

The European Union achieved a 17% renewables share in its gross final energy consumption in 2016, led by Sweden and Finland, Eurostat figures show.

For comparison, the EU's renewables share was 16.7% in 2015, and 8.5% back in 2004, the first year for which data is provided. The block has set a 20% target by 2020, with every country having its own goal based on different starting points, renewable energy potential and economic performance.

According to the EU's statistical office, Sweden generated about 53.8% of its gross final energy from renewable energy sources in 2016, already exceeding its national target of 49% for 2020. It was followed by Finland, where 38.7% of the energy came from renewables, so it has also achieved its goal of 38% for 2020. The third spot in the ranking was taken by Latvia with a 37.2% share and well on the way to its 40% goal.

The countries having the lowest renewables share in their final energy consumption were Luxembourg, with a 5.4% share, and Malta and the Netherlands, both of which derived 6% of their energy from renewables.

Overall, 11 of the bloc's 28 member states have achieved their 2020 national targets. As of end-2016, the Netherlands, France and Ireland were furthest away from their 2020 objectives. The Netherlands still has 8 percentage points to reach its 2020 target of 14%. With a 16% renewables share, France will need 7 percentage points to achieve the goal of 23%, while Ireland is 6.5 percentage points away from its 16% target.

Eurostat's statistics also showed data about non-EU members Iceland, Norway, Albania, Montenegro and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Of them all, Iceland had the highest renewables share of its final energy consumption in 2016, standing at 72.6%, above its 2020 national target of 64%. Norway has reached 69.4%, also above its 67.5% target.

Source: renewablesnow