The next step towards expanding renewable energy

The 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act creates the legal framework necessary for Germany to be able to achieve its climate and energy targets for 2030 and 2050 in the electricity sector. Find out more

New 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings'

Investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy has never been so rewarding and so easy. The new 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' programme has been launched, featuring a streamlined application procedure for all funding – including large amounts.
(More than a third of all final energy in Germany is consumed in buildings, where it is used, for example, to provide heating, cooling and hot water. Against this background, the Federal Government wants to ensure that Germany's building stock becomes climate-neutral by 2050. What this means is that more efficient buildings and a higher share of renewable energy in the heating and cooling supply are already needed today, as many of the buildings planned and constructed now will become part of the building stock in 2050. The good news is that wherever consumption is high, there is a lot of potential for saving energy.

The Federal Government wants to achieve these savings primarily through the 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' (Bundesförderung für effiziente Gebäude – BEG) (in German only) programme, which was launched on 1 January 2021 and forms a core element of the 2030 Climate Action Programme (in German only). The funding is to give a powerful boost to the energy transition in the buildings sector and replaces previous programmes to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy in this segment. These include the successful 'CO₂ Building Modernisation Programme' (implemented as the KfW 'Energy-efficient Construction and Refurbishment' programme) and the 'Market Incentive Programme' to promote the use of renewables for heating – applications for which hit a record high (in German only) in 2020.

Speaking at the launch of the 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings', Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy Peter Altmaier said: 'If we want to achieve our climate goals, we cannot however allow ourselves to rest on this success. This is why we are modernising and simplifying our funding instruments for efficient buildings'. In 2020, the 'Energy-efficient Construction and Refurbishment' (in German only) programme, which will be replaced by the 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' programme from July 2021, itself provided funding for almost half a million residential units, awarding loans and grants worth a total of almost €27 billion. According to calculations by KfW, this could trigger investments of up to €78 billion.

**Three programmes to cover everything**

The new 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' programme consists of just three sub-programmes: 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings – Residential Buildings' (BEG WG) (in German only), 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings – Non-residential Buildings (BEG NWG)' (in German only) and 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings – Individual Measures (BEG EM)' (in German only). The BEG EM was launched by the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) on 1 January 2021. 'Individual measures' refer to those measures which do not lead to the 'Efficiency House' standard being achieved for the building as a whole. For example, those wishing to replace their old draughty doors and windows or insulate their building façade and roof can apply for funding of 20%.

The same percentage of funding is also provided for system technology, such as the installation of digital systems for optimising consumption (e.g. digital heating systems). Individual measures also include investments in renewable energy for heating systems, such as heat pumps, biomass systems and hybrid heating systems, which receive funding of 20% to 40% depending on the technology. For oil heating system replacements, the funding can even be increased to 50% of the eligible costs. Innovative heating systems based on renewable energy or solar thermal systems, and measures to optimise heating – such as the installation of low-temperature heating systems or pipe insulation –
also receive funding. This includes support for 'hydraulic balancing'. This procedure ensures that the water flows evenly throughout the entire heating system and the heating system can be optimised.

The promotional loan scheme for the BEG EM will be available from KfW from 1 July 2021, with the other two sub-programmes (BEG WG and BEG NWG) also launching at the same time. Up until this date, applications for promotional loans for building construction and modernisation work leading to 'Efficient House' or 'Efficient Building' certification and for individual measures can continue be submitted to KfW as usual under the 'Energy-Efficient Construction and Retrofitting' programme. An important point for companies to note is that all three sub-programmes part of the new federal funding programme are considered 'no aid' under EU State aid law.

**One application for multiple measures**

By bundling the previous funding programmes into one, the funding programme has been modernised and made clearer. The application process has also become more simple. Since the start of 2021, homeowners have been able to apply for funding for multiple measures within a single application. And the level of funding they receive is higher, too. This increased rate of funding can be received for example for new buildings that are particularly sustainable. The new funding programme therefore introduces a new class of building, the 'Efficient House RE'. To be classed as such, at least 55% of the building's heating and cooling supply must be based on renewable energy or the building alternatively needs to have sustainability certification that is recognised by the Federal Government.

In future, anyone who wants to have their building project professionally planned and receive support right through the construction process can also receive funding for this under the 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' programme using the same application. According to the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA), applicants will also be able to view the processing status of their documents online.

