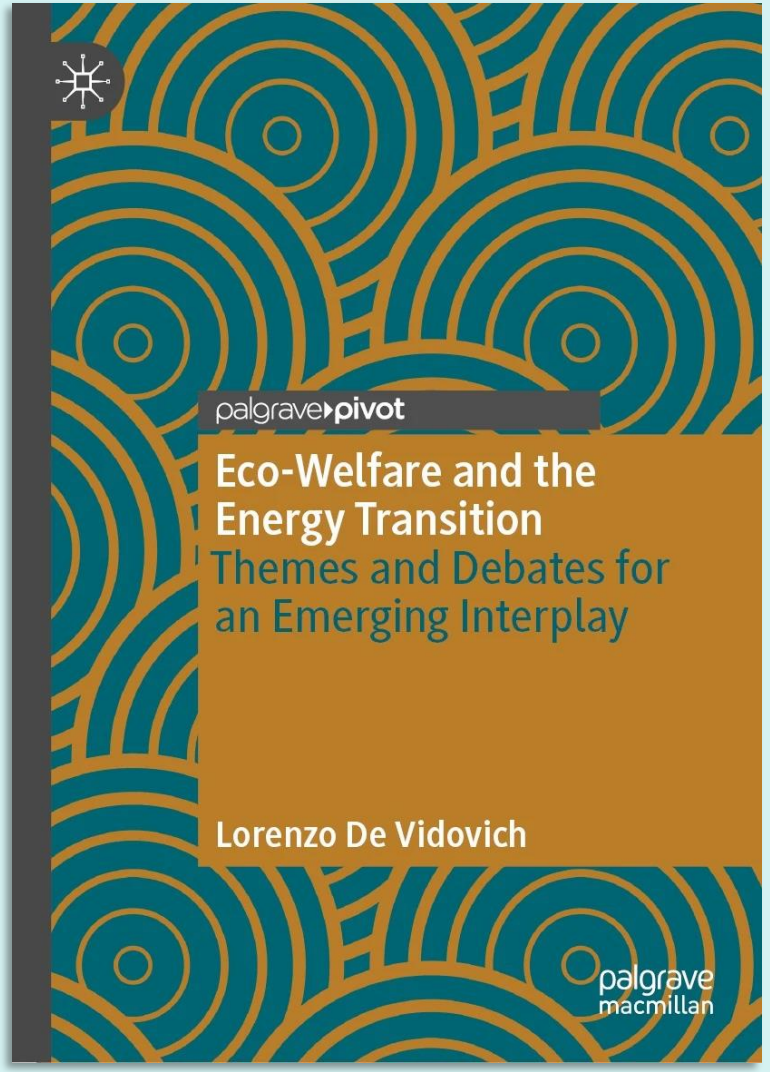
# ECO-WELFARE AND THE ENERGY TRANSITION

## THEMES AND DEBATES FOR AN EMERGING INTERPLAY




## THE ROLE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY COMMUNITIES IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION

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ECOWELFARE
Sustainable Welfare and Eco-Social Policy Network

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## (OF THE BOOK)

# What is a Renewable Energy Community?

## Definition from the EU

Energy communities organise collective and citizen-driven energy actions that help pave the way for a clean energy transition, while moving citizens to the fore

