

Key outcomes and highlights of the Geothermal Synergy webinar

The *Geothermal Synergy Webinar*, held on December 10, 2024 brought together about one hundred of participants from Poland, Iceland, and some other European countries to explore the transformative potential of geothermal energy. The event consisted of three main parts:

- Project Launch Meeting,
- Webinar on Geothermal basics, Iceland's experience, and Polish examples for stakeholders,
- Panel discussion.

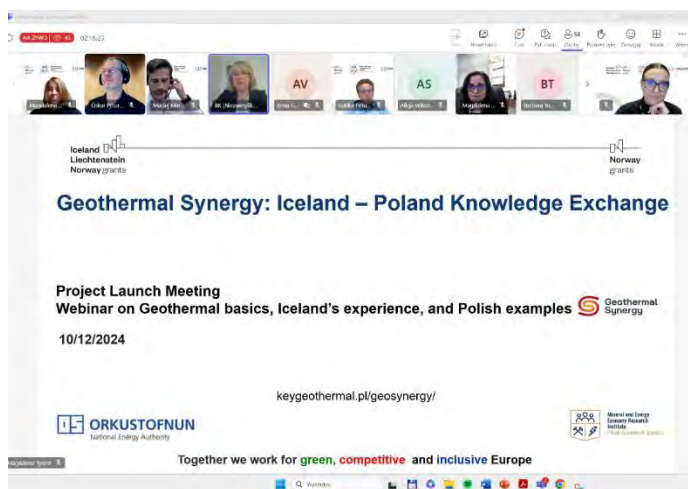
The Webinar was organised by National Energy Authority of Iceland, and Mineral & Energy Economy Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences – partners in the project co-funded by EEA FM and NFM, 2014-2021.

It event served as a platform to foster international collaboration, exchange technical expertise, and strengthen policy frameworks to support geothermal energy development. Through a series of expert presentations, discussions, and panel sessions, the webinar highlighted key outcomes and set the stage for future cooperation between stakeholders.

One of the core themes of the Webinar was the importance of **knowledge exchange**. Iceland's decades-long experience in geothermal energy development was showcased as a model for Poland's energy transition. Experts from Orkustofnun and Verkís provided insights into Iceland's technological advancements, particularly in geothermal exploration, district heating, and sustainable energy management. They also shared their observations on current geothermal development in Poland and future prospects, especially in space heating. This knowledge sharing underscored the opportunities for Poland to adopt and adapt proven practices to accelerate its geothermal initiatives. And vice-versa, Icelandic experts pointed out what they can learn from geothermal experts.

The webinar featured a **keynote address** delivered by **Krzysztof Galos, Chief State Geologist and Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Climate & Environment**, who emphasised the national importance of geothermal energy in Poland. He highlighted its momentum role in the country's energy transition and sustainable development. The address also touched on the alignment of EU and Polish policies and strategies to leverage geothermal energy as a cornerstone of future energy systems. This keynote underscored Poland's commitment to advancing renewable energy solutions while drawing inspiration from Iceland's leadership in geothermal innovation.

Policy development was a significant focus of the discussions, with speakers emphasising the role of a regulatory framework in fostering the growth of geothermal energy. Representatives from Poland's National Fund for Environment Protection & Water Management outlined funding mechanisms and strategies to support geothermal projects, while Icelandic experts shared lessons learned from their country's policy successes. The dialogue emphasised the necessity of adopting flexible, scalable policies to create an environment conducive to geothermal growth in Poland.



The webinar also explored **collaborative success stories**, such as the KeyGeothermal Project (keygeothermal.pl), which has facilitated vital knowledge transfer and collaboration between Iceland and Poland under the EEA FM framework. These projects exemplify how international partnerships can drive technical advancements, foster innovation, and build capacity in emerging markets like Poland. The cooperation in geothermal sector between Iceland and Poland was initiated some thirty years ago and included highly-skilled professional training; knowledge exchange and summer internships for academic staff and students; conferences on geothermal cooperation opportunities; first joint geothermal projects co-funded by EEA FM / NFM (conducted in 2016–2024). These successful actions create the basis for further strengthening mutual cooperation, giving it a higher dimension and implementing it systematically in the coming years. Especially since international initiatives are in place and programs are expected that can support such deeper cooperation.



Framework assumptions for the development of geothermal energy use in Poland

- ❖ Supporting the development of geothermal energy in Poland is one of the priority tasks of government, implemented by the Ministry of Climate and Environment
- ❖ Development of geothermal energy as one of important renewable energy sources is an important goal of the Polish Energy Policy and the National Energy and Climate Program
- ❖ These strategic documents indicate the need for its multi-level development, which is confirmed by the Multiannual Programme for the Development of the Use of Geothermal Resources in Poland
- ❖ Geothermal energy is - in Polish conditions - a source primarily of heat energy, although it also has the potential (although limited) to be used for conversion into electricity
- ❖ In the context of Poland's energy transformation, geothermal energy has a secure position as one of the important renewable energy sources with a potentially high efficiency potential, but with a limited reach (as a local source of heat energy supply, allowing, among other things, to reduce the so-called low emissions)

Participants addressed strategies to strengthen bilateral cooperation between Poland and Iceland in a dynamic panel discussion. The session explored how Poland could join the GEOTHERMICA Initiative, a European public authorities collaboration for more decisive geothermal energy progress in a net-zero world. Panelists highlighted the critical role of local authorities and municipalities in initiating geothermal projects, supported by Icelandic best practices, and also by Polish good experiences. Opportunities for research, development, and innovation were also discussed, encouraging greater involvement from Poland's academic and scientific communities, as well as investors and business sector.

The webinar concluded with a forward-looking perspective on the **next steps for collaboration**. Organisers emphasised the importance of continued dialogue and practical actions, including a study tour of geothermal facilities in Iceland, further policy workshops, and the development of a comprehensive framework for long-term cooperation. By aligning Poland with the GEOTHERMICA Initiative, stakeholders aim to secure funding, share expertise, and foster a sustainable energy future.

This event highlighted still not fully used potential of geothermal energy in Poland and demonstrated the power of international collaboration in addressing global energy challenges. With a shared commitment to innovation, sustainability, and partnership, the Geothermal Synergy Webinar marks a significant step toward a cleaner and more sustainable energy future for Europe. The speaker's presentations underlined the urgency and potential of geothermal energy in Poland, providing a strong foundation for the following discussions and plans.

Outcomes and presentations are available on the project website <https://keygeothermal.pl/geosynergy/>

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