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Trends in Spain

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

Key Renewable Energy Takeaways in 2020 from Spain

- Spanish cities are leaders in adopting solar thermal mandates, with early city action pushing for national-level action on solar thermal; more recent policies in Spanish cities are either aimed at the transport sector or entail subsidies for solar PV and/or thermal.
- Several Spanish cities have pursued the re-municipalisation of energy infrastructure; as of late 2020, Spain was the country with the second¹ highest number of re-municipalisation cases associated with energy infrastructure.

Brand new data shows

- 71 cities had renewable energy targets and/or policies (from a global total of over 1,300 cities). This covers around 13 million people, 34% of the urban population in Spain:
 - **Madrid, Barcelona** and **Málaga** have 100% renewable targets.
 - Most municipal policies identified in Spain are solar thermal mandates, present at least in 59 cities – all of which have been in force since the early 2000s.
 - City-level policies adopted in recent years (2018-2020) either focus on transport (e.g., LEZs in **Madrid** and **Barcelona**) or represent subsidy programmes supporting the installation of solar systems in buildings (e.g. in **Murcia** and **Barcelona**).
- Spanish cities are lagging behind on setting net-zero² targets: 16 cities net-zero targets (globally around 800 cities had net-zero targets)
- Only 30 cities in Spain had declared a climate emergency by the end of 2020 (up from 27 in 2019)³; globally a total 1,852 cities had such a declaration.

Renewable Energy Developments in Spanish Cities

City renewable energy commitments and policies

¹ Globally, (re-)municipalisation of energy infrastructure peaked in 2016, but the upward trend has continued. At least 369 cases of remunicipalisation of energy infrastructure were recorded as of late 2020, with the bulk of these cases (305, or around 80%) taking place in Germany, followed by Spain (18).

² Net-zero" emissions can be achieved, for example, by using natural sinks, such as reforestation 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.

³ Barcelona, El Prat de Llobregat and Valencia declared climate emergencies in 2020.

- As early as 2000, **Barcelona** – Europe’s pioneer in solar mandates – adapted its building code to require that solar thermal energy cover at least 60% of the hot water demand in new buildings and in buildings undergoing major renovation.
 - Over **50 Spanish towns and cities** followed **Barcelona’s** example, culminating in the implementation of national technical building regulations in 2007.
- In **Barcelona**, the municipal government renewed its housing renovation subsidy in 2020 to offer subsidies of up to 55% of the total costs of renovations to residential households that install solar thermal or solar PV.
- As of 2020, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing programmes were starting to be deployed across Europe:
 - HolaDomus is a PACE pilot program launched in 2020, co-led by GNE Finance and the City of **Olot**; it finances renewable energy and other innovative home improvements.
- In the last few years (2018-2020), some Spanish cities have adopted policies aimed at decarbonising the transport sector:
 - During 2020 in **Vitoria-Gasteiz**, a financial incentive was provided to support the expansion of e-taxis, although without an explicit link to renewable electricity.
 - In **Madrid**, only battery-electric, fuel cell electric and certain plug-in hybrid vehicles are allowed to circulate and park in the LEZ (2018) without restrictions.
 - **Barcelona** approved a LEZ in 2019 which came into force in 2020.

Scaling up renewables in buildings and transport

- **Scaling up renewables to address energy poverty** represents a significant challenge in Spain: **Martorelles** and other Spanish municipalities have collaborated with co-operative Som Energi to cover the electricity bills of households in need.
- **Interest in hydrogen is starting**: The Port Authority of **Santa Cruz de Tenerife** partnered with Hyundai Canarias and Enagás to build a facility to generate renewable hydrogen for transport.

Financing renewables in cities and citizen participation

- Spain invested more in renewables in 2019 than any other European country, the first time it has done so. The 2019 total investment in renewable energy capacity for Spain, at USD 8.4 billion, represented an increase of 25% compared to the previous year.
 - A contract for a wind farm in **Motilla del Palancar** designed to create local jobs and provide electricity to the city.

Citizen engagement to achieve energy and climate goals

- Several Spanish cities have re-municipalised energy infrastructure, including **Barcelona** - Barcelona Energia began supplying renewable electricity to city council buildings and facilities in 2018, and to the general public in 2019.
 - Other energy remunicipalisation projects also in **Cadiz, Madrid and Zaragoza**.
- Spanish citizens are involved in community energy projects through several regional co-operatives, including Som Energia (67,800 members) and GOIENER (>10,000 members):

- Municipal governments have spearheaded community energy projects in Spanish cities including **Barcelona, Cadiz, Girona, Madrid, Pamplona, San Sebastian, Valencia** and **Valladolid**.
- The concept of collective self-consumption, introduced in 2019, allows citizens in densely populated areas to join together and become “off-site prosumers” by investing in solar PV installations near their homes and on neighbouring buildings.

Spain’s Energy Profile

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

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 (2020). 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>