

Newsletter IEA Bioenergy Task 37: 04/2018

Statistics and Developments

European Biogas Association's statistical report 2017

This EBA Statistical Report includes the most up-to-date information available on the biogas and biomethane markets for the year 2016. There were 17,662 biogas plants and 503 biomethane plants in operation in Europe in December 2016. Despite diminishing support growth continued, especially in the biomethane sector. In 2016, the most dynamic countries in Europe for biogas plant construction were France (+93 units) and the United Kingdom (+41 units). Although the number of biogas plants in Europe is leveling off, the total installed electric capacity is on the rise. From 2010 (earliest EBA data) with 4,158 MW it increased to 9,985 MW in 2016 (+5,827 MW). In 2016 alone, the increase was 858 MW (+9%). In line with the development of biomethane plants, biomethane production has greatly increased since 2011: production rose from 752 GWh in 2011 to 17,264 GWh in 2016. In 2016 alone, biomethane production in Europe increased by 4,971 GWh (+40%)

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Biogas in France continues to develop

In the latest report of the French ministry of energy transition documents that the biogas market is continuing to grow. The second trimester 2017 has also shown a continued increase of injected biomethane of 13% yielding a total annual capacity of 533 GWh. The number of biomethane injecting plants has roughly doubled over the past year. About 300 projects are still in the pipeline waiting for approval. At the same time the electricity production from biomethane has increased as well reaching more than 400 MW_{el} with some 519 plants.

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Renewable gas: The fifth generation

The European Biogas Association together with Eurogas has put a nice little video on the five generations of renewable gas production on youtube.

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Northern Ireland: 103 anaerobic digestion plants approved

Northern Ireland's Anaerobic Digestion (AD) sector is set to rocket within the next half decade. A government official revealed that there are currently 103 AD sites either in construction or already approved in the region. Once completed, these will be capable of processing around 1.4 million tons of feedstocks a year. The figure is more than double the total currently used for anaerobic digestion in Northern Ireland. Speaking at an anaerobic digestion conference in Belfast on Thursday, industry leaders claimed AD has the potential to be worth up to **£33 million a year** to the Northern Irish economy. While it's likely some of the plants which have been approved may not ever be built or commissioned, due to funding or other issues, it still signals a significant boost in the AD movement. So far, 24 new plants have been commissioned in Northern Ireland since 2015.

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Gas for Climate 2050

The Gas for Climate group, consisting of seven leading European gas transport companies, is

committed to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in the EU by 2050. The group commissioned Ecofys to study the future role of gas in a net-zero emissions energy system. The results of the study show that it is possible to scale up renewable gas production between now and 2050 to more than 120 billion cubic metres annually, including both renewable hydrogen and biomethane. The biomethane potential is based on a conservative scenario on the sustainable use of European biomass potential. Using this renewable gas in existing gas infrastructure for the heating of buildings, to produce dispatchable electricity as a complement to wind and solar, and to fuel heavy transport, could save about €140 billion annually by 2050 compared to a future energy system without any gas.

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European potential of biogas from waste

A study of CE Delft for the European Commission showed that in 2014, 14.9 mtoe of biogas was produced in the EU: this represented about 7.6% of all primary renewable energy production in the EU. It was mainly used for renewable electricity production, followed by heat production and use as a transport fuel. The study examines the potential role, costs and benefits of biogas and the role that it could play 2020 and 2030. It also examines the barriers preventing the development of biogas markets. The absence of a stable and reliable investment framework and lack of effective support are identified as key obstacles.

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