



Solar heating and cooling on its way to mainstream

2 100 MW_{th} of new capacity: another record year for solar thermal in Europe

Brussels/Freiburg, 19 June 2007: Today, the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF) has published their latest market statistics for the 27 EU Member States and Switzerland at their bi-annual estec conference. The market development in 2006 exceeded expectations and solar thermal heating and cooling has clearly grown out of being a niche market.

“2006 was another great year for our sector”, emphasizes ESTIF President Gerhard Rabensteiner. “We are seeing growth across Europe. France is continuing its breath-taking growth that started in 2000. In Germany, new installations increased by 58% last year. Even markets such as the UK and Ireland have finally woken up. The European citizens have started to realise: The future is solar! And they act accordingly.” At an annual growth of 47% the market for new installations in the EU27 plus Switzerland has exceeded everyone’s expectations: 2.100 MW_{th} of new capacity were added in Europe during 2006 (3 million m² of collector area).

ESTIF explains that this result cannot be attributed to just one but to several factors: millions of satisfied customers and increased presence of the solar thermal industry – especially in the new markets – with new products and marketing strategies. Other key drivers are public support schemes, such as the solar obligations in Spain, training programs in France, and the many financial incentive schemes which exist in most EU countries.

In Germany alone more than 1.000 MW_{th} were newly installed, increasing that country’s contribution to 50% of the total EU market. Other countries have also grown considerably and the 5 Mediterranean countries, Greece, France, Italy, Spain and Cyprus, now account for almost 30% of the EU market.

On a per-capita basis, Austria clearly leads “continental” Europe with 25 kW_{th}/1.000 capita of new installations. In Europe, only Cyprus added more solar thermal per 1.000 capita, 57 kW_{th}. In 2006, the average new capacity per 1.000 capita for EU27 + Switzerland was just 4 kW_{th}. The differences on a per-capita basis show very clearly that there is a large near-term market potential: Spain and France, for

“Another great year” with 2.100 MW_{th} of new capacity

Growth was due to several factors, including strengthened public support

Cyprus and Austria lead on a per-capita size of the market

example, are still adding new capacity at only 10-12% of the level of Austria.

And the very positive market developments are not restricted to the old EU Member States. The Polish market for new solar thermal capacity grew by 49% to 29 MW_{th} and in Slovenia 44% more collector area was newly installed in 2006.

The total solar thermal capacity in operation in EU27 + Switzerland has reached 13.500 MW_{th}, producing 9.600 GWh of solar thermal energy.

“We have a goal for 2020”, says ESTIF Secretary General Uwe Trenkner. “1 m² of collector area for every European. Countries like Cyprus or Austria are already well underway to exceed that level by 2020. It is possible, and policy makers should follow through with clear policies everywhere in Europe: buildings should no longer be constructed without at least a minimum share of renewables for heating and cooling. No heating system should be renewed without integrating solar thermal or another renewable energy source!”

For 2007, the expectations for the EU27+CH are set at a growth rate of just 17%. This is mainly due to a drop in sales figures in the first quarter of this year in the German market. Here the sales figures are expected to remain steady and no growth rate is expected.

Note: There is a small mistake in the figure quoted on page 2 of the printed statistics brochure. The growth rate for EU27+CH should be 17% not 27%. Please refer to the PDF version of the brochure on our website, <http://www.estif.org/139.0.html>, for the correct details.

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Further Information:

Solar Thermal Markets in Europe. Trends and Market Statistics 2006
Solar Thermal Action Plan: www.estif.org/stap

Press Contact:

The ESTIF headquarters in Brussels are closed during estec2007 (3rd European Solar Thermal Energy Conference): 19-20 June 2007, www.estec2007.org and the Intersolar Fair, 21-23 June 2007.

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**Fast growth also in
New Member States**

**Solar thermal in
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**With binding regula-
tions 1 m² per Euro-
pean is possible by
2020**