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**Southeast Europe needs  
more cross-border capacity  
and flexibility to strengthen  
electricity markets**

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

- 4** Southeast Europe needs more cross-border capacity and flexibility to strengthen electricity markets
- 8** Interview with Petros Petropoulos, Events & Exhibitions Manager at PL Events
- 10** Diehl Aviation expands into Eastern Europe with new Romanian plant
- 10** Slovenian energy company buys battery storage systems in Bulgaria
- 11** DEHN opens new plant in Romania to meet rising European demand
- 12** TITE x IHT 2026 launches Global Buyer Invitation Program
- 14** MachTech&InnoTech Expo 2026 to bring together the latest industrial technologies
- 14** Eurasia Packaging Istanbul 2026 to take place in October
- 15** The future of industrial measurement and non-destructive testing on display at Control-Tech 2026
- 15** Solarplaza Summit Bulgaria explores the next phase of solar growth

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# Rethinking energy: How Eastern Europe turns solar growth into system value

Across the agricultural plains and industrial corridors of Eastern Europe, solar arrays silently harvest sunlight, feeding power into regional transmission networks. From the rolling fields of southern Romania to Bulgaria's Danubian valleys, photovoltaic modules generate electricity at a scale unimagined a decade ago. This regional transformation reflects a fundamental structural shift in the broader European power market. According to Eurostat, wind and solar power generated 30.7% of the European Union's electricity in 2025, outperforming fossil fuels – which supplied 29.0% – for the first time in recorded history. Globally, the renewable energy transition reached a parallel milestone. SolarPower Europe's Global Solar Market Outlook 2026 – 2030 reports that developers installed 664 GW of new solar capacity worldwide in 2025, pushing the cumulative global fleet past the 3 TW threshold early in 2026 – less than two years after reaching the 2 TW mark.

Yet this rapid deployment presents grid operators, utilities and project developers with a complex operational reality. Building generation capacity represents only the first phase of a successful energy transition. The current market demands a focus on system integration, grid stability and intelligent power dispatch.

## The challenge of solar overcapacity

On clear summer afternoons, thousands of solar systems generate power simultaneously across Eastern Europe. Because this output concentrates heavily during midday hours, electricity production frequently outstrips real-time regional demand. Transmission networks reach their physical limits quickly. System operators must curtail generation to maintain grid stability and prevent infrastructure damage. Consequently, wholesale power prices decline rapidly and often plunge into zero or negative territory. Asset owners find themselves producing maximum physical electricity precisely when the market value touches bottom.

When the sun sets and regional power demand surges during evening hours, solar output drops to zero. To balance the grid, utilities historically restart conventional power plants and rely heavily on imported natural gas. This structural dependence on fossil fuel generation exposes power markets to high price volatility. Ember analysis highlights that generating electricity with a typical gas power plant averaged EUR 111 per MWh in Italy in 2025. Gas generation generally has higher marginal costs and often drives wholesale prices in European power markets.



## The economic case for battery storage

Battery energy storage systems address these grid congestion and price volatility challenges directly. By storing excess midday solar generation and dispatching it during evening demand peaks, batteries compete with costly gas peaker plants. The economic advantage provides a compelling business case for developers. According to Ember, time-shifted renewable power stored in a battery costs approximately EUR 64 per MWh. Storing low-cost solar electricity during midday peaks and injecting it into the grid during high demand hours offers a market-driven solution to price volatility.

Market data reflects this shift in investment strategy across the continent. Data from the European Battery Market Outlook 2026 – 2030 by SolarPower Europe shows that Europe installed 36 GWh of new battery capacity in 2025. This marks a 48% year-on-year increase and pushes the European operating fleet past the 100 GWh milestone. Utility-scale systems drive this deployment, accounting for over half of the yearly capacity additions.

## Eastern Europe takes the spotlight

Eastern European markets capture a significant share of this storage growth and signal a geographical diversification of the sector. Project developers move away from simple generation expansion toward complex system integration. According to SolarPower Europe, Bulgaria joined the top five European storage markets for the first time in 2025. The country added 2.7 GWh of connected capacity, representing a 1,061% year-on-year surge supported by EU funding rounds targeting utility-scale storage.

Neighboring countries demonstrate similar momentum. In Ukraine, power producers installed 2.9 GWh of storage assets to manage severe generation deficits and secure decentralized power delivery. Romania establishes a substantial development pipeline, currently holding 3.1 GWh of supported utility-scale battery projects advancing toward commercial operation. A combination of support programs for prosumers and large-scale batteries alongside accelerated permitting procedures positions the Romanian battery market to double in size for the second consecutive year.

## Evolving business models and firm power

This regional expansion marks a transition from volume-driven capacity growth toward system value optimization. Developers no longer ask only how many megawatts of solar panels they can connect to the local grid. Commercial strategies now emphasize flexible and multi-revenue business models. Modern hybrid power assets combine photovoltaic generation with battery storage



and intelligent trading software. This setup allows operators to participate in day-ahead and intra-day markets, supply ancillary grid balancing services and insulate projects against merchant price risks.

Corporate energy consumers increasingly seek firm renewable supply through long-term power purchase agreements (PPAs) to manage their own costs. At the same time, large-scale digital infrastructure investments require continuous and non-intermittent electricity. Data centers, cloud computing facilities and artificial intelligence processing hubs expand across Eastern Europe, creating massive new demand loads that variable solar alone cannot meet. Storage helps bridge this gap as part of a wider equation involving grid flexibility and supply.

