

RENEWABLE ENERGY IN EUROPE. A SLOW REVOLUTION.

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In 2009, the Directive on energy from renewable sources 2009/28/EC of the European Union established targets for the production of renewable energy. It did so both for the union as a whole and for all the countries of the European Union. This was also joined by Norway and Iceland. The objectives contemplated the production by country of energy from renewable sources, which includes solar, wind, hydroelectric, biomass and geothermal energy, among others. The target for the EU was set at 20% for gross final energy and 10% for transport. And so Spain established it, setting itself the same goal as the average for the continent. The lowest objective being 10% of Malta and the highest 72% assumed by Iceland.

One year from the end of the term we see that there are many countries that are meeting the objectives set. Already in 2017 Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Croatia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, the Czech Republic and Hungary met their established objectives. Others, such as Greece and Latvia, were almost compliant and others such as Spain and the European Union itself were already well on their way to achieving it by 2020.

It is foreseeable that the objectives will be met in almost all countries. And for this reason the

objectives for the next decade have been updated. Last year, Europe set a new goal, reaching 32% by the year 2030. A goal somewhere between the 35% that the European Parliament was pursuing and the 27% that the council set. With this, a new renewable energy directive Directive 2018/2001/EC was approved to ensure compliance with said legally binding objective. This also proposes that by 2023 the figure be revised upwards and that self-consumption is not penalized with any tax until 2026, thus eliminating the famous Spanish sun tax.

This time Spain has assumed a new position regarding the energy transition, raising its commitment to 34%. This time, although only by two points, above the European Union average. Probably these objectives will also be met, what will remain to be seen is whether the objectives set have been sufficient or if we should have been more ambitious. The Nordic countries give clues that ambitious targets can be met, and that it can even be done earlier than set. The gauntlet is down!

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