

REC4EU – INVECE PROJECTS

REGIONAL ENERGY STAKEHOLDER MEETING

REC4EU - N. 4

INVECE – N. 2

Firenze, September 30th 2024 – h. 10:00 – 13:30

Venue: c/o Via di Novoli, 27 Firenze - Pal. A piano 2 Auditorium

On September the 30th 2024, the six-monthly meeting of the European projects REC4EU and INVECE between the local stakeholders (associations, bodies, universities etc.) that potentially may be interested in the development of RECs, was held at the headquarters of the Tuscany Region in Novoli, Florence. The event, organized by the Tuscany Region and ARRR, was attended by around 35 subjects (both in presence and connected remotely) who were invited to give their contribution to improving local governance in the field of REC and to share critical issues or strengths faced during the constitution and development process.

Simone Tartaro (ARRR), moderator of the meeting, underlines the importance of having so many people around this table, demonstrating that interest in RECs is constantly growing and that European projects provide the opportunity to exchange initiatives, good practices, information, results, etc. and to jointly address the problems that emerged in the establishment and development of RECs.

David Tei (Regione Toscana) first of all he declares himself satisfied for the participation of various personalities belonging to different categories of stakeholders (including the Universities with young researchers and doctoral students) interested and involved in what is being outlined in the field of RECs in Tuscany. He highlights how the problem of climate change, with often more alarming data, is not only increasingly current but above all it forces public decision makers to act very quickly in order to try and change the way we produce energy. And he states that Tuscany wants to be present in the energy transition process. In Tuscany region, RES are growing and in 2024 we faced a boom in requests for authorizations; but the 2030 objective (based on burden sharing at European and national level) is challenging because 4 GW of power must be added to the power of the RES plants by 2020 (around 2.5 GW).

It is necessary to ensure that there are no speculative operations behind the various initiatives. It is therefore important to encourage the growth of RES but equally essential is a good governance. RECs are a tool through which Tuscany can achieve its 2030 objectives, even with small and medium-sized plants that share the produced energy.

Another positive aspect of RECs is that they represent a model focused on community, solidarity and the fight against energy poverty. By the end of the year, the Region's ERDF call for 20 million euros will be released to finance the RECs, in particular those that will have statutes and members based on solidarity. The objective is to start from the word “community” and to build the idea of producing energy to be shared around this.

Another element to pay attention to is law 101/2024 converting the Agriculture Legislative Decree which places an absolute ban on installing ground-mounted PV systems in agricultural areas with

the exception of systems that are part of a REC: the danger to be avoided is the possible (and not desirable) constitution of RECs for the sole purpose of circumventing the law.

By the end of 2024, Tuscany Region Administration will approve a law which will define the suitable and not suitable areas for the installation of plants from renewable sources. This, in addition to respecting the commitments set at national level, will have the aim of governing the aforementioned processes.

Finally, the action and commitment of the Region to promote the energy transition is strengthened by the activities envisaged by the European projects which involve ARRR and, directly or indirectly, the Region also to share the issues mentioned above.

Roberto Bianco (ARRR) presents a summary sheet with the objectives of the two European projects: REC4U (Interreg Europe) aims at improving the governance policy, INVECE (Interreg Maritime Italy France) aims at prototyping, modelling and supporting RECs and at creating a REC Observatory. He shows the results of an enquiry carried out at regional level of REC initiatives (around 80 data collection forms sent to the Municipalities and during ARRR participation in events, meetings, etc.). He highlights the critical issues in the development of a REC and shows 5 REC prototypes (examples that are presented during the meeting) identified starting from the REC's promoter with the aim of defining how a reference REC model can be structured and how it can be supported.

Some interesting data:

- the legal form most used in 2 out of 3 cases is the unrecognized association;
- in 20% of cases the REC first establishes itself or starts its establishment (Council resolution) and then draws up a business plan and/or broadens the number of members;
- the aggregations of 2 or more Municipalities (started after the GSE* rules) represent 22% of cases and if we add the subjects that operate in multiple cabins, the figure reaches 40%;
* GSE is a publicly-owned company, Energy Services Manager, promoting and supporting RES in Italy
- for the financing of the plants, only 44% have identified the method (in most cases, Municipalities, the PPP is used, often putting out to tender both the construction of the plant and the development and management of the REC).

The project INVECE makes resources available (in the form of services and audits) to provide support to at least 2 RECs (established or in the process of being established) which actually need assistance, but which will demonstrate that they have started a path of development and sustainability.

