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A project for the improvement of renewable energy policies



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NEWSLETTER #03

November 2019

The objective of APPROVE is to improve the policies of four different European regions for the promotion of renewable energy, tackling existing **barriers** such as: low level of knowledge in the general public, lack of expertise of proponents and civil servants dealing with permitting procedures, issues of public opposition within approval procedures.

In line with the revised Renewable Energy Directive, APPROVE considers **awareness raising, capacity building, participation and stakeholder engagement** as ways to enable and promote renewables.



Regional Council of Lapland (FI) - Lead Partner

Lapland is an arctic sparsely-populated region with high technical potential in the bioenergy, wind and hydro sectors



Poliedra (IT) - Advisory Partner

develops and applies innovative methodologies and tools in mobility, environment, decision aiding and participation



Regional Council of Normandy (FR)

Normandy has a heterogeneous territory with a potential in the wind and biogas sectors and is the first French region in the wood energy sector



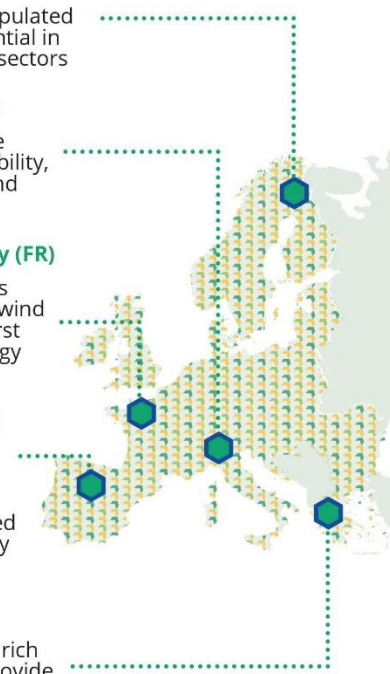
Regional public energy entity of Castilla y León (ES)

Castilla y León is the Spanish region with the most wind and hydro power installed, interested in developing also the bioenergy and geothermal sectors



Region of Epirus (GR)

Epirus is a mountainous region rich in natural resources that can provide innovative and sustainable energy solutions through research and innovation strategies



THE THIRD APPROVE INTERREGIONAL WORKSHOP

On the 25th of September, the third interregional workshop was held in **Valladolid**, in the Castilla y León region. Based on a framework proposed by the advisory partner Poliedra, the territorial partners and the participating stakeholders presented some **regional good practices** that could inspire other partners and their regional stakeholder groups for the development of their Regional Action Plans.



Types of good practices identified:

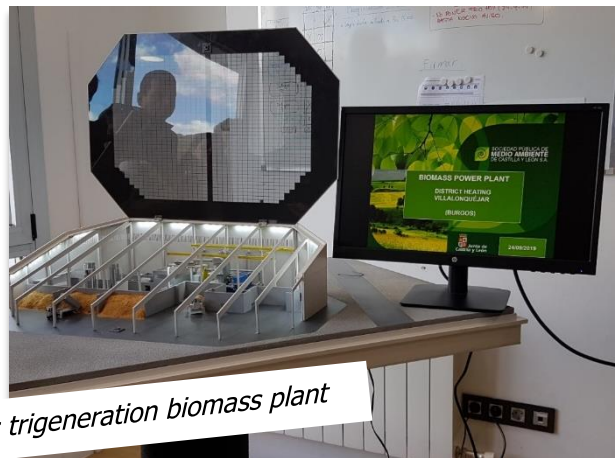
- **Participatory approaches in planning and permitting procedures**
- **Financial participation of communities and citizens**
- **Measures promoting regional co-benefits (tax cuts, ...)**
- **Building of institutional structures (voluntary agreements, industry self-commitments, ...)**
- **Knowledge & Capacity building**
- **Education**
- **Expositions & Fairs**
- **RES implementations as showcases**

Such good practices, plus others added later on, are being published on the project website and, after validation by the Interreg Europe programme experts, will be shared in the online database [Good practices from Interreg projects and beyond](#).

The project partner EREN (Regional Energy Agency of Castilla y León) organised numerous site visits around the bioenergy theme, including technical visits to Burgos industrial sites and to the biomass district heating in Valladolid, and a guided technical tour to the Expobiomasa fair.