## Intersolar Summit Romania: Scaling solar from market growth to system value

Managing the transition from solar deployment to system integration requires close coordination among regional stakeholders. Industry professionals gather to address these exact challenges at the Intersolar Summit Romania. The event is the Eastern European solar, storage and flexibility summit. Taking place on October 13 – 14, 2026 at the NORD Events Center by Globalworth in Bucharest, the summit provides a professional platform for project developers, utilities, grid operators, investors, service providers and policymakers. Participants discuss market dynamics, regulatory frameworks and new revenue streams in detail.

The comprehensive summit program features expert-led sessions focused on the practical challenges of the energy transition and the optimization of utility-scale photovoltaics. Central topics include PV integration, co-location strategies, storage optimization and firm power solutions designed to stabilize grid injection. Key discussions analyze merchant market dynamics, corporate power purchase agreements (PPAs) and financing models for hybrid assets as well as cross-sector integration strategies. The program also examines emerging demand-side factors, carefully analyzing the infrastructure requirements and the direct impact of large-scale digital infrastructure on the regional grid.



Beyond the technical presentations, the summit offers a structured environment for market participants to identify commercial opportunities, evaluate project pipelines and address regulatory challenges. It serves as a dedicated networking hub to negotiate partnerships and analyze regional investment conditions tailored to the Eastern European energy market. With more than 350 decision-makers, 25 expert speakers and 15 partners representing the renewable energy value chain, the event highlights Eastern Europe's strategic position in the energy transition. Part of the global Intersolar series, this summit delivers the market insights and business connections necessary to support the structured deployment of renewable energy.

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# Southeast Europe needs more cross-border capacity and flexibility to strengthen electricity markets

Southeast Europe's electricity markets continue to face structural challenges that can amplify price volatility during periods of system stress. The sharp increase in electricity prices observed across the region during the summer of 2024 highlighted the consequences of limited cross-border transmission capacity, tight regional supply-demand conditions and insufficient flexibility.

These issues are examined in the report „Increasing cross-zonal capacity & flexibility in SEE“, prepared by the European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) following a request from the European Commission. The report assesses measures that could increase cross-zonal capacities and system flexibility in Southeast Europe and help prevent or mitigate similar price developments in the future.

According to ACER, the price spikes recorded in 2024 resulted from a combination of tight regional supply-demand conditions and a limited ability to import electricity from the rest of the EU. Periods of high demand, often linked to extreme weather conditions, coincided with limited flexible supply capable of responding rapidly to changing system needs. At the same time, increased reliance on a relatively small pool of flexible generation assets to meet evening demand peaks put strong upward pressure on prices.

The situation was further compounded by limited cross-border transmission capacity. Planned line outages reduced the possibilities for importing lower-priced electricity from neighbouring markets, leaving the region more exposed to tight domestic supply conditions.

The report also points to the persistence of these challenges beyond the summer of 2024. Although price levels in 2025 did not reach the highs recorded during that period, significant price differences between Southeast and Central Europe continued throughout 2025 and into the first months of 2026. According to the report, this suggests that the developments observed in 2024 were not solely the result of exceptional cir-



cumstances, but also reflected more structural challenges affecting the region.

## Making better use of the existing network

In the near term, the report identifies the optimisation of existing transmission infrastructure as an important opportunity to increase cross-border trade towards Southeast Europe and mitigate electricity price volatility.

Rather than relying exclusively on conventional grid expansion, the report recommends prioritising lower-cost and faster-to-deploy upgrades that can increase the capacity of the existing network. Dynamic line rating is highlighted as one technology that could contribute to this objective. It allows the admissible power flow of a line to be adjusted according to measured or forecast ambient conditions.

The report also points to upgrading traditional power lines with high-temperature low-sag conductors. Such solutions can provide additional transmission capacity without waiting for conventional network expansion to be completed. ACER notes that these technologies can „unlock additional transmission capacity more quickly and at

lower cost than conventional grid expansion“.

The report recommends that transmission system operators across Central and Southeast Europe assess these solutions and accelerate their deployment in congested areas of the network. This is particularly important ahead of future periods of seasonal stress, when limited transmission capacity could once again restrict the region's ability to access electricity from neighbouring markets.

## Stronger regional coordination

Increasing available transmission capacity is not only a question of physical infrastructure. The report also identifies regional coordination as an important factor in ensuring that the available network capacity is used as effectively as possible.

One area requiring improvement is the coordination of regional outage planning. Planned outages can reduce the capacity available for cross-border electricity exchanges, and the report stresses the need to minimise their impact on market outcomes. More effective coordination can therefore help limit situations in which network availability is reduced during periods of system stress.

The report also highlights the more efficient use of curative remedial actions in capacity calculation. Such measures can help optimise the capacity made available to the market during periods of stress while maintaining operational security. In this way, the existing network can be used more effectively without compromising the safe operation of the electricity system.

These measures form part of the shorter-term actions identified by ACER. Their purpose is to increase the amount of capacity that can be made available to the market without relying solely on new transmission infrastructure.

**Completing market integration**

Alongside network optimisation, the report underlines the importance of deeper electricity market integration in Southeast Europe. The region would benefit from implementing existing EU legal and regulatory requirements aimed at strengthening market integration.

Among the measures identified is completing the implementation of the minimum 70% requirement, particularly in Central Europe. The report also calls for market coupling to be extended to non-EU neighbours in Southeast Europe and for flow-based capacity calculation and allocation to be progressively introduced in the region.

