

INTEGRATED LOCAL PLANNING

IN THE REVISED

RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE

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REAPING ALL SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
BENEFITS OF LOCALLY-ANCHORED  
RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS

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# INTEGRATED LOCAL PLANNING IN THE REVISED RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE

Energy Cities and REScoop.eu call on the European Union to introduce a crucial new obligation in the revised renewable energy directive in order to reap all the socio-economic benefits of locally-anchored renewable energy systems.

## LARGELY UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

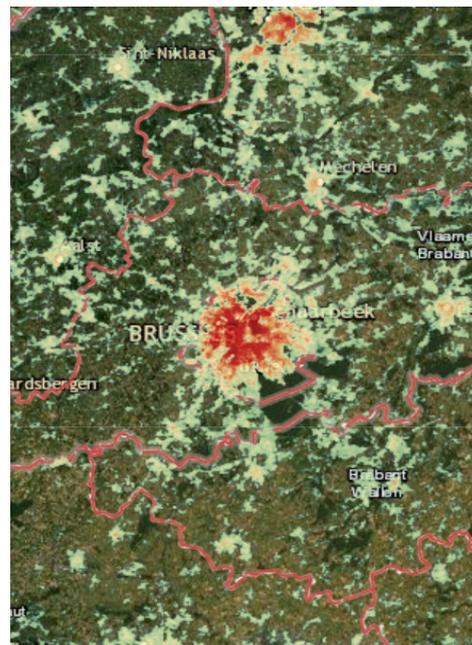
Today, there is no EU-wide harmonised system to guarantee that the local potential for renewable energy production is assessed and harnessed. The EU Covenant of Mayors itself is centred primarily on CO2 reductions and remains a voluntary initiative. However, planning energy supply options by starting at the local level is the best way to secure cross-sector solutions and synergies, while adding the criteria of socio-economic (and not techno-economic) development.

the level of national support required in the above-mentioned EED heat planning provision. This would help mainstream emerging methodologies and tools, which local authorities are already developing on a voluntary basis, such as solar atlases and heat maps. Such an obligation would also most likely encourage national authorities to support the creation of decentralised planning bodies instead of relying only on end-of-pipe mechanisms.

## EED PROPOSAL SETTING A PRECEDENT

With a new provision in article 23 of the Energy Efficiency Directive, the European Commission is setting a precedent by requiring that cities over 50,000 inhabitants conduct heat planning and that Member States support them in this process “to the utmost extent possible”. This new provision could be a game-changer if it effectively forces Member States to take a closer look at solutions for local efficiency gains and renewable energy deployment.

This provision should be mirrored in the Renewable Energy Directive by introducing a new requirement to conduct integrated energy mapping and planning at the local level, mirroring



A heat map of Brussels - Credits: hotmaps.eu

<sup>1</sup> As part of its recent “Efficient and Green Mobility” package proposal, the Commission also proposed to make it mandatory for hundreds of large and medium-size cities to adopt Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans

## INTEGRATED PLANNING AND MAPPING OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

Member States shall encourage their local and regional authorities\* in conducting extensive mapping of the local energy potential by:

§ Providing them with the technical, human and financial instruments relevant to develop energy-related GIS tools and other such relevant instruments such as solar atlases or heat maps;

§ Entrusting local authorities or independent public organisations (such as local and regional energy agencies) with the role of assessing all the local options to develop short-circuit energy supply chains, as well as identifying the energy supply and optimisation options, which are more conducive to long-term socio-economic development;

§ Promoting the “energy zoning” planning methodology, which helps determine the most appropriate energy supply source, customised district by district, and in concertation with local stakeholders.

\* The requirement should be mandatory for local authorities of at least 50,000 inhabitants. For countries with five or fewer cities above 100,000 inhabitants, a lower threshold of 10,000 inhabitants could apply.

### CHANGE NEEDED IN THE GOVERNANCE REGULATION

At present, there is no such thing as “integrated energy planning” happening at the EU level since there is little-to-no coordination between the objectives set by local and regional authorities and the long-term energy mix scenarios developed at national levels, despite the requirement on Member States to organise multi-stakeholder climate and energy dialogues as part of the Governance regulation.

In addition, local and regional plans rarely inform national strategies, given that virtually all member states lack a systematic, harmonised system to ensure adequate coordination between what remain largely separated exercises. The Governance regulation should also be updated to make sure that the potential found locally is reflected in national strategies.

### CONCLUSIONS

The capacity to map and harness the local renewable energy potential often relies on local authorities’ “good will”, or happens independently of national priorities and support.

Giving local governments the means to map and tap the local resources that make the most systemic, economic and social sense would, however, prove a crucial tool to increase Europe’s strategic autonomy and resilience.

More Information:  
[www.energy-cities.eu](http://www.energy-cities.eu)



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