



PRESS RELEASE

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“Geothermal energy development should be encouraged”

With these words the EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger concluded his speech to the experts gathered at the *European Workshop on geothermal energy in urban areas*, held yesterday, on November 15th, in Brussels. The Commissioner also stated that *“geothermal will play an important role in the future energy mix of the EU”* and that *“we should encourage geothermal development in more and more cities”*.

The workshop looked at how to exploit the huge potential of geothermal electricity and heating and cooling through increased cooperation in R&D, technology and best practice knowledge transfers among the EU Member States.

One of the main findings of the event was that geothermal energy can and will be a major contributor in the future energy mix of the EU. If appropriately encouraged, geothermal energy can continuously provide electricity and heating and cooling at high and low temperatures, with the possibility of underground thermal storage which suits well into the concept of smart cities.

“The geothermal industry needs a clear framework for investing in new installations, such as new drilling rigs; that is the reason new binding RES targets for post-2020 are needed” said Philippe Dumas, Manager at the European Geothermal Energy Council.

Dumas also pointed out that *“policy-makers, local authorities and utilities need to be more aware of the full range of geothermal resources available and of their possible applications”*. Finally, the importance of the heating and cooling sector was highlighted. However, *“concrete actions are yet to be taken”*, Mr. Dumas added.

Therefore, the geothermal industry has called for an EU Action Plan on renewable heating and cooling in order to assess the major bottlenecks hindering the further development of the sector.

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