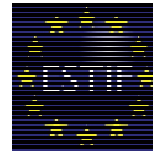


European Solar Thermal Industry Federation



PRESS RELEASE

Legislation could accelerate adoption of solar thermal all over Europe

European Parliament calls for a Renewable Heating and Cooling Directive

Brussels, 14 February 2006. With an overwhelming majority the European Parliament today called for a European Directive to Promote Renewable Heating and Cooling. The Parliamentarians agreed on an Initiative Report drafted by German MEP Mechtild Rothe, which calls the European Commission to come forward with a legislative proposal. In a swift reaction to the clear statement of the Parliament, EU Energy Commissioner Piebalgs already announced that the Commission would propose such a directive before the end of 2006.

The European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF) complimented the Members of the European Parliament on their important step: "This is truly a milestone for solar thermal in Europe", said ESTIF's European Policy Director Raffaele Piria. "Nearly half of Europe's energy consumption is due to demand for heating and cooling. Yet there is no European legislation in place to directly promote heat and cold production from renewable energy sources, such as solar thermal. The Initiative Report sends a clear message to the European Commission as well as to national governments to get going on renewable heating and cooling."

The Initiative Report calls for a Directive that sets effective targets for the use of renewable energies for heating and cooling. While the report does not suggest a harmonisation of support schemes at EU level, it proposes to agree on general principles for the support schemes to be adopted and implemented by the Member States and on a menu of suggested instruments, like tax breaks, financial incentives or regulatory measures. It also proposes measures to reduce the administrative barriers to the use of renewable heating and cooling.

Legislation to promote renewables also in heating and cooling still missing

Parliament's report gives concrete recommendations

"The recommendations of the European Parliament are very much inline with the Joint Declaration published 10 months ago by more than 40 European groups ranging from industry associations to energy agencies and international environmental NGOs", said ESTIF President Ole Pilgaard." The report of the European Parliament and the announcement of Commissioner Piebalgs underline the broad support for solar thermal and other renewable energies in heating and cooling. This is an excellent start for the discussion of the details of the forthcoming legislative proposal."

ESTIF President Ole Pilgaard welcomes the Parliament's recommendations

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Further information:

ESTIF website:

www.estif.org

The European Parliament's legislative Initiative Report can be found on pages 78ff of the following document:

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade3?PUBREF=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+20060214+SIT+DOC+WORD+V0//EN&LEVEL=1&NAV=S&L=EN>

EREC-led campaign for Renewable Heating and Cooling:

http://www.erec-renewables.org/publications/RES_heating_cooling.htm

Additional Notes:

ESTIF, the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation, represents manufacturers, national associations and service providers active in the solar thermal sector.

ESTIF's mission is to achieve high priority and acceptance for Solar Thermal as a key element for sustainable heating and cooling in Europe and with immediate effect to work for the implementation of all steps necessary to realise the high potential of Solar Thermal.

Press Contacts:

Raffaele Piria ESTIF European Policy Director
Tel / fax: +32 2 546 19 38 / 44
e-mail: info@estif.org / www.estif.org