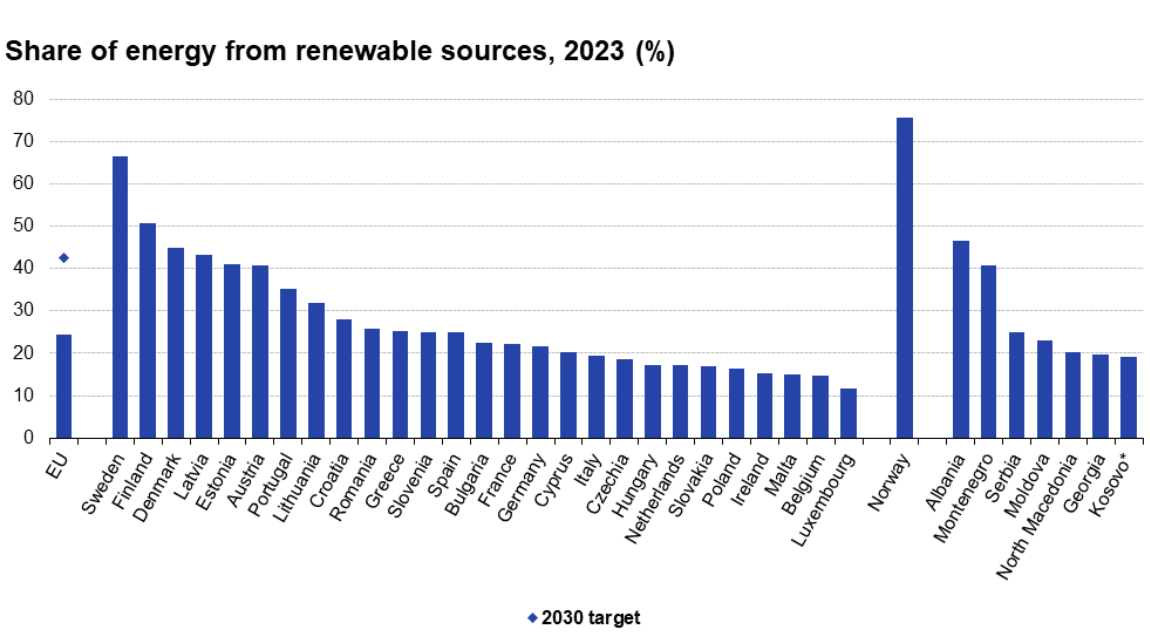
They contribute to increasing public acceptance of renewable energy projects and make it easier to attract private investments in the clean energy transition.

At the same time, they have the potential to provide direct benefits to citizens by increasing energy efficiency, lowering their electricity bills and creating local opportunities in social cohesion projects and labour market

https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/markets-and-consumers/energy-communities_en#citizens-and-renewable-energy-communities

# Placing RECs in the eco-social debate

## Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption (2023)

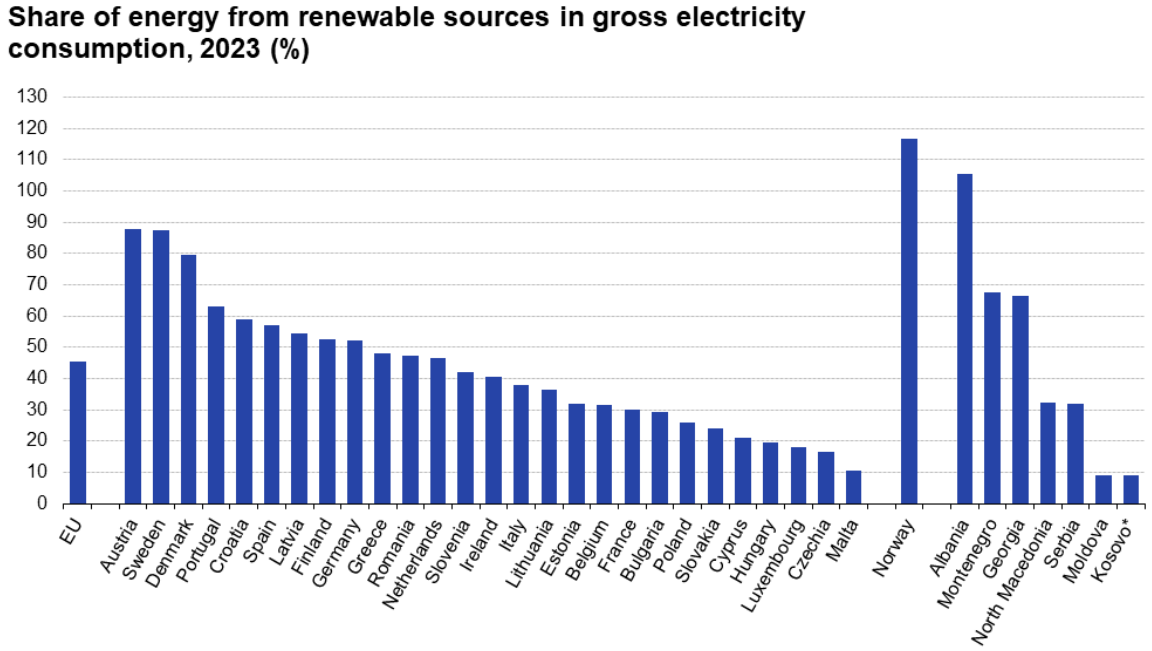



* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

*Source:* Eurostat (online data code: nrg_ind_ren)