The need for greater integration is closely connected to the price differences observed between Southeast Europe and the rest of the EU. The report states that persistent differences between Southeast and Central Europe indicate that network constraints continue to limit the effective integration of the region with neighbouring markets.

The limited ability to import electricity was already an important factor during the 2024 price spikes. Strengthening the mechanisms through which electricity markets are integrated can therefore improve the region's ability to benefit



from electricity available in neighbouring markets when local supply-demand conditions become tight.

**Structural network bottlenecks require investment**

Operational improvements and better market integration cannot eliminate every constraint. The report identifies structural bottlenecks between Central and Southeast Europe that require targeted network reinforcement.

Persistent price differences indicate that network constraints continue to limit the effective integration of Southeast Europe with neighbouring markets. For this reason, the report calls for network investments to be accelerated where they can provide significant benefits for regional market integration and security of supply.

The report recommends prioritising projects with a high impact on these objectives where their expected benefits justify faster delivery. At the same time, the distribution of the costs associated with such investments needs to be considered at regional level.

ACER stresses that effective cost-sharing mechanisms remain essential to ensure a fair

distribution of costs and benefits among the Member States concerned. This is particularly relevant when the main benefits of an investment extend beyond the Member State in which the project itself is carried out.

Strengthening electricity market integration in Southeast Europe therefore requires both better utilisation of existing infrastructure and targeted investment in the network where structural constraints remain.

**Flexibility can bridge the gap to evening peaks**

The other major element identified in the report is system flexibility. Greater flexibility is needed to reduce both the frequency and severity of future electricity price spikes.

The issue is particularly important during the transition from the central hours of the day towards the evening, when demand conditions can change rapidly. The report stresses the importance of improving the system's ability to respond to sharp changes in supply and demand, particularly during evening peaks.

According to ACER, this requires the removal of market and regulatory barriers to the par-

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## VESS breaks ground on Bulgaria's first vanadium flow battery plant



Photo: VESS

On 16 July 2026, Vanadium Energy Storage Systems (VESS) broke ground on Bulgaria's first automated vanadium flow battery (VFB) manufacturing plant, marking a major step in the country's clean energy transition. Located in the Zagore-Elenino Industrial Zone in Stara Zagora, the facility will form a key part of HEROS Park, an integrated industrial ecosystem focused on renewable energy technologies. Covering 6928,7 sq m, the plant will host Bulgaria's first fully automated production line for vanadium flow battery stacks, a core component of long-duration energy storage systems. The technology is intended to support renewable energy integration, grid stabilisation, industrial facilities, data centres and critical infrastructure. The plant is expected to create more than 120 highly skilled jobs.

## TeraPlast Group opens polyethylene pipe factory in Spain



Photo: TeraPlast Group

Romania's TeraPlast Group inaugurated its new TeraPlast Iberia polyethylene pipe factory in Okondo, Spain, on July 23, 2026, marking an important step in its strategy to expand across European markets. With an annual production capacity of 16 000 tonnes, the facility is strategically positioned to serve customers in Western Europe and North Africa. The factory employs 79 people and already has a solid customer base in Spain, France and Germany. TeraPlast Iberia is expected to become a strategic hub for expanding the Group's operations in Western Europe and strengthening its international presence.



participation of distributed energy resources. The report also points to the need to mobilise investment in storage and other flexible generation. These measures can broaden the range of resources available when the electricity system comes under pressure. Greater flexibility would reduce reliance on a relatively small pool of flexible generation assets to cover evening demand peaks, which was one of the factors contributing to upward price pressure during summer 2024.

The report therefore approaches flexibility as an essential complement to cross-border capacity. Even where additional electricity can be imported, the system needs sufficient flexibility to respond effectively to changes in supply and demand.

## Demand as a source of flexibility

The report also highlights the importance of stronger participation of demand in wholesale electricity markets. Demand-side participation, combined with further deployment of short-term flexibility resources, can strengthen the resilience of electricity systems across Southeast Europe. According to ACER, these measures can increase competitive pressure during periods of tight market conditions and support more stable and efficient price formation. This gives flexibility a role that extends beyond the availability of generation. The report specifically links system resilience to the participation of demand and distributed energy resources, alongside storage and other flexible resources.

Removing market and regulatory barriers is therefore presented as an important condition for unlocking this potential. Greater participation of demand in wholesale markets could provide an additional response when supply-demand conditions become tight and contribute to more efficient market outcomes.

## Beyond the 2024 price spikes

The central message of the report is that the electricity price spikes experienced in Southeast Europe during summer 2024 should not be considered solely the result of exceptional circumstances. ACER concludes that the episode was also linked to deeper structural challenges.

The report states that the price spikes were „likely not an isolated event caused only by exceptional weather conditions or specific network maintenance“. Instead, they also reflected structural challenges associated with the regional supply-demand balance, market structure and degree of interconnectivity.

The persistence of significant price differences between Southeast and Central Europe during 2025 and the first months of 2026 further supports the report's conclusion that the region faces challenges extending beyond the conditions of summer 2024.

The response outlined by ACER combines measures aimed at improving the use of existing infrastructure with longer-term actions addressing structural network constraints. It also places greater system flexibility and deeper electricity market integration at the centre of efforts to strengthen the region's resilience.

The report concludes that „Deeper integration of Southeast Europe with the rest of the EU, together with increased system flexibility, can help mitigate future periods of system stress in the region“.

