

Bosnia and Herzegovina Needs Sensible and Transparent Energy Policy



Bosnia and Herzegovina's renewable energy sector is ripe for international investment. BiH citizens will benefit from this – but only if energy policy is sensible, transparent and rapidly deployed, EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko said today.

The EUSR was speaking by video link to BiH parliamentarians and ministry representatives taking part in a study trip to the German state of Saarland. The trip focuses on the energy sector and has been organised by the Saarland Government and the EU Special Representative's Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the Parliament for Europe program.

The two-day visit is supported by the European Commission's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX), which facilitates the exchange of expertise in the approximation, implementation and enforcement of EU legislation.

"The only net energy exporter in the Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina has the potential to turn this massive natural resource into an instrument of economic transformation," the EUSR said and noted that Germany, which recently announced its intention to become a world leader in renewable energy, is already active in the BiH renewable energy sector.

“Scope for expanding the hydro, biomass and wind energy sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is enormous,” the EUSR said, but he warned that the current suspension of investment in the electricity transmission infrastructure because of political disagreement “has turned a potential economic dynamo into an economic liability.”

Echoing the conclusions of a Citizens’ for Europe meeting in Sarajevo two weeks ago, the EUSR called for greater coordination among all levels of government and between government and civil society, as well as the rapid establishment of a Designated National Authority to facilitate investment in “clean” energy in order to maximise the potential of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s energy sector.

The EUSR said Bosnia and Herzegovina “should be busy turning its massive renewable energy potential into more jobs, more income and more economic opportunity for companies and individual consumers,” and he stressed this could be achieved through “a pragmatic and creative energy strategy.”

The text and video of the EUSR’s address can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.eu