Applications for funding for all three sub-programmes must be submitted to BAFA before the measures commence. Building-owners undertaking projects can consult energy-efficiency experts to help them decide which measures should be implemented. The costs for this are funded by the programmes 'Energy Advice for Residential Buildings (EBW)' and 'Energy Advice for Non-Residential Buildings, Plants and Systems (EBN)' at 80%.

Further information on 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' can be found at deutschland-machts-effizient (in German only) and on the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (in German only) and KfW websites.

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**FURTHER INFORMATION**

[🔗 Joint press release (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy /Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control/KfW): 'Launch of Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings (BEG) and new funding guideline for energy advice for non-residential buildings, installations and systems (EBN)' (in German only).](#)


Information from Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control on 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings' (in German only)

Information from KfW on 'Federal Funding for Efficient Buildings'
More and more power plant capacity based on renewables

In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein, Saxony-Anhalt and Rhineland-Palatinate, renewable energy accounts for the highest share of total installed power plant capacity. In North Rhine-Westphalia, conventional power plants still predominate by a sizable margin.
In Germany, renewable energy is continuing to gather strength. A quick look at the 2019 figures for installed power plant capacity across the German Länder (federal states) reveals that renewable energy was already dominant in ten of all 16. However, considerable differences exist between the individual Länder. At the end of 2019, the highest installed power plant capacity based on renewable energy was found in Bavaria, with 20.1 gigawatts (GW). Solar plants accounted for more than 65% of...
this figure. Lower Saxony had the second highest installed renewable power plant capacity, at 17.3 GW. Unlike in Bavaria, onshore wind turbines accounted for about 65% of the installed capacity of renewables in this Land. In contrast, North Rhine-Westphalia, which has a lignite mining region and former hard coal mining industry, was the front-runner in conventional power plants, which provided 28.6 GW of power plant capacity. Some 12.8 GW were, however, provided by renewables here as well.

In terms of total installed capacity per federal state, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (87%), Schleswig-Holstein (78%) and Saxony-Anhalt (78%) had the highest share of renewables. Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania had 5.9 GW of power installed plant capacity based on renewables, whereas conventional power plants only accounted for 0.9 GW. At the end of 2019, Schleswig-Holstein had 9.1 GW of installed renewable capacity. Conventional energy sources made up just 1.1 GW. In Saxony-Anhalt, 8.6 GW was available from renewables, while fossil energy sources made up 2.4 GW.

‘Installed power plant capacity’ indicates the maximum possible electricity that a generation plant can produce. This value is however normally higher than actual generation. This is because wind turbines and photovoltaic plants do not always produce at full load as wind and solar energy are intermittent, and conventional power plants have to undergo maintenance and their electricity generation is confined for flexibility reasons. The installed capacity especially of different renewables but also of renewables with conventional energy sources is therefore only comparable to a limited extent.

**Nuclear energy: last nuclear power plants to go off-grid by the end of 2022**

Schleswig-Holstein is one of a total of four federal states in which nuclear power is still used in electricity generation. In 2019, 1.4 GW was available here from nuclear power; in Lower Saxony and Bavaria, the figure was 2.8 GW. In Baden-Württemberg, one reactor producing 1.4 GW was still in operation after the shutdown of the Philippsburg nuclear power plant at the end of 2019. By the end of 2022, the bar for nuclear power in statistics graphs will drop to zero when the last German nuclear power plants are taken off the grid and their operating licences expire. After the nuclear disaster in Fukushima in 2011, the Federal Government did some work on its energy concept and accelerated the phase-out of nuclear power. Since then, eleven nuclear power plants have been gradually taken off the grid. The remaining nuclear power plants are still allowed to generate precisely defined amounts of electricity under the control of the Bundesnetzagentur (Federal Network Agency) until they are decommissioned (For more information about the phase-out of nuclear power, please click [here](#)).

**Coal phase-out: compensation for hard coal-fired power plants ensures successful first round of auctions**

Like the use of nuclear, the share of fossil fuels will also continue to decline. This is because ending coal-fired power generation (in German only) in Germany is already a done deal. Germany wants to phase out coal by 2038 at the latest and is following the recommendations of the Commission for Growth, Structural Change and Employment (KWSB) (in German only). At the end of November 2020, the European Commission established key foundations for this process by approving a compensation programme for hard coal-fired power plants. This enabled the scheduled closure of four gigawatts of coal-fired power plant capacity (in German only) to take place before the end of 2020.
'People should be protagonists, not just background actors'

Ukraine is planning to phase out coal and to create an increasingly carbon-free economy in the coming years. Stanislaw Tillich, Federal Government Commissioner for Structural Change in the Ukrainian Coal-Mining Regions, explains how Germany is helping Ukraine in this effort.

