



**Interreg
Europe**



European Union | European Regional Development Fund

ACTION PLAN



agencia extremeña de la energía (c)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project: AgroRES

Partner organisation: Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency (AGENEX)

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): Regional Ministry for Ecological Transition and Sustainability. DG for Industry, Energy and Mines. Extremadura Regional Government

Country: Spain

NUTS2 region: Extremadura (ES43)

Main contact person: Javier Gonzalez

email address: fjgonzalez@agenex.net

phone number: +34 924262161

Additional contact person: Rachel C. Tully (rctully@agenex.net)

This action plan has been designed by Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency (AGENEX). The foreseen actions in it will be carried out with the coordination of the Directorate General for Industry, Energy and Mines of Junta Extremadura.

Action Plan AgroRES – Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency

AgroRES project seeks to raise awareness on the benefits of investing in renewable energy in agriculture, such as gaining independence from the external energy supplies or contributing to a more sustainable energy production. In addition to showing opportunities in the sector, the project will promote public dialogue to overcome previously identified barriers and challenges.

Thanks to the project, each AgroRES partner has designed their Action Plan, which will support the integration of Renewable Energy technologies that are best suited for each agricultural and rural area.

The Action Plan will be implemented during the project's second phase. This document will provide details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be implemented, in order to improve the policy instrument addressed within the region. This document will specify the nature of the actions to be carried out, their timeframe, the stakeholders involved, the costs and the funding sources.

This is the key document elaborated throughout the project; it will integrate conclusions from the regional self-assessment regarding the use of renewable energies in rural areas, the lessons learnt from the stakeholders' participation in project activities, and the exchange of knowledge achieved through different project activities and events. All this will develop in long-lasting results and impacts in the region.

In the case of Extremadura, the feasibility analysis revealed that consumers lack a lot of information regarding the provision of energy services. This situation of unawareness hinders the implementation of renewable energy technologies in this sector even if they could improve the energy efficiency in their process, which, in the case of agribusiness, has energy-intensive periods. The adoption of these renewable solutions by the sector is perfectly feasible since it fits the energy consumption profile, type of energy demanded and location. A potential solution could be the implementation of Energy Communities in rural areas with the participation of local administrations. The business network in Extremadura, and specifically the agricultural and agro-industrial sector, is composed in its majority by SMEs. Supporting the development of Energy Communities is proven to be a viable solution and it also has enormous potential due to the proximity between agricultural and agro-industrial facilities make easier the implementation of these kinds of communities, and at the same time, the rural areas, which account with great public areas, such as the roof of public buildings, where renewable energies can be implemented and developed a public Energy Community.

The integration of renewable energy in the agricultural and agro-industrial sectors in Extremadura is not only perfectly viable but it is also necessary. In conjunction with the Regional Government, one of the needed lines of action will be to develop awareness-raising actions in the field of energy savings, as well as highlighting other territorial benefits achieved through the integration of these technologies.

POLICY CONTEXT

- The Action Plan aims to impact:
- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
 - European Territorial Cooperation programme
 - Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

- **Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (PRTR, from its initials in Spanish).**

The Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan is a national plan that defines the roadmap for the modernisation of the Spanish economy; for the recovery of economic growth and job creation; for a robust, inclusive and resilient economic rebuilding after the Covid-19 crisis; and to respond to the challenges of the coming decade.

This Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan will entail a significant volume of public and private investment in the coming years. This investment, necessary to relaunch the Spanish economy and accelerate the transformation of the production model towards sustainable and inclusive growth, will be financed by the Next Generation EU, the European Recovery Fund dedicated to this purpose at EU level. Specifically, this Fund will enable Spain to obtain financing of up to 140 billion euros, of which around 72 billion will be disbursed in a non-repayable form and the rest as loans.

The Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan is structured around ten levers that are urgent due to their capacity to drive activity and employment for the modernisation of our economy and society, and in the context of AgroRES Project, there are two levers to be influenced: (I) urban and rural agenda, the fight against rural depopulation and agricultural development; and (II) a just and inclusive energy transition.

Within the framework of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, Strategic Projects for Economic Recovery and Transformation (PERTE) are defined as strategic projects with a great driving force for economic growth, employment and competitiveness of the Spanish economy, with a high component of public-private collaboration and transversal to the different administrations.

Its objective is to contribute to the agile and efficient management of the funds and to reinforce those projects that clearly contribute to the transformation of the Spanish economy.

- **PERTE projects in renewable energy, renewable hydrogen and energy storage**

The transition to a carbon-neutral economy is an opportunity in environmental, social and economic terms, and among other advantages, it also makes it possible to reduce foreign energy dependence. With these PERTE projects, the aim is to support the areas associated with the energy transition in which Spain is well positioned, such as renewable energies, power electronics, storage or renewable hydrogen, and reinforce those with less presence.

