

WINDEUROPE ANNUAL EVENT RETURNS TO BILBAO IN 2022

WindEurope and Bilbao Exhibition Centre today announced that the WindEurope Annual Event in 2022 will take place in Bilbao on 5-7 April. It will be the second time Bilbao has hosted the event, after 2019. It will be a full exhibition and conference, showcasing the latest in onshore and offshore wind, as wind gears up to be to Europe's leading source of electricity later this decade.

The WindEurope Annual Event 2022 will take place in Bilbao on 5-7 April. It will comprise an exhibition showcasing the latest developments in wind energy and a conference covering all the key market, technology, and policy issues. The last WindEurope Annual Event in Bilbao in 2019 attracted 300 exhibitors and 8,500 visitors.

The event will come at a decisive time for the European wind industry. The EU and national Governments are counting on the industry to help deliver Europe's climate and energy targets. Wind is 16% of Europe's electricity consumption today. The EU wants it to be half by 2050 - and electricity to play a much bigger role in the energy mix. That implies a huge expansion in wind energy: from 180 GW in the EU today to 1,300 GW by 2050. Wind is set to become Europe's number one source of electricity by the end of the 2020s.

Wind energy plays an increasingly important role in Europe's economy. It employs 300,000 people across Europe and contributes €37bn pa to EU GDP. Each new wind turbine generates on average €10m of economic activity.

The press conference was opened by **Arantxa Tapia, Minister for Economic Development and Infrastructure of the Basque Government**, who welcomed the European wind industry to Bilbao. *"The fight against climate change is a global challenge that we all face. Clean energies will play a key role, and the Basque Country has made a firm commitment to work in this field. The promotion of wind energy is essential and fundamental to meeting the goals we have set ourselves as society. We have the necessary capabilities, and strong public policies with a Basque Green Deal strategy that drives sustainable and fair development. Wind Europe will give us the possibility to get to know the latest trends in wind energy and it will also be a platform for us to show what we are capable of"*, Tapia said.

Giles Dickson, WindEurope CEO, said: *"WindEurope is delighted to return to Bilbao. Bilbao, the Basque Country and Spain are shining examples of the economic value of wind. Bilbao is the HQ of Iberdrola and Siemens Gamesa, two of the leading companies in wind energy. The Basque Country and its surrounding area play a key role in the wind supply chain. Spain has 27,000 jobs in wind and is building 2 GW of new wind every year. Bilbao is a perfect place to show that wind means jobs, growth and economic recovery."*

Ainara Basurko, Regional Deputy for Economic Promotion – Foral Council of Bizkaia, said: *"It is great news that Bizkaia will once again be the focus of attention of one of the most important events for renewable energies. This international event is once again a magnificent occasion to show the institutional unity around the development of renewable energies, as well as the strengths of the sector and the international leadership of some of our companies in the wind energy market. It places us in an unbeatable position to address environmental and energy transitions. In addition, the return of the*

WindEurope Annual Event sends a message of optimism for, recovery, growth and major congresses and professional meetings in general."

Xabier Ochandiano, Councillor for Economic Development, Trade and Employment in the Bilbao City Council, said: *"After the pleasant and successful experience of 2019, this event is back again, placing us, once more, among the great congresses in Europe. For us, Wind Europe 2022 is synonymous with the future, talent, innovation, new ways of doing things and producing in a small country like ours, but with a lot of industrial and entrepreneurial wisdom. The previous edition was a success both in terms of professional public and exhibitors. And I am sure that success is going to repeat itself. I hope that, once again, we will be able to demonstrate our great organisational capacity and prove ourselves as a host city for major quality events. And that companies and research centres that visit us, reinforce the image of us as a driving force behind economic and industrial activity, research, talent and entrepreneurship, with a clear and strong commitment to new technologies and energy sources."*

Spain is the second biggest country in Europe for wind energy. It has 27 GW of wind farms which generated 60 TWh in 2020. Wind is 22% of its electricity. The Spanish Government wants 50 GW of wind by 2030. Its new Contract-for-Difference auction now delivers the cheapest wind energy in Europe: €20-28/MWh. The rapid progress of floating wind will enable Spain to start developing wind farms offshore. And Spanish companies are at the forefront of Europe's emerging renewable hydrogen economy.

Representing the Spanish wind industry, **Juan Diego Diaz, President of the Spanish Wind Energy Association (AEE)**, said: *"Wind power is already the backbone of our electricity mix. It is the number one technology in terms of installed power and electricity generation. We will maintain this position over the next decade to reach 50.3 GW in 2030 according to our PNIEC. The reality we are now experiencing is the result of the constant and responsible work of an energy, industrial and innovation sector that is strategic for the Spanish economy and for Europe. As you know, in Spain we have the whole industrial and technological value chain of the sector, something that has been in our sector's DNA since its beginnings. The presence of more than 230 industrial centres in our country is a clear sign of the strength and resilience of the sector. Spain creates technology and manufactures equipment and components for the wind sector, positioning itself as the third largest exporter in the world. In the European wind sector, we will have to face together the main challenges for 2030, and the place to discuss them and share experiences will be the WindEurope Annual Event 2022 in Bilbao."*

Bilbao, the province of Bizkaia and the Basque Country play a key role in Spain's wind industry. The region has become a significant industrial cluster for wind energy, creating jobs, economic value and local tax revenues. The Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy and Iberdrola headquarters in Bilbao are just some examples of the importance of the industry in and around Bilbao.

Andreas Nauen, CEO of Siemens Gamesa and WindEurope Chairman, said: *"We are delighted that the WindEurope Annual Event 2022 will gather the whole industry in Bilbao – where the headquarter of Siemens Gamesa is located. This is testament to the leadership the Basque Country and Spain has in the wind industry, especially in terms of innovation and technology. We are looking forward to fruitful exchanges that will further drive the success of our industry."*



Xabier Viteri, CEO Iberdrola Renewables, said: *“Iberdrola very much supports the return of WindEurope’s annual event to Bilbao, a key platform for continuing to power a better future, with wind energy as a key driver for the decarbonisation of the economy. We hope to see you all there for some networking over excellent Basque cuisine.”*

The press conference was concluded by **José Ignacio Hormaeche, Director General of the Basque Energy Cluster**, who said: *“The appointment of Bilbao to host the Wind Europe event in 2022 confirms the Basque Country as one of the most important industrial ‘hubs’ of the wind sector in Europe. The competitiveness and excellent positioning of the Basque wind value chain on the global markets for wind energy is the main driver for companies and experts from all over the world to meet again in Bilbao. And to keep on boosting wind energy as a fundamental pillar of the energy transition. In the Basque Country we “breathe” wind power and we embrace it as one of our key industries to create wealth and high-quality jobs.”*