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# CITIZEN AWARENESS RESEARCH REPORT

*Accessing the Green Transition: What citizens say  
about renewable energy support in Kosovo?*



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# CITIZEN AWARENESS RESEARCH REPORT

*Accessing the Green Transition: What citizens say about renewable energy support in Kosovo?*

July, 2026

Pristina, Kosovo

Prepared by:

**Democracy for Development (D4D)**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kosovo is taking important steps toward a cleaner and more diversified energy system. New legislation, policy commitments, and public support programmes have created opportunities for households to invest in renewable energy and energy-efficiency technologies. Yet the success of this transition will depend not only on a supportive legal and policy framework, but also on whether citizens can understand, access, and trust the programmes available to them. Affordability, clear information, manageable procedures, and confidence in responsible institutions all shape households' ability and willingness to invest.

This report presents findings from an omnibus survey conducted in Kosovo in March 2026 with 1,065 adult respondents. It examines citizens' awareness of renewable energy support programmes, their experiences with application procedures, access to official information, perceptions of institutional performance, and the barriers affecting household investment decisions. The results are weighted and analyzed by gender, age, and place of residence.

The findings show that citizen engagement with renewable energy programmes remains uneven. While 47.7% of respondents reported that they had applied or attempted to apply, only 25.3% reported a successful application. A further 40.8% were aware of available support but had never applied, while 11.5% had never heard of such programmes. This points to both a participation gap among informed citizens and a continuing information gap among part of the population.

Information remains a challenge in both reach and clarity. Around half of respondents considered the application steps and eligibility criteria clear, while the rest either found them unclear or lacked enough information to assess them. Access to official information followed a similar pattern: 48.1% said it was easy to find, while 51.9% reported some difficulty. This suggests that information may be available, but not always sufficiently visible, centralized, or easy to understand.

Administrative procedures also present a significant practical barrier. Nearly half of respondents described them as somewhat or very difficult. Among those with application experience, the most common challenges were long waiting times, complicated processes, and excessive documentation.

Citizens held mixed views of the institutions involved. Central institutions were most often identified as the main obstacle, followed by energy companies, municipalities, and financing institutions. Nearly one-quarter of respondents, however, could not identify which institution was primarily responsible, suggesting limited clarity about institutional roles and accountability. Trust was also cautious: while a slight majority expressed some confidence that applications would be handled fairly and transparently, more than four in ten reported little or no trust.

Affordability emerged as the main barrier to household investment. Almost half of respondents (48.3%) identified high initial costs as the principal obstacle, while 23.8% cited insufficient information. Administrative procedures and limited trust in institutions were each mentioned by around one in ten respondents. When asked what would make investment

easier, 52.8% selected increased subsidies, followed by simpler procedures, clearer information, and technical support.

The analysis also reveals important demographic differences. Women were more likely than men to be unaware of renewable energy programmes or to lack information about application requirements. The clearest differences were linked to age: respondents aged 65 and older consistently reported lower awareness, less understanding of procedures, greater difficulty finding official information, and more serious administrative barriers. Rural respondents showed higher engagement and a greater proportion of successful applications than urban respondents, but they were also more likely to face long waiting times and difficulties completing the process. Urban respondents more often cited complicated procedures, documentation requirements, and housing-related constraints.

Overall, the survey shows that citizens' participation in renewable energy programmes is shaped by several interconnected constraints rather than one single barrier. Financial costs are central, but greater subsidies alone will not be sufficient. Citizens also need information that is easy to locate and understand, simpler and more predictable procedures, clearer institutional responsibilities, transparent decision-making, and practical assistance throughout the application process.

Based on these findings, the report recommends action in five priority areas.

**Improve the affordability and targeting of financial support:** Renewable energy support should be sufficiently attractive to address the high initial costs faced by households. Subsidies and other financial incentives should be better targeted to reflect differences in income, housing conditions, and ability to invest, while ensuring that support reaches households that would otherwise be unable to participate.

**Make information easier to find and understand:** Citizens need a clear and recognizable source of official information on available programmes, eligibility conditions, application requirements, and deadlines. Guidance should be written in plain language and communicated through both digital and non-digital channels. Targeted outreach and practical assistance should be provided to groups facing greater information barriers, particularly older citizens, women, rural households, and people with lower levels of education.

**Outreach and evidence to improve programme delivery:** Municipalities, civil society organizations, media, and development partners can support public outreach, applicant assistance, monitoring, and citizen feedback. At the same time, institutions should make systematic use of administrative data and applicants' experiences to identify recurring problems and continuously improve programme design and implementation.

**Simplify the application process and improve applicant support:** Application requirements should be reviewed to remove unnecessary documentation and reduce procedural complexity. Responsible institutions should establish clear processing timelines, provide applicants with regular status updates, and offer practical support throughout the process. Particular attention should be given to the constraints affecting residents of apartment buildings and shared properties.

**Strengthen institutional coordination, transparency, and accountability:** The responsibilities of the Ministry of Economy, the Energy Regulatory Office, municipalities, energy companies, financial institutions, and other relevant actors should be clearly defined and

communicated. Transparency should be strengthened by publishing eligibility and evaluation criteria, providing explanations for unsuccessful applications, and ensuring that complaint and appeal mechanisms are accessible and easy to use.

Kosovo has an opportunity to broaden citizen participation in the renewable energy transition by developing a more citizen-centered support system. Combining financial assistance with clear information, simplified procedures, stronger institutional coordination, and targeted support would make renewable energy programmes more accessible, understandable, and trusted.

## ACCESSING GREEN TRANSITION

### ***Citizen Awareness of Renewable Energy Support in Kosovo***

#### **Survey**

- ▶ *1,065 respondents*
- ▶ *Nationwide survey*
- ▶ *Data gathered on: March 2026*

#### **Awareness**

- ▶ *11.5% never heard of support programmes*
- ▶ *40.8% aware but never applied*

#### **Experience**

- ▶ *25.3% applied successfully*
- ▶ *15.5% unsuccessful*
- ▶ *6.8% gave up because the process was too difficult*

#### **Main Challenges**

- ▶ *High upfront costs*
- ▶ *Complex procedures*
- ▶ *Lack of information*
- ▶ *Institutional uncertainty*

#### **Who faces the greatest barriers?**

- ▶ *Older citizens*
- ▶ *Women (information gap)*
- ▶ *Rural households (waiting times)*

#### **What citizens want?**

- ▶ *52.8% higher subsidies*

**followed by**

- ▶ *Simpler procedures*
- ▶ *Clearer information*
- ▶ *Technical support*

**Five Priority Recommendations**

1. *Improve financial support*
2. *Simplify procedures*
3. *Improve communication*
4. *Strengthen institutional coordination*
5. *Use evidence to improve programmes*

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

Kosovo's energy sector is undergoing a significant transformation as the country seeks to strengthen energy security, diversify energy sources, and advance its commitments under the Energy Community Treaty, Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, and European Union's climate and energy objectives. For decades, electricity generation in Kosovo has relied predominantly on lignite, making the country one of the most coal-dependent energy systems in Europe. While this has historically ensured domestic electricity production, it has also contributed to high greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and increasing pressure to accelerate the transition towards cleaner and more sustainable energy sources.

Renewable energy represents a central pillar of this transition. Recent policy developments, including the adoption of Kosovo's Energy Strategy 2022–2031 and the Law No. 08/L-258 on the Promotion of the Use of Renewable Energy Sources, have established ambitious objectives for increasing renewable energy generation, improving energy efficiency, and encouraging greater participation by households, businesses, and local communities. At the same time, various public support mechanisms, including subsidy programmes for energy efficiency and residential solar photovoltaic systems, have created new opportunities for citizens to invest in renewable energy technologies.

