

EREF Press Release

The strategy of the European Commission for a resilient Energy Union – only a first step in the right direction

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The European Commission published today its strategy to achieve a resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy. According to Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič, the Commission launches “the most ambitious European energy project since the Coal and Steel Community”.

EREF’s President Savvas Seimanidis welcomes the high significance of renewables within the strategy as well as the acknowledged necessity for decentralized energy production, flexible grids and electricity markets. “We are now looking forward for a proposed market design. Such a design must be developed with renewables as centrepiece of the new system and needs to feature coherent holistic structures encompassing the whole system change and the phasing out of fossil and nuclear energy.”

Unfortunately, these positive developments are contradicted by other priorities. The search for new gas vendors and the envisioned new investments in pipelines and LNG terminals is irresponsible as they only perpetuate Europe’s dependency. Furthermore, coal is not ruled out as an option and nuclear energy is still regarded as eligible.

EREF points out that the dependency of many Central and Eastern European EU member states on Russian gas exports could be quickly overcome by using efficiency and renewable sources such as biogas and biomass in district-heating and long-distance heating facilities. For example, regions, local government and cities should use the Cohesion Policy Funds amounting to € 38 billion for the funding period 2014 to 2020 to implement investments in energy efficiency in buildings, renewable energy, and smart grids.

According to Dr. Dörte Fouquet, the Director of EREF, today’s published strategy is a step in the right direction to put renewables upfront but there are still a lot of inconsistencies that will act as barriers in the EU effort to reach the declared goal of President Juncker in July 2014 to “become the world number one in renewable energies”.

For more information on this matter, please contact

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EREF is a federation of national renewable energy associations from EU Member States, such as wind, solar, small hydro, bio-energy, tidal, wave, and geothermal sources. EREF is striving to defend the interests of independent power, fuel and heat production from renewable sources and to promote non discriminatory access to the energy market.