To achieve this, the following actions will be implemented:

- 25 transformative measures aimed at developing technology, industrial capabilities, new business models and their implementation in the productive fabric of the country.
- The NextGen Energy hallmark to monitor projects related to the same strategic objective and that receives different grants.
- 17 accompanying measures to favour the development of PERTE projects, such as education and training that allow industries to adapt to new technologies and take advantage of job creation opportunities.

- A system for monitoring, evaluating and analysing the impact on the value chain of the energy transition in Spain.

Although the PRTR is a Policy Instrument defined at a national level, the specific funds allocated for every Autonomous Community are managed at a regional level. The budget estimated for Extremadura is 241M €.

Main stakeholders involved:

- **Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency**

The Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency (AGENEX) is a public entity, set up by regional and local entities of governmental and training nature, created in 2001 in order to promote the energy source diversification and the energy efficiency in Extremadura.

Its main mission is to support local and regional policy makers in the definition of strategies and directives allowing to achieving Regional, National and European targets in the field of energy. AGENEX seeks to boost the implementation of green technologies (both Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency) in the day to day of citizens, by promoting RTD projects, funding sectorial initiatives, supporting project promoters, etc. One important mission of AGENEX is the awareness-raising of general public, customers, users and decision makers of the entire society, in all issues concerning energy change, sustainable energy and climate change mitigation.

Furthermore, AGENEX also cooperates in projects that directly involve the development of the use of renewable energy.

- **Regional Ministry for Ecological Transition and Sustainability. Directorate General for Industry, Energy and Mines. Extremadura Regional Government.**

Junta de Extremadura is the institution responsible for organizing the Government of the region of Extremadura, in Spain.

At regional level, the highest-ranking organism in policy making and regional planning in the field of energy improvement and planning is the *DG de Industria, Energía y Minas* (DGE – DG for Industry, Energy and Mines). The entity is developing right now a significant experience in the field of energy efficiency promotion and innovative financing in Renewable Energy Sources.

DGE has direct competencies in industrial promotion, energy generation, energy distribution, industrial management and mines. More precisely:

- A) Energy planning, in accordance with the Spanish national energy regime.
- B) The promotion of renewable energies.
- C) Betterment of Energy Savings and Efficiency both generation and consumption.
- D) The management and control of the security in the industrial, mining and energy sectors.
- E) The registration of companies in these sectors, as well as the inspection and sanctioning procedure of such activities.
- F) Control of the quality of the electricity supply.

Besides, DGE is now running an internal grant and incentives programme with the aim of fostering renewable energy in various sectors in the region of Extremadura.

DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED

After the interregional exchange of experiences, the regional self-assessment and stakeholders' meetings that have been developed during the learning phase of AgroRES project, AGENEX has identified that there is a huge opportunity in the promotion of the use of renewable energy in agriculture and in the rural sector in general.

Therefore, there has been one main action identified to trigger the use of RES:

1. Technical and financial advice to develop new Energy Communities in rural areas through a specific section of the One-Stop-Shop by centralizing the different grants available from both ERDF and PRTR funds.

According to Programme Manual, section 4.3.1., the proposed improvement of the policy instrument is envisaged by type of change 2, where there will be a change in the management of the policy instrument.

All these improvements and new approaches have been defined thanks to the cooperation and to the lessons learnt during the exchange of experiences, as we will explain in the background section of the action.

ACTION 1 - Technical and financial advice to develop new Energy Communities in rural areas through a specific section of the One-Stop-Shop by centralizing the different grants available from both ERDF and PRTR funds.

BACKGROUND

During the AgroRES exchange of experiences, AGENEX has learnt that many of the participating countries (United Kingdom, Ireland and Finland) are implementing Renewable Energy Communities through cooperation of the public and private sector.

Thanks to these examples of Good Practices and to the findings of the Regional self-assessment process, AGENEX has detected that the implementation of Renewable Energy Communities is highly feasible in a rural and unpopulated area, in which the joint collaboration between the public sector and the citizens can create synergies that will facilitate a significant reduction of fossil fuels used in rural areas.

The first good practice in which the AP is based was the one presented by Devon County Council: Community-owned Energy, in which the community energy organisations offer citizens the chance to own renewable energy assets and develop funds to tackle low carbon issues. Community energy gives local communities greater control over how energy is generated and used, and it maximises the engagement and benefits from energy projects. Devon County Council has supported the growth of the sector by funding support services and establishing public grants to community energy organisations.

During the first cross-cut visits held in Sligo, Ireland, project partners had the chance to participate in an informative session of a community solar farm in development. This was one of the first projects to be successful in getting the tariff agreement from the new Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS); and it is the second good practice in which this AP is based. During the mentioned meeting in Sligo, AGENEX was able to learn about how renewable energy communities are managed and configured from their start-up to reaching investments for energy generation; and what are the strengths and weaknesses to take into account for its implementation in Extremadura.