For Southeast Europe, increasing cross-zonal capacity and flexibility is therefore not a single infrastructure task, but a combination of measures involving the existing network, regional co-ordination, market integration, network investment and system flexibility. According to the report, addressing these areas together can improve the region's ability to manage tight electricity system conditions and reduce the likelihood and severity of future price spikes.

# Olmet Technology: Optimizing turbine blasting for efficient, uninterrupted production

For Olmet Technology, effective turbine blasting and surface preparation are essential to achieving high product quality, efficient production and controlled operating costs. This is why the company approaches every project as an engineered technological solution, focusing on the customer's specific requirements and the overall production process.

Olmet Technology is the official representative in Bulgaria of the Slovenian manufacturer of turbine shot blasting machines STEM. Rumen Olimpiev, Owner and Manager of Olmet Technology, has been working with STEM for more than 25 years. Over this period, the company has developed extensive expertise in turbine blasting technology, surface preparation and blasting abrasives.

## Engineered solutions for demanding applications

STEM was founded by engineers who believed that turbine blasting machines and surface preparation systems should not be treated as standard equipment. Their focus has always been on technological development, flexibility in meeting customer requirements and a creative approach to solving technological challenges.

Today, the portfolio includes automatic turbine blasting machines, customized shot blasting systems, integrated blasting and painting lines, heavy-duty solutions for foundry blasting and specialized equipment for complex industrial blasting applications.

The equipment is supplied to foundries, steel structure manufacturers, shipbuilding and ship repair companies, railway wagon producers, automotive manufacturers, energy facilities, defense industry enterprises and nuclear energy plants.

Foundry blasting is particularly demanding, as the process takes place under extreme conditions. Durability, turbine efficiency, abrasive control and wear protection are critical factors. This is why turbine blasting solutions are widely used in heavy industrial applications, while customized systems are developed according to specific production processes and surface preparation requirements.

## Surface preparation is critical to product quality

Customer requirements for shot blasting technology have changed significantly over the past decades. In the early years, blasting was often underestimated and companies were reluctant to invest in dedicated equipment. It later became clear that proper blasting is critical to overall product quality.

Good corrosion protection requires proper surface preparation, including optimal roughness and high cleanliness standards. Manufacturers are increasingly looking for consistent quality and extended warranties, while recognizing the additional costs that can result from skipping or inadequately performing this technological step.

At the same time, reliable technical service has become increasingly important. Customers need specialists who understand both equipment performance and the process itself, and who can monitor and control the results.

This is where Olmet Technology sees its added value. The company does not position itself merely as a seller of machines and abrasives, but as a specialist capable of understanding the process and its specific requirements and providing complete solutions, including machinery and the appropriate consumables.

## Process optimization means higher productivity

The cost of blasting abrasive is often the first concern raised by customers. However, turbine shot blasting machines are essentially self-destructive systems, and their major cost components are electricity consumption and spare parts. With electricity costs being significant, process optimization is therefore crucial.

Olmet Technology provides technical service and consultation focused on the blasting process itself. The objective is clear: optimal settings, optimized costs and maximum productivity.

To support this approach, the company has invested in a mobile laboratory equipped with instruments for monitoring key blasting parameters. Simulation software and patented devices are also used to convert visual cleanliness standards into measurable and comparable values through colorimetric analysis.

Technical visits conclude with expert reports that provide customers with an overview of the current situation, potential areas for cost savings, opportunities for improvement and the steps required for optimization.

## The right abrasive is part of the solution

Olmet Technology also supplies blasting abrasives. Selecting the right abrasive is not simply a matter of price. The abrasive must be suitable for the material being blasted and the required surface roughness, while also matching the turbine energy, desired cleanliness class and productivity targets.

The company follows three principles: fast, cheap and high quality – while recognizing that all three cannot be achieved simultaneously. A process that is fast and high quality will not be cheap; one that is cheap and high quality will not be fast. In industrial turbine blasting and surface preparation, choosing the cheapest option can therefore result in higher overall costs.

## Uninterrupted production as a priority

After equipment is sold, Olmet Technology continues to act as a technical partner. In the event of a technical issue, STEM responds with service or parts, while a subsequent investigation identifies the cause. The priority is uninterrupted production.

Good service, process monitoring and a timely response are central to the company's approach. Rather than simply reacting to problems, Olmet Technology aims to anticipate them and provide preventive support. Out-of-warranty service is handled in the same way as during the warranty period, which also enables the company to offer extended warranties.

This long-term approach has helped Olmet Technology build trusted relationships with leading Bulgarian companies. Olmet Technology's machines operate at every railway wagon manufacturer in Bulgaria, while its equipment is also used by major defense industry companies. A complete blasting and painting line operates at Odessos Shiprepair Yard in Varna, and machines are also installed at Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant. More than 100 clients in Bulgaria currently operate over 130 machines.

## Technology and human trust

The next decade will bring further developments in turbine blasting and surface preparation. AI will support diagnostics, while smart turbine blasting systems are expected to become increasingly common. STEM is already working and investing in this direction.

Yet, alongside technological development, human trust remains essential. For Olmet Technology, successful cooperation is based on being a reliable technical partner who understands the equipment and the process, provides support when needed and protects the customer's interests.

In industrial blasting and surface preparation, technology is only part of the equation. Engineering expertise, process optimization, reliable service and long-term trust are what make it possible to achieve the ultimate goal: efficient, high-quality and uninterrupted production.