However, achieving these policy objectives depends not only on the availability of financial incentives or legal frameworks, but also on the ability and willingness of citizens to participate in the transition. Access to reliable information, understanding of administrative procedures, confidence in public institutions, and perceptions of affordability all influence whether households decide to invest in renewable energy technologies. Even where support programmes exist, complex administrative procedures, limited awareness, or uncertainty regarding eligibility and application processes may discourage participation.

International experience demonstrates that successful energy transitions require active public engagement alongside institutional reforms. Citizens are not merely beneficiaries of renewable energy policies but important actors whose decisions collectively shape energy demand, investment patterns, and public acceptance of climate policies. Understanding public perceptions, experiences, and barriers is therefore essential for designing effective policies that respond to citizens' needs and increase the uptake of renewable energy solutions.

Against this background, this report presents findings from an omnibus survey conducted in Kosovo in March 2026. The study examines citizens' awareness of renewable energy programmes, their experiences with administrative procedures, access to information, perceptions of institutional performance, and barriers to investing in renewable energy technologies. It also explores how these perceptions vary across different population groups, providing insights into demographic differences that may require targeted policy responses.

Rather than assessing the technical performance of renewable energy systems, the report focuses on the human dimension of the energy transition. It seeks to understand how citizens perceive existing opportunities, what challenges they encounter, and what measures they believe would facilitate wider adoption of renewable energy. By combining nationwide survey data with analysis of citizens' experiences and attitudes, the report aims to contribute evidence that can inform future policy development, institutional improvements, and public communication efforts in Kosovo's renewable energy sector.

The report is structured as follows. Following this introduction, chapter 3 describes the survey methodology and respondent profile. The subsequent chapters analyze citizens' experience with renewable energy programmes, awareness and access to information, administrative and institutional barriers, trust in relevant institutions, and perceived barriers to investment. The report concludes by summarizing the key findings and presenting recommendations aimed at strengthening citizen participation in Kosovo's renewable energy transition.

### **3. METHODOLOGY AND RESPONDENT PROFILE**

This report is based on data collected through a omnibus survey conducted in Kosovo in March 2026. The survey examined citizens' awareness, experiences, perceptions, and attitudes related to renewable energy adoption, with particular emphasis on access to information, administrative procedures, perceptions of institutional performance, public trust, and barriers affecting investment decisions.

The research applied a quantitative approach using a structured questionnaire administered to respondents across Kosovo. The questionnaire covered previous experience with renewable energy support programmes, perceptions of application procedures, access to official information, trust in relevant institutions, and perceived barriers to adopting renewable energy technologies. Demographic information was also collected to support comparisons across different population groups.

The findings presented in this report are intended to provide evidence that supports a better understanding of citizens' experiences and perceptions and to inform future policy development and public communication related to Kosovo's renewable energy transition.

The final dataset includes responses from 1,065 adult respondents from across Kosovo. The sample includes respondents from urban and rural areas, different age groups, educational backgrounds, employment categories, and household income levels. The questionnaire examined five main thematic areas:

- ▶ *Citizens' experience with renewable energy support programmes,*
- ▶ *Awareness of renewable energy procedures and available information,*
- ▶ *Administrative barriers encountered during application processes,*
- ▶ *Perceptions of institutional performance and public trust, and*
- ▶ *Barriers affecting citizens' willingness or ability to invest in renewable energy technologies.*

Together, these topics provide a comprehensive picture of the non-technical factors that influence renewable energy adoption in Kosovo.

Survey data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistical techniques, including frequencies and percentage distributions, were used to summarize respondents' answers. Comparative analyses were conducted to explore differences across gender, age groups, and place of residence. Where relevant, additional cross-tabulations were used to identify differences among population groups and support interpretation of the findings.

The report combines statistical analysis with interpretation, focusing not only on the distribution of responses but also on their implications for renewable energy policy, institutional performance, and citizen engagement. The findings are intended to support a better understanding of citizens' experiences and perceptions and to inform future policy development and public communication related to Kosovo's renewable energy transition.

## RESPONDENT PROFILE

Understanding the demographic composition of respondents is important for interpreting the survey findings and assessing how perceptions of renewable energy may differ across various population groups.

The survey includes respondents of different genders, age groups, educational attainment, employment status, household income levels, and places of residence. This diversity enables the analysis to identify whether awareness, experiences, and barriers related to renewable energy vary among different segments of the population.

The following section presents the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents.

### Gender of Respondents

The weighted sample is almost evenly divided by gender, with women representing 50.5% of respondents and men 49.5%. This balanced distribution provides a strong basis for comparing awareness, experiences, and perceived barriers related to renewable energy between women and men.

| Gender       | Percentage  |
|--------------|-------------|
| Women        | 50.5%       |
| Men          | 49.5%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Table 1 Gender of Respondents

### Age Distribution

The survey includes respondents from all adult age groups. Those aged 25 - 34 constitute the largest group at 19.1%, followed closely by respondents aged 35 - 44 and 45 - 54, each representing approximately 17.7% of the sample. Younger respondents aged 18 - 24 account for 15.7%, while those aged 55–64 and 65 or older represent 14.7% and 15.1%, respectively. Overall, age distribution provides broad generational coverage and enables meaningful comparisons across age groups.

| Age Group    | Percentage  |
|--------------|-------------|
| 18 - 24      | 15.7%       |
| 25 - 34      | 19.1%       |
| 35 - 44      | 17.7%       |
| 45 - 54      | 17.7%       |
| 55 - 64      | 14.7%       |
| 65+          | 15.1%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 2 Age Distribution*

## Place of Residence

Respondents from rural areas make up 58.7% of the sample, compared with 41.3% from urban areas. This distribution is particularly relevant to the analysis, as access to information, public services, administrative institutions, and renewable energy opportunities may differ between urban and rural communities.

| Place of residence | Percentage  |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Rural              | 58.70%      |
| Urban              | 41.30%      |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 3 Respondents' Place of Residence (Urban vs. Rural)*

## Education Level

The sample includes respondents with a wide range of educational backgrounds. The largest group has completed secondary education, accounting for 31.9% of respondents, while 29.6% have completed university-level studies. A further 14.5% hold a master's or doctoral degree. Respondents with primary education or only several years of formal schooling represent a smaller share of the sample. The relatively broad educational profile enables the report to examine whether knowledge and understanding of renewable energy programmes vary according to educational attainment.

| Educational attainment         | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Some years of primary school   | 2.8%       |
| Primary school completed       | 10.7%      |
| Some years of secondary school | 2.6%       |

| Educational attainment      | Percentage    |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Secondary school completed  | 31.9%         |
| Student                     | 7.8%          |
| University degree           | 29.6%         |
| Master's or doctoral degree | 14.5%         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>100.0%</b> |

Table 4 Respondents' Education Level

### Employment Status

More than half of respondents are employed, with 26.6% working in the public sector and 24.6% in the private sector. Approximately 13.9% are unemployed and actively seeking for a job, while pensioners represent 15.5% of the weighted sample. Homemakers, students, respondents working occasionally, and those outside the labor market constitute the remainder. This diversity allows the analysis to consider how employment and economic circumstances may influence access to information and the perceived affordability of renewable energy investments.

| Employment status               | Percentage  |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Employed in the public sector   | 26.6%       |
| Employed in the private sector  | 24.6%       |
| Pensioner                       | 15.5%       |
| Unemployed and seeking job      | 13.9%       |
| Homemaker                       | 7.0%        |
| Student/pupil                   | 5.0%        |
| Occasionally employed           | 3.9%        |
| Unemployed and not seeking work | 2.8%        |
| Other                           | 0.5%        |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>100%</b> |