The coal phase-out is an issue Stanislaw Tillich is quite familiar with – not just as a politician. During his time in office as Saxony’s Minister-President, Tillich, a native of Sorbia, concerned himself in depth with the structural change taking place in Saxony and other parts of Germany. He was also one of the chairs of the Federal Government’s Commission for Growth, Structural Change and Employment. Born and bred in a coal-mining region, Tillich has experienced first-hand how Germany has been turning away from coal. He is familiar not only with the economic and political context of structural change, but also with its immediate ramifications affecting the people on the ground.
In early December, he was appointed Federal Government Commissioner for Structural Change in the Ukrainian Coal-Mining Regions. Later that month, he made an appearance at the First German-Ukrainian Energy Day. The Energy Day is the key annual event within the framework of the German-Ukrainian Energy Partnership, which is founded on a joint declaration signed by the two countries on 26 August 2020 with a view to sharing experience and working together more closely in the energy sector.

Mr Tillich, what challenges is Ukraine going to face in the coming years and what kind of support can it expect from Germany?

Ukraine was one of the first countries to sign the Paris Agreement, a global climate accord (in German only). The signatories to the convention commit themselves to taking action to make the world economy more climate-friendly. By 2040 at the latest, Ukraine’s energy industry is to abandon the use of coal to generate electricity. By 2070, the nation wants to become carbon-neutral. The Ukrainian government is therefore planning to shut down the country’s coal-fired power plants and hard coal mines, which are becoming increasingly unprofitable and dependent on heavy government subsidies. Of the 33 mines run by the government, only four are deemed profitable. I am referring primarily to hard coal, given that Ukraine has one of the largest bituminous coal reserves in Europe. Also, Ukraine has an energy-intensive economy and relies heavily on oil and gas imports.

The challenges faced by the Ukrainian government over the coming years will be manifold. Most importantly, it will have to make sure that the coal phase-out goes hand in hand with a sustainable, socially acceptable and economic transformation without jeopardising national energy security. This will be no easy task. Ukraine has more than 41 million inhabitants. Even today, up to 700,000 people are still working in the power stations and in the government-run and private mines. Therefore, the government has developed a national programme for the coal phase-out and an energy strategy, setting the stage for fundamental reforms in the energy sector.

This is where the Federal Republic of Germany can provide support, notably in the context of our Energy Partnership with Ukraine – and we can do so not only with a view to the coal phase-out, but also by placing a focus on greater energy efficiency and renewable energy in order to make Ukraine’s energy industry fit for the future. We can draw on the rich experience of Germany’s mining regions. We have our own share of experience with issues such as depopulation in former mining areas and we have drawn vital lessons from this.

What will the support from Germany look like on the ground?

Together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), which has been operating a country office in Kyiv since 2009, we are going to support Ukraine by providing legal and strategic expertise. For example, this includes assisting policymakers in developing exit strategies and
the necessary legal framework. We are also discussing how Germany can help Ukraine to set up and manage a structural transformation fund, possibly with participation by the European Commission. Ukraine has established a coordination centre. Also, on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, a country secretariat has been set up to facilitate the implementation of the Energy Partnership.

This means that we have a solid foundation on the ground from which we can set about supporting a variety of pilot projects for regional structural change. These projects are to explore and demonstrate possible ways of shaping a successful transformation into a post-coal economy. The pilot regions of the GIZ project include the city of Myronohrad in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine and the city of Chervonohrad in western Ukraine.

**What are your responsibilities as Federal Government Commissioner and what are your personal goals for this mission?**

I want to make an active contribution to the success of structural change processes in Ukraine. We would like to promote expertise and increase awareness of issues linked to the energy transition, and to propose solutions for transforming energy systems. All of this works best if I am able to visit Ukraine as often as possible. Unfortunately, this is still difficult at the moment due to the coronavirus pandemic. The appointment of a Federal Government Commissioner has added a political dimension to the support for regional projects and their implementation. This makes it easier for us to initiate processes of structural adjustment where they are needed.

