INTER PARES PROJECT
STREAMLINED SOLUTIONS TO REMOVE ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS TO PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION AND PLANNING OF RES-E PLANTS

www.iee-interpares.eu
WHAT INTERPARES IS?


The project has started in September 2009 and it will last 34 Months (until June 2012). It addresses the importance of ensuring an 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 that hinder the increase in electricity production from renewable energy sources.

In the EU many initiatives can be taken, especially by local authorities at NUTS3 level, in order to promote RES-e’s 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 expedited, while innovative local plans should be implemented.

INTER PARES aims at achieving concrete solutions with a substantial impact: the project team is composed by three National Government Central Associations representing 205 European Local Authorities, (107 Italian Provinces, 57 Greek Prefectures and 41 Romanian Counties); both central Association and Local Authorities will be challenged to develop and implement concrete solutions to enable RES-e policies and strategies.

The objectives of the project are:

- knowledge and competences on RES-e opportunities among local authorities’ administration;
- Streamlining pre-existing RES-e regulatory framework 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 involved local authorities;
- Supporting the development of innovative measures and initiatives aiming at removing administrative barriers.
Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE) offers a helping hand to organizations willing to improve energy sustainability. Launched in 2003 by the European Commission, the program is part of a broad push to create an energy-intelligent future for us all. It supports EU energy efficiency and renewable energy policies, with a view to reaching the EU 2020 targets (20% cut in greenhouse gas emissions, 20% improvement in energy efficiency and 20% of renewables in EU energy consumption).

The Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE) program is giving a boost to clean and sustainable solutions. It supports their use and dissemination and the Europe-wide exchange of related knowledge and know-how.

- Targeted funding is provided for creative projects putting this idea into practice
- The projects help to further the three main objectives:
- Promoting energy efficiency and encouraging the rational use of energy sources;
- Increasing the use of new and renewable energy sources as well as encouraging energy diversification;
- Stimulating energy efficiency and renewable in the field of transport.

**Expected Results**

**INTER PARES major outputs and results are the following:**

1) N. 1 Detail analysis of the administrative barriers and an exhaustive state-of-the-art and benchmark of the legislative frameworks in force at Provincial level (205 local authorities taken into account);

2) N. 1 Training programme on RES-e policies and strategies (four Local Government Central Association involved); RES-e local managers trained;

3) N. 3 Capacity Buildings Programs for provincial staff in order to create new competences and skills on RES-e issues;

4) N. 3 National RES-e Policies and Strategies round tables;

5) Local Agreements and Streamlining solutions for RES-e authorization developed and implemented;

6) N. 1 common template of Guidelines for RES-e installations to other EU countries.

**Target groups**

- National Associations representing Provincial Local Authorities;
- CEPLI members (Confederation of European Intermediate Local Powers);
- Local Authorities (NUTS 3 level) staff (working in Energy field);
- Local, national and European stakeholders (RES associations, energy provider companies, RES installers, citizens, municipalities etc).

**Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE)**

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/

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INTER PARES METHODOLOGY

The RES permit process is often lengthy and complicated due to a series of administrative obstacles that hinder RES development on national territory and create disparities among the different economic actors and investors working in different regions.

The project aimed at harmonizing and simplifying the procedures, in order to facilitate the development of renewables through a bottom-up approach that directly involved the public officers of the participating local authorities. The officers (12 Italian provinces and 3 Romanian counties) worked without any pre-formulated solutions, models or standards, drawing upon various technical proposals and multiple meetings with the project team, to prepare a series of shared support documents for the administrative procedure that aim at rendering the whole process faster and more efficient.

Analysis of the laws, regulations and procedures

(WP2- Decision making process at NUTS 3-level)

A questionnaire was submitted to 205 members of the partner associations in order to gather data on the existing permit procedures related to the following types of RES installations in Italy, Romania and Greece:

- Wind
- Hydro
- PV
- Biomass
- Geothermal

The analysis was then summarized in a report for each partner and contained data on:

a) the attribution of competences and decision making power in regard to the authorization of renewables’ electricity projects
b) administrative procedures (technology-specific) and main requirements
c) average duration of the process and failure/success rates
d) perceived difficulties and type of barriers faced

Capacity building

(WP3- Capacity Building Programme)

The main objective of the Capacity Building Programme is to empower Central Associations in order to lead their activities toward a more effective management of every issue concerning renewable energies.

