

UNECE Renewable Energy Uptake

Concept Note: 2021 Hard Talks

The “Hard Talk” is a discussion format on current topics of renewable energy held with relevant stakeholders of the participating member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and organized by the UNECE secretariat and partner organizations.

The goal of the Hard Talk is to identify the best methods for realizing the potential of renewable energy by identifying key barriers that block private sector investment, as well as creating a well-functioning and stable system for the development of renewable energy.

The multi-stakeholder dialogues are organized by the UNECE in collaboration with host countries, local partners and international organizations such as the European Union, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), REN21 (Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century), and dena (German Energy Agency).

Hard Talks involve all interested government agencies, parliament, private investors, energy producers and consumers, financial and research institutions, NGOs, and international organizations. Key players in the field of energy discuss key issues, determine priorities and offer concrete policy recommendations to overcome political, legal, regulatory, and technical barriers and to tap the untapped potential of renewable energy.

A series of four upcoming Hard Talks with selected UNECE member States: Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Serbia, are to be held in the framework of the UNECE Re-Uptake Project in 2021, which is jointly undertaken by dena, REN21, and the UNECE, and in close cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi).

Hard Talk Format:

- Each Hard Talk will be held over two days and have a duration of 3-3.5 hours (incl. breaks) each day. A web-conference platform (Zoom) will be used to facilitate the Hard Talks.
- The Hard Talks will be primarily hosted and moderated by the main UNECE Re-Uptake Project organisations (REN21, UNECE, dena), together with country representatives where appropriate.
- Simultaneous interpretation services will be provided where necessary, from the host language to English and vice versa. The documentation language will be English, for: correspondence, agenda, presentations, recommendations, and reports, etc.
- The use of Q&A sessions and possibly ‘breakout rooms’ may be used in order to facilitate open and flowing discussion from and between a wide range of relevant stakeholders.
- After the Hard Talk, a report with key issues and recommendations will be produced and distributed to all participants and further relevant stakeholders. The results of the Hard Talk will also be incorporated into further reports and studies.

Albania Hard Talk

Date: 06-07 July 2021, 3-3.5 Hours (incl. breaks)

Introduction:

Albania has one of the largest shares of renewable energy in its energy mix in South-East Europe but is also a net energy importer and thus heavily reliant on imports. The renewable energy share in Albania is predominantly hydropower of which accounts for 95% of all generating capacity, with the remaining divided between solar (1%) and crude oil (4%). The heavy reliance on hydropower also means that renewable generation is sensitive to rain-fall, of which has seen considerable annual variations and a steady decline in recent years. This is likely to further decline with the effects of climate change. In addition to hydropower resources, Albania also has abundant solar and wind resources, which are almost entirely untapped. In order to improve the energy security and climate resilience and to meet growing energy demand, it is imperative that Albania accelerates the transition to those abundant, available and local, renewable energy sources.

The Hard Talk will therefore focus on known, key challenges to increasing the uptake, integration and harmonisation of renewable energy within the Albanian electricity network, with the intention to develop solutions and recommendations for action.

Main Focus Area/s:

- Uptake, integration and harmonisation of renewables with the electricity network

Identified Challenges / Discussion Topics:

1. **Network Integration:** What needs to be done to integrate and harmonise renewables with the electricity network? (Day 1)
2. **RES Support:** How can current support mechanisms for renewable energy deployment be strengthened and improved? (Day 2)
3. **Project Development:** How can bankability of project ideas and proposals be improved? (Day 2)

**Depending on interest and time, not all challenges/topics may be discussed.

General Proceedings:

- An **introductory presentation of the challenge / discussion topic** will be given by an industry/market expert to introduce and provide context of the discussion topic
- **Presentations of different perspectives** from multiple national and international stakeholders will be given to provide further context and aspects which are to be considered and discussed
- **Discussion with all participants** and stakeholders to determine potential solutions and next steps will take place with (an initial, open discussion round followed by a second open discussion round to further refine solutions and recommendations)
- **Formulation of solutions and recommendations** will be carried out, agreed upon and documented
- A **summary** of possible solutions, recommendations and next steps will conclude the Hard Talk



Participants (tentative):

Institution/Company
Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE)
National Agency of Natural Resources (AKBN)
Energy Efficiency Agency (Albania)
Ministry of Tourism and Environment (Albania)
National Environmental Agency (Albania)
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration (Albania)
Energy Regulatory Authority (ERE)
Transmission System Operator (OST)
Electricity Distribution System Operator (OSHEE)
Albania Power Exchange (ALPEX)
Albanian Power Corporation (KESH)
Albania Energy Association
Albanian Renewable Energy Association (AREA)
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
EBRD Western Balkans Sustainable Direct Financing Facility (WeBSEDFF)
Energy Community (EnC)
Deutsche Industrie-und Handelsvereinigung in Albanien (diha)
GIZ – Office Albania
German Wind Association - Bundesverband Windenergie (BWE)
German Solar Industry Association - Bundesverband Solarwirtschaft (BSW)
German Trade and Invest (GTAI)
German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi)
Voltaia
International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
Seman Sun Power
United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)
United Nations Development Programme (UNPD)
Delegation of the European Union to Albania
KfW Banking Group
Wind Europe
European Solar Association
ENTSO-E



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In cooperation with

UNECE: The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe is one of the five regional commissions under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. All activities relating to the Hard Talks are implemented in close cooperation with the UNECE Secretariat.



REN21: REN21 is the global community of renewable energy stakeholders from Science, academia, governments, NGOs and industry. They provide up-to-date facts, figures and peer-reviewed analysis on global developments in technology, policy and markets, to inform decision makers.



AKBN: The National Agency of Natural Resources (*Agjencia Kombëtare e Burimeve Natyrore*) is an Albanian government agency that supervises and monitors the use of natural resource Albania and is a close country partner for the UNECE RE-Uptake Hard Talk with Albania.