People should always be at the very core of policymaking. It is my wish that Ukraine will manage to offer long-term future prospects for the inhabitants of today's mining regions and their children, and to involve them as actively as possible in the process of structural change. Instead of being mere background actors, people should be convinced and ready to strike out in a new direction. Once you realise the extent to which a working life in mining can be a source of pride and identity, you understand how critical it is that these people become protagonists of such a transformation and that new prospects for their home regions be created. To make a difference with this vision in mind will be one of my major tasks.

**How could Ukraine's energy sector develop in the long term and what is the country's significance with a view to the global energy transition, particularly for Germany and Europe?**

As I said, Ukraine's economy offers tremendous potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy. The current priorities of our Energy Partnership include increasing energy efficiency, modernising the electricity sector, expanding renewable energy and reducing carbon emissions.

Going forward, the focus will be on the urgent task of transforming the mining regions, and on the
integration of renewable sources of energy as well as green hydrogen. Ukraine has rich supplies of solar, wind and hydroelectric power, which is why it is well suited to the use of hydrogen technologies. This is also of interest to German companies on the Ukrainian market and their export opportunities. And of course, the energy transition does not stop at national borders, which is why Ukraine’s climate targets, its orientation to the EU’s Green Deal and its commitments under the Paris Agreement are also a European issue.

You were born and grew up in one of Germany’s largest mining regions. As Minister-President, you presided over Saxony’s departure from coal. What are your most enduring memories in this context and what does the energy transition mean to you personally?

I have always been greatly impressed by the way living and working in a mining region shapes people’s sense of identity. Often, entire generations and even successions of generations have spent their working lives in the mining sector. They had to make sure that people were able to heat and light their homes in the winter. Driven by a fundamental can-do spirit, they knew what to do in the case of occasional disruptions. Our handling of the coal phase-out has been quite successful, but we have also made mistakes. We have been particularly successful whenever people retained their positive outlook and were offered a long-term future prospect in their home region, one that they were really able to identify with. The way I see it, this is an essential precondition of a successful energy transition.

Thank you very much for talking to us, Mr Tillich. The interview was conducted by Dana Hesse.

From 2008 to the end of 2017, Stanislaw Tillich was Minister-President of the Free State of Saxony. Since 1999, he had previously held various offices in the Saxon state government, including those of State Minister and Chief of the State Chancellery from 2002 to 2004, State Minister for Environment and Agriculture from 2004 to 2007, and State Minister of Finance from 2007 to 2008.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[→ Press release by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy: ‘Stanislaw Tillich appointed Federal Government Commissioner for Structural Change in the Ukrainian Coal-Mining Regions’]
[→ Information from the German Energy Agency (dena) on the German-Ukrainian Energy Partnership (in German only)]
[→ Official website of the German-Ukrainian Energy Partnership]
What exactly is landlord-to-tenant electricity?

Sunlight has to travel around 150 million kilometres to reach the photovoltaic systems on the rooftops of our cities. Find out how this becomes landlord-to-tenant electricity and what this really has to do with tenants.

This is what it's all about: tenants can have climate-friendly and low-cost photovoltaic electricity supplied by the photovoltaic system on the apartment building they live in or on nearby buildings.

The photovoltaic systems on our buildings are very busy on sunny days. They supply environmentally friendly electricity and therefore make a contribution to combating climate change. When the photovoltaic system does not feed the generated electricity into the public grid, but passes it on directly to the tenants in the same building or neighbourhood, this is called 'landlord-to-tenant electricity'.

Landlord-to-tenant electricity: what part do tenants play?

If the photovoltaic system on the rooftop produces more electricity than is required by the tenants, this will be fed into the public grid. Should the system not supply enough electricity or any electricity at all due to low levels of sunshine, tenants will receive electricity from the public grid. Photovoltaic electricity and grid electricity are now bundled in a tenant electricity tariff. This ensures that the tenants are always well supplied with electricity. It is up to the tenants to decide whether they want to use the tenants' electricity tariff or choose a different electricity supplier. All they have to do is sign a supply contract and the green electricity will be supplied to them from the rooftop of their buildings to their electricity sockets.
Bonus is to make landlord-to-tenants electricity economically more attractive