Table 5 Respondents' Employment Status

### Household income

Household income levels vary considerably across the sample. Nearly one-third of respondents, 31.4%, report monthly household income above €900, while 15.8% fall within the €601 - €750 category and 13.8% within the €751 - €900 category. Around 11.0% report household income between €451 and €600. Lower-income categories account for smaller proportions of the sample, while 12.9% of respondents declined to provide information or did not know their household income. These differences are important because household financial capacity is likely to shape the affordability of renewable energy technologies and perceptions of the need for subsidies or other forms of financial support.

| Monthly household income | Percentage  |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| No household income      | 2.8%        |
| Up to €150               | 1.4%        |
| €151 - €300              | 5.5%        |
| €301 - €450              | 5.5%        |
| €451 - €600              | 11.0%       |
| €601 - €750              | 15.8%       |
| €751 - €900              | 13.8%       |
| Above €900               | 31.4%       |
| Refused/Did not know     | 12.9%       |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 6 Respondents' Household Income*

Limitations: The findings presented in this report should be interpreted considering several methodological considerations. First, the analysis is based on respondents' self-reported perceptions and experiences. As with all perception-based surveys, responses may be influenced by individual knowledge, previous interactions with public institutions, and personal circumstances. Second, the survey provides a snapshot of public opinion at the time of data collection. Perceptions and attitudes may evolve over time as new policies, financial incentives, or renewable energy programmes are introduced. Finally, while the survey offers valuable quantitative evidence on citizens' awareness, experiences, and perceived barriers, it should be interpreted alongside other sources of information, including administrative data and sector-specific studies, when developing policy interventions.

## 4. CITIZEN EXPERIENCE WITH RENEWABLE ENERGY PROGRAMMES

Citizen participation in renewable energy programmes provides an important indication of how accessible existing support mechanisms are in practice. Respondents were asked whether they or another member of their household had ever applied for renewable energy subsidies or programmes.

The findings show that direct engagement with renewable energy programmes remains limited. Approximately 40.8% of respondents reported that neither they nor another household member had ever applied for such support, while a further 11.5% stated that they had never heard of these programmes. Together, these results show that more than half of respondents had no direct application experience.

At the same time, 25.3% reported having applied successfully, while 15.5% had applied but were unsuccessful. An additional 6.8% said that they had attempted to apply but found the process too difficult. Taken together, 47.7% of respondents had either applied or attempted to apply, a notable level of engagement with renewable energy support programmes, although only around one-quarter reported a successful outcome.

| Previous experience with renewable energy programmes | Percentage  |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Applied successfully                                 | 25.3%       |
| Applied, but was unsuccessful                        | 15.5%       |
| Tried to apply, but the process was too difficult    | 6.8%        |
| Never applied                                        | 40.8%       |
| Never heard of such programmes                       | 11.5%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                         | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 7 Previous Experience with Renewable Energy Programmes*

These findings point to two related challenges. The first is limited awareness, as a notable share of citizens remain unfamiliar with available programmes. The second concerns participation and application outcomes, as more than one in five respondents either applied unsuccessfully or were discouraged by the difficulty of the process. Increasing participation will therefore require stronger public outreach, clearer procedures, and better guidance for applicants.

Some demographic differences are also visible. Respondents aged 65 or older were considerably less likely to report a successful application and more likely to say that they had never heard of renewable energy programmes. Rural respondents, meanwhile, were more likely than urban respondents to report a successful application, but they were also more likely to describe the application process as too difficult. These patterns suggest that communication and applicant support may need to be adapted to the needs of older citizens and rural households.

## Differences by Gender

Experiences with renewable energy programmes are broadly similar among women and men, although some differences are visible. Women were slightly more likely than men to report a successful application, at 25.8% compared with 24.7%. Men were more likely to report that they had attempted to apply but found the process too difficult, at 8.2%, compared with 5.6% of women.

Women were also more likely to report that they had never heard of such programmes: 13.9%, compared with 9.1% of men. This difference suggests that information about renewable energy support may not be reaching women and men equally and highlights the value of communication approaches that are accessible to all household decision-makers.

## Differences by Age

The findings reveal more pronounced differences across age groups. Respondents aged 55 - 64 reported the highest rate of successful applications, at 36.3%, followed by respondents aged 18 - 24, at 30.5%. In contrast, only 9.4% of respondents aged 65 or older reported a successful application.

Older respondents also showed the lowest level of awareness. Nearly one-quarter of respondents aged 65 or older, 23.1%, stated that they had never heard of renewable energy programmes. This was substantially higher than among respondents aged 35 - 44, where only 6.3% reported no awareness.

The results suggest that older citizens may face particular barriers to accessing information and participating in renewable energy support schemes. Targeted outreach through traditional media, municipalities, community organizations, and direct assistance may therefore be necessary to ensure that these programmes are accessible to older households.

## Differences by Place of Residence

Rural respondents were more likely than urban respondents to report a successful application. Successful participation was reported by 28.0% of rural respondents, compared with 21.3% of those living in urban areas.

However, rural respondents were also somewhat more likely to report that they had tried to apply but found the process too difficult: 8.0%, compared with 5.2% among urban respondents. By contrast, urban respondents were more likely to report that they had never applied, at 45.8%, compared with 37.3% of rural respondents.

The higher participation rate among rural households may reflect stronger interest in renewable energy or energy-efficiency support, potentially because of household characteristics, heating needs, or the availability of suitable property. At the same time, the greater proportion reporting procedural difficulty indicates that rural applicants may require more accessible guidance and local support during the application process.

*Key finding: Almost half of respondents had applied or attempted to apply for renewable energy support, but only around one-quarter reported a successful application. Limited*

*awareness, unsuccessful applications, and difficult procedures remain important barriers to broader citizen participation.*

## 5. AWARENESS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Clear and accessible information is essential if citizens are expected to take part in renewable energy support programmes. Respondents were therefore asked whether they understood the application steps and eligibility criteria, and whether official information on subsidies and procedures was easy to find.

The findings show that citizens are almost evenly divided. Around half considered the application process clear, while the other half either found it unclear or lacked enough information to assess it.

### Clarity of Application Steps and Criteria

Half of the respondents (50.1%) considered the application steps and eligibility criteria either very clear or somewhat clear, including 15.0% who described them as very clear and 35.1% who considered them somewhat clear.

By contrast, 31.9% said the steps were not very clear, while 5.3% considered them not clear at all. A further 12.7% reported having no information about the steps and criteria. Taken together, 49.9% of respondents either found the process unclear or lacked the information needed to assess it.

| Clarity of application steps and criteria | Percentage  |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Very clear                                | 15.0%       |
| Somewhat clear                            | 35.1%       |
| Not very clear                            | 31.9%       |
| Not clear at all                          | 5.3%        |
| No information                            | 12.7%       |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 8 Perceived Clarity of Application Steps and Criteria*

The results show that information on renewable energy support is not equally understandable to all citizens. Although half of respondents considered the requirements clear, the other half either struggled to understand them or had no information at all.

The findings point to two distinct communication challenges. Some citizens appear to have encountered programme information but found it difficult to understand, while others may not have received the information at all. Improving communication therefore requires both wider outreach and clearer guidance.

Programme information should explain in simple terms who is eligible, which documents are required, how the application process works, and which institution is responsible at each stage. Publishing information alone is not sufficient if citizens cannot easily find or understand it.

