



## Revised Targets of the new Renewable Energy Directive

- **This article concerns:** The transport, industry, heating and cooling sectors, as well as the building sector of each EU Member State.
- **The benefits of the new regulations are:** improving energy efficiency for vulnerable customers, people in energy poverty and people living in social housing, and reducing energy bills for those most in need.
- **Entry into force:** The Directive will enter into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal of the EU and Member States will have 18 months for its transposition into national law.

### • INTRODUCTION

The European Union continues to lead the way in the global transition towards a more sustainable future, as evidenced by the recent adoption of the new Renewables Energy Directive<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Directive on Renewable Energy [ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-36-2023-INIT/en/pdf> ]

(RED II) by the Council. The new Directive sets new targets and measures for energy efficiency, and tackling energy poverty, putting consumers at the forefront.

Furthermore, emphasis is placed on cross-sectoral objectives, the overall target of using Renewable Energy Sources (RES), as well as the impact of these new regulations.

- **THE RENEWED AMBITION: SETTING THE STAGE**

Central to the new Directive is the goal to significantly boost the proportion of renewable energy in the EU's overall energy consumption, namely at **42.5% by 2030**. Furthermore, an additional provision allows for an **indicative top-up of 2.5%**, potentially pushing the overall target to **45%**. It is crucial to note that this does not constitute an isolated endeavor; every EU Member State is mandated to contribute towards this collective goal, ensuring a harmonized approach to addressing the renewable energy challenge.

- **SECTORAL BREAKDOWN: DEEPENING THE DIVE**

Recognizing that a broad-brush approach may not yield optimal results across diverse sectors, the Directive lays down sector-specific targets, a strategic move given the varying pace of renewable integration across sectors.

– **Transport:** The transport sector, traditionally reliant on fossil fuels, is now presented with a dual-path approach:

States can opt for a 14.5% reduction in greenhouse gas intensity, leveraging renewables by 2030. Alternatively, a more direct route would be to ensure that **renewables comprise at least 29% of the final energy consumption** in the sector by the same year. A noteworthy mention is the combined sub-target of 5.5% for advanced biofuels and other renewable fuels. Within this, a dedicated 1% is set aside for renewable fuels of non-biological origin by 2030, signaling a move towards diverse renewable sources.

– **Industry:** Industrial processes, another significant energy consumer, have clear markers set out: A steady **annual increase** in renewable energy usage **by 1.6%** is mandated. By 2030, a **robust 42% of hydrogen used** in industry should be sourced from renewable fuels of



non-biological origin, rising to **60% by 2035**. However, flexibility mechanisms exist, allowing States to discount the contribution of these renewable fuels under specified conditions.

– **Buildings, Heating, and Cooling:** The Directive boldly sets an indicative target for a 49% renewable energy share in buildings by 2030. Furthermore, renewable targets for heating and cooling are on a progressive trajectory, necessitating binding annual increases at the national level. This phased approach reflects a strategy of gradual adaptation and ease of implementation.

- **ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS: BIOENERGY AND PERMIT ACCELERATION**

– **Bioenergy:** The Directive seeks to ensure sustainable bioenergy production, emphasizing stronger sustainability criteria for biomass energy utilization. This is coupled with the cascading principle, tailored with due regard to national contexts.

– **Permit Acceleration:** In the wake of geopolitical shifts, especially Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU is pressing ahead with expedited permit procedures for renewable projects. Areas designated for renewables acceleration will benefit from streamlined permit-granting processes, and legal challenges to new installations will face stringent scrutiny given the 'overriding public interest' in renewable energy deployment.

- **LOOKING AHEAD: IMPLEMENTATION AND BROADER CONTEXT**

The Directive's formal adoption sets the clock ticking. It will be published in the EU's Official Journal and will come into force 20 days thereafter. Member states have a timeline of **18 months post-enactment** to integrate it into their national legal frameworks.

It is essential to position this Directive within the broader '**Fit for 55**' package, which underscores the EU's resolute commitment to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions by at least **55% by 2030**. The revamped Renewables Energy Directive, an enhancement over its predecessor effective since December 2018, is a testament to the EU's evolving and escalating ambitions in the renewable energy space.

- **CONCLUSION**





The new Renewables Energy Directive is more than just a policy document; it is a reflection of the EU's vision for a sustainable future. While the targets are ambitious, they represent a strategic blend of flexibility and firmness, ensuring that the transition to renewables is both aggressive and achievable. As the Directive moves from adoption to implementation, it will be pivotal for Member States to harness the opportunities and navigate the challenges it presents.

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