## Shotblasting machine expert



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STEM d.o.o. company has more than 30 years long tradition in shotblasting technology with the unique aim to develop and produce shot blasting machines with top quality solutions for the purposes of surface treatment (cleaning, matting, shot peening, stress peening, roughening and others).



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# Our long-term objective is to establish A&R Expo as an annual international meeting point for the SEE region

Petros Petropoulos,  
Events & Exhibitions Manager at PL Events,  
for South-East European Industrial Market Magazine

## Following two successful editions of Automation & Robotics Expo, how would you assess the event's development? Which trends are shaping the future of the sector?

The development of Automation & Robotics Expo (A&R Expo) has exceeded our initial expectations. When we launched the exhibition in 2024, our vision was to create a dedicated meeting point for the rapidly evolving automation and robotics industry in Southeastern Europe (SEE). Just two editions later, the exhibition has established itself as a key regional platform where technology providers, manufacturers, system integrators, research institutions, startups and end users come together.

The sector itself is evolving at an unprecedented pace. Artificial intelligence is now transforming industrial automation, collaborative robots are becoming more accessible to companies of every size, autonomous mobile robots are revolutionizing logistics, while digital twins, machine vision and predictive maintenance are becoming standard technologies rather than future concepts. At the same time, labor shortages across Europe are accelerating investment in automation.

One of the biggest highlights of this year's edition was the significantly increased international participation, alongside high-level conferences, live demonstrations, robotics competitions and presentations of real industrial applications. Visitors were looking for practical solutions rather than theoretical concepts, which demonstrated the maturity of the market.

## In what ways has the second edition built on and expanded the inaugural event?

The second edition represented a major step forward in every aspect. We welcomed more exhibitors, more international companies, larger exhibition spaces and a broader range of technologies covering industrial automation, robotics, AI, smart manufacturing and Industry 4.0.

We also noticed an important evolution in visitor quality. Decision-makers, factory owners, production managers, engineers, system designers, and investors represented a much larger percentage of attendees. Companies visited with specific investment projects in mind and concrete purchasing plans, making discussions more focused and productive.



## Are there plans to organize the event annually in the coming years?

Our long-term objective is to establish Automation & Robotics Expo as an annual international meeting point for the region. The strong response from exhibitors and visitors gives us confidence that there is both demand and momentum to continue expanding the exhibition year after year.

## What feedback have you received about the format's effectiveness as a B2B platform? How does the event position Greece and the region on the global map of industrial innovation?

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Exhibitors consistently reported meeting high-quality business contacts, identifying new distributors and partners, and initiating projects that continued after the exhibition. Many companies described the event as highly targeted because nearly every visitor had a genuine professional interest in automation and robotics.

Our goal is not simply to organize another trade exhibition. We aim to build an international ecosystem that connects industry, academia, startups,

We believe the region has enormous potential to become an important hub for advanced manufacturing and industrial innovation, and exhibitions like ours contribute by bringing together the right stakeholders under one roof.

Sophia attracted tremendous interest throughout the exhibition. While she was certainly one of the most photographed attractions, what impressed us most was the depth of the conversations she generated among professionals.

Her presence highlighted the growing convergence between robotics, artificial intelligence and human-centered design, which is exactly the type of discussion Automation & Robotics Expo aims to encourage.

Bulgaria has an increasingly dynamic technology ecosystem, with strong

We would be delighted to welcome even more Bulgarian exhibitors, technology providers, research institutions and industry organizations in future editions. Automation & Robotics Expo offers direct access to decision-makers from Greece and the wider Southeast European market, while also creating opportunities for cross-border partnerships and European collaboration.

Innovation grows through international cooperation, and we believe Greece and Bulgaria have tremendous opportunities to build stronger industrial and technological partnerships together.

Absolutely. Robotics, automation and artificial intelligence are no longer stand-alone sectors – they are becoming horizontal technologies that influence virtually every industry.

This is reflected across our entire exhibition portfolio. In Syskevasia, we see increasing adoption of automated packaging lines, robotic palletizing and smart logistics. Plastica showcases advanced manufacturing technologies and intelligent production systems. Printing Show increasingly focuses on digital workflows, automation and AI-driven production. Chem Expo highlights laboratory automation, process control and quality assurance technologies, while Cleantech demonstrates how intelligent automation supports sustainability, energy efficiency and environmental performance.

We believe the boundaries between industries are becoming increasingly interconnected. Future innovation will emerge where robotics, AI, automation, digitalization and sustainability converge. As exhibition organizers, our role is to create platforms that encourage these cross-sector collaborations and accelerate the adoption of next-generation technologies across industry.

south-east european **INDUSTRIAL MARKET** 9

# Diehl Aviation expands into Eastern Europe with new Romanian plant

Diehl Aviation has opened a new production facility in Craiova, Romania, adding another link to its European manufacturing network and giving the company extra capacity to build components for commercial aircraft. The site was inaugurated in a ceremony attended by employees, business partners, and public officials from both Germany and Romania, including German Ambassador to Romania Angela Ganninger, Craiova Mayor Lia-Olguta Vasilescu, and Cosmin Dorin Casile, President of the Dolj County Council. Their presence underscored the local and diplomatic significance of the project, which now stands alongside Diehl Aviation's existing sites in Germany, Hungary, and Mexico.

What stands out most about the Craiova plant is the speed of its construction. The facility, which spans more than 12 000 square meters of production and office space on a 33 500 square meter plot, was developed and completed in under a year. The project was backed by a mid-double-digit million euro investment, and the company describes it as a significant step in its broader growth strategy.