By using a landlord-to-tenant electricity supply, tenants are exempt from a wide range of charges that they would otherwise have to pay if they purchased their electricity via the public grid. These include grid charges, grid surcharges or electricity tax. However, the additional meters, and the acquisition and billing, for instance, generate higher costs for the provider of the tenant electricity tariff. Also, providers still have to pay the renewable energy surcharge (EEG surcharge) for landlord-to-tenant electricity. To compensate for the higher costs, landlords receive a bonus for every kilowatt-hour of electricity they supply to their tenants. The bonus was introduced with the 2017 Renewable Energy Sources Act and was intended to make tenant electricity economically more attractive for landlords and tenants alike. Installing both a photovoltaic system and a landlord-to-tenant electricity tariff can add value to the property. The tenants can save at least 10% of their electricity costs by choosing the landlord-to-tenant electricity tariff as opposed to the basic supply tariff. It is important to know that in the landlord-tenant-electricity scheme the owner of the photovoltaic system and the electricity consumer are two different people. If a homeowner installs a photovoltaic system on his own rooftop and consumes the electricity himself, it is called self-supply.

Landlord-to-tenant electricity is a great opportunity, especially for the energy transition in cities, where buildings are located close to each other and where most people rent. Since the introduction of the tenant electricity bonus in July 2017, more than 30 megawatts of photovoltaic landlord-to-tenant electricity systems have been installed in Germany that take advantage of the funding. The amount of electricity generated would be sufficient to cover the average electricity demand of around 14,000 households in urban areas.

So far, the Federal Government's 'Landlord-to-Tenant-Electricity Report' (in German only) shows that the expansion of the landlord-to-tenant electricity systems has fallen short of expectations. The amendments to the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG 2021) which came into force in January 2021 are therefore intended to further increase the share of landlord-to-tenant electricity in German cities. Several amendments to the 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG) make the acquisition and operation of PV systems more attractive and less bureaucratic for landlords.

The supply chain model: as of 2021, the landlord-to-tenant-electricity bonus is available even if third parties take over the supply of electricity

Until now, only homeowners who took care of the billing and sale of the generated electricity themselves, and who were not only owners of the system but also assumed all the obligations of an electricity supplier, were entitled to receive the landlord-to-tenant electricity bonus. To avoid this, system owners would lease the entire PV system to electricity suppliers. The 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG 2021) allows landlords, as owners of the PV system, to pass on these obligations to a third party that is experienced in the energy industry, such as an energy supply company for example. The third party becomes part of the supply chain of the landlord-to-tenant electricity (the so-called supply chain model). Landlords are then still entitled to the bonus.

But there is more than just that: the landlord-to-tenant electricity subsidy is now independent from the feed-in tariff

The landlord-to-tenant electricity bonus has been recalculated in the 2021 Renewably Energy Sources Act. The bonus no longer depends on the ‘normal’ feed-in tariff and has also been increased.
This is supposed to ensure that the photovoltaic system operates economically over the entire remuneration period. This means that all in all there will be more and more long-term benefits for the landlord-to-tenants electricity.

**Neighbourhood approach: landlords are now allowed to supply the entire neighbourhood with landlord-to-tenant electricity**

A further amendment now makes the installation of a photovoltaic system more appealing for landlords. In order to receive the bonus, the photovoltaic electricity had to be supplied ‘in the immediate vicinity of the building’ on which it was generated – which usually means to the same building. Now the photovoltaic systems of neighbouring residential building may also supply tenants with electricity, as long as they are located in the same ‘neighbourhood’ as the building being supplied and as long as the electricity between the buildings is not fed through the public grid.

**Aggregated calculation of installation capacity: in future, every photovoltaic system is to be counted separately**

The rooftops of our cities are crowded together and it often occurs that the photovoltaic systems installed on these rooftops are very close to each other, too. Up until now, even if these PV systems were technically separate entities - i.e. with separate connections to the grid - the capacity of installations ‘in immediate proximity’ has been added together (aggregated calculation of installation capacity). The disadvantage: a large installation would receive a smaller bonus per generated kilowatt hour (kWh) than a small photovoltaic system. By introducing the 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act, it is no longer relevant for the landlord-to-tenant electricity bonus whether other photovoltaic systems of the same or of other system operators are connected at neighbouring connection points. For instance, if several small photovoltaic systems are installed on your rooftop, you are entitled to a higher bonus than before.

