

Energy efficiency and renewable energy

By 2020, the EU aims to reduce its total energy consumption by 20% and increase the share of renewable energy to 20% of total energy consumption. Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway support these efforts by contributing more than €213 million to renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

WHY FOCUS ON RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY?

According to the EU, energy efficiency – achieving the same result with less energy – is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.¹ Greater energy efficiency and increased use of renewable energy sources also contributes to better air quality, particularly in densely populated areas.

Potential gains from stepping up energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energy in Europe are considerable. EU figures show that:

- > Energy use in residential and commercial buildings contributes about 36% of Europe's greenhouse gas emissions
- > For the manufacturing industry, the overall saving potential through energy efficiency measures is estimated to be around 25%

Through cost-effective energy efficiency measures, significant emissions reductions and cost savings can be achieved. Shifting towards renewables will also stimulate growth in the job market in Europe, with increasing numbers of people employed in the renewable energy sector.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE?

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway have allocated €213.6 million to programmes on renewable energy and energy efficiency in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Romania. The programmes contribute to:

- > Reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants
- > Increasing the share of renewable energy in energy use

¹ European Commission (2011) Energy Efficiency Plan



© Gencho Petkov / Shutterstock.com

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?

Support from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway is focused on four areas:

- > Energy efficiency
- > Renewable energy
- > National climate strategy
- > Saving energy and promoting renewable energy sources

Types of activities supported by the programmes include:

- > Reducing greenhouse gas emission and air pollution from power plants and industrial processes
- > Replacing old heating installations and systems in public buildings
- > Making municipal buildings in Poland more energy efficient through, among other things, better insulation and developing innovative solutions through national energy savings campaigns
- > Capacity building and training for government officials in Slovakia in the field of energy efficiency
- > Increasing the use of geothermal energy to heat buildings. The National Energy Authority of Iceland is involved as a partner in several programmes, sharing its expertise in geothermal energy extraction

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Projects on energy efficiency and renewable energy are supported under dedicated programmes in seven countries. Some projects are predefined, while others are selected following calls for proposals organised by the programme operator in each country. Calls are published on the websites of the programme operators and on www.eeagrants.org.

Projects on energy efficiency and renewable energy are also supported under a research programme in Spain on environmental and climate change-related research and technology. Energy-related projects are also supported under the NGO programmes as well as through the research funds.

BILATERAL COOPERATION

To enhance knowledge exchange and mutual learning, partnerships between organisations in the donor and beneficiary countries are taking place. Several public bodies from the donor countries are involved as donor programme partners. They play a strategic role in programme planning and implementation as well as facilitating project partnerships.

Entities from the donor countries also participate in individual projects as project partners. To encourage cooperation, funding is available from the bilateral funds. This can be used for developing joint project applications or to facilitate partner searches, as well as for activities not directly related to projects, such as networking, joint events or the exchange of best practice.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Country	Energy efficiency	Renewable energy	Partners	Grant amount (€ million)
Bulgaria	●	●	• Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate	13.3
Greece		●		9.5
Hungary*	●	●		16.1
Latvia		●		5.2
Poland	●	●		144.2
Portugal		●	• Norwegian National Energy Authority	4.0
Romania	●	●	• National Energy Authority of Iceland • Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate	21.3
Total				213.6

*Payments currently suspended in Hungary: bit.ly/1K41Ybl