## Access to Official Information

Respondents were also asked how easy it was to find official information about renewable energy subsidies and application procedures. Overall, 48.1% considered the information easy to find, including 12.4% who described it as very easy and 35.8% as somewhat easy. A slightly larger share, 51.9%, reported some degree of difficulty: 40.2% found the information somewhat difficult to locate, 11.0% described it as very difficult, and 0.6% said it was impossible to find.

| Ease of finding official information | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Very easy                            | 12.4%       |
| Somewhat easy                        | 35.8%       |
| Somewhat difficult                   | 40.2%       |
| Very difficult                       | 11.0%       |
| Impossible to find                   | 0.6%        |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 9 Ease of Finding Official Information on Subsidies and Procedures*

The findings show a nearly even divide between respondents who could locate official information with relative ease and those who experienced difficulty. The largest single group, representing four in ten respondents, described the process as somewhat difficult. This suggests that information is generally available, but not always sufficiently visible or easy to locate.

Considered together with the findings on clarity, the results point to two related challenges. Citizens must be able both to find programme information and to understand what it requires. Information may be clear once located but inaccessible to those who do not know where to look; equally, an official announcement may be easy to find but still leave citizens uncertain about eligibility, required documents, or the next steps in the process.

## Differences by Gender

Women and men reported broadly similar levels of clarity regarding application steps and eligibility criteria. Around half of both women (50.6%) and men (49.7%) considered the requirements very or somewhat clear.

The main difference concerned access to information. Women were more likely to report having no information about the process, at 16.2% compared with 9.2% of men. Men were

somewhat more likely to describe the available information as unclear. This points to two related communication challenges: women may be less likely to encounter the information, while men may be more likely to find it difficult to understand.

Although the differences are not substantial, they suggest that communication efforts should improve both the reach and clarity of programme information.

### Differences by Age

Differences by age were particularly pronounced. Respondents aged 18 - 24 reported the highest level of clarity, with 61.2% describing the application steps and eligibility criteria as very or somewhat clear. The corresponding share was also relatively high among those aged 25 - 34, at 56.1%.

By contrast, only 29.0% of respondents aged 65 and older considered the requirements clear, while 24.2% reported having no information about them. Access to official information showed a similar pattern. While 51.7% of respondents aged 18 - 24 considered official information easy to find, this fell to 46.0% among those aged 25 - 34 and to 32.5% among respondents aged 65 and older. Conversely, 67.5% of the oldest respondents described official information as somewhat or very difficult to locate.

Overall, the findings show that older citizens face the greatest information barriers. They were less likely to understand application requirements, more likely to lack information, and more likely to experience difficulty finding official guidance. Younger respondents generally reported better access and greater clarity, although a substantial share still faced uncertainty or difficulty.

### Differences by Place of Residence

Differences between urban and rural respondents were relatively small. Around half of both groups considered the application steps and eligibility criteria clear: 48.1% of urban respondents and 51.5% of rural respondents. The share reporting no information was also similar, at 12.2% in urban areas and 12.9% in rural areas.

Access to official information followed the same pattern. Around 49.6% of urban and 47.0% of rural respondents considered official information easy to find.

These findings suggest that information barriers are not concentrated in either urban or rural areas. The challenge is broader: citizens across both settings need information that is easier to locate, clearly presented, and simple to understand.

*Key Finding: Around half of respondents either found application requirements unclear or lacked enough information to assess them, while a slight majority experienced difficulty finding official guidance. Information barriers were most pronounced among respondents aged 65 and older, while differences by gender and place of residence were smaller.*

## 6. ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS AND PROCEDURAL CHALLENGES

Administrative procedures can strongly influence whether citizens apply for renewable energy support and whether they are able to complete the process. Respondents were asked about the main difficulties they experienced, how easy or difficult they considered the procedures, and how long they expected the process to take.

The findings show that waiting times, complicated procedures, and excessive documentation are the main administrative challenges.

### Main Problems Experienced During the Application Process

Respondents who had applied or attempted to apply were asked to identify the main problem they encountered. Long waiting times were the most frequently reported difficulty, cited by 34.0% of applicants. Complicated procedures followed at 28.8%, while 21.2% identified excessive documentation. Unclear information was selected by 13.6%, and only 2.4% cited high administrative costs.

| Main Problems Experienced During the Application Process | Percentage  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Long waiting time                                        | 34.0%       |
| Complicated procedures                                   | 28.8%       |
| Excessive documentation                                  | 21.2%       |
| Unclear information                                      | 13.6%       |
| High administrative costs                                | 2.4%        |
| <b>Total</b>                                             | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 10. Main Problems Experienced During the Application Process*

The findings show that applicants are primarily concerned with the time and effort required to complete the process. Delays were the most common problem, while complicated procedures and excessive documentation together accounted for half of all responses. This indicates that the administrative burden affects both the preparation of applications and the time required to receive a decision.

As respondents selected only one main problem, the results should be interpreted as a ranking of the most prominent difficulties rather than a complete account of all challenges experienced.

### Perceived Difficulty of Administrative Procedures

Respondents were also asked how easy or difficult they considered the administrative procedures. Overall, 47.0% described them as somewhat or very difficult, including 38.1%

who selected somewhat difficult and 8.9% who selected very difficult. By comparison, 36.9% considered the procedures somewhat or very easy, while 16.1% were unable to assess them.

| Perceived Difficulty of Administrative Procedures | Percentage  |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Very easy                                         | 6.7%        |
| Somewhat easy                                     | 30.3%       |
| Somewhat difficult                                | 38.1%       |
| Very difficult                                    | 8.9%        |
| Do not know                                       | 16.1%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 11 Perceived Level of Difficulty for Administrative Procedures*

The findings show that administrative procedures are more often viewed as difficult than easy, although most respondents selected the moderate categories rather than the extremes. "Somewhat difficult" was the largest single response.

The 16.1% who could not assess the procedures are also important. This suggests that a notable share of citizens who had heard of renewable energy programmes still did not have enough information or experience to form a clear view of how the process works.

### Expected Duration of Procedures

Respondents were asked how long they believed it would take to complete the procedures needed to install a renewable energy system, such as solar panels. The most common expectation was one to three months, selected by 32.7% of respondents. A further 16.7% expected the process to take between three and six months, while 10.5% believed it would take more than six months.

Only 14.5% expected the procedures to be completed in less than one month, and 25.6% were unable to estimate the duration.

| Expected duration of procedures | Percentage  |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Less than one month             | 14.5%       |
| One to three months             | 32.7%       |
| Three to six months             | 16.7%       |
| More than six months            | 10.5%       |
| Do not know                     | 25.6%       |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 12 Expected Time Required to Complete Procedures*

The findings point to considerable uncertainty about how long the administrative process for installing a renewable energy system should take. Although one to three months was the most common estimate, responses varied widely, and one in four respondents could not provide an estimate. This is consistent with the earlier finding that long waiting times were the most frequently reported problem among applicants.

As the question captures expectations rather than actual processing times, the results cannot confirm how long the procedures take in practice. They do, however, indicate that many citizens lack a clear understanding of the expected timeline for completing the required administrative steps.

## Differences by Gender

Women and men identified similar problems during the application process.

- ▶ Long waiting times were the leading difficulty for both groups, reported by 34.1% of women and 33.9% of men.
- ▶ Women were somewhat more likely to identify complicated procedures, at 31.0%, compared with 26.8% of men.
- ▶ Men were more likely to report excessive documentation, at 23.6%, compared with 18.8% of women.