Roughly 75 employees will staff the site during its initial phase of operations. That number is



Photo: Diehl Aviation

expected to grow substantially, with Diehl Aviation aiming for a workforce of up to 500 in the medium term. The building itself was designed with room to grow, allowing for further expansion down the line if demand requires it.

In its early stages, the Craiova facility will focus on manufacturing products that are already established elsewhere in Diehl Aviation's production system. These include manually laminated composite components for aircraft cabins, insulation blankets, and tanks used in aircraft water and waste systems. Rather than starting from scratch, the site will inherit proven manufactur-

ing processes, technical know-how, and quality standards transferred directly from the company's other locations.

Joerg Schuler, CEO of Diehl Aviation, framed the opening as a notable point in the company's development. He thanked Romanian authorities and the company's local partner, Global Vision, for their role in bringing the project to completion. According to Schuler, the new plant will not only expand the company's manufacturing capabilities but also reinforce its capacity to meet the quality, reliability, and delivery expectations of customers around the world.

## Slovenian energy company buys battery storage systems in Bulgaria

GEN-I Invest, the investment arm of the GEN-I Group focused on renewable energy, has completed the purchase of three battery energy storage systems in Bulgaria, marking the company's first move into a market outside Slovenia. The three installations, located in Belovo, Momchilgrad, and Parvomay, have a combined capacity of 30 MW and can store 76 MWh of electricity. The deal closed in June 2026 and brings GEN-I Invest's total battery storage portfolio to 42 MW and 100 MWh.

With the acquisition, GEN-I Group becomes one of the larger regional players in battery storage operations. The company says it will manage the participation of these systems in Bulgaria's energy markets, which it expects will help stabilize the country's power grid as it absorbs more electricity from wind and solar sources.

The Bulgarian purchase builds on a series of international investments GEN-I Group began in 2022, when it started building solar power plants in North Macedonia. Those projects, completed in 2022 and 2024, now total 29 MW of capacity. Oversight of the group's international investments later passed to GEN-I Invest, a subsidiary set up to focus on Central and South-Eastern Europe, with a particular emphasis on battery storage and large-scale renewable energy projects.

Last year, GEN-I Invest acquired a battery system in Kidricevo, Slovenia. The Bulgarian deal is its first venture beyond national borders and represents a notable step in the company's expansion plans. GEN-I Invest has



said it intends to add a further 100 MW of battery capacity through additional acquisitions before the end of 2026.

Battery storage is increasingly viewed as central to managing the shift toward renewable energy, since it allows grids to absorb larger volumes of variable solar and wind power while smoothing out fluctuations in supply and demand. As GEN-I Group continues to build out its holdings in renewables and storage across the region, the company is positioning itself as a more active participant in shaping how Europe's energy markets adapt to that transition.

# DEHN opens new plant in Romania to meet rising European demand

DEHN, a family-run business based in Neu-markt, Germany, which specialises in lightning protection, surge protection and safety equipment, has started production at a new site in Pitesti, Romania, roughly two hours' drive north-west of Bucharest. The plant became operational in July 2026, less than a year after ground was first broken there – a timeline the company points to as evidence of how smoothly the project came together.

The move follows an earlier expansion closer to home. In spring 2023, DEHN opened a new production facility at its Muehlhausen site in Germany. That expansion, combined with growing demand from customers across Europe, prompted the company to look for an additional base on the continent – one that could take on a different kind of work than its existing German plants and give it more flexibility in responding to orders from across the region.

That difference in function is central to how the new site fits into DEHN's operations. The company's plants in Neu-markt and Muehlhausen are built around high production volumes and heavily automated processes. Pitesti works dif-



Photo: DEHN

ferently: it is set up for smaller batches of products that call for a substantial amount of manual assembly, particularly surge protective devices. Rather than duplicating existing capacity, the Romanian plant is meant to complement it.

Choosing Romania followed a broader search across Europe for a location that could support this kind of work. According to the company, the

country stood out for its infrastructure and for a labour market with a strong pool of trained workers. The Pitesti site is designed to grow into a genuinely multi-functional operation: alongside production and logistics, it will eventually house human resources, marketing, IT and other administrative functions. Once fully staffed, the plant is expected to employ up to 150 people.

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# TiTE x IHT 2026 launches Global Buyer Invitation Program

The 2026 edition of the Taiwan International Tools & Hardware Expo x International Hardware Expo Taiwan (TiTE x IHT) is strengthening its international outreach with the launch of its „Global Buyer Invitation Program“. The initiative is aimed at brand owners, retail chains, importers, distributors, dealers, and corporate procurement professionals looking for new sourcing opportunities in Asia.

Co-organized by the Taiwan Hand Tool Manufacturers' Association (THTMA) and Lanza International Co., Ltd., TiTE x IHT 2026 will be held from 20 to 22 October at the Taichung International Convention and Exhibition Center (TICEC). This year's event will be held under the theme „From Manufacturing to Co-Creation“ and will focus on smart manufacturing, artificial intelligence, the transition to net-zero production, and international industrial cooperation. More than 500 exhibitors and over 1000 booths are expected.

## Building an international buyer network

Preparations for the exhibition have included an extensive international promotion campaign. In March, TiTE x IHT was presented at EISEN-WARENMESSE – International Hardware Fair Cologne in Germany through the „Taiwan Flagship Showcase“, organized by TAITRA under the commission of the International Trade Administration (TIDA), Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The showcase brought together companies from Taiwan's hand tool, fastener, and related industries under the „Team Taiwan“ concept. Product demonstrations, buyer tours, networking activities, and product launches highlighted the country's manufacturing capabilities and reliable supply chain, attracting more than 2000 buyer visits.

