

Renewables industry provides work for 235,000 people

Employment effects even greater than predicted

Germany's continuing renewables boom created more new jobs last year than predicted. According to a newly published study, around 235,000 people were employed in Germany's renewables industry in 2006 – almost 50 percent more than in 2004 (around 160,000) and 20,000 more than previously estimated. At least 134,000 of these jobs – almost 60 percent of the 2006 figure – were created as a direct result of Germany's Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG).

Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel explains: "The consistent expansion of renewable energies is not only an environmental and climate policy imperative; it is also good for innovation, growth and employment in Germany. This is borne out impressively by the new study. The German Government's energy and climate programme adopted at the end of August sets ambitious goals for the further expansion of renewable energies in all sectors – in other words, in the electricity, heat and fuels markets. In this way, we are also putting in place the framework necessary to ensure that the "renewables job motor" can run and run."

The newly published figures are the result of a research project commissioned by the Federal Environment Ministry and carried out by the Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research, Baden-Württemberg (ZSW, Stuttgart; project management), the German Institute for Economic Research, Berlin (DIW, Berlin), the German Aerospace Center / Department of Systems Analysis (DLR, Stuttgart) and the Institute of Economic Structures Research (GWS, Osnabrück).

Interim results of this project, which follows on from an earlier broad-based project by the same research group, were published back in February this year. The February figures were around 10 percent lower than those contained in the latest study. More up-to-date data on the unexpectedly strong expansion of renewables in Germany itself and the industry's successes in the export markets, and – for the first time – the quantification of the employment impacts of public and private investment in renewables meant that a clear adjustment of the initial projections was necessary.

A separate analysis in the new study also estimates – for the first time – the employment impacts of the construction of production capacities for renewable energy plants in Germany. Largely due to the recent boom in solar energy companies in eastern Germany, this stood at around 23,500 jobs in 2006, although the figure fluctuated considerably during the period under review.

Employment impact in the various segments / Comparison with 2004

2006
2004

Wind power
82.100
63.900

Solar energy
40.200
25.100

Hydropower
9.400
9.500

Geothermal energy
4.200
1.800

Biomass
95.400
56.800

Including fuels / motor fuels
50.200
22.600

Total
231.300
157.100

Jobs funded by the public / non-profit sectors
4.300
3.400

Total
235.600
160.500

For information: Expansion of production capacities for renewable energy (estimated)
23.500
5.800

The researchers had previously forecast that the employment effects of renewables would increase further, creating 310,000-350,000 jobs by 2020. However, the latest study suggests that a figure of around 400,000 jobs is feasible by 2020 – and that is without taking account of funding from the public sector.

Further information:

- [General Information](#): Renewable energies already providing 236,000 jobs in Germany in 2006
- [Current report](#): Erneuerbare Energien: Bruttobeschäftigung 2006 (German only)
- [Report as of September 2006](#): Effect of increased use of renewable energies on the German labour market