



WIND ENERGY THE FACTS

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Hungary needs to develop its huge wind potential

“Hungary has a tremendous wind energy potential. If the government promptly addresses issues such as administrative procedures and grid access for renewable energy, wind could be a major contributor to reaching its 2020 target,” said Péter Tóth, President of the Hungarian Wind Energy Association (HuWEA) at a workshop in Budapest organised with the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

The EU Directive setting up mandatory targets for renewable energy for all EU Member States establishes that Hungary must increase the amount of renewables in its energy mix from 4.3% at the end of 2005 to 13% by 2020. “According to the model used by the European Commission in its assessment, Hungary’s potential is 20% by 2020, hence anything beyond 13% should be seen as an additional opportunity for the local economy,” said Andrea Hercsuth, Policy officer at the Transport and Energy Directorate General of the European Commission.

Currently, just under 1% of Hungarian energy comes from wind. In May 2009, there was a total of 177 MW of wind power capacity installed in the country, out of the approximately 65,000 MW of total installed wind capacity in the EU.

“A national renewable energy action plan outlining appropriate measures to reach the targets will have to be submitted to the European Commission by June 2010” said Jacopo Moccia, Regulatory Affairs Advisor at EWEA. In order to ensure the development of wind energy in Hungary, the country’s grids will need to be significantly improved. “The current 330 MW cap on wind energy placed by the TSO should be significantly increased by 2020,” said Máté Kovács, Counsellor, Department of Environmental Development, Hungarian Ministry of the Environment and Water.

At the workshop, Søren Krohn, advisor to the World Bank in Washington, presenting EWEA’s “Economics of Wind Energy” publication, described wind energy as a “mature industry, competitive power generating technology and as an insurance against increasing fuel costs”. 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 Hungarian scale, bringing about new wealth and jobs for its citizens”, concluded Moccia.

The event in Budapest 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 Sofia and Ankara.

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