

Strengthening Poland-Iceland cooperation – The GEOTHERMICA Initiative event in Oradea, Romania

Polish delegation from MEERI PAS was invited to participate as observers at the concluding workshop of the GeoThermal Bridge Initiative (GBI), sponsored by the EEA and Norway Grants, which was held in Oradea, Romania from January 28th–30th, 2025. This event brought together influential representatives from Romania, Iceland, Poland, and other GEOTHERMICA Initiative Member States, marking an important step in advancing regional cooperation and exchanging expertise on low- to medium-temperature geothermal energy. This visit represented a pivotal step in enhancing bilateral collaboration in geothermal energy. Under the banner of the Geothermal Synergy Project, funded by the EEA and Norway Grants, key leaders and experts came together for policy dialogues and consultations with Iceland's and Romanian experts.

GeoThermal Bridge Initiative (GBI)

The GBI was created to enhance international collaboration between Central and Eastern European nations and Iceland by tapping into the potential of low- and medium-enthalpy geothermal energy resources.

Over a series of workshops, GBI has served as a forum for policymakers, scholars, researchers, and industry experts to explore innovative approaches for utilizing geothermal energy. The project has paved the way for collaborative research, academic exchanges, and joint ventures that support sustainable energy solutions and foster economic development. The Polish delegates took part in the final event as observers and presented their recent work to make a step forward to join the GEOTHERMICA Initiative.



*The Oradea Business Incubator building – one of the meeting places of the GBI event (left)
A group of participants of the GBI event in Oradea (right)*

Participation of Polish delegates from MEERI PAS in the event

As part of the GeoThermal Bridge Initiative event, delegates from Poland, alongside representatives from the GEOTHERMICA Initiative and Romania, embarked on an informative field tour of several district heating facilities and geothermal drilling sites throughout Oradea city. Renowned for its geothermal potential, Oradea provided an ideal setting for this workshop. The comprehensive

renovation of the city's existing district heating networks, combined with new geothermal investments, served as a tangible demonstration of how support from international renewable energy projects can drive local progress and elevate living standards.



Visited facilities of the general heating system in Oradea

Representatives from the member states of the GEOTHERMICA Initiative delivered a comprehensive overview of their activities. At the same time, delegates from Romania and Poland provided detailed insights into the geothermal sector and projects in their respective countries. MEERI PAS showcased the latest advancements in Poland's geothermal industry, highlighting the Geothermal Synergy Initiative alongside other innovative projects.

Highlights from the Final Workshop

The final meeting in Oradea showcased several promising directions for future collaboration between GEOTHERMICA Initiative member states and Poland:

- Strengthening expertise in geothermal technology through joint research initiatives and academic exchange programs.

- Examining new applications for geothermal energy beyond heating, including roles in food production, greenhouse agriculture, and tourism.
- Identifying strategies to further incorporate geothermal energy into district heating networks, thereby enhancing energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions.
- Emphasizing the importance of simplified legal frameworks and supportive policies to attract investment and accelerate regional geothermal development.

Strengthening Cooperation Between Poland and Iceland

A key achievement has been the establishment of a strong basis for ongoing collaboration between Poland and Iceland. By combining Iceland's extensive experience in geothermal energy with Poland's so far achievements and quite rich geothermal resources, both countries are well-positioned to further joint projects that will benefit their nations.



Panel discussion during the GBI workshop

Looking to the future

The Polish delegation's participation in the recent event organized under the GeoThermal Bridge Initiative resulted in a robust exchange of knowledge and the establishment of a clear strategy for harnessing geothermal resources in Central and Eastern Europe. The focus areas and themes explored by the GEOTHERMICA Initiative align seamlessly with Poland's envisioned development trajectory. Moreover, the delegation's involvement has significantly accelerated efforts toward Poland's integration into the initiative while fostering closer cooperation between Iceland and Poland.



A group of participants of the GBI event at the Oradea City Hall

Photographs in the text courtesy of: Magdalena Tyszer, Karol Pierzchała, Beata Kępińska (MEERI PAS)

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