

Germany solar energy policy

As of 14 December 2020, Germany's ruling coalition agreed modifications to its energy law to create the legal basis for continuing the expansion of renewable energy in the long term and help the country meet its goal of producing 65% of its electricity from clean sources from 2030.

The law came into force as of 1 January 2021. It seeks to help ensure that both electricity supply and electricity consumption become carbon-neutral before 2050. To this end, the law specifies the pace at which sustainable energy such as wind and photovoltaics are to be expanded over the next few years.

In order to meet its renewable energy targets, the Federation and the Länder established a new Bund/Länder Cooperation Committee under the Renewable Energy Sources Act.

According to a new report published by the Federation and the Länder, the targets are not to be fulfilled if new wind-power projects are not approved. The amount of land dedicated to onshore wind farms is not sufficient to meet the 2030 target, which amounts to 71 GW of installed capacity and for annual auction volumes.

The Solar Package I introduces new minimum nature protection criteria for all subsidized ground-mounted PV plants (with the exception of special solar plants), which are intended to improve the compatibility of ground-mounted PV plants with nature and landscape. For this purpose, Section 37 (1a) EEG provides for a catalog of five minimum criteria from which plant operators must meet at least three:

The Solar Package I increases the maximum bid amount for the EEG tender procedures for ground-mounted PV plants from the previous 20 MW to 50 MW of installed capacity per bid. Equally, the maximum volume per bid for which a payment entitlement (Zahlungsberechtigung) can be issued to the plant operator has also been increased to 50 MW.

Previously, solar plants of the second segment with an installed capacity of up to and including 1 MW were exempt from participating in EEG tender procedures. This statutory threshold has now been reduced to 750 kW by the Solar Package I, so that in future all rooftop PV plants with an installed capacity of more than 750 kW are obliged to participate in the EEG tender procedure in order to receive any financial support under the EEG.

With the reduction of the threshold obligation to participate in the tendering procedure, the Solar Package I, on the other hand, also increases the tender volumes for rooftop solar plants. In particular, a significant increase is made for the tender procedures starting in 2026 by more than doubling the tender volumes. In detail, the annual tender volume for the years 2024 to 2029 is adjusted as follows:

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