eurostat

## Share energy from renewable sources in electricity consumption (2023)




* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

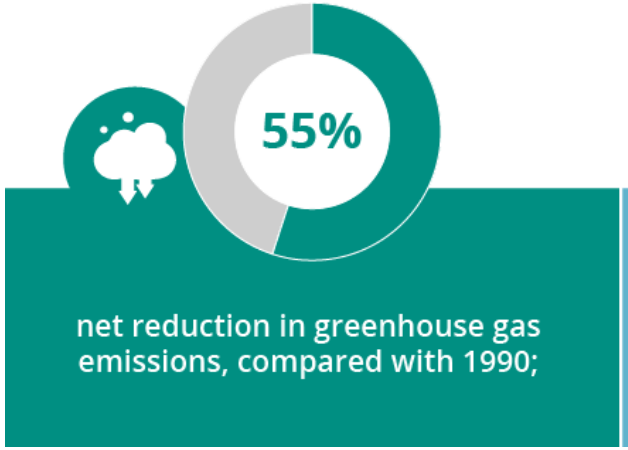
*Source:* Eurostat (online data code: nrg_ind_ren)

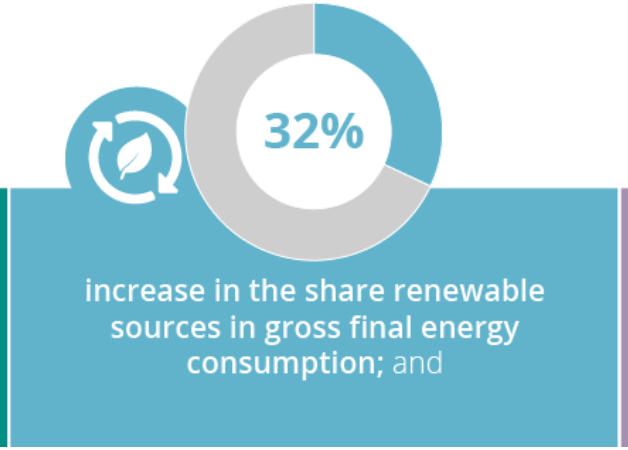
eurostat

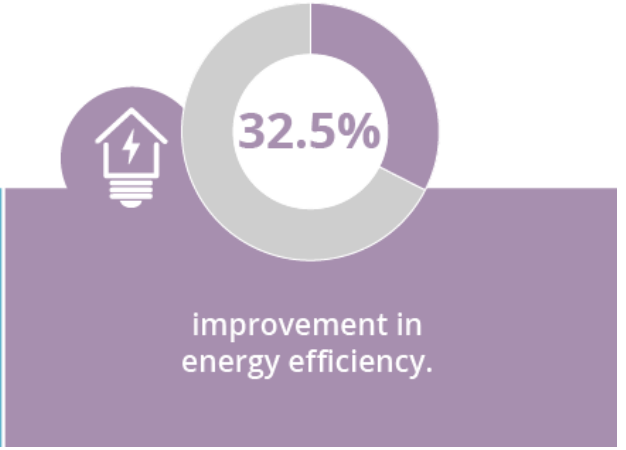
In 2023, renewable energy represented 24.5% of energy consumed in the EU, up from 23.0% in 2022

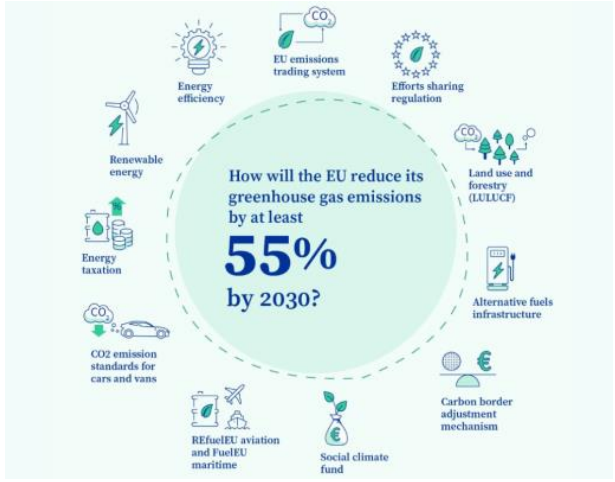
# RECs in the European framework

The current 2030 minimum targets for greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy and energy efficiency at the EU level are:



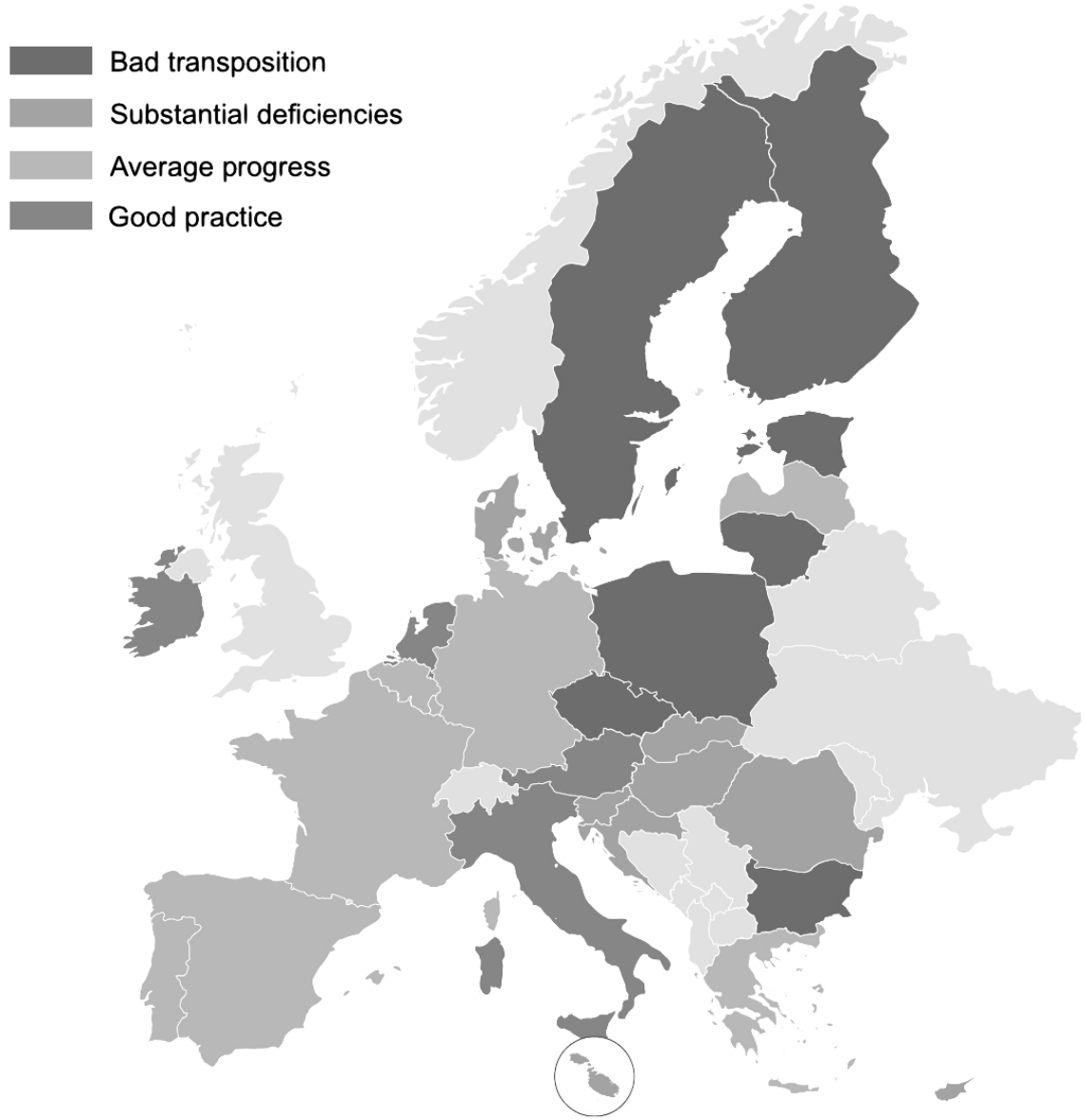



© Sources: European Environment Agency | European Commission

# RECs in the European framework

- Directive EU 2018/2001 | **RED II**
  Promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources
- Directive EU 2019/944
  Common rules for the internal market for electricity

- **Three aims**
  - Decarbonization
  - Decentralization
  - Localization
- **Tre typologies of benefit**:
  - Environmental
  - Economic
  - Social