Finally, in the Interregional Event organised in Joensuu, Finland, the consortium visited the good practice Eno Energy Cooperative, which generates heat from energy wood for its use in local public buildings, commercial premises and housing companies. The cooperative is owned by 54 local forest owners, and they all have a common goal: to generate thermal energy by providing wood chips for the 3 district heating plants. Extremadura has a large number of agri-food cooperatives that could take advantage of this cooperative model to generate renewable energy both for self-consumption and to feed into the grid.

As part of the learning process, AGENEX has been elaborating a guide and a road map to be used as a tool to make the municipal representatives of Extremadura aware of the versatility and potential of this collaborative formula between citizens, companies and institutions that can generate important benefits for the local economy and, at the same time, important positive impacts on the social and environmental surroundings of the rural regions of Extremadura. In order to understand the legal forms, AGENEX has elaborate a pre-feasibility study 1 that analyses the possibility of integrating community energy projects in rural municipalities.

ACTION

The action is focused on the implementation of new energy communities, with shared ownership of renewable energy installations, with the collaboration of public entities and citizen participation. To this end, in the One-Stop-Shop (SICAREx) that has recently been established to advise citizens on energy efficiency and renewable energies, and thanks to the AgroRES Project, a specific section will be created that will encompass all grants and/or financing mechanisms that seek to promote the creation of new energy communities.

In order to create this specific section, and with the aim of promoting the creation of new energy communities, a series of previous works are required that AGENEX has developed jointly with the Regional Government.

The development of this tool will promote renewable energy communities, which will encourage the use of renewable energies in the rural sector of Extremadura. In addition, AGENEX will be able to monitor the progress and development of these new communities.

Activities:

1.1. Development of a specific assessment line in the One-Stop-Shop for Renewable Energy Communities.

AGENEX will develop a specific section in the One-Stop-Shop (SICAREx) to provide technical and financial advice on the implementation of energy communities in the region. In order to do that, AGENEX, in collaboration with the RG, will undertake a series of digital works within the existing online platform to include this specific assessment line.

1.2. Design a specific section in the One-Stop-Shop for Renewable Energy Communities.

During the initial stage, AGENEX will also work on the design of an additional section, as, apart from the establishment of the assessment line, the OSS will also include a specific tab with information related to the development of Energy Communities.

AGENEX will compile and select useful information about Energy Communities gathered during the learning stage for publishing it on this section tab, making it accessible for citizens or other interested public/private organizations. This is the case of the guide/roadmap about Energy Communities elaborated by AGENEX, some examples of Energy Communities identified or information about available grants and applicable legislation.

The information included in this section will be continuously updated, with information about new grants or laws published, so the website will be up to date.

1.3. Establishment of a group of experts to provide advice.

AGENEX will allocate a group of experts who will be responsible for providing technical and financial advice to citizens, public administrations and other entities about the possibilities of Energy Communities.

The information provided by the expert group will be based on the knowledge learned thanks to the interregional exchange during AgroRES project, including the preparation of the Regional Assessment document and the studies that AGENEX has elaborated within the framework of the Energy Communities.

1.4. Information sessions about the new line of the One-Stop-Shop about Energy Communities.

This advisory service will be promoted through several information and training sessions held by AGENEX for the citizens, public and private sectors.

At the same time, these seminars will help to boot the new concept of Energy Communities and, at the same time, the One-Stop-Shop, which will help its implementation throughout the region's municipalities.

1.5. Meeting with Public Authorities. Policy makers / managing authorities.

Periodic meetings will be held with the public body, which belongs to the Regional Government, to ensure an adequate commitment of the public administration in the development of new Energy Communities and help develop a work strategy to achieve a low-carbon economy at the municipal level.

These meetings will be essential to know how to advance in the advisory work, focusing on the points where the most significant impetus is needed.

1.6. Monitoring.

Once the specific line in the One-Stop-Shop will be developed, AGENEX will monitor and analyse the implementation of new Energy Communities in rural areas. There is currently no Energy Community in Extremadura, and this action will allow the development of the firsts, with the special attention it the participation between the public and private sectors.

