



VII. INTERENEF

SOLAR INTERENEF FORUM

Solar energy in the energy policy of the European Union and Southeast Europe

VII. The Interenef Forum was held on September 22 in Split. The forum was opened by Prof. Dr.Sc. Anđelko Milardović, founder of INTERENEF and head of the Institute for European and Globalization Studies, digital think tank, Split-Zagreb. During the introductory speeches, Antonio Kuzmanić, Deputy Mayor of the City of Split, who in his opening speech announced solar projects in the area of the City of Split, as well as Mario Jakic, director of the Dalmatian Energy Agency, addressed the audience. Prof. Dr.Sc Marko Jelić, prefect of Šibenik-Knin County, mentioned the projects in the territory of the neighboring county as well as the challenges faced by the local community and investors. The moderator of the forum was Ana Jerković from Pugwash Hrvatska. The plenary lecture on solar energy in the energy policy of the European Union and Southeast Europe was held by prof. Ph.D. Romana Jerković, member of the European Parliament in Brussels.

In the following, three panels were held, led by the moderator Prof. Dr.Sc. Daria Karasalihović Sedlar from the Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum, University of Zagreb.

The first panel Solar technology: Theory, business examples and good practices was attended by Denis Čamber, from the company Končar, head of business development who described his experiences in the implementation of the largest solar project in Croatia and also described how the process of building such a complex system goes. Matija Sinković, from E.ON Energy Infrastructure Solutions d.o.o. gave his overview of how to advise the customer for optimal technical solutions, described the process of negotiating with customers and what customers are most concerned about and how to help customers in order to enable the development of long-term relationships. Zdravko Krmek, director of Sunseco d.o.o. from Sisak, explained the technology of solar hybrid systems, energy storage systems, as well as the charger project for electric vehicles developed by Sunseco. Vjeran Piršić, president of the association Eko Kvarner from Krk, presented his own experiences of energy independence at the level of the local community and experiences related to optimal business and technological models. Ognjen Marković, an energy expert and member of the ReSET Center for Sustainable Energy Transition from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, emphasized that Southeastern Europe, and especially the Western Balkans' electricity generation, is still largely based on fossil fuels, and what role solar power plants can play in the decarbonization process with special with an emphasis on a just transition in a region that is still dependent on coal mining. Aljoša Pleić, Director, Acciona energia from Split, presented his experiences related to the development of solar projects and the application of technology, as well

as opportunities for new investments in solar projects.

The conclusion of the panel is that the profession has the technology and knowledge of applying solar technology and that the biggest challenges of the energy transition are actually legislative, not technological in nature.

The second Panel dealt with regulatory aspects and legal obstacles in the wider application of solar technology. The panel was attended by associate professor, Ph.D. Mišo Mudrić, from the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, who described the obligations expected by EU member states regarding the installation of solar panels and the role of prosumers in the implementation of the Solar Strategy and RepowerEU. Jan Krčmář, director of the Czech Solar Association, from Prague, Czech Republic, stated the opportunities available to governments to accelerate the growth of the share of renewable energy sources in the country's energy mix, as well as obstacles and administrative barriers to greater project implementation, as well as obstacles to financing and stability of investments. He also referred to the possibility of involving the local community in renewable energy projects.

Mario Krka from the law firm Divjak, Topic, Bahtijarevic & Krka from Zagreb gave a brief insight into the legal framework for the implementation of solar projects as well as some provisions of the construction law that are crucial for the implementation of such projects.

Sonja Risteska from Green Enesys Group GmbH from Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany shared the experiences of good business practices in other EU markets related to the development of solar projects as well as the main challenges of their realization. At the same time, she gave some recommendations for improving the regulatory framework for the development of projects and cross-border cooperation during their implementation. Access to the network is recognized as one of the biggest challenges from an investor's perspective.

Prof. Dr.Sc Marko Ivkošić, Vice Dean for Science at the Faculty of Law, University of Split, described the legal forms that are suitable for investing in solar projects, such as joint ventures and public-private partnerships in the energy sector. He also referred to the challenges and obstacles of the Energy Act. Leila Salijević from the law firm Ibrahimovic & Co, from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, described her own experiences in the realization of energy projects on the neighboring market of BiH.

The conclusion of the panel was that there are good business practices and that we need to work on them opportunities and harmonization of the legal and regulatory framework for the purpose of greater and faster implementation of solar projects.

The third panel, Economic Benefits and Challenges, dealt with the economic aspects of implementing solar technology. Participants were Mirko Budiša, deputy director of the Fund for Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency from Zagreb, who noted that the European Parliament recently presented an updated Directive on energy from renewable sources, which increases the target for the share of energy from renewable sources in the final energy consumption in the EU to 42.5 % by 2030. Member States should strive to achieve a share of 45%. Since solar energy is extremely important in the energy mix, especially Croatia, which has excellent insolation, needs to work on reaching ambitious goals. In order to realize larger infrastructure projects, significant funds are necessary. However, the goal of the green transition is to encourage the wider application of such systems directly at the points of consumption, that is, in companies

and in households. Their application is a challenge for the network, and despite the reduction in the prices of such systems, it is still a challenge for users to arrange the financial structure. However, incentives are available to users that can be used for the realization of solar projects.

Leon Stille from the New Energy Institute from Sweden listed the priorities when implementing solar projects. The importance of avoiding network congestion and the importance of increasing energy storage systems as well as the role of batteries and hydrogen in this as well as the importance of introducing smart meter systems. He also referred to advanced solar technologies such as flexible panels, integrated systems and vertical systems.

Joris Heijdt, from the energy department of the Ministry from the Netherlands, presented the experience of the Netherlands, which is making use of state resources to encourage an increase in the share of solar energy in achieving European strategic solar goals. He additionally looked at the application of new technologies, but also the challenges they encountered and examples of successful projects.

Finally, it was concluded that in order to reach all the set strategic goals, the cooperation of all sectors will certainly be necessary, and financial incentives will represent a very important component as well as the removal of administrative and regulatory barriers.