

Germany's renewables cover record 38 per cent of consumption

Wind and solar continue to grow; battery technology grows with it

Berlin (GTAI) - Renewable energies covered 38 per cent of Germany's gross power requirement in the first three quarters of 2018, according to the Federal Association for Energy and Water (BDEW). The new figure is a three percentage point rise on the figure for 2017 and was boosted by an exceptional weather year for renewable energies, with plenty of wind through the spring and an exceptionally sunny summer. In January, April and May, renewables covered 43 per cent of the gross power requirement for Germany.

Assuming an autumn with annual average wind, the 38 per cent figure will be valid for the entirety of 2018, a new record. But even above-average wind will be less of a challenge than it might once have been, as a new battery facility started up in the town of Varel shows. The battery storage facility, which can store 22 megawatt hours (mwh) and supply 11.5 megawatts of power at a time, is made of a combination of lithium-ion and sodium-sulphur technologies and was developed by Japanese companies in the German state of Lower Saxony. It can supply Varel, a town of 24,000 people, with uninterrupted power for five hours. Such facilities are crucial in harnessing the full potential of renewable energies, which are subject to unpredictable weather-based spikes in supply.

Renewable energies produced 170bn kilowatt hours (kwh) through to the end of September, only 2bn kwh fewer than coal-fired energy production. Coal-fired production fell by seven per cent and gas-fired production by eight per cent over the period. "This is a superb result from a lot of hard work during a period where Germany has had to be innovative in how this energy has been used and distributed," said Robert Herrmann, CEO of economic development agency Germany Trade & Invest. "During this process of Energiewende [energy transition] we have faced numerous challenges, most recently working on how to best distribute the enormous quantities of energy renewable sources have been producing. Projects such as the SINTEG [Schaufenster Intelligente Energie / Shop Window for Intelligent Energy), which has examined a host of innovative solutions to energy storage, distribution, pricing and other aspects of management have helped us make huge steps forward in energy management. Germany remains at the forefront of clean energy solutions, as this result shows."



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