Differences were more visible in overall perceptions of the procedures. Approximately 51.5% of men considered them somewhat or very difficult, compared with 42.3% of women.

Women were more likely to say that they did not know how to assess the procedures, at 18.8%, compared with 13.4% of men. Women were also more likely to be uncertain about the expected duration of installing the system: 31.0% did not know how long the process would take, compared with 20.3% of men.

Overall, men were more likely to describe the procedures as difficult, while women were more likely to report uncertainty about how the process works and how long it should take.

### Differences by Age

The main difficulties experienced during the application process varied across age groups.

- ▶ *Complicated procedures were most frequently identified by respondents aged 18 - 24, at 35.8%.*
- ▶ *Long waiting times were particularly common among respondents aged 45 - 54, at 42.5%, and those aged 55 - 64, at 43.2%.*
- ▶ *Among respondents aged 65 and older, 45.7% identified excessive documentation as the main problem. This result should be interpreted cautiously because fewer respondents in this age group had direct application experience.*

Older respondents were also more likely to describe the procedures as difficult. The combined share considering them somewhat or very difficult was 38.1% among respondents aged 18 - 24, compared with 55.3% among those aged 65+.

Uncertainty about processing time was particularly high among respondents aged 55 - 64, of whom 37.0% said they did not know how long the process would take.

Overall, the findings suggest that administrative barriers differ by age. Younger respondents were more likely to point to procedural complexity, while older groups more often reported documentation burdens, greater overall difficulty, and uncertainty about processing timelines.

### Differences by Place of Residence

Urban and rural applicants reported different leading problems. Complicated procedures were more frequently identified in urban areas, at 35.6% compared with 24.7% in rural areas. Excessive documentation was also more common among urban respondents, at 24.1% compared with 19.3%.

Rural applicants, by contrast, were more likely to report long waiting times, cited by 38.6% compared with 26.7% of urban respondents.

Despite these differences, overall perceptions of administrative difficulty were almost identical, with 46.9% of both urban and rural respondents describing the procedures as somewhat or very difficult. Expectations regarding duration were also broadly similar. Around one-third in both groups expected the process to take one to three months, although urban respondents were somewhat more likely to be unable to estimate the duration, at 28.8% compared with 23.3% of rural respondents.

Overall, administrative barriers affect citizens in both settings, but in different ways. Urban respondents more often pointed to procedural complexity and documentation, while rural respondents more frequently experienced long waiting times.

*Key Finding Long waiting times, complicated procedures, and excessive documentation are the main administrative problems reported by applicants. The findings point to two connected issues: the process is demanding for many applicants, and its expected timeline is unclear to a substantial part of the public.*

## 7. INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES AND TRUST

Citizens' views of the institutions involved can influence how they experience renewable energy programmes. Respondents were asked which institution they considered the main obstacle and how much they trusted institutions to handle applications fairly and transparently. The results reflect public perceptions and should not be treated as an objective assessment of institutional performance.

### Institutions Perceived as the Main Obstacles

Central institutions were most frequently identified as the main obstacle, selected by 28.3% of respondents. Energy companies followed at 21.5%, while 14.5% pointed to municipalities and 11.7% to banks or financing institutions. A further 24.0% said they did not know which institution represented the main obstacle.

| Institution perceived as the main obstacle | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Central institutions                       | 28.3%       |
| Energy companies                           | 21.5%       |
| Municipalities                             | 14.5%       |
| Banks or financing institutions            | 11.7%       |
| Do not know                                | 24%         |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 13 Institution or Administrative Level Perceived as the Main Obstacle*

The findings show that citizens do not associate the difficulties with one institution alone. Obstacles are perceived across central institutions, energy companies, municipalities, and financing providers.

The large "do not know" category is also important. Nearly one in four respondents could not identify which institution was mainly responsible. This may indicate that institutional roles are not clear to many citizens or that responsibility is seen as spread across several actors.

The results therefore point to two issues: citizens perceive obstacles at several institutional levels, and many are uncertain about who is responsible for each part of the process.

### Trust in Fair and Transparent Treatment of Applications

Respondents were also asked how much they trusted institutions to ensure that renewable energy applications were handled fairly and transparently. Overall, 55.4% expressed at least some trust, including 8.2% who reported a high level of trust and 47.3% who trusted institutions to some extent. By comparison, 32.5% said they trusted institutions only a little, while 12.1% did not trust them at all. Together, 44.6% expressed low or no trust.

| Level of trust in institutions | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Trust greatly                  | 8.2%        |
| Trust to some extent           | 47.3%       |
| Trust only a little            | 32.5%       |
| Do not trust at all            | 12.1%       |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 14 Trust in the Fair and Transparent Treatment of Applications*

The findings suggest that public confidence is cautious rather than strong. Although a slight majority expressed at least some trust, only 8.2% reported a high level of confidence, while more than four in ten respondents expressed little or no trust, indicating that confidence in fair and transparent treatment is far from secure.

## Differences by Gender

Men were more likely than women to identify central institutions as the main obstacle, at 32.6% compared with 23.8%. Women often pointed to energy companies, at 23.1%, compared with 19.8% of men and more likely to say they did not know which institution represented the main obstacle, at 27.0% compared with 21.1% of men.

Trust levels were broadly similar. Around 57.7% of women expressed at least some trust in institutions, compared with 53.3% of men.

The differences do not point to a major gender divide. However, men were more likely to associate obstacles with central institutions, while women were more likely to express uncertainty about which institution was responsible.

## Differences by Age

Age differences were more pronounced. Central institutions were identified as the main obstacle by 16.9% of respondents aged 18 - 24, compared with 42.7% of those aged 65 and older. Younger respondents were more likely to identify energy companies, selected by 27.7% of those aged 18 - 24, compared with 16.1% of respondents oldest group.

Respondents aged 35 - 44 were the most likely to say they did not know which institution represented the main obstacle, at 27.1%.

Trust also varied by age, but without a clear pattern. Respondents aged 18 - 24 and those aged 65 and older reported the highest levels of trust, at approximately 62.2% and 61.8%, respectively. The lowest level was recorded among respondents aged 55 - 64, at 48.5%.

Overall, age shaped how respondents perceived institutional obstacles. Older respondents were more likely to identify central institutions as the main obstacle, while younger respondents more often pointed to energy companies.

## Differences by Place of Residence

Urban and rural respondents expressed broadly similar views.

- ▶ *Central institutions were identified as the main obstacle by 27.7% of urban and 28.7% of rural respondents.*
- ▶ *Energy companies were selected by 20.3% and 22.4%, respectively.*

Urban respondents were somewhat more likely to say they did not know which institution represented the main obstacle, at 25.6% compared with 22.7% of rural respondents.

Trust was slightly higher in rural areas, with 57.5% expressing at least some confidence that applications would be handled fairly and transparently, compared with 52.4% of urban respondents.

These differences are relatively small. Overall, the results show that uncertainty about institutional responsibility and concerns about fairness are present in both urban and rural areas.

*Key Finding: Central institutions were most frequently perceived as the main obstacle, followed by energy companies, municipalities, and financing institutions. Nearly one-quarter of respondents, however, could not identify which institution represented the main obstacle. Trust was cautious: although a slight majority expressed at least some confidence that applications would be handled fairly and transparently, more than four in ten reported little or no trust. The findings point to a need for clearer institutional roles and more transparent communication about application assessment and decision-making.*

## 8. BARRIERS TO INVESTING IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

The adoption of renewable energy technologies depends not only on citizens' interest, but also on whether households have the resources and practical conditions needed to invest. Respondents were therefore asked to identify the main barrier preventing them from investing in renewable energy and the change that would make such an investment easier for their household.

