



Opening Remarks by Mr. Anastasios Tosios, IENE Partner, Leader

“Innovation in Energy Programme”

Good morning, everyone,

It is with great joy and a deep sense of responsibility that I welcome you all to the opening session of today’s conference — and to the launch of IENE’s new “Innovation in Energy” programme.

As an IENE Partner and Leader of this new initiative, today's event feels particularly meaningful. It marks not only a new beginning for IENE, but also a personal milestone in a journey that I deeply believe in: accelerating innovation in the energy sector across our region.

Innovation today is not just a trend or an option. It is the driver of our efforts towards sustainability, security, and affordability in energy. Across Europe, we witness how digital tools, data analytics, artificial intelligence, and new business models are transforming the way we produce, manage, and consume energy.

For example, **AI** is emerging as a powerful game-changer. From predictive maintenance of energy infrastructure to smart forecasting in renewables, and real-time grid balancing, AI technologies are not only enhancing operational

efficiency but also enabling greater integration of renewable and decentralized energy sources. They also help us to predict and manage energy demand more intelligently supporting both operators and consumers.

We see how countries like Germany, the Netherlands, and the Nordics have created regulatory sandboxes to foster innovation, from smart grids to hydrogen clusters and local energy communities.

Greece is also gaining momentum. We have seen important steps in the digitalization of our network operators, in the exploration of energy storage, and in early developments around demand-side flexibility. Yet, challenges remain — from fragmented coordination to regulatory complexity and the need for stronger links between public policy and private sector initiatives.

This is exactly where I believe IENE can play a transformative role.

Through the Innovation in Energy programme, our goal is to act as a catalyst — creating bridges between researchers, entrepreneurs, companies, policymakers, and investors. Our vision is not to simply host events, but to cultivate a living, breathing platform for dialogue, collaboration, and the exchange of actionable ideas. Therefore, we shall **focus on**:

- Information flow in energy markets
- Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage technology (CCUS)
- International electricity interconnections
- Smart grids and data management

- Cataloging and facilitating the promotion of innovative products and processes in energy
- Critical raw materials implemented in energy applications

In 2025 and 2026, we are preparing a dynamic calendar of activities. Our agenda includes several initiatives, such as:

- A webinar on Innovation in Energy at 20/5/2025
- A special research note on innovation's trends in Southeast Europe
- A dedicated session on Innovation in the 29th National Energy Conference "Energy & Development 2025"
- A relative microsite, featuring updates and developments in innovation in the energy sector
- A networking event with startups and stakeholders in major Southern Eastern Europe's capital cities (Athens, Sofia, Belgrade, Bucharest)

Dear colleagues, beyond events and discussions, my personal aspiration — and IENE's collective commitment — is to make innovation tangible: measurable, inclusive, and impactful.

As we set out on this new journey, I invite all of you to be part of it. Let us not only talk about innovation. Let's drive it together.

Thank you!