

**RECOMMENDATION
OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY**

**2024/1/MC-EnC on accelerating the deployment of renewable energy projects and
implementing the energy efficiency first principle**

The Ministerial Council of the Energy Community,

Having regards to the Treaty establishing the Energy Community¹ ('the Treaty') and in particular Articles 2, 24, 25, and 79 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal of the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) One of the main objectives of the Treaty, as set out in Article 2(d), is to improve the environmental situation in relation to network energy and related energy efficiency and to foster the use of renewable energy;
- (2) The acceleration of domestic renewable energy projects and the full implementation of the energy efficiency first principle should enhance security of energy supply, reduce demand in the Contracting Parties, and help them achieve their respective targets for 2030, set by Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, as adapted to and adopted in the Energy Community by Ministerial Council Decision 2021/14/MC-EnC of 30 November 2021 and amended by Ministerial Council Decision 2022/02/MC-EnC of 15 December 2022 ('the EnC Governance Regulation');
- (3) With regard to renewable energy, the European Union, by adopting Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources ('Directive (EU) 2023/2413')², recently committed to facilitating the deployment of renewable energy projects, namely through (1) mapping renewable energy potential, the available areas for its deployment and the necessary grid and storage infrastructure, designating renewable energy acceleration areas, while excluding high-value environmental areas such as protected areas for nature and biodiversity conservation under national and international legislation, ensuring public participation and acceptance as much as possible, and (2) introducing fast permit-granting procedure for renewable energy projects and repowering, minimizing complex and lengthy administrative procedures by introducing stringent timelines for project permitting especially within renewables acceleration areas, digital single point of contact for applicants and introducing the presumption that renewable energy projects are of overriding public interest for the purposes of the assessments foreseen in Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora³, Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the

¹ OJ L 188, 20.7.2006, p. 18.

² OJ L, 2023/2413, 31.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/2413/oj>.

³ OJ L 206 22.7.1992, p. 7.

Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds⁴ and Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy⁵;

- (4) With regard to energy efficiency, the European Union, by adopting Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency⁶ ('Directive (EU) 2023/1791') reinforced the application of the energy efficiency first principle as introduced in the Energy Community by the EnC Governance Regulation. Directive (EU) 2023/1791 follows a holistic approach to the energy efficiency principle, taking into account the overall efficiency of the integrated energy system, security of supply and cost effectiveness by proposing that energy efficiency solutions, including demand-side resources and system flexibilities, are assessed in planning, policy and major investment decisions;
- (5) A Recommendation to the Contracting Parties to the Energy Community to start incorporating and implementing the relevant provisions of the latest Directives adopted by the European Union should help them tapping into their significant potential for fast deployment of renewable energy projects in line with high environmental standards. Furthermore, it should help reduce the overall demand for energy in a more holistic manner at a crucial point in time of their energy transition, without prejudice to a full incorporation and implementation of these Directives in the Energy Community at a later stage;
- (6) This Recommendation was discussed at the meetings of the Renewable Energy Coordination Group, the Energy Efficiency Coordination Group and the Environmental Task Force, and endorsed by the Permanent High Level Group at its meeting on 11 December 2024.

HEREBY RECOMMENDS:

Article 1

Preparation for the implementation of the Directive (EU) 2023/2413

1. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of Article 1(6) of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources ('Directive (EU) 2023/2413') as regards the implementation of Articles 15b, Article 15c, Article 15d and Article 15e of the amended Directive (EU) 2018/2001 related to the mapping of areas for the deployment of renewable energy and the necessary grid and storage infrastructure in their jurisdictions, as well as designating renewable acceleration areas.
2. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of Article 1(7) of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 as regards the implementation of Article 16, Article 16a, Article 16b, Article 16c, Article 16d,

⁴ OJ L 020 26.1.2010, p. 7.

⁵ OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p.1.

⁶ OJ L 231, 20.9.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/1791/oj>.

Article 16e and Article 16f of the amended Directive (EU) 2018/2001 related to the permit-granting procedure in their jurisdictions.

3. The Secretariat should assist the Contracting Parties' efforts in this respect. It should report to the Ministerial Council on the progress annually.

Article 2

Preparation for the implementation of the Directive (EU) 2023/1791

1. Contracting Parties should prepare the legal and institutional preconditions for the implementation of Article 3 of Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency related to the energy efficiency first principle.
2. The Secretariat should assist the Contracting Parties' efforts in this respect. It should report to the Ministerial Council on the progress annually.

Article 3

Entry into effect

This Recommendation enters into effect upon its adoption.

Article 4

Addressees

This Recommendation is addressed to the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat.

For the Ministerial Council

Presidency