An Expression of Interest will be published shortly on the INVECE project website. The selection will be based on a self-assessment grid with predefined criteria and scores and the ranking that will be drawn up could be used by other bodies interested in awarding aid to RECs.

For the REC4EU project, he reports some interesting good practices that emerged from the exchange with the project partners, in particular

- on help for participatory and citizen projects on RES,
- incentive for training on still little-known issues regarding RECs,
- support for aggregations of RECs and development of coordination and monitoring activities especially for local "social" companies involved in the fight against energy poverty.

For details of the intervention, please refer to his presentation [\(link here\)](#)

Susanna Ceccanti (ARRR) shows objectives and partnerships of the European projects REC4EU and INVECE and, in reference to this second project, presents the Cross-Border RECs Observatory which will be launched shortly in December 2024/January 2025 during a regional event on energy

transition and RECs. It will involve, starting from the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding, all stakeholders interested in the creation of a network, exchange of good practices, sharing of actions to support and disseminate RECs. The Observatory will also have a development at Tuscany region level with the aim, among others, of monitoring the results of the RECs and the social impacts over time. Stakeholders can provide their contribution because this is the conception and implementation phase of the Observatory and therefore whoever wants, can help the partnership to start it by signing the memorandum. [Link to her presentation here](#)

Presentation of 6 examples of RECs established or in the process of being established, differentiated based on the promoter and representing different prototypes already present in the area:

- REC promoted by a public body: Capannori Municipality – Giampiero Tartagni (REC president) [\(link here\)](#) and Province of Livorno – Michela Chiti (European Planning and Policies Service) [\(link here\)](#)
- REC promoted by companies: ISI Foundation, coordinator of the Unioncamere Toscana Energy Transition project with which they supported the development of 4 RECs – Simone Coltella [\(link here\)](#)
- REC promoted by cooperative: Sievenergie – Silvia Russo (FTBCC) [\(link here\)](#)
- REC promoted by associations: Sienaenergia – Alessandro Vigni (REC president) [\(link here\)](#)
- REC promoted by a third party producer: Estra Clima – Elena Beudò [\(link here\)](#)

Several interesting aspects emerged from the above presentations and the following round table:

- the collaboration between Sienaenergia and the University of Siena on a shared energy management system to signal to citizens when, for example, it's the right time to turn on the washing machine in the presence of shared and available energy or even have it started by home automation,
- CEBASE's collaboration with installation companies to encourage the entry of new members thanks to the information and awareness that these companies can provide,
- the availability of the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (Department of Sociology) to provide a contribution through active participation in the INVECE project for all aspects that may concern the sociological issues relating to RECs (e.g. energy poverty),
- the difficulty in involving Municipalities if the initiative starts from citizens, associations, businesses, more generally difficulty in convincing subjects to participate in a REC,
- the need to have legal, commercial, technical support, etc. for the development of the project of a REC and/or plants to be proposed to the Municipalities with PPP,
- the need to harmonize and make compatible the various relief measures (energy account incentives and non-refundable contributions: for instance the uncertainty regarding the cumulation between the GSE incentive and the tax credit from Transition 5.0), considering the difficulty for the REC, which has limited capacity to attract financial resources, to find financing to build plants,
- the complexity of connecting the systems to the network despite the network manager (e-distribution) having given prior approval,
- the influence that plans, programs, regulations and acts governing the development of RES at a local level (guidelines for the integration of plants into landscapes, compatibility with intended uses, urban planning regulations, structural plans, etc.) have on the process of

authorization, but also in the identification of the procedure to be followed and the related timings.

One of the main critical issues that emerged is the relationship with the GSE, in particular in the phase that follows the construction of the plants and the registration on the REC portal to obtain the incentive.

First of all, the difficulty in communicating and finding the reference person who can respond comprehensively to requests for clarification and in REC registration and data entry on the GSE portal; and furthermore:

- when introducing the statute into the portal, the GSE rejects it if it does not contain exactly what is written in the Cacer decree, only in this way it can be approved,
- bureaucratic repetition of the documents to be attached for each configuration,
- exclusion of the participation of condominiums,
- the edit and add function is not active on the GSE portal to insert new members of the REC and new plants (in this regard, the GSE responded via ARRR that their experts are working on the implementation of the function!!).

In conclusion, David Tei, in thanking all the participants to the morning session and those who were connected online for their participation, and considering the morning very fruitful, suggests structuring this working group who can make reference to the Tuscany Region on the various topics addressed during present the meeting and believes it will be useful to organize other moments meeting in order to highlight critical issues and good practices.

The next appointment could be in mid-December/January (date to be defined) in Florence for the launch event of the REC Observatory.