Bioenergy EUROPE

PRESS RELEASE

Statistical Report 2020: Bioenergy Landscape

BIOENERGY EUROPE STATISTICAL REPORT 2020

Bioenergy will continue to be the largest RES in EU in the decades to come - but only an ambitious and stable policy framework can make the energy transition possible

Brussels, 03 November 2020 - Bioenergy Europe is pleased to announce the seventh and final chapter of its Statistical Report 2020. This last publication provides a perspective on the bioenergy sector in Europe as a whole.

The report highlights that our energy system is still largely dependent on imported fossil fuels, and whilst renewable consumption grew significantly in the last decade, their penetration in the market needs to accelerate.

Biomass is by far the main renewable energy source within the EU28 and in 2018 it accounted for more than 10% of the gross final energy consumption. The use of bioenergy has more than doubled since 2000 and contributes to all the final usage forms of energy i.e. heat, transport and electricity due to its storable, dispatchable and locally sourced nature.

Bioenergy accounts for 56.6% of the EU total renewable energy consumption representing the largest renewable source in Europe and will remain so in the coming decades. This confirms that the sector is an indispensable and unavoidable companion of the European energy system.

Furthermore, most biomass is locally sourced. Import dependency remains very low at 3,7% only. Bioenergy is an EU sourced energy and is now more important as indigenous source compared to coal, gas, or oil.

As bioenergy relies on feedstock from agriculture and forests streams, it is therefore a relatively job-intensive sector in comparison to other types of energy. In addition, bioenergy is largely produced in rural areas and thus has a positive socio-economic impact and is key driver of job creation.

With more than 50.000 business units, bioenergy is the largest renewable energy source in terms of direct and indirect employment, accounting for 708.600 jobs in the solid biomass, biofuels, biogas, and renewable municipal waste sectors.

In 2018, the sectors' turnover represented €57.6 bn in the EU-28. Europe has become the leader in bioenergy technologies manufacturing and is the major exporter of advanced and innovative equipment and solutions. This strongly contributes to making the industry resilient to the disruptions of the global value chains.

But bioenergy in EU28 has also concrete environmental benefits, as it allowed to save 310 $MtCO_2eq$, equivalent to around 7% of the EU28 GHG emissions in 2018, more than 2,5-fold the annual emissions of Belgium.

By 2050, renewable energy sources must supply the vast majority of our energy consumption if we want to achieve our carbon neutrality objective. A fair and coherent plan must be set now, with renewable sources forming the backbone of the EU energy mix. Bioenergy should play a crucial role in achieving these objectives, thanks to its flexibility and reliability.

On the manufacturing side, it is essential to review the European industrial strategy recognizing the decarbonisation potential of bioenergy, as well as its potential for economic growth and job creation. This will play in favour of achieving the strategic autonomy in technology manufacturing.

Statement by Jean-Marc Jossart, Bioenergy Europe Secretary General:

2020 has been a difficult year for all of us but also an opportunity to trigger a real change. Bioenergy is still subject to intense polemics. However, we are delivering today a real and readily available solutions for heat, electricity and transport. With a dedicated and unique sustainability framework set in RED II - that applies even beyond the border of EU - the bioenergy sector is showing the way to all other energy sectors. This is a good basis to continue innovation, strengthen the sector, and overcoming challenges. Europe can count on bioenergy, but the big question is: can bioenergy count on Europe?

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