



### **Solar thermal will make a substantial contribution to EU renewables targets**

**Brussels/Freiburg, 19 June: As the fastest growing sector in renewable heating and cooling, solar thermal can deliver a substantial contribution to reaching the EU targets for renewables, if the right policies are quickly introduced at EU level and in the Member States.**

**The fastest growing sector in renewable heating and cooling**

The unanimous decision of the Heads of State of the 27 EU countries to set a binding target of 20% renewables share by 2020 is particularly important for the solar thermal sector: for the first time, renewable heating and cooling (RES-H) is fully integrated into the EU's energy policy strategy, which was not the case in the past.

**Fully integrated in the EU's energy policy strategy**

Mr Gerhard Rabensteiner, President of ESTIF, said: "The solar thermal industry's target for 2020 is to have an average of 1m<sup>2</sup> of solar thermal collectors in operation per every European, equal to a capacity in operation of 320 GW<sub>th</sub>, producing the energy equivalent of the heating consumption of 10 million European households.

**Target of 1m<sup>2</sup> solar collector per every European**

Some communes are already very close to reaching this target. Cyprus and Austria are on track to reach it by 2020. But many EU countries are still in the starting blocks. This prevents the sector from benefitting from economies of scale that will make solar thermal fully competitive, once a critical mass of the market is reached EU-wide.

**EU-wide growth to create economies of scale**

Raffaele Piria, ESTIF Policy Director, said: "To achieve this, stronger and more continuous support policies must be implemented as soon as possible. As solar thermal is not yet covered by EU legislation, it is essential that the new EU Renewables Directive is adopted soon, including strong measures for renewable heating and cooling."

**Strong EU Directive to be adopted soon**

The Directive should make sure that specific targets and measures for renewable heating and cooling are a part of the national renewables action plans. For new buildings, and those undergoing major renovations, an obligation to cover a minimum share of heat consumption by renewables should be introduced, as already implemented in some countries and municipalities. The Directive should make sure that administrative barriers are reduced and that Member States avoid stop-and-go in other support schemes such as financial incentives, training programs and demonstration projects. Finally, the Directive should also ensure that national support policies do not create involuntary barriers to trade: all product requirements should be based strictly on European standards and certification procedures.

**Directive to include strong measures for renewable heating and cooling**

As the time until 2020 is short, we cannot afford to lose precious years simply by waiting for the EU legislative process to be concluded. Thus, national and local governments should take immediate action and start implementing strong policies, as mentioned above and discussed in detail in ESTIF's Solar Thermal Action Plan for Europe.

**Member States  
should not wait  
for Directive to  
take action**

**Characters (incl. spaces): 2.690**

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**Further Information:**

Solar Thermal Action Plan: [www.estif.org/stap](http://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](http://www.estec2007.org) and the Intersolar Fair, 21-23 June 2007.

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