

## Tirana energy independence

The Tirana Energy Forum (TEF) 2024 serves as a central platform for discussing critical issues related to energy, construction, and the green economy in Albania. This year's forum, set for November 20 at the Palace of Congresses, promises a range of insights from key industry leaders and experts. Each panel is designed to provide in-depth perspectives on the challenges and opportunities facing the Albanian energy sector. Let's delve into the first panel, which will focus on advancing the energy transition for sustainable industry and business in Albania.

The first panel, "Advancing the Energy Transition for Sustainable Industry and Business in Albania," will explore the alignment with the Green Agenda and the Economic Investment Plan for the Western Balkans. Facilitated by Lorenc Gordani, the discussion features prominent figures, including:

Ilir Shala is a seasoned professional with extensive experience in the energy sector, boasting over 25 years of expertise in Kosovo, Albania, and the Western Balkans. He holds a Master of Science in Service Management (Leadership & Innovation) from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Prishtina.

His expertise encompasses leadership, project management, and the entire lifecycle of projects, including design, engineering, supervision, and commissioning of transmission and distribution projects. He has held several key positions, including the role of CEO at KOSTT, where he led significant initiatives such as the establishment of the Kosovo-Albania Control Block, the independence of KOSTT (by negotiating and achieving a new interconnection agreement with ENTSO-E), and the Albanian Power Exchange (ALPEX).

His work also extends to consultancy roles at Voltalia, where he provided strategic guidance for major renewable energy projects in Albania and the Western Balkans. Currently, he serves as the CEO of Global Energy Solutions, a company specializing in the development of renewable energy and energy infrastructure.

Dr. Umberto Berardi is the Canada Research Chair in Building Science, a Full Professor, and the Director of the BeTOP center at Toronto Metropolitan University. His research focuses on innovative materials and solutions to enhance performance within the built environment, particularly through integrating nanotechnologies, organic bio-PCMs, and granular aerogel.

As the current President of both the Canadian Acoustical Association and the International Association of Building Physics (IABP), Dr. Berardi has an extensive publication record with over 200 peer-reviewed articles, 180 conference papers, and five books. His work includes high-impact publications in notable journals, such as *Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews* and *Applied Energy*, and has garnered approximately 19,000 citations on Google Scholar.

In addition to his research, Dr. Berardi has chaired several international conferences, including the Sustainability Forum and the International Conference on Building Physics in Toronto. He is actively involved in academic communities, serving as the Editor-in-Chief of Canadian Acoustics and holding editorial positions in various prestigious journals.

Dr. Berardi's accolades include the 2023 European Thermophysical Properties Award and the 10th Clean16 Award in Canada. He has secured over \$2.5 million in research funding from government and private sectors.

Join us at the first panel of TEF 2024 to gain valuable insights from these distinguished speakers as they explore the future of sustainable energy in Albania. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of the discussion shaping Albania's energy transition.

The Institute of Energy for SE Europe (IENE) in partnership with SEA Consulting is organizing the 3rd Tirana Energy Forum on Thursday May 30, 2024, in order to examine and discuss current aspects of Albania's energy sector but also explore its growth potential, including the furthering of cooperation with the neighboring countries.

The Forum will undertake a broader review of energy policies currently pursued in the West Balkans and Albania in particular. At the same time, the Forum will seek to explore the full range of energy resources currently being utilized by Albania and the transformation of the power system infrastructure, while it will try to map out the challenges and prospects ahead.

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