



Grid development essential for Romanian wind industry's growth

“Wind energy will be key for us to reach our 2020 renewables target”, Alexandru Sandulescu from the Romanian Ministry of Economy told delegates at a European workshop on the integration of wind energy in Romania this morning. The workshop was organised by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), the Romania Wind Energy Association (RWEA) and the Centre for the Promotion of Clean and Efficient Energy in Romania (ENERO).

The EU Directive setting up mandatory targets for renewable energy for all EU Member States establishes that Romania must increase the amount of renewables in its energy mix from 17.8% at the end of 2005 to 24% by 2020.

“A national renewable energy action plan outlining appropriate measures to reach the targets will have to be submitted by June 2010 to the European Commission” said Arthouros Zervos, President of EWEA. “In the case of Romania, it is crucial that the government promptly addresses issues such as administrative procedures and grid access for renewables projects. This will facilitate the development of wind energy, which should be the main contributor to reaching the renewables targets” added Zervos.

Currently, less than 1% of Romania's energy comes from wind. At the end of 2008, there was a total of 10 MW of wind power capacity installed in the country, out of the approximately 65,000 MW of total installed wind capacity in the EU. In order to ensure the development of wind energy in Romania, the country's grids will need to be significantly improved.

“There is a huge wind potential in Romania and if existing infrastructure barriers are removed the Romanian wind power market will grow, providing jobs and helping drive the economy, especially in poor rural areas”, said Cristian Tantareanu from ENERO.

“We trust the national law will be finalised soon which will benefit greatly the Romanian wind industry, particularly in the current economic climate”, added Dana Duica from RWEA.

At the workshop, Zervos described wind energy as a “mature industry and a competitive power generating technology”. In 2008, 36% of all new electricity generating capacity built in the European Union was wind energy, exceeding all other technologies including gas, coal and nuclear power. On average, 20 wind turbines were installed for every working day of 2008. By the end of the year, a total of 160,000 workers were employed directly and indirectly in the sector, which saw investments of about €11 billion in the EU. Wind energy employment is expected to more than double to almost 330,000 in 2020: “The positive growth trends we see in Europe could certainly be reflected on the Romanian scale, bringing about new wealth and jobs for its citizens”, concluded Zervos.

The event in Bucharest was one of a series of workshops organised in promising emerging markets in order to analyse issues related to the further development of wind power in Europe. It also presented a detailed overview of wind energy based on the 'Wind Energy – The Facts' publication, a European Commission-funded project, widely considered to be the most important wind energy reference in the world. The next workshops will take place in Budapest, Sofia and Istanbul.

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For more information on 'Wind Energy – The Facts' please see www.windfacts.eu