Particularly, they have been trained to support their associates by promoting and disseminating solutions that enable strategies for RES.
A two-days Capacity Building extensive working meeting was organized to prepare the ground for the project activities in the participating countries. A national conference was subsequently organized in each of the partner countries to analyze and discuss how to resolve the main problems and issues regarding administrative obstacles within the RES permit process. Many stakeholders (economic actors, trade associations, ministries, local authorities, environmental protection groups, etc.) were invited to the national Conferences, where they discussed the topics proposed by the working group (Background document), identified problems from a variety of perspectives and outlined the work areas for the next phase of Project INTER PARES. The conclusions of the national Conference were then collected in the final Dossier.

In addition to the phases described so far, **Communication and Dissemination (WP5)** activities were also conducted through a dedicated project website, 16 Newsletters and a final Conference. To ensure the dissemination of the project and its results, a Policy Paper was drafted on strategies for the promotion of electricity production from RES production at NUTS 3 level. The paper addresses the major trends at European level on the implementation of policies for the promotion of RES at NUTS 3 level on the basis of centralized/decentralized approaches used in different member states. The policy paper describes the common principles and guidelines to be followed and adopted by NUTS 3 level in different countries for finding the most suitable approach for the best promotion of RES at local level. The policy paper is to be adopted by the members of European Confederation of Intermediary Local Governments CEPLI and widespread among main European local authority network (through the Committee of the Region commissions and Council of European Municipalities and Regions – CEMR).

**Defining the administrative simplification solutions and experimentation**

(WP4 - Drafting and implementing RES-e Solutions and Policies)

In this phase, the working group prepared technical solutions for simplifying the permit process by developing a “kit” that contains all the forms and paperwork (which differs for each category of RES installation) discussed during the Round Table. This was followed by an experimental phase, during which the officially involved local authorities adopted the proposed forms and applied them to a concrete instance proceeding. The agreement acts (memoranda of understanding) - opinions, clearances and acts of consent from other administrations - were prepared for all of the other bodies involved in the permit procedure in order to facilitate the intermediate phases of the process.
Italian provinces that took part in the trial

The project involved 12 provinces from 7 different Regions of Italy. From the Marche Region - the Provinces of Ancona and Fermo; from the Campania Region - the Provinces of Benevento and Salerno; from the Calabria Region - the Province of Crotone; from the Liguria Region - the Provinces of Genoa, La Spezia and Savona; from the Tuscany Region - the Province of Livorno; from the Lazio Region - the Provinces of Terni and Latina; from Emilia Romagna Region – the Province of Bologna.

Romanian Counties involved

Inter Pares Project involved 6 Romanian Counties, two more than initially planned. The participating counties are: Maramureș, in Northern part of Romania, Timiș, [Western part of Romania], Dolj, Călărași, Teleorman [Southern side] and Prahova [Center of Romania].

KEY RESULTS OF THE INTER PARES PROJECT

The Italian Provinces - The INTER PARES simplification kit

Together with 12 provincial energy offices, the Project’s working group used a number of technical meetings (Round Tables and email correspondence) over the last year to develop and implement a simplification kit for a single authorization procedure for every province. The kit includes all the models and forms that the Applicant (and the Designer) need to submit an FER permit application. It also includes a checklist to monitor the completeness of the application documentation.

The kit is composed of the following models and forms (about 150 pages):

1. Executive decision model for the endorsement of the INTER PARES forms;
2. List of forms and annexes to be submitted [checklist];
3. Model 1 - Single authorization request;
4. Model 2a - Technical report for biomass-biogas installations;
5. Model 2b - Technical report for wind-power installations;
6. Model 2c - Technical report for photovoltaic installations;
7. Model 2e - Technical report for hydroelectric installations;
8. Model 3 - Form for declaring the Proponent’s outstanding liabilities;
9. Model 4 - Form for requesting the opinion of the Government office;
10. Model 5 - Contract scheme for the provision of by-products biomass-biogas;
11. Model 6 – Self-executed affidavit model for biomass-biogas;
12. Model 7 - Model for sworn ENAC declaration;
13. Model for assessment of the plant projects.
The purpose of these models is to accelerate the preparation phase of each authorization applications being submitted by the proponents, to reduce the time taken by design verification and integration requests on the part of provincial officers.

The kit constitutes a technical manual, conceived to support the completeness and comprehensiveness of the designer’s work and to reduce the number of delays related to design errors. The design verification by the provincial officer is expedited considerably as a direct consequence of the technical reports and standardized models. The technical reports concern 4 technologies - photovoltaic, wind-power, hydroelectric and biomass/biogas.

