

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, Belgium –How to heat European cities for the winters to come?

Sustainable heating and cooling solutions are available today to help cities maintain their security of supply in an environmental and growth-friendly way.

Heat Pumps and district heating offer efficient, low carbon and affordable solutions for heating, cooling and sanitary hot water for European cities. It is not a lack of technology, but a lack of planned concerted action that prevents cities from making better use of available energy. Ambitious and consistent decisions are needed though!

This is the concluding message of the event *“Sustainable and affordable heating and cooling: The case of European cities”* hosted by the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA) at the Committee of the Regions on Thursday 2 October 2014. The event was well attended by various members of the renewable heating and cooling sector and representatives of local authorities from several European cities.

Keynote speaker Mrs Linda Gillham (UK/EA), member of the CoR, Commissions for the "Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE)" and "Natural Resources (NAT)", introduced the event by insisting on the importance of minimizing the overall energy demand in the urban area and improving the use of affordable renewable energy and efficient technology in European cities.

Secretary general of EHPA, Thomas Nowak, mentioned the key role of cities in the climate and energy debate and the need to make the right decisions. *“Instead of focusing on the search for new gas sources, decision makers should turn to available technologies that can heat, cool and provide sanitary water and are indigenous. Heat pumps are a perfect option to bridge the differences between supply and demand for heating and cooling in cities”*.

According to Paul Voss, Managing Director of Euroheat & Power, *“in 35 years from now, cities will still need heating. So sustainable cities will require sustainable heat supply. Therefore, we need a plan... to be developed by all stakeholders with a major role being played by cities”*.

Frédéric Boyer from Energy Cities showed how much is already happening at city level. He pointed out however that financing is still the major problem. *“Structural funds for renewables do exist, but local authorities lack the necessary technical assistance to make use of them”*. Linda Gillham (CoR) added to the argument that *“what is also lacking is political will”*.

The first panel of discussion concluded that Europe’s gas crisis is indeed a challenge for Europe’s heating demand but is also an opportunity to make decisions, which will create (local) jobs and promote Europe’s know-how. **We must put an end to the need of Russian gas by using efficient, renewable, local and proven technology but we demand an ambitious energy strategy now to achieve our targets for 2050.**

During the second panel, heat pump projects in the cities of Tallinn, Bruges and Drammen were presented. The presentation of decisions of local authorities towards renewable and energy efficient heating and cooling provided good examples on how cities can immediately benefit from efficient and proven solutions.

Dave Pearson from Star Refrigeration Europe sharpened the audience's perception for rivers as constant flows of energy. Not only did he present how the city of Drammen benefited commercially from the use of a 90MW heat pump, he also transferred the application to Brussels! The hidden river Senne could provide 7,5 times the amount of energy needed by the main buildings of the European Parliament.

Tallin is using structural funds to refurbish children foster homes and thus use available financing sources to equip buildings. Brugge has installed heat pumps in two big projects that provide social services to vulnerable people.

All presenters in the second half of the meeting were satisfied with the performance of heat pumps. Expectations were met, and sometimes even exceeded.

The event successfully gave an overview of opportunities and solutions that heat pump technology can bring to local authorities. Heating and cooling technologies can offer creative solutions for decarbonized cities. It remains however a matter of political decisions to opt for renewables and district heating in general and heat pumps in particular. Such decisions will allow today's heating and cooling technologies to replace all chimneys (gas boilers) in European cities.

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Note to the editor

The Brussels based European Heat Pump Association (EHPA) represents the majority of the European heat pump industry. It has currently 107 members from all parts of the industry's value chain: heat pump and component manufacturers, research institutes, universities, testing labs and energy agencies. Its key goal is to promote awareness and proper deployment of heat pump technology in the European market place for residential, commercial and industrial application. EHPA coordinates the European Quality label for heat pumps and the EUCERT education and training scheme for heat pump installers. It compiles the annual sales statistics and market outlook. For more information, please visit: www.ehpa.org.

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