



SEMINAR: Guidelines for Local Participation in Windpower



ONLINE & at Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy, Denmark

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Public Inclusion Toolbox for Renewable Energy, European Commission

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Enhancing public participation – Public Inclusion Toolbox for renewable energy

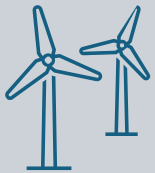
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Seminar – Guidance on local participation in wind power – 13 October 2026

Why public acceptance measures?



Public acceptance refers to the degree to which a project is accepted by the local community and other stakeholders



Critical for the deployment of renewables:

Public opposition to RES may hinder the achievement of our RES targets at a time when acceleration is essential to address the current energy crisis

Public opposition can generate extra costs and affect the RES projects' viability

Legal framework

RED Article 15d:

Public participation

1. Member States shall ensure public participation regarding the **plans designating renewables acceleration areas** [...], including identifying the public affected or likely to be affected.
2. Member States shall **promote public acceptance** of renewable energy projects by means of **direct and indirect participation of local communities** in those projects.

European Grids package (EC proposal)



Legal proposal to further expand RED Article 15d:

Mandatory **benefit-sharing** for projects above 10 MW

Designation of independent **facilitators**

- **Ongoing negotiations**



Public inclusion toolbox (published)

[Public inclusion toolbox for renewable energy - Energy](#)

based on the findings of the study on “RES and other public goods”

[Study on good practices in siting renewable energy installations taking into account the interactions with other public goods and annexes - Energy](#)

Overview of recent study

Study aim: research and evaluate diverse approaches in each Member State to public acceptance and schemes for the participation of local/rural communities in renewable energy projects and their benefits



Study outcome:

Framework for understanding public acceptance (stakeholder, needs, challenges, and typology of measures), based on extensive literature review and interviews

Collection of examples of approaches and schemes (procedural participation and financial benefit-sharing measures) in Member States

Comparison and analysis of best practices

Public acceptance stakeholders



Typology of public acceptance measures

Measures promoting **direct procedural** participation and trust building

Measures promoting **indirect procedural** participation and trust building

Measures promoting **direct financial** participation and benefit-sharing

Measures promoting **indirect financial** participation and benefit-sharing

Typology of public acceptance measures

Measures promoting direct procedural participation and trust building

Measures promoting indirect procedural participation and trust building

Key types of policy measures: procedural participation (1/2)

- Procedural participation and trust-building measures **influence how decisions are made and whether citizens feel heard.**

Direct procedural participation

- **Different levels of participation: consultation** (collecting opinions - low influence on the outcome); **co-development** (build solutions together – medium influence on the outcome) ; **co-decision** (decide together- high influence on the outcome).
- **What matters most is clearly communicating the level of procedural participation upfront.**

Good examples:

- Austria (Burgenland) – successful procedural participation in strategic zoning for wind and ground-mounted solar PV
- The Wind Energy Service Point in Thuringia (Germany)

Key types of policy measures: procedural participation (2/2)

Indirect procedural participation

- Focus on transparency and sectoral norms: certification schemes; local value mapping; inclusion of acceptance criteria in auctions; public information campaigns.
- **Their effectiveness depends** largely on the credibility, the monitoring and the enforcement guidance.

A good example: Spain - UNEF Seal of Excellence in Sustainability (an industry's initiative) - promoting sustainability standards in installations

Typology of public acceptance measures

Measures promoting direct financial participation and benefit-sharing

Measures promoting indirect financial participation and benefit-sharing

Key types of policy measures: financial participation and benefit sharing (1/2)

Direct financial participation and benefit sharing ~ direct monetary returns or ownership stakes for individuals or communities (project success is in the interest of the community)

Shared ownership schemes

Debt-based instruments (loans)

Crowdfunding schemes

Sale-and-lease-back models



Good examples:

- Lower Austria's Solar Power Plant Community Initiative (a sale-and-lease-back model)
- Canary and Balearic Islands mandatory local ownership requirements for large-scale renewable energy projects

Key types of policy measures: financial participation and benefit sharing (2/2)

Indirect financial participation and benefit sharing ~ benefits are redistributed to citizens without ownership (easier to deploy and can help address grievances)

Job creation and training programmes; construction and maintenance of public infrastructure

Community benefit funds

Financial compensations to communities in proximity

Tax benefits for the hosting municipality

Discounts in the price of electricity and support for vulnerable households



Good examples:

- Ireland Community Benefit Fund
- Greece reduced electricity costs for local communities
- Wind turbine compensation fee in Estonia
- Denmark's value-loss compensation fee

Timing matters...



Conclusions: principles for effective participation measures



No one-size-fits-all approach



Combination of procedural participation and benefit-sharing



Institutional support and clear governance



Meaningful and transparent participation



The degree of inclusivity, fairness and transparency



The role of impartial intermediaries



Developer commitment as an informal but powerful enabler



Monitor and report the impact of public acceptance measures