Plenary Keynote: Asbjørn Haugstrup

Chief External Relations Officer and a member of the Senior Management Team at Innargi A/S — a Danish company developing large-scale geothermal solutions for district heating in Germany, Poland, and Denmark. Previously, Asbjørn Haugstrup has served as Special Political Advisor to several Danish ministers, including those for Climate, Energy and Buildings; Economic Affairs and the Interior; and Foreign Affairs.

Outlook: Why is the heating of our homes attracting increased political attention and what is its role in Smart Energy Systems if we are to meet political targets?

Abstract
Cities are responsible for 70 % of global emissions, making them the front-line battlefield in the fight against climate change.

In Northern European cities, 56 % of CO_2 emissions come from heating homes.

This makes the decarbonisation of heat one of the most impactful climate actions available to cities and communities.

Traditionally, heat in cities has been generated as a by-product of electricity production. This residual heat, most often produced by burning fossil fuels, has been effectively distributed through district heating networks.

Hopefully, the future is different. As energy systems transition to renewable sources such as solar and wind – which do not generate any waste heat – we will need new ways to generate heat in urban areas. Alternative approaches vary and may include the collection of waste heat, the introduction of geothermal, large scale heat pump solutions, burning of fossil fuels and biomass etc.

Until recently, heating has received relatively little attention in European energy policy compared to e.g. electricity and hydrogen. But this seems to be changing now. The new European Commission has announced plans for a strategy on heating and cooling as well as an action plan for geothermal energy.

Asbjørn Haugstrup will deliver a keynote addressing the role of heating in the decarbonisation of European cities, the importance of developing heating infrastructure, and the political drivers in the EU policy making that may shape the future of urban heating.