

Good afternoon

Ladies and Gentleman

It is a great honour for me to have been invited to chair this group discussion on distributed renewable energy in a specifically European context.

This meeting is particularly timely given that the European Parliament is negotiating the next Framework Programme on Research and Innovation, the Horizon 2020.

I am the rapporteur of the Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020 - The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), where the energy and the international cooperation play an important role for the fight against poverty.

I would also like to mention a number of other parliamentary measures proposed by the European Parliament to encourage renewable energy, such as:

- Microgeneration
- Rethinking 2050
- Climate Parliament Forum - letter to Energy Commissioner

The discussion today will certainly provide important inputs in the area of energy.

The key priorities for the European Parliament for the Energy sector in H2020 are the following:

3. Secure, clean and efficient energy

3.1. Increasing energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption and carbon footprint through smart and sustainable and secure use

3.1.1. Bring to mass market technologies and services for a smart and efficient energy use

3.1.2. Unlock the potential of efficient and renewable heating-cooling systems

3.1.3. Foster European Smart cities and Communities

3.2. Sustainable, low-carbon, low-cost electricity supply

3.2.1. Develop the full potential of wind energy

3.2.2. Develop efficient, reliable and cost-competitive solar energy systems

3.2.4. Develop geothermal, hydro, marine and other renewable energy options

3.2.4a. Decentralised energy production

3.2.4b. Lowering the environmental impact of transitional energy sources

3.2.4c Develop competitive and environmentally safe technologies for CO₂ capture, transport and storage

3.3. Alternative fuels and mobile energy sources

3.3.1. Make bio-energy competitive and sustainable

3.3.2. Reducing time to market for hydrogen and fuel cells technologies

3.3.3. New alternative fuels

3.4. A single, smart flexible European energy grid

3.4.1. Energy storage

3.4.2. Back-up and balancing technologies

3.5. New knowledge and technologies

3.6. Robust decision making and public engagement

3.7. Market uptake of energy innovation, empowering markets and consumers through Intelligent Energy Europe III

The Parliament believes that Flexible and efficient fossil fuel power plants are still essential for ensuring grid stability and security of electricity supply. In a transition period, moving on towards a low-carbon economy, we are facing the challenge to balance electricity from

variable renewables with electricity from flexible conventional power plants. Conventional power plants are currently designed to operate at base-load, whereas, when backing up renewable energy, they will frequently run at part-load. In this mode, they are less efficient with an impact on emissions.

Research is needed to optimise the flexibility and efficiency of conventional power plants when operated part-load, thus ensuring that flexible and efficient backup will be available to accompany and support the growth of renewable energy and gradually enabling a higher integration of electricity from variable renewables into the grid.

In terms of funding level, the Parliament highlighted the political importance of the Energy sector suggesting an increase from 7,5% to 8,4% of Horizon 2020 budget for the Energy Societal Challenge.

Finally, we are also negotiating the new European Financial Perspectives. It is of course important that we ensure that energy is properly taken into consideration in the post 2013, budget.

I am particularly looking forward to hearing your inputs. I am sure that you will have a valuable contribution to these questions.

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