**The trial in 12 Italian Provinces**

The 12 Provinces began the trial with the adoption of the INTER PARES kit via an executive decision (previously prepared by the working group), approved by the Director of Provincial Energy Services. The Provinces then published the kit on their respective websites as the working group promoted the kit’s adoption during industry trade shows, such as Energy Med in Naples. During the trial period, the Proponents and Designers were able to use the websites to download the separate format for each type of installation and therefore to draft the project using the INTER PARES’ models. Each of the Provinces tested the new procedure with at least one permit application and monitored the improvements in the permit process as a whole.

In the trial phase the Provinces tested the forms’ efficacy in improving the quality of the submitted installation projects and in reducing the time required for each project assessment and for the verification by the provincial officers and any other agency involved in the procedure.

**Results of the trial**

The efficacy of the INTER PARES kit was verified through key indicators, such as the time taken to complete the procedure against the timing required by regulations and the quality of the projects that were presented. Many Provinces also received compliments from the Designers and Proponents for the simplicity and clarity of the technical report models, which made the design process much faster and certain in terms of verification by the Provincial Energy Office.
The overall results of the trial were the following:

- 12 projects for new RES installations presented using the INTER PARES kit
- average reduction in authorization times (days): 30%
- delays due to project incompleteness: zero;
- improvement in the technical quality of the designs and the completeness of the documentation presented by the Proponents
- improvement in the relations between the Energy Office and other entities.

The Province of Benevento began the trial with a miniature wind-power pilot project in the Municipality of Montefalcone di Valfortore. The planned wind-turbine is designed for 900 KWP of nominal power with an average annual production of roughly 540,000 Kwh. The altitude of the installation is 851 metres, with an overall height of 67 m. The periodic contacts with the proponent subject have revealed the real advantages:

1. the clarity and precision of the forms facilitated the drafting of the technical draft by avoiding the ongoing requests for clarification that had previously slowed down the investigative work of the Authority;

2. the sharing of the forms used by the Agencies who were invited to express themselves produced a noticeable bureaucratic streamlining and time saving. The proposed formats, in fact, include various facsimiles (e.g., the Aerospace Agency declaration to be signed by an authorized technician, the authorization request for the Government archaeological office, etc.) that most certainly contributed to facilitate the relations between the proponent and the Agencies involved in the permit process.

In order to spread the adoption of the new forms, the Department for Energy Policy of the Province of Benevento has signed an agreement with the Municipality of Limatola, Municipality of Bonea, Municipality of Montesarchio. At the same time, it tries to extend the agreement to more Agencies.

The efforts undertaken by the signatories of the above mentioned agreement concern:

✓ A broader collaboration to achieve simplification through the adoption of more standardized forms to be issued by the concerned Agencies invited to opinions, clearances and acts of consent;

✓ The acceleration of administrative procedures, investigations, controls and all other procedures through the publication on their own website, for instance, of the information and standard forms to be used for requesting the competent assessments;

✓ The coordination of the responsible offices in order to expedite the authorization process.
Result of the ongoing experimentation (*in itinere*)

The data gathered so far confirm the validity of the project proposal. Indeed:

- All the declarations and certifications have already been produced for the application presentation phase;
- The operating procedure becomes standardized for all the participating Provinces through the use of a common set of forms;
- This has already successfully overcome many bureaucratic obstacles.

In conclusion, the INTERPARES trial translated into a dramatic reduction in the turnaround times required to complete the authorization process for the issue of Single Authorizations.

The descriptive graph reported below illustrates the reduction in turnaround times.

The ongoing trial shows an estimated time reduction of approximately 30%. In the Province of Benevento, approximately 21 wind-power installations have been authorized to date with an average investigation time of about 90-100 days. Based on our findings, the same permits would have been issued in an average of 60-70 days each with a total expected savings of approximately 600 working days.

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**Romanian Counties - The Local Guide for RES Investors**

Sustainable Energy is a central element of the EU long-term economic strategy and his actions to combat climate change. Thus, the guide is addressed to all legal persons who wish to invest in production capacity of electricity obtained from RES. It was first elaborated by the Maramure county and later on it was adapted by the other 5 participating councils.

The guide is now available on the website of all the 6 county councils involved and it represents an important and concrete tool for delivering consolidated information and useful contacts for every person or body interested in developing any RES installation in Romania. Prior to the Inter Pares project such kind of
information was not accessible for potential investors.

The guide does not offer guarantees of success, but only directions for those interested in the field. Its indisputable usefulness is due to the fact that presents and describes all the permits and the authorisations needed to obtain the permit.

Also, it works as a “roadmap” between authorities that includes the logical order of steps or stages that must be completed to achieve a E-RES capacity, such us:

- location selection, purchasing /leasing the land,
- obtaining permits or licenses;
- drawing or development the RES investment project;
- obtaining construction permit and license of electricity generation;
- obtaining the accreditation as a producer of electricity from RES sources;
- subscribing to SC OPCOM SA (Romanian power market operator) to sell E-RES on the next day market.

