strong European partnerships.

RENEW leaves behind a lasting legacy of cooperation, knowledge exchange, friendship, and shared commitment to a greener, more democratic, and more inclusive Europe.



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