### Main Barriers to Investment

The high initial cost of renewable energy technologies emerged as the most significant barrier, identified by 48.3% of respondents. This means that almost half of the population sees affordability as the principal obstacle to investing in solutions such as solar panels or other renewable energy systems.

Lack of information was the second most frequently cited barrier, reported by 23.8% of respondents. Administrative procedures and lack of trust in institutions were identified by similar proportions, at 10.8% and 10.6%, respectively. Housing-related limitations were reported by 4.8%, while 1.8% selected another barrier.

| Main barrier preventing investment | Percentage    |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| High initial cost                  | 48.3%         |
| Lack of information                | 23.8%         |
| Administrative procedures          | 10.8%         |
| Lack of trust in institutions      | 10.6%         |
| Housing-related limitations        | 4.8%          |
| Other                              | 1.8%          |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>100.0%</b> |

*Table 15 Main Barrier Preventing Investment in Renewable Energy*

The findings show that affordability is the dominant obstacle to renewable energy investment. However, financial capacity is not the only concern. Nearly one-quarter of respondents identified insufficient information, while approximately one in five pointed to either administrative procedures or lack of institutional trust.

Increasing renewable energy investment will therefore require more than financial support alone. Subsidies and other incentives should be accompanied by clearer information, simpler procedures, and more transparent programme implementation.

## Measures for Making Investment Easier

When asked what would make renewable energy investment easier for their household, 52.8% of respondents selected increased subsidies. This was by far the most frequently preferred measure and closely reflects the prominence of high initial costs as the main barrier.

Simplified administrative procedures were selected by 18.6%, while 15.8% identified clearer information and 8.4% chose technical support. Only 4.5% said they were not interested in investing in renewable energy.

| Measure that would make investment easier | Percentage  |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Increased subsidies                       | 52.8%       |
| Simplified administrative procedures      | 18.6%       |
| Clearer information                       | 15.8%       |
| Technical support                         | 8.4%        |
| Not interested in investing               | 4.5%        |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>100%</b> |

*Table 16 Measure That Would Make Renewable Energy Investment Easier*

The low share reporting no interest suggests that limited uptake is driven more by practical barriers than by a lack of willingness to invest. Instead, most households may be more open to renewable energy if financial support is strengthened and access to programmes becomes easier.

The strong preference for increased subsidies also shows that support schemes must be sufficiently attractive and accessible to households with different financial capacities. Their effectiveness would be further strengthened by clear eligibility rules, simpler procedures, and practical guidance on technology selection, installation, and maintenance.

## Differences by Gender

High initial cost was the leading barrier for both women and men, reported by 48.8% of women and 47.8% of men. Lack of information was also identified at similar levels, by 24.2% of women and 23.3% of men.

Some differences emerged in the secondary barriers. Men were more likely to identify administrative procedures as the main obstacle, at 13.2% compared with 8.4% of women, while women were somewhat more likely to cite lack of trust in institutions, at 11.9% compared with 9.2% of men.

Increased subsidies were the preferred solution among both groups, selected by 52.5% of women and 53.0% of men. Men were slightly more likely to favor simplified procedures, while women were somewhat more likely to state that they were not interested in investing.

Overall, the findings show that affordability is a shared concern across gender, while procedural and institutional barriers differ slightly in emphasis.

### Differences by Age

Age differences were more pronounced. High initial costs were the dominant barrier among most respondents aged 18–54, including 55.6% of those aged 35 - 44 and 54.3% of those aged 18 - 24.

A different pattern emerged among respondents aged 65 or older. Only 18.3% of this group identified cost as the main barrier, while 36.3% cited lack of information and 34.3% pointed to administrative procedures.

Increased subsidies remained the most frequently selected measure across all age groups, although support was lower among respondents aged 65 and older, at 46.0%. This group was also more likely to favor simplified procedures, at 23.7%, and clearer information, at 22.7%

Overall, the findings suggest that policy responses should reflect different needs across age groups. Financial incentives are central for most citizens, while older respondents may benefit more from clearer information, practical assistance, and simpler procedures.

### Differences by Place of Residence

High initial costs were almost equally important in urban and rural areas, reported by 48.7% of urban and 48.0% of rural respondents. Lack of information was also nearly identical, at 23.9% in urban and 23.7% in rural areas.

Differences were more visible in the secondary barriers. Rural respondents were more likely to identify administrative procedures as the main barrier, at 12.4%, compared with 8.7% among urban respondents. Urban respondents, by contrast, were more likely to report housing-related limitations, at 7.5%, compared with 2.8% in rural areas.

Increased subsidies were the preferred measure in both settings, selected by 54.4% of rural and 50.5% of urban respondents.

Overall, affordability and information gaps affect both urban and rural households, while the form of the additional barrier differs. Rural households appear somewhat more affected by procedures, while urban households are more likely to face housing-related constraints.

*Key finding: High initial costs are the main barrier to renewable energy investment, while lack of information is the second most common obstacle. More than half of respondents said increased subsidies would make investment easier, indicating that financial support should be combined with clearer information, simpler procedures, and targeted assistance.*

## 9. CROSS-CUTTING DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC PATTERNS

Many barriers to renewable energy investment are shared across the population. High costs, limited information, procedural complexity, and moderate institutional trust affect women and men, different age groups, and both urban and rural households. However, several differences suggest that some groups may require more targeted communication and support.

### Demographic and Socioeconomic Spotlight

#### Older citizens

- ▶ *lowest awareness*
- ▶ *greatest information barriers*
- ▶ *lowest participation*

#### Women

- ▶ *more likely to lack information*

#### Rural households

- ▶ *more successful applications*
- ▶ *longer waiting times*

#### Citizens with lower educational attainment

- ▶ *Lowest programme awareness*
- ▶ *More likely to lack information about eligibility and application requirements*
- ▶ *Greater information barriers*

#### Lower-income households

- ▶ *Lower awareness of support programmes*
- ▶ *Greater information barriers*
- ▶ *Affordability remains a major concern*

#### Rural households

- ▶ *Higher participation and more successful applications*
- ▶ *More likely to experience long waiting times*
- ▶ *Greater difficulty completing the application process*

#### Urban households

- ▶ *Lower participation in support programmes*

- ▶ *More likely to report procedural complexity*
- ▶ *More likely to face housing-related constraints*

### Differences by Gender

Women and men reported broadly similar levels of participation and almost equal shares of successful applications. Both groups also identified high initial costs as the main barrier to investment.

The clearest difference concerns access to information. Women were more likely than men to report that they had never heard of renewable energy programmes, at 13.9% compared with 9.1%, and that they had no information about application steps and criteria, at 16.2% compared with 9.2%.

Men were somewhat more likely to report administrative difficulties after engaging with the process. Overall, the findings suggest that women face greater gaps in the reach of programme information, while men are somewhat more likely to report procedural barriers.

### Differences by Age

Age was associated with the clearest differences across the survey. Respondents aged 65 or older consistently reported lower awareness and greater informational and procedural barriers. Nearly one-quarter (23.1%) had never heard of renewable energy programmes, while only 9.4% reported a successful application.

Older respondents were also less likely to consider application requirements clear and more likely to experience difficulty finding official information. For this group, lack of information and administrative procedures were more prominent barriers than high initial costs.

In contrast, younger respondents generally reported greater awareness and a clearer understanding of procedures. These findings suggest that older citizens may require simplified requirements, direct assistance, and communication through municipalities, public service points, traditional media, telephone support, and printed materials.