Burgos trigeneration biomass plant



Examples of multi-fuel heating systems



NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

On the 23rd of September a **bilateral meeting** between the APPROVE teams from Normandy and Castilla y León took place in the Regional Minister of Economy and Financing headquarters of Castilla y León Regional Government, as part of the experience exchange among the project partners. Normandy introduced the relevance of energy cooperatives for offering energy services for SMEs and households in order to reduce energy consumption and make it more sustainable. The Normandy model is interesting for Castilla y León, where this kind of services is usually offered by companies more than by collaborative economical entities as in the French region. As a consequence of the meeting, the Normandy cooperative 7 Vent has started to be in contact with the Castilla y León regional energy cooperative Energ-Ética, in order to analyse possible collaborations.

Both regions were then comparing their renewable energy development with specific attention to biogas facilities from farm residues (also talking about Langage des Nez®, an assessment method of the olfactory impact) and to the wind power market in Castilla y León, among the first in Europe in terms of capacity installed.



On the 5th of September, the Regional Council of Lapland organised a **stakeholder event in Rovaniemi** to discuss the challenges faced by the biogas projects in the region with regards to profitability, risk aversion and investment costs. The various national support schemes available for funding new projects (RES plants, biogas filling stations, assistance to farmers) were presented.

The core issue is the scarcity of up and running plants that could work as references for farmers who are often interested in investing to biogas but lack the knowledge and the local experience for understanding the projects' risks and opportunities. A number of new projects were present and the discussions revolved also around the Government's new program pledge to increase biogas installations around Finland.

The third edition of the annual **Normandy sustainable development meeting**, which gathered close to 600 attendees on the 16th of October, was a great opportunity to propose an APPROVE workshop dedicated to "How to facilitate the energetic transition?".

More than 50 attendees listened to the workshop's pitch: *NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard), NIABY (Not In Anyone's Back Yard), BANANA (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything)... judicial appeals... While the majority of French people are in favour of renewable energy, considering the climate challenge which makes necessary the energetic transition, local resistances to projects are increasingly raising.*



The workshop started with a talk by Rudy Amand, sociologist at Caen University, who went back on the questions of change resistance (is it always correct to talk about it, or sometimes the issue is just a legitimate conflict of interest?) and social acceptability of renewables (isn't it good to have some opposition? should we extend the approach to social acceptability, which usually is seen from the perspective of project management?). The speech was mainly focused on human behaviour, the reactions of citizens regarding projects and the way projects are designed, proposed and communicated... a way to make attendees ask themselves if the current practices are appropriate and how they could be improved.

Then, Stéphane Lobbedey from the Normandy Region introduced the APPROVE project, its purpose, partners and planned activities. Some of the good practices identified within APPROVE were presented: a workshop on energy transition, a living lab for the co-design of projects, the road to energy event, the crowdfunding for an onshore wind farm project, joint development or citizens projects.

A 45 minute debate with reactions, comments, questions and ideas from the public closed the workshop.

NEWS FROM THE PROJECT

- APPROVE was one of the co-organisers of the session "Speed up the energy transition by raising social acceptance", which took place on 19/6/2019 during the **EU Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW)** Policy Conference in Brussels. The session was webcast live online; the stream will still be available [here](#) for a limited time.
- Some APPROVE partners attended the workshop "Financial Instruments for the Low-Carbon Economy" offered by the Interreg Europe **Policy Learning Platform** on 20/6/2019. We learned about the ways in which public authorities can encourage private investment by using public funds to create financial instruments that can leverage private investment and overcome market failures. For more information please visit the event [webpage](#).
- Some APPROVE partners attended the workshop "New tools to help you improve your regional policies" organized by the Interreg Europe **Policy Learning Platform** on 9/10/2019 during the European Week of Regions and Cities. For more information please visit the event [webpage](#).



- The analyses developed during the second semester of the project are presented in the **Report on gaps, needs and challenges**. The report provides quantitative data and qualitative remarks about the regional situations as regards renewable energy sources development and policies, with a focus on public participation and stakeholder engagement. You can download it [here](#).

- The **next interregional workshop**, which will take place in Normandy in April, will focus on the presentation and discussion of the preliminary Regional Action Plans that will be prepared in collaboration with your regional stakeholder group and the managing authorities.

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