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## **Trends in the United States of America**

### **Facts from the *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report***

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#### **USA's Top Highlights in 2020**

- The United States ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> after China both in terms of renewable energy capacity added (32 GW) and cumulative renewable energy capacity (313 GW) in 2020. The country added a record 19.2 GW of solar PV <sup>1</sup>for a total exceeding 97 GW, making solar PV the leading source of new power capacity for the second consecutive year. This accounted for a record 43% of all US power capacity additions in 2020. The United States also commissioned 16.9 GW of new wind power capacity in 2020, up 85% over 2019 installations.
- In the United States, renewable energy reached nearly 20% of net electricity generation by end-2020; of this, more than half was generated by solar and wind energy, while coal fell from around 24% in 2019 to less than 20% in 2020.
- The United States is a leading country for multiple types of renewable energy. In 2020, it ranked second in terms of capacity additions for solar PV and wind power (following China), led in geothermal power capacity and biofuels production, and was among the top five in installed capacity of hydropower, bio-power and concentrating solar thermal power.
- In the United States, the USD 900 billion COVID relief package included extensions of the production and investment tax credits for solar PV and onshore wind power, a new tax credit for offshore wind power, USD 1.7 billion for low-income homeowners to install renewable energy, and USD 4 billion in research and development (R&D) funding for solar power, wind power, hydropower and geothermal energy.

#### **Where does the United States stand among G20 countries?**

The figure below shows that renewable energy made up just above 10% of the United States' total final energy consumption (TFEC). The United States of America did not set a target for the share of renewables by 2020.

As seen in the figure below, only five of the world's largest member economies in the G20 – the EU-27, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom – had set 2020 targets to achieve a certain share of renewables in final energy use.

Do net zero targets<sup>2</sup> or targets for renewable shares actually support the uptake of renewables? Targets are needed, as they are binding objectives that can be used to hold countries accountable. Setting net zero targets alone does not necessarily lead to greater attention to renewables or to

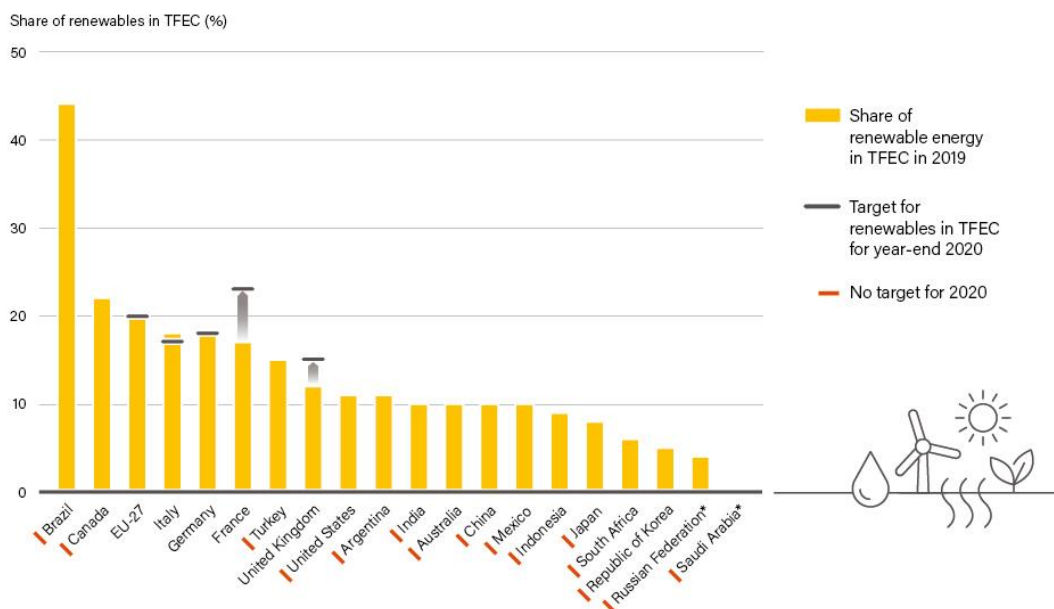
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<sup>1</sup> Solar PV capacity data are provided in direct current (DC).

<sup>2</sup>Click here to read REN21's brief overview of net zero targets: <https://www.ren21.net/net-zero-basics/>

success in meeting renewable energy targets. Alongside any kind of target, robust policies and regulations are needed to ensure these targets are met.

### Renewable Energy Shares and Targets, G20 Countries, 2019 and 2020



Note: TFEC = total final energy consumption.  
Data for Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia are for 2018 and 2017 respectively.

## Global rankings

Total renewable power capacity, end-2020 (Gigawatts)

1. China (908)
2. **United States** (313)
3. Brazil (150)
4. India (142)
5. Germany (132)
6. Japan (104)

Renewable power capacity per person, not including hydropower, end-2020 (kilowatts per person)

1. Iceland (2.1)
2. Denmark (1.7)
3. Sweden (1.6)
4. Germany (1.5)
5. Australia (1.1)
- ...11. **United States** (0.7)

Solar PV capacity additions, 2020 (Gigawatts)

1. China (48)
2. **United States** (19)
3. Vietnam (11)
4. Japan (8.2)
5. Germany (4.9)
6. India (4.4)

The *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report* material is available here: <https://www.ren21.net/gsr>

**Questions?** Please contact [press@ren21.net](mailto:press@ren21.net) or +33 1 44 37 50 99.