

2nd Regional Power Exchange takes place in Budva, Montenegro

The Regional Power Exchange is an annual, 2-day conference bringing together diverse stakeholders to discuss achievements, challenges, and priorities in grid decarbonisation in the Western Balkans.

In late October, over 80 energy sector professionals from across the Western Balkans gathered in Budva, Montenegro, to discuss the region's progress on decarbonising the power sector. The flagship event of the project '*Green Agenda: Decarbonisation of the Electricity Sector in the Western Balkans*', funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), provides a platform for in-depth exchanges and strengthening regional cooperation among technical and regulatory energy stakeholders in the Western Balkan region.

The Exchange took stock of achievements since the last regional meeting, discussed overarching topics and challenges in decarbonisation, and allowed working groups to set priorities for the year ahead. Other sessions addressed regulatory advancements, innovative technology solutions, and on-the-ground support for energy projects.

The Keynote Speech delivered by Charles Esser, Secretary General of E.DSO set the tone for the event by highlighting the importance of cooperation and long-term planning in decarbonisation projects for power sector.

Mr Esser's insights were followed by a panel with insights from regional and international experts, including speakers from TransnetBW and the German Development Bank (KfW) on the current stage of the energy transition in the region.

For the rest of the day, participants took part in joint and breakout technical and regulatory working group sessions, addressing key issues like the introduction of battery storage solutions and procedures for connecting renewable energy systems to national grids. The sessions aimed to identify priorities for the coming year and explore how each nation can best support the wider Western Balkans decarbonization goals.

Another insightful session was a panel on gender dynamics in the energy sector. Panellists discussed the difficulties certain groups, including women face when it comes to engaging with the sector, and highlighted the importance of education and the breaking down of societal barriers.

A unique aspect of this year's exchange was a visit to the Converter Station of the HVDC link between Italy and Montenegro courtesy of the Terna Company. Participants exchanged with engineers on the technical aspects of the link and discussed the potential of cross-border infrastructure in supporting energy security and renewables integration in the region. Attendees also enjoyed a cultural night, fostering stronger cross-border relationships.

A significant outcome of the conference is the launch of the Western Balkan Power Sector Knowledge Hub on the [energypedia](#) platform. The energypedia is an open access renewable energy wiki in the context of development cooperation by, and for energy professionals.

By the second day regulatory and technical working groups set clear priorities for the next project period in 2025. The points agreed jointly during the Exchange will drive the work that

is ahead and emphasize a region-wide commitment to transitioning to a cleaner, interconnected energy future for the Western Balkans.