The promotional campaign continued in June at the Global DIY-Summit in Amsterdam, one of the leading international events for the home improvement and building materials sector. The TiTE x IHT team met with retail groups, brand owners, importers, distributors, and purchasing managers from Europe, the Americas, and Asia to introduce the October exhibition and encourage buyer participation.

According to the organizers, these activities are part of a broader strategy that combines international promotion, buyer recruitment, business matchmaking, and factory visits to create more business opportunities for exhibitors and overseas visitors.

## Sourcing combined with factory visits

To coincide with the Autumn Canton Fair, TiTE x IHT has prepared an „International Buyer Golden Sourcing Week“. Overseas visitors travelling to Asia will be encouraged to include Taichung in their business itinerary. The program

offers accommodation subsidies, business matchmaking services, and visits to local manufacturing facilities.

One of the exhibition's key advantages is its location in Central Taiwan, where manufacturers of hardware, hand tools, precision machinery, metal processing equipment, and fasteners are concentrated. This allows buyers to meet suppliers at the exhibition, compare products, discuss technical specifications, and then visit nearby production sites within a short travel time.

The organizers describe this concept as „Exhibition as Factory“ or „Front-Showroom, Back-Factory“. Buyers can complete product evaluation, business meetings, and factory audits within a single day, making supplier selection faster and more efficient.

## Eight exhibition zones

TiTE x IHT 2026 will cover the entire hardware and manufacturing supply chain through eight dedicated exhibition zones. These include Tools & Accessories, Metal Processing, Plant Equipment & Industrial Safety, Automotive Service & EV, Fasteners, Garden & Outdoor, Building & Home Repair, and Digital Smart Manufacturing.

The exhibition will present solutions ranging from manufacturing and custom product development to joint research and development and integrated production systems, giving international buyers a broad overview of Taiwan's industrial capabilities.

## Strong industry support

Hsieh Wu-Chi, Chairman of the Taiwan Hand Tool Manufacturers' Association, said the association will continue supporting Taiwan's hand tool manufacturers by highlighting the strengths of the country's industrial clusters and supply chain. Through TiTE x IHT, the goal is to encourage long-term cooperation between Taiwanese manufacturers and international buyers.

Andrew Liu, General Manager of Lanza International Co., Ltd., said the exhibition will continue to focus on international marketing, buyer invitations, business matchmaking, and industrial visits to help connect overseas demand with Taiwanese suppliers.

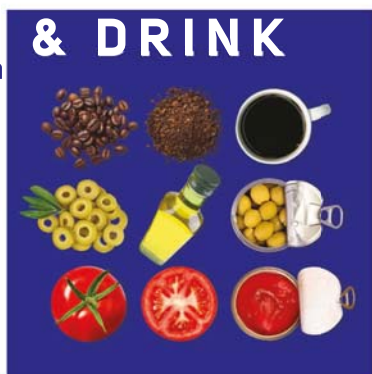
According to the organizers, more than 80% of the exhibition space has already been reserved. Applications for accommodation subsidies and participation in the Global Buyer Invitation Program are currently open, with the organizers inviting international hardware brands, distributors, importers, and OEM/ODM procurement representatives to attend the exhibition in Taichung this October.

Photo: Lanza International Co.



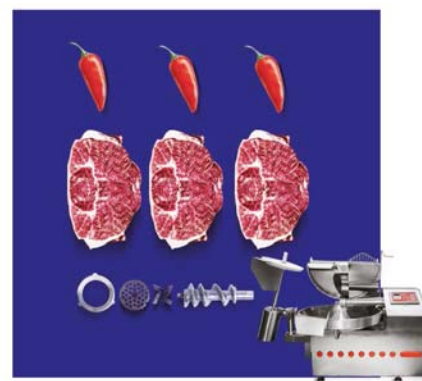
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# MachTech&InnoTech Expo 2026 to bring together the latest industrial technologies

From October 6 to 9 2026, Inter Expo Center in Sofia will bring together professionals from the metalworking, industrial technology and robotics sectors for the 17th edition of MachTech&InnoTech Expo. The event is set to create a meeting point for entrepreneurs, company owners and managers, technology developers and innovators from Europe, Asia and Africa, offering opportunities to establish business contacts and explore new solutions first-hand.

The scale of the exhibition continues to grow. The previous edition featured more than 600 brands and attracted over 16 000 visitors, while current expectations point to nearly 20% growth. Hundreds of exhibitors will present their technologies across five halls, creating an extensive environment for professional exchange and business development.

The MachTech zone will focus on metalworking and processing technologies, featuring machine tools, laser systems, welding and heat treatment technologies, machine design solutions, recycling and environmental technologies, as well as hydraulic and pneumatic equipment. InnoTech will highlight industrial automation, networks and software, industrial AI, 3D technologies, electronics, robotics, and design and de-



velopment tools. Visitors will also find specialized marketing and advertising solutions.

The event will take place alongside Inter Drone Expo, dedicated to drones, unmanned technologies, cyber security and AI. Visitors to MachTech&InnoTech Expo will receive free access to the parallel exhibition, expanding the technological scope of their visit. Tickets are

available online and will also be sold at the Inter Expo Center box office during the exhibition. With its broad international participation and focus on technologies shaping the future of industry, MachTech&InnoTech Expo is set to provide a comprehensive overview of current solutions and emerging trends in manufacturing.

