

Urgent rethink required as Germany's Energy Transition stalls

Energy Watch Group says renewables must increase prominence after coming election

Berlin, 15.09.2017. With the German election looming later this month, the country is seeing its ambitious Energy Transition – the Energiewende – stall. The former global leader is seeing the rate at which renewable energy is being installed dramatically fall.

Behind the decline, argues the Energy Watch Group in a new report, is a series of policy failures. The tender process, put in place to encourage renewable deployment and replace Germany's feed-in tariff, has been a complete failure, says the Energy Watch Group. Dramatic declines in large scale solar PV, biomass, hydropower, and geothermal have taken place since tenders were introduced, with wind power set to follow suit in 2019.

Most worryingly, at the rate at which renewables are being installed in Germany at present, they will be insufficient to replace nuclear closures and will derail the country's decarbonization program.

"Germany moved from frontrunner to laggard, exactly at the time when renewables are the cheapest option, and Germany must rethink its policy structures and move away from tenders towards a modern feed-in tariff," says Hans-Josef Fell, former German parliamentarian and Energy Watch Group President.

Fell observes that in the current election campaign, energy and Germany's Energy Transition project has been sidelined, and must urgently return to the center.

The Energy Watch Group report sets out not only the extent of the policy failures regarding renewables, but also points to the danger to the German economy if it and the Energy Transition continues to stall.

"Germany is becoming disconnected from one of the most dynamic and disruptive sectors within the global economy, with China, India, and the U.S. standing by to take the lead," said Dieter Janecek, German Parliamentarian, and member of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen party's economic and energy committee. "These countries are embracing this new economy, solar, wind, e-mobility, storage at the moment Germany is turning its back. In some years Germany will import the technologies from abroad, and no-one will buy the German technology and products."

The Energy Watch Group advises that the new majority in the German parliament after the forthcoming election should pursue a very different policy agenda with regards to renewable energy deployment. This should involve:

- Abandoning the tender process for renewables;
- Removing unnecessary bureaucracy hampering deployment;
- Installing a 'modern' feed-in tariff for combined renewable investment;
- Incorporating grid integration as a target for all investors in renewables.

The study can be downloaded here: <http://energywatchgroup.org/urgent-rethink-required-germanys-energy-transition-stalls/>