

Press release for: The new Renewable ENergy REgions Network (RENREN)

A strategic new EU project “**RENREN**”, the **Renewable ENergy REgions Network**, will investigate how regional governments can help accelerate a shift towards renewable energy and so support EU aspirations for a greener, cleaner energy future. At the launch conference in Kiel, Germany, on 28th April, the network’s 14 partners will debate how they and other regions can play their part in global climate action and a securer energy supply.

RENREN will identify policy choices to improve regional frameworks for renewable energy expansion. It will explore the enabling conditions for renewables which regions can influence, and how these can be fine-tuned to support different technologies, such as wind, biomass or solar. The outputs of workshops, field trips and studies will be made available to a wider audience of stakeholders through a series of events and a website www.renren-project.eu. The network will draw up policy guidelines so that the findings can be easily transferred into regional policy-making across Europe.

At the launch, the partners will also sign a formal Charter committing to work together on these issues.

Regions will play a huge part in helping the EU and its member states achieve their 2020 renewable energy targets as well as wider EU objectives on energy. The ambitious EU energy agenda is based on the three pillars of energy security, competitiveness and sustainability. A minimum increase of 20% by 2020 in renewable energy generation compared to energy consumption is one key element of this. Independence from energy imports has also become a crucial goal of EU energy policy. Last but not least, the renewable energy sector is one of the fastest growing, and has significant job creation potential.

The current phase of the network’s activities, led by the German Land Schleswig-Holstein, is being supported by the EU INTERREG IVC programme. Between 2010 and 2012, it has a total budget of €2.16 million with a €1.65 million EU contribution. The RENREN launch conference on 28th April will mark the starting point for this exciting collaboration. It will be followed by the network’s first project workshop on 29th/30th April.

Fourteen partners from across Europe are involved in RENREN. Some of the regions are already well ahead in the renewable energy stakes but, for others, renewables development is only starting to gain momentum. RENREN will examine how the challenges vary according to where regions sit on this trajectory.

If you’d like more information about this RENREN network go through www.renren-project.eu



European Union

European Regional Development Fund

The project will look at enabling conditions that help or hinder renewables expansion focusing on these areas: finance, strategic planning, consents, innovation and jobs. Since the key technologies being deployed in Europe are diverse, the network will consider these enablers in terms of how they apply to different technology families:

- Wind, ocean, hydropower;
- Geothermal, biomass;
- Solar thermal, photovoltaic.

The list of the Project partners is:

- **Schleswig-Holstein** Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport (Germany, Lead Partner)
- **Welsh** Assembly Government (United Kingdom)
- County Council of **Jämtland**, Institute of Rural Development (Sweden)
- The Association of municipalities in the **Westfjords** (Iceland)
- **Cyprus** Institute of Energy
- Department of Innovation, Enterprise and employment of the government of **Navarre** (Spain)
- Regional energy agency of **Castilla y León** (Spain)
- **Pays de la Loire** Region (France)
- The Agency for Social and Economic Development of **Timiș** County (Romania)
- **Lodz** Region (Poland)
- **Ustí** Region (Czech Republic)
- Region of **Central Macedonia** (Greece)
- **Andalusia** Energy Agency (Spain)
- Bay Zoltán Foundation for Applied Research, Institute for Logistics and Production Systems (**North Hungary**)

The **Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC**, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention. EUR 302 million is available for project funding but, more than that, a wealth of knowledge and potential solutions are also on hand for regional policy-makers.

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