



Paper: “Multi-Level Governance and Industrial Engagement in Renewable Energy Communities: A Pre-Regulatory Study from Lombardy”

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Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Salloom A. Al-Juboori
Applied Science Private University, Jordan

Reviewer 2: Foldi Kata
University of Debrecen, Hungary

Reviewer 3: Blinded

ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2025

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Reviewer Name: Kata Dr. Földi	
University/Country: Hungary	
Date Manuscript Received: 23/05/2025	Date Review Report Submitted: 03/06/2025
Manuscript Title: Multi-Level Governance and Industrial Engagement in Renewable Energy Communities. Pre-Regulatory Study from Lombardy	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 32. 17/05/25	
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Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	5
The title "Multi-Level Governance and Industrial Engagement in Renewable Energy Communities. Pre-Regulatory Study from Lombardy" is clear and adequately reflects the content of the article. The title accurately reflects the article’s focus on governance structures and industrial engagement in the early stages of renewable energy community development in Lombardy before regulatory frameworks were finalized. The title is both clear and well-aligned with the article’s content, providing an informative and precise summary of the study’s scope and context.	
2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results.	5

<p>Yes, the abstract of the article "Multi-Level Governance and Industrial Engagement in Renewable Energy Communities. Pre-Regulatory Study from Lombardy" clearly presents the objectives, methods, and results of the study. The study aims to investigate the early-stage development of renewable energy communities (RECs) in Lombardy, Italy, focusing on how small and medium-sized industrial firms perceive and respond to communication efforts before the full implementation of regulatory frameworks and economic incentives. It specifically examines the role of multi-level governance (national, regional, and local public authorities) in shaping industrial awareness and interest in renewable energy participation. The research is based on data collected through a targeted survey conducted among industrial firms in Lombardy. The analysis employs a non-parametric statistical test to assess the influence of different governance levels on industrial engagement with RECs. The findings indicate that local public authorities (LPAs) exert a significantly stronger influence on industrial perceptions and willingness to engage in renewable energy communities compared to higher-level institutions. This suggests that trust-based, locally driven communication strategies are more effective than top-down approaches. The study highlights the importance of coordinated, place-based governance strategies that empower local actors as intermediaries in the energy transition.</p>	
<p>3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>Based on the provided text from the article "Multi-Level Governance and Industrial Engagement in Renewable Energy Communities. Pre-Regulatory Study from Lombardy," there are very few grammatical errors or spelling mistakes. The writing is generally clear, formal, and appropriate for an academic publication. Here is a brief analysis:</p> <p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <p>Grammar and syntax: Sentences are well-structured and ideas are logically connected.</p> <p>Spelling: Words are spelled correctly throughout the abstract and introduction.</p> <p><i>Academic Tone:</i> The language is suitable for a scholarly article</p> <p>Minor Issues Noted</p> <p>Punctuation and style: There are a few minor punctuation inconsistencies (e.g., missing commas, use of semicolons).</p> <p>Acronyms: The acronym "SMI" is used, but the more common term is "SME" (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises). However, "SMI" is defined in the keywords, so this is not a mistake, just a stylistic choice.</p> <p>Parentheses and citations: Some citation styles vary (e.g., "Ahmed et al.2024" should be "Ahmed et al., 2024"), and some references lack spacing.</p> <p>Examples of Minor Issues</p> <p>"SMI" is sometimes used instead of "SMEs," which may cause confusion for some readers.</p> <p>"Bazilian et al, 2020" should be "Bazilian et al., 2020" (missing period and comma placement).</p> <p>"Enabling them to access renewable energy solutions and transition more effectively will be critical to meeting broader climate goals." — This is a sentence fragment and could be combined with the previous sentence for clarity</p>	
<p>4. The study methods are explained clearly.</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>The methods are clearly explained. The article details the survey approach, analytical methods, conceptual framework, and the specific context in which the research was conducted. This clarity allows readers to understand how the study was designed, how data</p>	

was collected and analyzed, and how the findings relate to the stated objectives and hypothesis.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	5
The results are clear and do not contain errors. They are presented in a straightforward, logical manner and directly address the research question. The findings are well-supported by the data and analysis, and the implications are clearly stated for both academic and policy audiences.	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	5
The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content. They logically follow from the objectives, methods, and results, and make a meaningful contribution to the literature on renewable energy communities and multi-level governance.	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	5
The references are comprehensive and appropriate. They provide a solid foundation for the research, cover all necessary thematic areas, and are up-to-date. Minor improvements could be made in citation formatting and by expanding the international comparative perspective, but overall, the reference list supports the article's academic rigor and credibility.	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

This is well-conceived and executed study that makes a meaningful contribution to the literature on renewable energy communities and governance. With minor revisions and clarifications, it will be even stronger and more impactful.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

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Date Manuscript Received: 7/5/2025	Date Review Report Submitted: 11/05/2025
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2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results. <i>Please see comments below and on manuscript</i>	-----
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article. <i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	5
4. The study methods are explained clearly. <i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	4
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors. <i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	4
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	-----

<i>Please see comments below and on manuscript</i>	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	4
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

1. *The abstract should contain the most important results of the study (i.e the statistical analysis by % such as the awareness level%, comparative analysis of SMI,.....etc not all results but just the most and the less effective)*

2. *The conclusion is very long and does not reveals the main findings of the study by %*

I suggest the followings: -

Conclusions: From the statistical analysis of this study, the following main points can be concluded:

i. The highest awareness at a regional level is 51% not interested due to.....

ii. The impact of energy on costs sales.....

iii. Comparative analysis

iv. The attitude levels.....

v..... And so on the other findings

3. *From these findings, put in abstract the highest and the lowest % of findings with reasons*

4. *There are some abbreviations are not defined in text of the manuscript*

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

The study results of this paper in order to be clear and understandable for the readers, must considering the overall comments.