© RESCoop.eu | *Transposition tracker*

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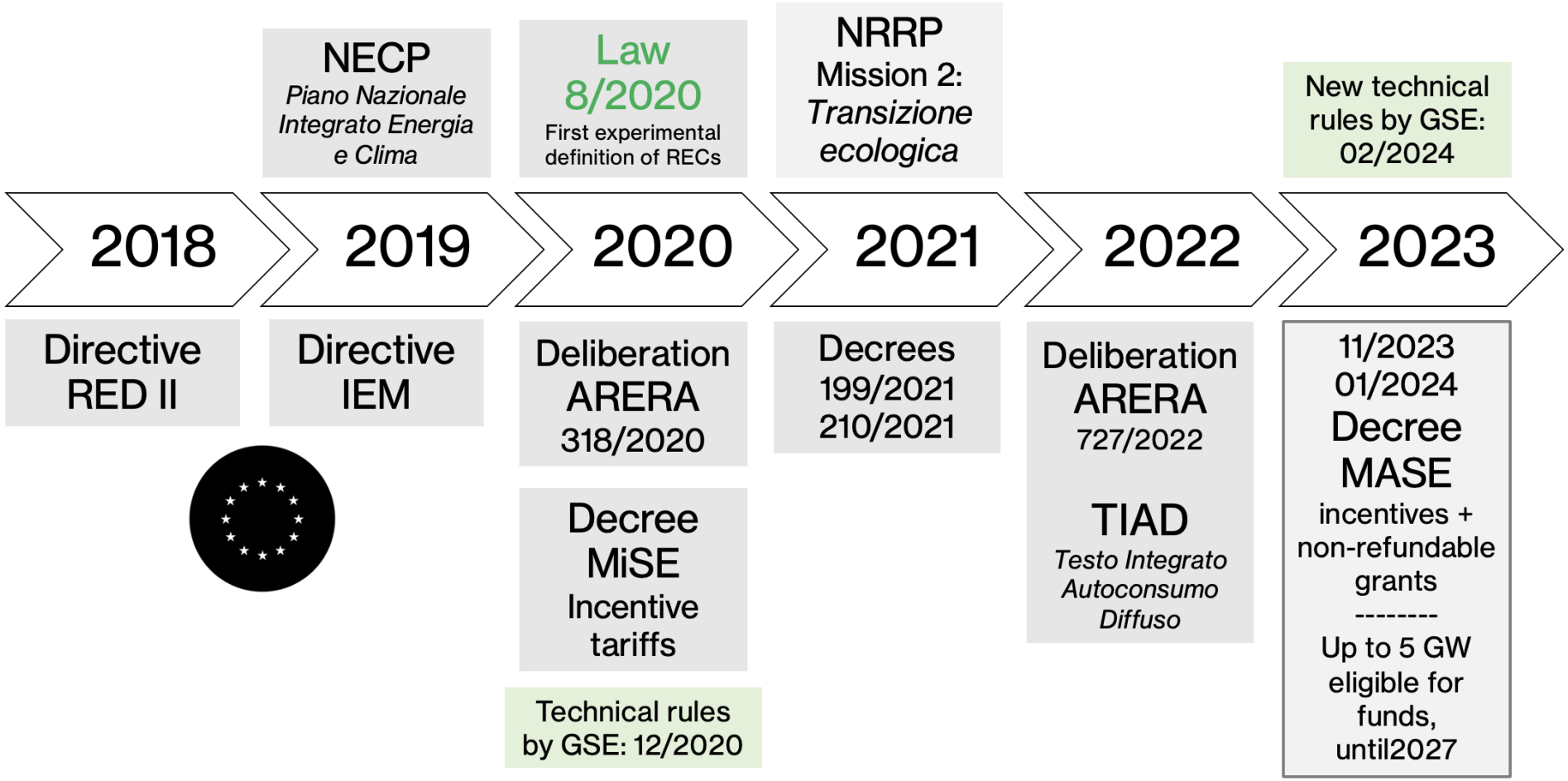
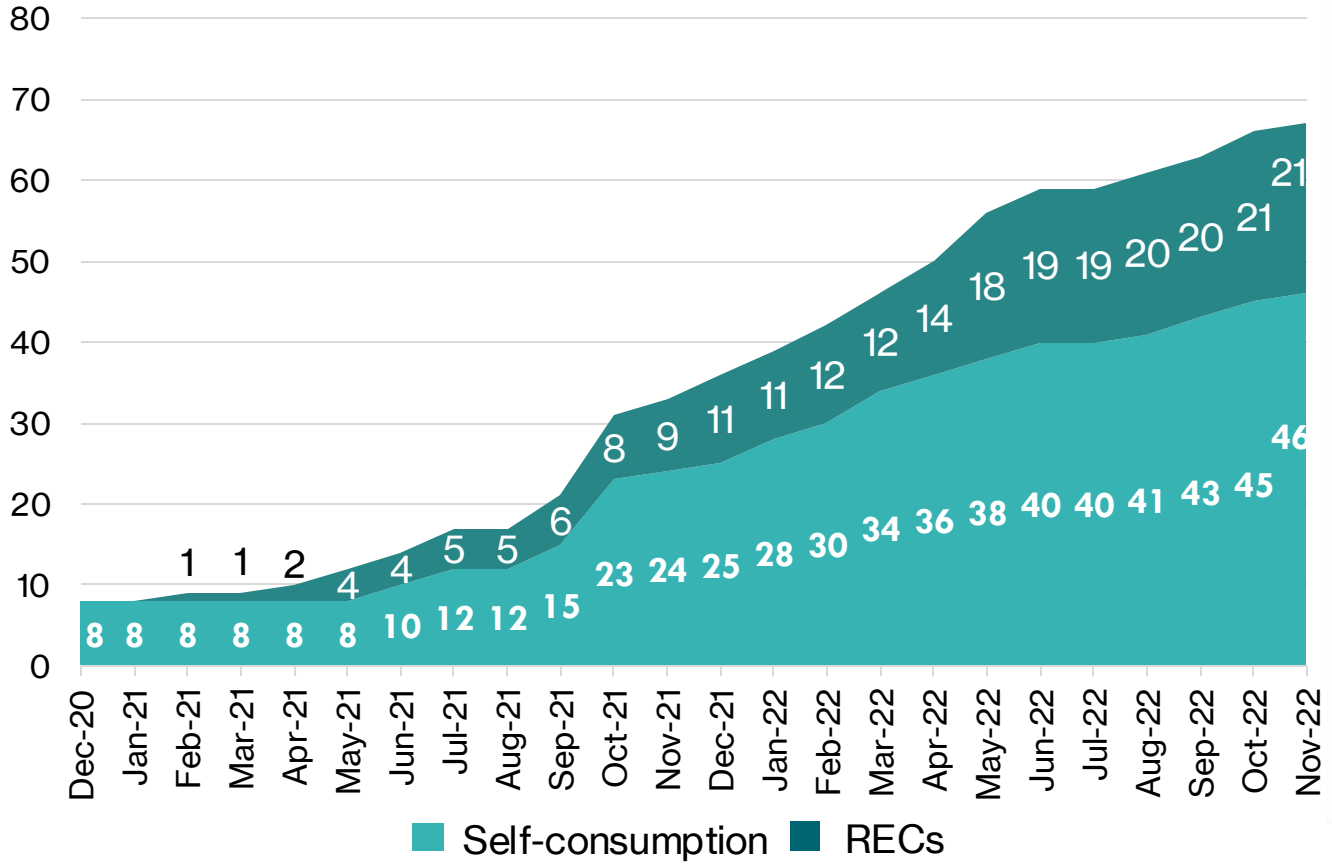
# A focus on Italy: regulatory framework