### Differences by Place of Residence

Urban and rural respondents reported similar concerns regarding costs, information, and the overall difficulty of administrative procedures. However, rural respondents were more likely to report direct engagement with renewable energy programmes. Successful applications were reported by 28.0% of rural respondents, compared with 21.3% of urban respondents.

At the same time, rural respondents were more likely to report long waiting times and difficulty completing the application process. Urban respondents more frequently identified complicated procedures, excessive documentation, and housing-related limitations.

These findings suggest that rural households may benefit from more accessible local support and faster, more predictable processing. Urban households may require clearer solutions for apartment buildings, shared ownership, limited roof access, and other housing-related constraints.

## Differences by Education and Income

Educational attainment was strongly associated with awareness of renewable energy support programmes. Approximately one-third of respondents with primary education or less, 33.6%, reported that they had never heard of such programmes. This fell to 13.7% among respondents with secondary education and to only 2.7% among those with university or postgraduate education.

Differences were also visible in respondents' understanding of application requirements. Among respondents with primary education or less, 39.5% considered the application steps and eligibility criteria clear, compared with 56.6% of university-educated respondents. At the same time, 25.8% of respondents with lower educational attainment said they had no information about the requirements, compared with 10.2% among those with university-level education.

Household income was also associated with programme awareness. Among respondents from households with low or no income, 27.5% had never heard of renewable energy support programmes. The corresponding proportion was 7.9% among middle-income households and 6.9% among households reporting monthly income above €900.

However, high initial costs remained a major concern across all income groups. They were identified as the main barrier by 49.2% of respondents from low- or no-income households, 44.0% of middle-income respondents, and 51.6% of those from households earning more than €900 per month. This indicates that affordability is not limited to the lowest-income households, although households with fewer resources also face a substantially greater information gap.

Taken together, the findings suggest that different citizens encounter barriers at different stages. Respondents with lower levels of education and income were more likely to face initial awareness and information barriers. Better-informed and higher-resource respondents were more likely to progress to the point where the financial cost of investment became the dominant concern. Renewable energy support programmes should therefore address the full pathway from initial awareness and understanding to application assistance and affordable investment.

*Key finding: The principal barriers to renewable energy adoption are widely shared, but citizens encounter them at different stages and with varying intensity. Women, older citizens, and respondents with lower education or income face greater gaps in programme awareness and access to information. Rural households demonstrate comparatively high engagement but experience greater difficulties during the application process, while urban households more often face procedural and housing-related constraints. High initial costs remain a major concern across all income groups, indicating that broader financial support must be combined with targeted communication, practical assistance, and solutions adapted to different household circumstances.*

## **10. KEY FINDINGS**

### **1. Awareness does not consistently translate into participation**

A substantial share of citizens remain outside renewable energy support programmes. While 40.8% of respondents were aware of available opportunities but had never applied, a further 11.5% had never heard of such programmes. These findings point to two distinct challenges: reaching citizens who remain unaware and helping informed households move from awareness to participation.

### **2. Programme information is not sufficiently accessible or clear**

Around half of respondents either found application steps and eligibility criteria unclear or lacked enough information to assess them. A slight majority also experienced some difficulty finding official information about subsidies and procedures. The challenge therefore concerns both reach and usability: citizens must know where to find official guidance and be able to understand what it requires.

Information barriers were especially pronounced among older respondents and somewhat more common among women. These differences indicate that general public communication should be complemented by more targeted outreach and practical assistance.

### **3. Administrative procedures reduce accessibility and predictability**

Nearly half of respondents considered administrative procedures somewhat or very difficult. Among those with application experience, the main problems were long waiting times, complicated procedures, and excessive documentation.

Uncertainty about timing was also substantial, with one-quarter of respondents unable to estimate how long the administrative process should take. The findings suggest that applicants need simpler requirements, clearer timelines, regular status updates, and more practical support during the process.

### **4. Institutional roles are unclear and trust remains cautious**

Central institutions were most frequently perceived as the main obstacle, followed by energy companies, municipalities, and financing institutions. Nearly one-quarter of respondents, however, could not identify which institution represented the main obstacle. This suggests that citizens do not always have a clear understanding of the roles played by the different institutions involved.

Trust was present but limited. Although a slight majority expressed at least some confidence that applications would be handled fairly and transparently, strong trust was uncommon, and more than four in ten respondents reported little or no confidence. Clearer institutional

roles, more transparent assessment procedures, and better communication of decisions could help strengthen accountability and public confidence.

## **5. Affordability is the dominant barrier, but financial support alone will not be enough**

High initial costs were identified as the main barrier to investment by 48.3% of respondents, while lack of information was the second most common obstacle. More than half said that increased subsidies would make investment easier.

Only 4.5% reported that they were not interested in investing. This indicates that limited uptake is driven primarily by practical constraints rather than a lack of willingness. Stronger financial support is therefore essential, but it should be combined with clearer information, simpler procedures, and technical guidance.

## **6. Different groups experience the support system differently**

The main barriers are broadly shared, but their form varies across the population. Women were more likely to report gaps in programme awareness and information. Respondents aged 65 and older faced the most substantial informational and procedural barriers. Rural households reported higher engagement and more successful applications, but also greater difficulty with waiting times and completing the process. Urban respondents were more likely to identify procedural complexity, documentation requirements, and housing-related limitations.

These differences show that a single communication or support approach will not meet the needs of all citizens. Programme design and outreach should respond to the specific barriers faced by different groups.

Overall, the findings suggest that citizens' interest in renewable energy is not being fully converted into participation and investment. Affordability is the most significant constraint, but the effectiveness of financial support depends on whether programmes are visible, understandable, accessible, and trusted. A more citizen-centered approach should therefore combine adequate financial incentives with clearer information, simpler procedures, stronger institutional coordination, and targeted support for groups facing additional barriers.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The survey findings show that citizen participation in renewable energy programmes is constrained by a combination of high upfront costs, limited access to clear information, difficult procedures, uncertainty about institutional roles, and cautious trust in the application process. These barriers are interconnected and should not be addressed through isolated measures.

The recommendations are therefore organized around five priority areas. Together, they aim to make renewable energy support more affordable, understandable, accessible, transparent, and responsive to the needs of different population groups.

### **Improve the Affordability and Targeting of Financial Support**

High initial costs were identified as the main barrier to renewable energy investment by almost half of respondents, while more than half said that increased subsidies would make investment easier. Financial support should therefore remain a central policy priority. Subsidy levels should be sufficiently attractive to influence household investment decisions and should reflect differences in citizens' financial capacity. Where possible, support could be differentiated according to household income, vulnerability, housing conditions, or the scale of the proposed investment. This would help ensure that public support reaches households that would otherwise be unable to participate.

Subsidies could also be complemented by other financing options, including low-interest loans, credit guarantees, instalment arrangements, or payment schemes that reduce the initial financial burden. Cooperation with banks and other financing institutions may help expand access to investment beyond households able to cover a substantial share of the cost upfront.

Financial offers should clearly explain the full cost of the investment, the amount covered by the subsidy, the expected household contribution, and any additional expenses associated with installation or maintenance. This would allow citizens to assess affordability before beginning the application process. Financial support alone, however, will not be sufficient. Its effectiveness will depend on whether citizens can find the relevant information, understand the eligibility requirements, and complete the application process without unnecessary difficulty.

### **Make Information Easier to Find and Understand**

The findings show that citizens face two related information problems. Some have not encountered information about available programmes, while others have found the information difficult to locate or understand. Public communication should therefore address both the reach and the clarity of official guidance.