Photo: Inter Expo Center

# Eurasia Packaging Istanbul 2026 to take place in October

Eurasia Packaging Istanbul 2026 will bring the packaging industry together from October 13 to 16 at the Tuyap Fair and Congress Center in Istanbul. Entering its 31st edition, the exhibition has established itself as a major business and technology platform connecting manufacturers, solution providers, investors and buyers from across Eurasia and international markets.

The scale of the 2025 edition underlined the event's strong global profile. Its 30th anniversary edition welcomed 77 165 visitors, including 14 017 international professionals from 141 countries, while more than 1200 exhibiting companies from 40 countries presented their products and technologies. Building on this momentum, the 2026 edition is expected to further strengthen international participation and business opportunities.

The exhibition will cover a broad range of technologies and solutions, from packaging materials, machinery and equipment to printing, converting and automation technologies. Food and beverage processing systems will also have a prominent place, reflecting the close relationship between packaging and one of its most important end-user industries.

Innovation and sustainability will be central themes of the 2026 edition. Dedicated areas and showcases will focus on next-generation packaging design, smart manufacturing, sustainable materials and circular economy applications, giving professionals an opportunity to explore technologies responding to changing market requirements.

Beyond technology showcases, Eurasia Packaging Istanbul is designed



to facilitate international business development, from establishing new partnerships and distribution channels to exploring export opportunities and meeting potential customers. With its strong international participation and focus on emerging technologies, the 2026 edition will once again position Istanbul as a key meeting point for the packaging industry and a venue for shaping its next stage of development.

Photo: RX Tuyap

# The future of industrial measurement and non-destructive testing on display at Control-Tech 2026

The 36th edition of the fair of industrial measuring technology and non-destructive testing Control-Tech will take place on 22 – 24 September 2026 at Targi Kielce, Poland. As the country's leading event dedicated to measurement technologies and NDT solutions, the exhibition will once again bring together manufacturers, suppliers, experts and industrial professionals looking for the latest technologies supporting quality, safety and efficiency in modern production.

Control-Tech has established itself as an international platform for presenting innovations in specialised measurement systems, analytical equipment, material testing technologies, measuring instruments and components for advanced metrological solutions. The event provides an opportunity for companies and specialists from various industrial sectors to exchange

knowledge, explore new solutions and build valuable business relationships.

A key element of the fair programme will be a series of seminars and expert lectures focused on current challenges, technological developments and future trends in industrial measurement and testing. The sessions will offer participants practical insights into innovations shaping the next generation of quality control, diagnostics and production processes.

The 2026 edition of Control-Tech will also benefit from the support of the Office of Technical Inspection (UDT), one of Poland's leading institutions responsible for the technical safety of equipment and installations, which has assumed honorary patronage over the event. According to UDT, the fair's focus on technical diagnostics, quality control and non-destructive testing closely reflects the organisation's mission of improving industrial



safety and promoting best practices.

Control-Tech is part of the Targi Kielce Industrial Autumn expo cluster, which creates a comprehensive showcase for industrial technologies. The cluster also includes events dedicated to foundry technologies, heat treatment, non-ferrous metals and industrial air conditioning and filtration, bringing together a wide range of specialists from the manufacturing sector.

Photo: Targi Kielce

# Solarplaza Summit Bulgaria explores the next phase of solar growth

Bulgaria's solar energy market is entering a new stage of development, with nearly 6 GW of installed capacity and strong momentum toward reaching 10 GW. As the sector moves beyond the initial phase of rapid capacity expansion, attention is increasingly turning to how renewable projects can be structured, financed and operated more effectively. These developments will be at the centre of Solarplaza Summit Bulgaria 2026, taking place on October 14 at Hyatt Regency Sofia.

The event will bring together developers, independent power producers, investors, financial institutions and industry advisors to examine the opportunities and challenges shaping the country's next wave of solar growth. A key focus will be the growing role of hybrid projects and co-location, particularly the combination of photovoltaic generation with battery energy storage systems. The programme will explore how these models can

support more flexible and commercially viable projects in Bulgaria's evolving electricity market.

Revenue optimisation will be another major theme. Discussions will address merchant revenues, power purchase agreements, trading strategies and aggregation models, alongside the practical considerations involved in developing standalone battery projects. Speakers will also examine the risks, pitfalls and financing requirements associated with battery energy storage, including what makes a BESS project bankable from the perspective of investors and lenders.

The summit will also look at the conditions needed to accelerate the development of the next 5 GW of solar capacity. Grid availability, permitting and curtailment remain important factors for project developers, while access to capital will be crucial for turning Bulgaria's renewable potential into new investments. An investor keynote



will examine why international capital is increasingly looking towards the Bulgarian market.

Case studies and international experience will complement the discussions, including insights from the UK's development of the storage market and examples of utility-scale PV+BESS projects in Bulgaria's merchant environment. The programme will conclude with a forward-looking discussion on the factors that could define Bulgaria's renewable energy leadership by 2030.

Photo: Solarplaza International

## Companies in this issue

|                           |        |                                     |    |
|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|----|
| Everising Macine.Co. .... | 9      | Olmet Technology .....              | 7  |
| Inter Expo Center .....   | 13, 16 | Solar Promotion International ..... | 3  |
| Jaksa .....               | 2      | SPS/IPC/Drives/Messago .....        | 11 |
| Lemi Trafo .....          | 5      |                                     |    |

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