# A focus on Italy: emerging cases

in **2024**:
192 configurations
~60 MW power

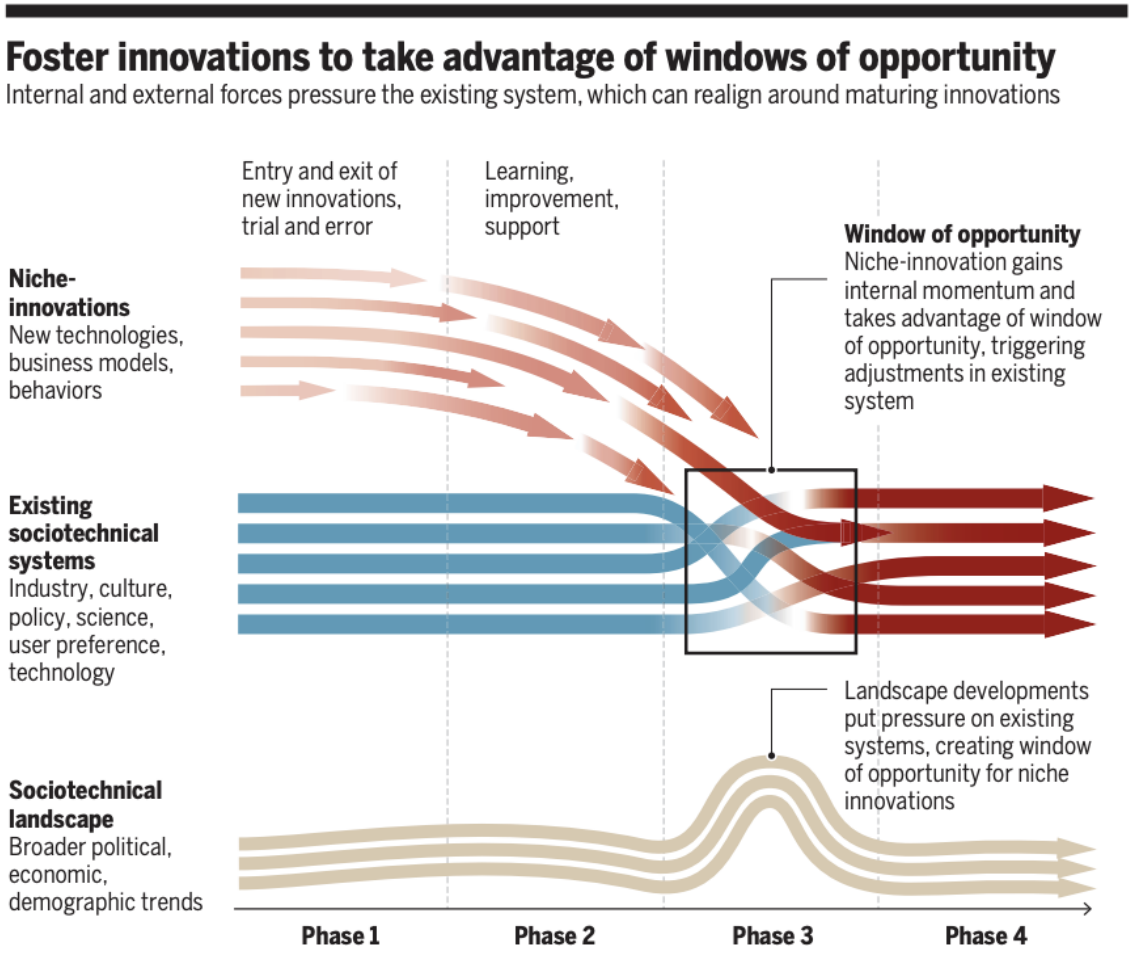
## Self-consumption schemes and RECs:
cumulative trend in operation as of 31 December 2022.





Source: GSE (*Gestore Servizi Energetici*)

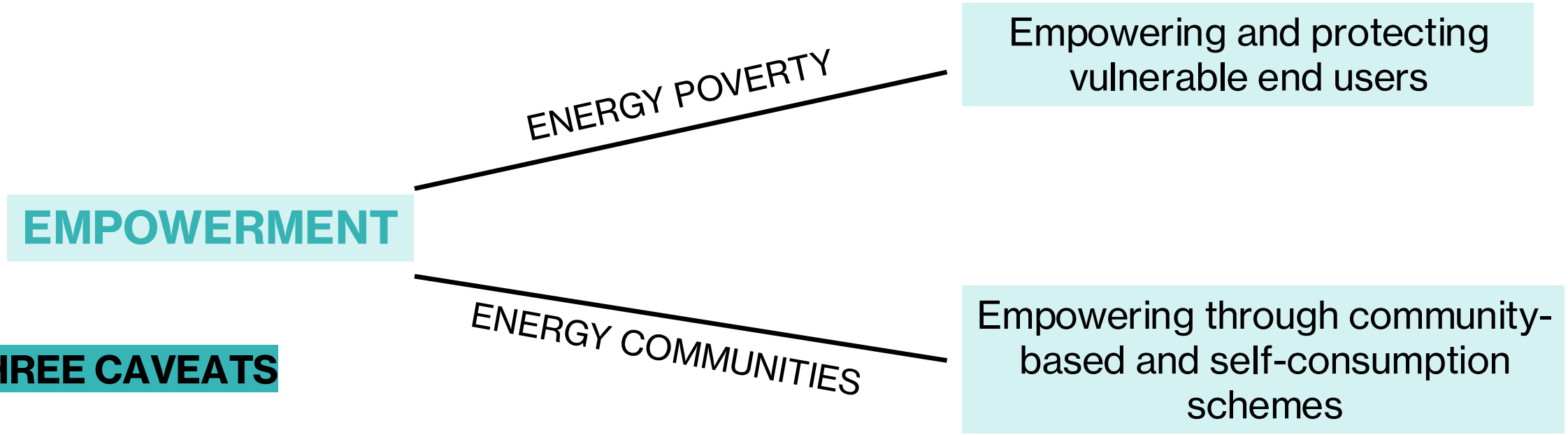
# RECs and socio-technical implications:
## organizational innovations and the transformation of energy practices




