

Profile of the institution:



The **Slovak Association of the Photovoltaic Industry and RES (SAPI)** is the leading association of renewables in Slovakia with almost 150 members encompassing producers and suppliers of electricity, installers of PV systems, suppliers of technology, providers of energy services and consulting firms. **SAPI** is currently representing the solar PV, wind energy, geothermal energy and small hydropower industry. **SAPI** is an active partner for policy makers in forming energy policy with the aim to promote and enable efficient and sustainable energy transition to renewable energy sources. We conduct legislative work, develop guidelines for implementation of best practices from other EU countries and we also provide education for installers of small PV and solar thermal sources.

- > 6 employees

Quick Facts:

Name: Ján Karaba

Education: University of Economics in Prague & Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien)

Job Title and Responsibilities @

SAPI: Director, responsible for strategic management and renewable energy policy

Languages: Czech, English, Spanish, Portuguese

Personal Motto / Guiding Principle: Things are never as good as they initially appear and things are never as bad as they initially appear.



Mr. Jan Karaba, Credit: Jan Karaba

Questions interview:

What drives you personally and SAPI?

Personally, I'm motivated by my passion for new technologies utilizing clean energy. As for SAPI, firstly it is driven by the responsibility to our members for finding effective ways to promote and support the development of renewable energy market. Secondly, the amount of influence we have on the public debate about energy policy is really compelling driving us to bringing the best of expertise and practices for the Slovak market.

Can you explain a little bit to our audience what your organization is doing?

SAPI is an active partner for policy makers in forming energy policy with the aim to create enabling framework for efficient and sustainable energy transition to renewable energy sources. We conduct legislative work, develop guidelines for implementation of best practices from other EU countries and we also provide education for installers of small PV and solar thermal sources.

How do you see the development of renewable energies in Slovakia?

After a long period of an imposed ban for grid connection (started in 2013 and lasted until April 2021) it is now possible to develop even bigger renewable energy sources (RES) projects and actually this is already happening. According to our National Energy and Climate Plan, Slovakia should deploy 1200 MW of new PV and wind capacity until 2030. We believe that there is space for an even faster development.



Where do you see the most potential?

Mostly solar PV and wind energy

What are you currently working on?

At the moment we are in intense discussions with the Ministry of Economy about the implementation of the Clean Energy Package and we are also preparing recommendations for an upcoming update of our National Energy and Climate Plan.

What challenges do you face?

Lack of experts, lack of effort and lack of political will from the government to support renewables

As public acceptance within the population is always a big issue and factor, how do you see the developments in Slovakia concerning the realization of renewable energy projects?

Solar PV is largely well accepted. Development of wind energy projects is much more sensitive in terms of public acceptance and permitting

procedures that are tied with public acceptance through environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. We desperately need some early birds in the form of well-developed and successfully commissioned projects in order to show the government and municipalities that it works and makes sense.



Looking at the market design and the regulatory framework in Slovakia and the European Union. Where does Slovakia still need to catch up?

We need to finish the implementation of RED2 (due to happen in September 2022) and the regulatory office still has to adopt secondary legislation very much needed for the new market design to

work properly.

In your experience, are there any peculiarities to pay special attention to when doing renewable energy projects in Slovakia?

In every country there are lots of peculiarities. Slovakia is typical in that there are very few guidelines for anything having to do with permitting of renewable energy projects.

Which influences from the current Covid19-Crisis do you expect or already experiencing in your activities/projects?

The ongoing energy crisis is currently influencing our projects and activities much more than post Covid19 issues. We are trying to be an active part of the political discussion about efficient measures to be taken to reduce the impacts of high energy prices.

What do you want everybody to know about SAPI?

SAPI is promoting renewable energy in Slovakia taking advantage of global experience and technological innovations and advancements in this industry. We believe that through expert cooperation between the government, business sector and research institutions it is possible to achieve a sustainable growth of renewable energy usage.

Do you have an anecdote or a lesson learnt from doing renewable energy projects you want to share with the audience?

Don't trust whoever tells you it's easy. In reality it takes a lot of skill to develop and implement a technically feasible and sustainable renewable energy project.



If we do the interview again in five years, where does SAPI stand then? What is your vision for the future?

We are hoping that renewables will play a much more important role in the energy mix of Slovakia. We will be able to see some erected wind parks using cutting edge wind turbines and hybrid PV and wind power plants utilizing energy storage. Solar PV will be designed and installed on all new buildings as part of the solar mandate proposed by the European Commission.

How does a day at the office usually look like for you?

I start with a morning coffee and organizing priorities. And then it's all about the management in between of surprises that invariably tend to attack my work agenda.

Can you describe to our readers a little bit what you do in your free time to relieve the stress of everyday working life?

I enjoy open water swimming, cycling and playing beach volleyball. At home I like gardening works and playing board games with my family.

Thank you very much for the interview and your time!

If you would like to find out more about the **Slovak Association of the Photovoltaic Industry and RES (SAPI)** and its activities please visit: <https://www.sapi.sk/en/>



If you like, what we are doing and want to stay informed about renewable energies development in CEE countries please look at:

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