A clear and recognizable source of official information should bring together all relevant household renewable energy programmes. This could take the form of a central online platform or coordinated information point containing:

- ▶ *available subsidies and financing opportunities,*

- ▶ *eligibility conditions,*
- ▶ *required documents,*
- ▶ *application steps and deadlines,*
- ▶ *expected processing timelines,*
- ▶ *responsible institutions and contact details,*
- ▶ *available technical or procedural assistance, and*
- ▶ *information on complaints and appeals.*

All guidance should be written in plain language and organized around the practical questions citizens are most likely to ask. Step-by-step instructions, checklists, frequently asked questions, process diagrams, explanatory videos, and worked examples could make technical or administrative information easier to understand.

Communication should not rely exclusively on websites or social media. Information should also be distributed through municipalities, traditional media, telephone support, printed materials, community organizations, and local outreach activities.

Targeted communication is particularly important for groups facing greater barriers. Older citizens may require printed guidance, telephone assistance, and direct support with forms and documentation. Outreach to women should use channels and networks that reach them directly and recognize their role in household investment decisions. Rural households may benefit from local contact points and information sessions organized in local communities, while citizens with lower levels of education may require more visual, practical, and accessible communication formats.

The responsibility for providing accurate information should remain with public institutions. Civil society organizations, media, municipalities, and development partners can support dissemination and explanation, but they should complement rather than replace official communication.

## **Simplify the Application Process and Improve Applicant Support**

Nearly half of respondents considered administrative procedures difficult. Applicants most frequently reported long waiting times, complicated processes, and excessive documentation. The application process should therefore be reviewed from the perspective of the citizens rather than only from the internal requirements of the implementing institution.

Application requirements should be simplified wherever possible. This may include:

- ▶ *Reducing the number of documents requested,*
- ▶ *Avoiding repeated submission of information already held by public institutions,*
- ▶ *Standardizing forms and requirements across programmes,*
- ▶ *Providing clear checklists and application guides, and*
- ▶ *Clearly distinguishing mandatory requirements from supporting information.*

Applicants should be informed from the outset about the expected timeline for each stage of the process. Institutions should introduce clear processing standards, acknowledge receipt of applications, provide status updates, and notify applicants when additional information is required. Where delays occur, applicants should receive a clear explanation.

Unsuccessful applicants should receive a written explanation of the decision and, where relevant, guidance on whether missing information can be corrected or a future application submitted. This would improve transparency while also helping citizens understand the process.

Application support should respond to different practical circumstances. Rural applicants may require assistance closer to where they live and better coordination between local and central institutions. Urban residents, particularly those living in apartment buildings or shared properties, may need specific guidance on collective applications, shared roofs, co-ownership consent, and building-level renewable energy systems.

### **Strengthen Institutional Coordination, Transparency, and Accountability**

Citizens identified obstacles across central institutions, energy companies, municipalities, and financing institutions. At the same time, nearly one-quarter could not identify which institution represented the main obstacle. This suggests that the roles of the actors involved are not always clear from the citizen's perspective.

The Ministry of Economy, the Energy Regulatory Office, municipalities, energy companies, financing institutions, and other relevant actors should clearly explain how responsibilities are divided across each programme, including where applications are submitted, who reviews technical and administrative requirements, who provides guidance, who makes final decisions, who manages payments or implementation, and where complaints and appeals should be directed.

A simple institutional map or step-by-step process diagram could help citizens understand how responsibilities are divided and where they should seek assistance at each stage.

Stronger coordination is also needed behind the process. Institutions should establish clear referral procedures so that citizens are not repeatedly redirected between offices. Shared guidance, consistent terminology, coordinated public announcements, and common service standards would reduce confusion and improve the applicant experience.

Transparency should be strengthened by publishing eligibility and evaluation criteria before applications open. Applicants should be able to understand how decisions are made, how applications are prioritized when funding is limited, and why an application was unsuccessful.

Institutions should also provide accessible complaint and appeal mechanisms. These should include clear submission procedures, defined response timelines, and information on how complaints are reviewed.

Aggregate data on programme implementation should be published regularly, including the number of applications received, approved, rejected, and pending; the geographical distribution of support; average processing times; and the main reasons for rejection. This would strengthen accountability and allow the public to assess whether programmes are being implemented consistently and fairly.

## Use Outreach, Partnerships, and Evidence to Improve Programme Delivery

Public institutions should remain responsible for programme design, implementation, and official communication, but broader partnerships can help improve reach, applicant support, monitoring, and public feedback.

Municipalities can play an important role by bringing information and assistance closer to citizens. Depending on local capacity, they could provide contact points, organize information sessions, support applicants with documentation, and refer technical or programme-specific questions to the institution responsible.

Civil society organizations can help identify recurring barriers, reach groups that may not engage with official communication channels, and collect feedback from applicants, while media can support public understanding. Development partners can contribute technical expertise, communication support, capacity building, and financing for pilot approaches.

These actors should work within a coordinated communication framework so that citizens receive consistent information. Outreach materials should be based on official guidance and updated whenever programme requirements change.

Institutions should systematically use administrative data and applicants' experiences to improve programme delivery by monitoring application and approval rates across population groups and locations, points where applicants withdraw or fail to complete the process, reasons for rejection, processing times, complaints, satisfaction levels, participation among underrepresented groups, and recurring technical or communication problems. These findings should be complemented by surveys, applicant interviews, feedback from support services, and consultations with municipalities and civil society to distinguish isolated concerns from broader structural issues. The findings will then be used to adjust eligibility rules, documentation requirements, outreach approaches, service standards, and support mechanisms. Programme improvement should therefore be treated as a continuous process rather than a one-time redesign.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

However, the survey findings show that the existence of these measures does not automatically ensure broad citizen participation. Many households remain outside the support system because they are unaware of available opportunities, find official information difficult to locate or understand, face demanding administrative procedures, or cannot afford the initial investment.

Affordability emerged as the strongest barrier, but the findings also show that financial constraints are closely linked to information, procedures, and institutional confidence. Almost half of respondents identified high initial costs as the main obstacle, while many others pointed to insufficient information, administrative difficulties, and limited trust. At the same time, the very small share of respondents who expressed no interest in investing suggests that low participation is driven mainly by practical barriers rather than a lack of willingness.

The survey also shows that these barriers are not experienced equally. Older citizens face the most substantial information and procedural challenges, women are more likely to report gaps in programme awareness, and rural households combine relatively high participation with greater difficulty during the application process. Urban households, meanwhile, are more likely to encounter housing-related constraints, particularly in apartment buildings and shared properties.

These findings underline the importance of placing citizens' needs and experiences at the center of programme design and implementation. Financial support remains essential, but it must be accompanied by information that is easy to find and understand, simpler and more predictable procedures, clearer institutional roles, transparent decision-making, and practical assistance for groups facing additional barriers.

Kosovo therefore has an opportunity not only to expand renewable energy support, but also to improve how citizens experience it. A more accessible, coordinated, and trusted support system would help convert public interest into greater participation, wider household investment, and stronger public ownership of the country's renewable energy transition.



**Democracy for Development (D4D)** was established in April 2010 by a group of analysts who had become increasingly concerned that the state-building process had sidelined democracy. D4D's vision is to promote active and informed citizenship that fully participates in public life and engages in representative and decision-making processes to foster dialogue and build consensus on the efficient, strategic, and sustainable allocation of resources, thereby contributing to equitable development. D4D influences concrete policymaking, promotes a cross-sectoral approach to problem-solving, and addresses institutional decision-making routines by recommending gradual improvements and acting with maximum effectiveness to contribute to the democratic stabilization and development of Kosovo.



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