

REPORT

Renewable energy in the V4

Monday 6th of November 2017, 16:00-18:00
European House, Jungmannova 24, Prague

- **The third and last Prague Climate Talks debate of this year took place on Monday 6th November at the European House. The project is co-organized by EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy and Glopolis, in co-operation with Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Prague and under the auspices of the UN Information Centre Prague.**
- **The theme of the third debate was "Renewable energy in the V4" and we welcomed three excellent speakers: Vojtěch Kotecký (Glopolis), Petr Hösl (ČEZ Renewable Energy) and Petr Rokůsek (Nano Energies). The debate was moderated by Christian Kvorning Lassen from EUROPEUM.**

Mr. Kotecký began the discussion by outlining the key characteristics of renewable energy use in the Visegrad countries. He provided an invaluable insight into the situation in the region, calling the V4 countries "a neat bloc" when it comes to renewable energy. He also highlighted the discrepancies between perceptions and reality, reminding the audience that the V4 is not as hopeless as it is often viewed and that this narrative is rather counter-productive. "***There are success stories in the V4,***" Kotecký remarked. However, when it comes to the attractiveness for investment in renewable energy sources (RES), the V4 truly are the laggards. This is mostly due to the unpredictability of the regulatory environment as the position of the governments towards RES support changes much more often in this region than in Western Europe. As a result, **RES is not seen**

as a promising sector for investors here, which poses a major hindrance to further development, even though the public is generally in favour of increasing the share of renewables.

Mr. Hösl continued by sharing his perspective from the largest energy company in the Czech Republic. His assessment of the Czech regulatory environment was rather critical, pointing out **the lack of any governmental support mechanism to revive the interest of investors in the RES market.** When speaking about the future developments of RES in the V4, he highlighted the EU 2030 targets as crucial in providing the necessary push in a region with lots of renewable potential but wavering political will. The government strategy on how to go about the gradual

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decommissioning of coal power plants in the future will also play an important role.

Last but not least, **Mr. Rokůsek** provided an invaluable insight into the work of a small, independent, purely renewable-based energy supplier. And with that he provided **an optimistic vision for the future, where the system will become more and more decentralized and more and more people will be able to use renewable sources.** Thanks to technological developments, such as blockchain, peer-to-peer transmission of energy among small producers will become possible, pushing the costs of renewable energy even further down. This is important, as the Czech Republic is a price-sensitive country and consumers will *en masse* turn to electricity from RES only if the price is low enough. Mr. Rokůsek finished with a positive vision for the future as more young people who demand cleaner energy enter the market.

Afterwards, the public engaged with their inquisitive questions. These touched upon issues such as the public attitude to photovoltaics following the past subsidies scandals, the developments of smart grids, and the sustainability of renewable sources (e.g. the harmfulness of monoculture agriculture used for bio-fuels). It finished with projections for the future, where the speakers agreed that we are likely to follow the path of Germany, where the market will become less centralized, with lots of new smaller companies entering and challenging the big ones, which will suit the renewables well. However, **a more inviting investment environment and support for innovations are necessary for this transformation to occur.**

This was the final Prague Climate Talks debate of 2017. We are looking forward to welcoming you again next year!

Prague Climate Talks is a new project aimed at establishing a platform for continued high-level discussion on the complex issue of climate change. Throughout a series of debates it will bring together experts and professionals from varying relevant fields as well as members of the general public.

The project is co-organised by **EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy** and **Glopolis** in cooperation with **Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Prague** and under the auspices of the **UN Information Centre Prague**.



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