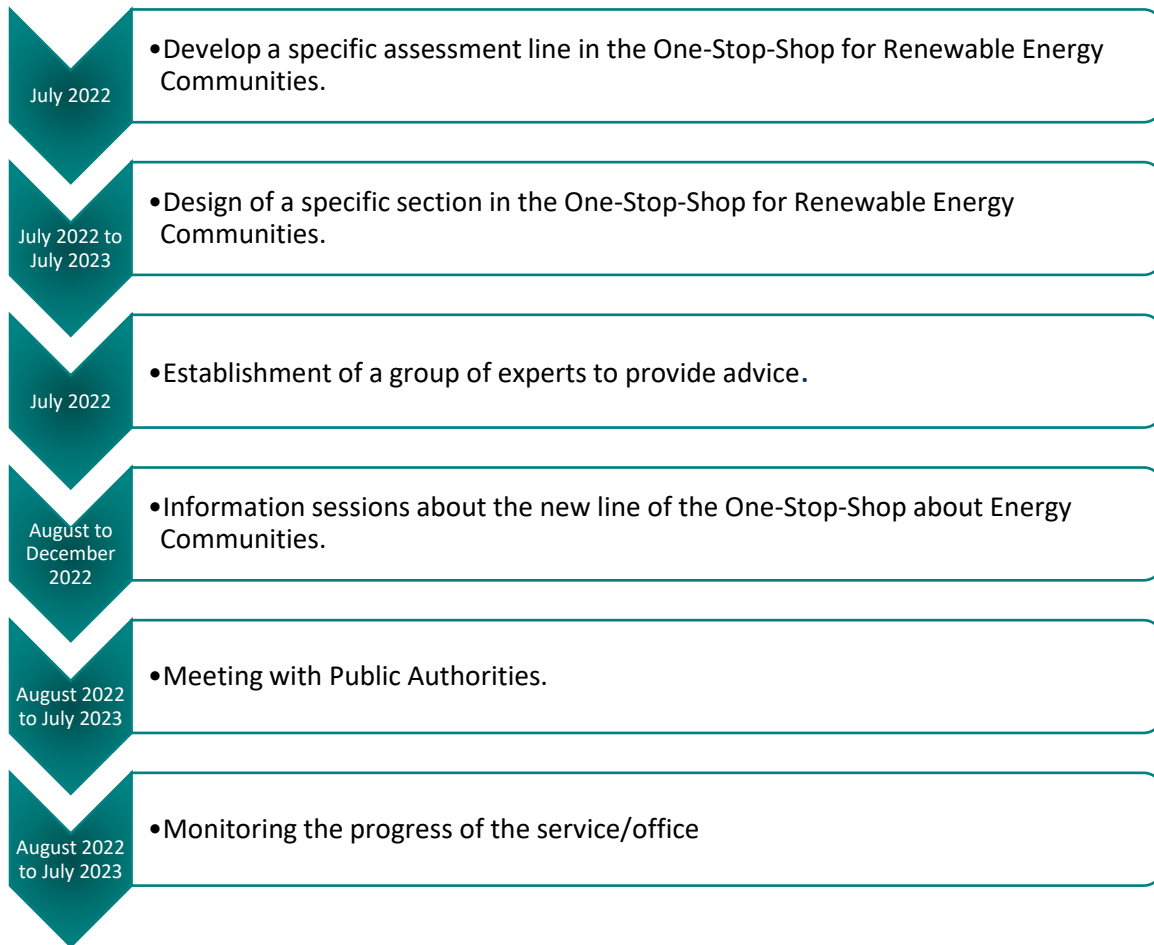
AGENEX will be able to monitor the progress of these new communities, from basic information to the creation of new institutions, keeping a total record of the Renewable Energy Communities created during this period.

PLAYERS INVOLVED

The main players involved in this action are AGENEX and the Regional Government, through its DG for Industry, Energy and Mines.

Other key players will be the local public administrations and civil society organizations.

TIMEFRAME



COSTS

The costs associated to this action will be those related to staff costs for the technical support that will be provided by AGENEX during the implementation of the One-Stop-Shop and for the development of the specific section for Renewable Energy Communities. It is estimated 35.000€ (1,2 person approx. from AGENEX).

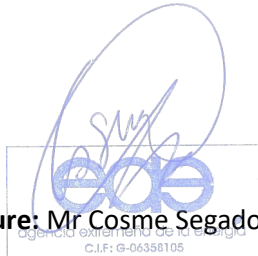
FUNDING SOURCES

In the case of the technical support that will be provided by AGENEX, Consortium Extremadura Energy Agency will use its own resources.

Own resources from the regional general budget and support from its own administration's staff.

European funds by Next Generation through the budget allocated under the programme Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (PRTR) and in the strategy of PERTE of renewable energies, renewable hydrogen and storage.

The partner responsible for drafting the AgroRES regional plan for Extremadura Region



Signature: Mr Cosme Segador, Director
Director of AGENEX – Consortium Extremadura
Energy Agency

Managing Authority of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan acknowledging and validating the current action plan

Signature: Mr Samuel Fernández, Director
Directorate General for Industry, Energy and Mines
– Regional Government of Extremadura