**The new bonuses introduced with the 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act**

The landlord-to-tenant electricity bonus is set at 3.79 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) for up to ten kilowatts (kW) of installed capacity. The bonus is 3.52 cents/kWh for up to 40 kW and 2.37 cents/kW for up to 100 kW. These bonus rates will apply in January 2021. The bonus rate is slightly reduced for each month the landlord-to-tenant electricity installation enters into operation thereafter.

The amendments to the landlord-to-tenant electricity installations included in the 2021 Renewable Energy Sources Act apply to new systems that go into operation from 1 January 2021. They are intended to make it easier for the landlords to decide in favour of a photovoltaic system on their apartment building. There is still room for more installations on German rooftops. A study (in German only) commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy on the topic of landlord-to-tenant electricity from 2017 concludes that up to 3.8 million apartments could be supplied with landlord-to-tenant electricity. This equates to about 18% of all rented flats.

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**FURTHER INFORMATION**

[🔗 Article by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy: 'Landlord-to-tenant electricity]
[🔗 Apply: energy transition in your own home'](in German only)
Quote of the week

‘In addition to tackling the current crisis, we must also set our sails for the future and drive forward the global energy transition by exploiting the full potential of renewable energy. It is now a matter of setting the course in a way that enables us to achieve our goals of building sustainable energy systems that combine effective climate-change mitigation with sound economic sense and the same high security of supply we have now.’

Peter Altmaier, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy, on the occasion of the IRENA General Assembly
What the press say

This time in 'What the press say': Record figures for the energy transition – global investment in the energy transition has exceeded US$500 billion for the first time; €44 million was paid out to German citizens who opted for heating based on renewable energy in November 2020 alone, and the wind farms in the North Sea are producing more electricity than ever before (+12.4% in 2020).

**The Handelsblatt, 19 January 2021: 'Farewell to oil-based heating: Homeowners rethinking their heating'**

Citing figures from the Federal Office of Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA), the Handelsblatt reports that more and more homeowners are showing a high level of interest in renewable energy (in German only).

**pv magazine, 19 January 2021: 'BNEF: Global investment in energy transition exceeds US $500 billion for the first time'**

pv magazine presents a report by Bloomberg New Energy Finance that reports record global investment in renewable energy. The report cites investment levels of +9% in 2020 compared with 2019. Europe in particular has seen strong growth (in German only).

**Zeit Online (dpa), 20 January 2021: "Wind farms in the North Sea producing more electricity than ever before"**

In its online edition, Die Zeit looks at growth figures for offshore wind power. According to the transmission system operator Tennet, the wind power plants in the North Sea supplied more electricity last year than ever before (in German only).
Three new funding calls for applied energy research

In German only
Three new funding calls for applied energy research are now giving researchers the opportunity to present their innovative project ideas for funding. The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy's 'Hydrogen Technology Initiative' funding call is promoting research and development as part of the Federal Government's Hydrogen Strategy. Two other new funding calls are dedicated to the digitalisation of the energy system. These are: the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy's 'Communication Technologies for the Energy Industry' (KomTechE) funding call and the 'Digital Transformation for Green Energy Transition' funding call launched by the global Mission Innovation initiative and the ERA-Net EnerDigit of the EU's Joint Programming Platform Smart Energy Systems.

Coronavirus pandemic was central topic of IRENA General Assembly

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the four-day General Assembly of the International Energy Agency (IRENA) took place this year as a virtual event. The pandemic situation also took up much of the agenda. The main topic of discussion was the importance of the energy transition for a sustainable recovery after the COVID 19 pandemic. EU Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson also spoke about renewable energy and the path to carbon neutrality. Other topics included financing for renewable energy investments, the energy supply to the health sector, and national energy masterplans to promote the energy transition. A new IRENA forum (High Level Vision Building Forum on the Global Energy Transition) has also been established to provide impetus for the global energy transition.

IPCEI funding for innovative ideas for hydrogen technologies

In German only
The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure have made a call for proposals for projects in the field of hydrogen technologies and systems. The two federal ministries,
together with the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the German Länder, are planning to fund integrated projects ranging from the production of green hydrogen and infrastructure, to the use of hydrogen in industry and mobility. The funding is to be provided within the framework of the ‘Important Projects of Common European Interest’ (IPCEIs) and to come from budget funds from the Federal Government’s 2019 stimulus package as well as financial resources from the Länder. Project abstracts can be submitted until 19 February 2021.

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