

Embargoed until: 09:30 CET Paris Time – 18 March 2021

Trends in France

Facts from the *Renewables in Cities 2021 Global Status Report*

Key Renewable Energy Takeaways in 2020 from France

- Most city-level renewable energy targets in France are for renewables in total final energy consumption, with several aiming for 100% renewables.
- France is among the top 10 countries in terms of district heating and cooling capacity, with cities increasingly pursuing efforts to supply their DHC networks with renewable energy.
- Opportunities for citizen participation and other forms of city-level participatory governance in France's energy transition have grown in recent years.

Brand new data shows

- Only 14 cities in France had renewable energy targets and/or policies (from a global total of over 1,300 cities). This covers 6.5 million people, 12% of the urban population in France:
 - 6 of these cities had 100% renewable targets, and the remaining cities/targets focused on lower shares of renewables in total final energy consumption.
 - Most city-level policies identified in France are aimed at transport, with 6 cities having proposed or planned new vehicle bans and/or low-emission zones in 2020.
- French cities are lagging behind on setting net-zero¹ targets: only 3 cities had net-zero targets - **Dijon, Nantes** and **Paris** (from a global total of around 800 cities with net-zero targets).
- Only 25 cities in France had declared a climate emergency by 2020 (up from 23 in 2019)² – a small share of the total 1,852 cities worldwide with such a declaration.

Renewable Energy Developments in French Cities

City renewable energy commitments and policies

- **Paris** is one of only a few cities worldwide that have a sector-specific 100% renewables target for heating and cooling (with an intermediate target for 75% by 2030).
- **Paris** is also one of only a few European cities that have regulations banning the installation of oil-based heating systems in buildings (most such bans are in California, US).

¹ Net-zero" emissions can be achieved, for example, by using natural sinks, such as reforesting land or adopting agricultural best practices, or through a technological solution, such as carbon capture and storage. Net-zero targets also are referred to commonly as "climate-neutral", "carbon-neutral" or "zero-emission" targets, although technically these are not the same. Carbon neutrality refers to net-zero emissions of only CO₂, whereas climate neutrality indicates a broader focus on net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases. There is no agreed-upon definition, and implementation of these targets also varies broadly.

² Faches-Thumesnil and Strasbourg declared climate emergencies in 2020.

Scaling up renewables in buildings and transport

- France is among the top countries in terms of district heating and cooling capacity, with 43% of France's district heating and cooling provided by renewables. Several cities have expanded renewables:
 - In 2019, the local district heating network of **Lyon-Confluence** was connected to the central network of Lyon, and a new 51 MW biomass plant was commissioned to supply the networks.
 - In the **Paris** region, district heating systems have gradually increased their geothermal heating capacity.
 - **Montauban** is installing a district heating network using residual waste to heat 4,200 homes, with completion scheduled for 2023.
- **Electrification of transport is gaining ground in French cities:**
 - **Paris** is among the world's EV capital cities with some 307 public EV chargers per million population, relying on 22% renewable electricity in the national mix.
 - In 2020, **Paris** stipulated that only battery-electric and fuel cell vehicles will be permitted in its low emission zones by 2030.
 - The RATP Group in **Paris** started converting all city bus depots to support fleets running on electricity and biogas.
- **Scaling up renewables at the neighbourhood level:** The Carquefou district in **Nantes** was one of the first European³ positive energy districts to begin operation (2018): Carquefou's La Fleuriaye "eco-neighbourhood", which consists of 620 housing units with 6,000 m² of solar PV panels, provides 80% of the district's energy needs through solar electricity and is expected to be one of Europe's largest positive energy districts when completed in 2022.

Financing renewables in cities

- The use of green bonds is rising across Europe, with notable increases in 2019 in France (up 113% to USD 30.1 billion).
- Most municipal COVID-19 recovery packages are still being developed, **Lille** was one of the first cities worldwide to publish its plan: **Lille** allocated EUR 20 million (USD 24.5 million) through its Rebound Fund, a business support programme that requires small businesses to commit to the energy transition.
- Most Power Purchase Agreements supporting renewables are in the power sector, although examples exist of PPPs for renewable heat, such as in **Rittershofen**, where a PPP helped support a geothermal project to supply process heat to a local biorefinery.

Citizen engagement to achieve energy and climate goals

- Opportunities for citizen participation and other forms of city-level participatory governance in France's energy transition have grown in recent years:
 - Cities in Europe increasingly have introduced participatory budgeting, including **Paris**: One-fifth of Paris' investment budget, or EUR 100 million (USD 122.8 million), is earmarked for climate-friendly investments.

³ As of 2020, 61 European cities were developing plans for positive energy districts.

- The democratically elected board of Eau de Paris installed solar PV panels (generating 17,500 MWh of electricity in 2018) and decided to set an internal goal of 95% renewables in the company's power mix by the end of 2020.
- In **Strasbourg**, a community solar PV project started in 2020 aims to be more inclusive by making shares available for only EUR 100 (USD 122.8); it relies on a network of people to identify feasible new sites for solar PV, and the project managers negotiate with homeowners and facilitate the installation.

France's Energy Profile

<https://www.iea.org/countries/france>

Regional Trends: Europe

- European cities are global leaders on urban energy and climate issues, often driven by the push for greater climate action and the desire to improve the health of city residents; Europe is spearheading the climate emergency declaration movement, accounting for almost half of the total 1,852 declarations in 2020 (up from around 1,400 in 2019). More than 350 cities had a renewable energy target.
- In line with the EU Green Deal, cities have also committed to net-zero goals, developed more holistic strategies, integrated solutions to decarbonise activities in urban areas: scaling up renewables on municipal buildings, using waste and wastewater as inputs, shifting municipal fleets, integrating solar and geothermal district heating.

Questions? Please contact press@ren21.net or +33 1 44 37 50 99.

All report materials, figures, case studies and the full data pack can be downloaded here:

<http://ren21.net/rec2021press>