© Geels et al. (2017), Sociotechnical transitions for deep decarbonization, *Science*

Thermal power plan of Fiumesanto (Sardinia) | © Arno Senoner

# RECs and energy poverty: strong or weak tie?




**THREE CAVEATS**

**Who to engage?**
*Fuel poor* is a hard-to-reach target

**Where? Scale and place matter!**
Fragile neighbourhoods, rural or remote municipalities; not only cities.

**Which regulatory scheme?**
Mitigation of energy poverty risk *VS* community energy support | Two different frameworks

CONCLUDING REMARKS

# Sum-up

## A key message from the book

Energy fits into the eco-welfare framework insofar as it satisfies both societal and environmental needs, is a driver of the low-carbon transition, and interacts with the social practices that characterize a socio-technical system.

pp. 141 | 142

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

# RECS AS ECO-WELFARE TOOLS?

**RECs encourage energy citizenship:**
joining a REC end users enact an active role in the energy system

**Socio-ecological implications:**
beyond economic returns, RECs ensure **environmental** and **social** benefits for their members

**Socio-technical and organizational implications:**
RECs are “sub-niches” of the socio-technical community energy system, bringing new organizational innovations

**A tension | RECs and energy vulnerabilities:**
currently a weak tie, due to several barriers to be addressed (and investigated)

# THANK YOU | Q&A

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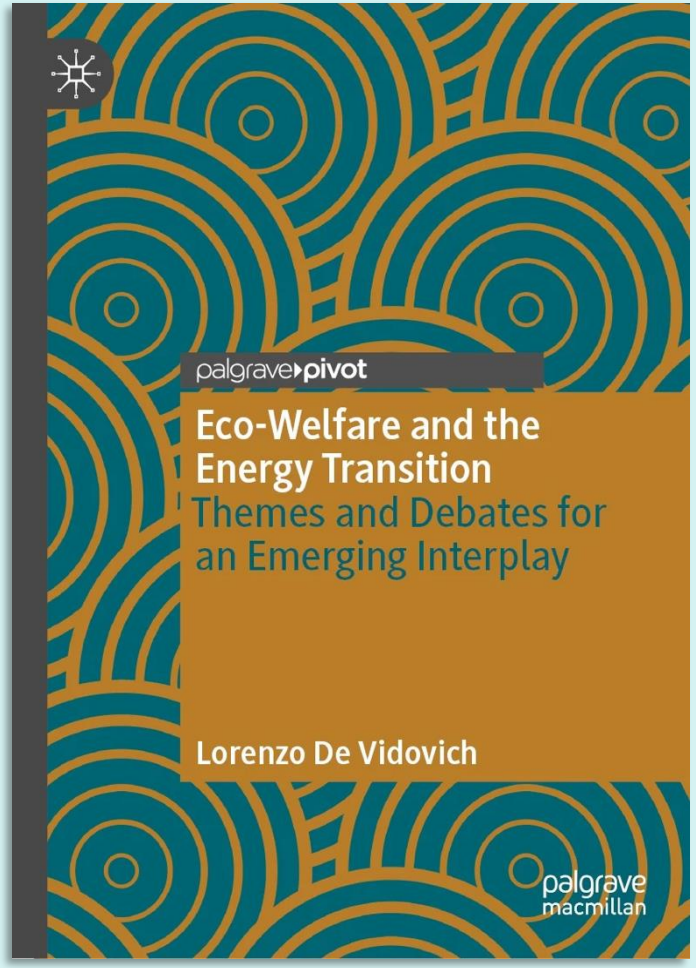


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