The Guide fluid and streamlined work of County Council officers and also those of Maramures Agency for Energy Management (AMEMM). This translates into lower number of citizens who are directly addressing questions about RES investments. Instead, they ask about the existence of such a guide or someone within Local Office to provide all the guidance and advice on starting an investment E-RES.

Another very important result is an official decision issued by each county council which designates a specific staff member who takes over all RES responsibilities as first contact and liaison person for potential investors. A new, adequate job description is attached to each official decision. Prior to this project, it was very difficult for investors to find out all the preliminary information they needed before applying for a RES license. Now, investors will have a unique contact point and consolidated information at their disposal.

At the end of 2011, Prahova County Council /Technical Committee and Spatial Planning issued an Internal decision which shortens and simplifies a certain stage of the authorization process of the RES installations. More specifically, application for RES investments can be accepted even if up to two documents are still missing – the investor having to add these
documents to the application in less than two weeks. The process is thus shortened. This decision has been communicated to the other 5 county councils, at present, the evaluation process of this procedure is ongoing.

Within the 2nd Bucharest round table from 11th of April, officials of the 6 county councils, it was concluded that, at the level of each territorial administrative unit, a step forward would be to include areas of land for RES investments in territorial planning documents such as PUG (General Urban Plan) and PUZ (Zonal Urban Plan). Because land surfaces having RES destination were not expressly provided in PUG, it was necessary whenever, there were requests for such investments, to prepare or revise the PUZ (Zonal Urban Plan). As a result of those discussions, county councils have requested all town halls (urban and rural) in the county to analyze this aspect, and many of them have already sent positive responses.

In participating counties, they are working on developing and obtaining local maps of potential for renewable energy to be included them into Sustainable Development Strategies (updated) of each county. This measure together the above one (including areas for RES investments in territorial planning documents) will contribute to have prepared and published a local cadastral map of the county, containing areas where they can or cannot be located any wind turbine or other RES equipment because of restrictions related to legislation.

THE BEST PRACTICES DISSEMINATION

The project results and their future implementation realized by Provinces, represent the basis for a large dissemination activity that UPI will perform among its associates and their territories.

Through the CEPLI Network, the European Confederation of Local Intermediate Authorities, other European local associations will verify the Project suitability with their
administrative contexts, in order to widespread the need to reduce administrative barriers in the Renewable energy Policies.

At National level, the diffusion of project results will be done thanks to the collaboration of other institutional partner like Local agenda 21, gathering more than 350 among Regions, Provinces, municipalities, Association of Italian municipalities and Confederation of Regions.

In Romania, the INTER PARES as an ongoing initiative and its results achieved by the six participant counties, will be disseminated at European Level by means of a continued campaign through UNCJR representation office in Brussels. Also, the project was presented through one of the most known International energy fair, named ENREG EXPO. The 4th edition of the biggest trade fair on renewable energy and efficiency in the west part of Romania. ENREG ENERGIA REGENERABIL took place between 25th-27th of April 2012, at Expo Arad International. The trade fair expected its visitor with 90 exhibitors from 12 European countries, who presented their products end services and discussed with specialized visitors, key persons and industry experts about experiences and business. The event created also a meeting point for the common interest that Romania, Hungary and Serbia have for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

At national level, UNCJR executives will keep all members informed by means such us: informative notes to its members, by posting all the steps and activities related to INTER_PARES on organisation web page.

The final results will be disseminated also to the other Romanian structures of local public administration such us: Municipalities Association, Town Association or Communes Association.
The project’s conferences

- National Seminar, Rome 8-9 of February 2011
- National Seminar, Bucarest 10-11 March 2011
- Project meeting - Bucarest, 13 of December 2010
- Project meeting Italy-Greece - Athens, 27th of September 2011
- Project meeting - Policies Lab forum with UPI – ENAE – UNCJR - Bruxelles, 13th of October 2011
- Project meeting – Rome, 24 of February 2012
- I Round table – Rome, 30 of September 2011
- II Round table- Rome, 20 of February 2012
- III Round table- Rome, 1st of June 2012
- I Round table- Bucarest, 29 of September 2011
- II Round table - Bucarest, 11 of April 2012
- III Round table- Bucarest, 7 of June 2012

Dissemination events

- Forum Energie Rinnovabili, Provincia di Cremona – Cremona, 23 of May 2011
- ENREG EXPO – Arad, 25-27 of April 2012 (UNCJR promoted the project INTER PARES through one of the most known renewable energy fair in Romania).
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