

EURELECTRIC Award 2013 honours IEA Chief Economist, Dr Fatih Birol

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This year's EURELECTRIC Award goes to Dr. Fatih Birol, Chief Economist of the International Energy Agency (IEA), for his outstanding contribution to improving understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the power sector. The winner was announced at the EURELECTRIC Annual Convention in Bologna today.

'Under Dr Fatih Birol's direction, the IEA's World Energy Outlook has become the most authoritative source of forward-looking energy market analysis. It has drawn attention to the huge challenges that will need to be overcome to maintain electricity supply in the decades ahead. Its finding that 2.6 trillion USD needs to be invested in the EU's power sector through to 2035 has become an iconic figure for the industry. Fatih Birol has made a unique contribution to raising awareness among policymakers, the financial community and other stakeholders of the issues the power sector has to deal with', said EURELECTRIC Electricity Ambassador and Chair of the award panel Paul Bulteel in his laudatory speech.

The nomination fits well with the 'innovative investments' theme of the 2013 EURELECTRIC convention.

A Turkish citizen, Dr Birol was born in Ankara in 1958. He earned a BSc degree in power engineering from the Technical University of Istanbul and received his MSc and PhD in energy economics from the Technical University of Vienna. He worked for six years in the Secretariat of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna, before joining the IEA in 1995. He is now the IEA's Chief Economist and also the founder and chair of the IEA Energy Business Council, which provides a forum to enhance cooperation between the energy industry and energy policymakers. Dr Birol has been named by Forbes Magazine among the most powerful people in terms of influence on the world's energy scene. He is the Chairman of the World Economic Forum's (Davos) Energy Advisory Board. In 2012, he received the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, the country's highest honour. In 2009, alongside awards from the Dutch and Polish governments, Dr Birol received Germany's Federal Cross of Merit, the country's most prestigious decoration.

In addition to the industry award, a special student award was presented to Hjalmar Braemer, studying for a Master's degree in Sustainable Energy Systems at the University of Applied Sciences Pinkafeld (Austria), for the best essay on this year's conference theme of innovation.

The EURELECTRIC Award was inaugurated at the EURELECTRIC Convention in 2008. It seeks to honour companies or persons that have made a pioneering contribution towards the development of the electricity industry. Since 2010, EURELECTRIC has also organised a formal student competition as an integral part of its Annual Convention.

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