PRESS RELEASE

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“Heat pumps on the rise – time to move to system integration!”

In 2015, the European heat pump market grew by 10%, (resulting in a record year with 880 179 units sold) contributing to 24 Mt of CO2 emission savings and the creation of 47 103 full time jobs. These latest figures were released today by the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA) at the occasion of its traditional Summer press cocktail.

Success is on air

This growth is mainly driven by the strong segment of air-sourced heat pumps, a renewable technology that finds increasing attention in European and national statistics, according to EPHA.

Geographically, most of the growth can be attributed to increased sales in the Mediterranean countries Spain (+15%), Italy (+20%) and France (+8%). ‘These figures could increase further in these countries if an appropriate framework would be set at EU level to account for renewable cooling’, commented Pascal Westring, EHPA expert in statistics. This issue is address by the Commission this year, with the Heating & Cooling Strategy and revision of the Renewable Energy Directive.

‘Technology-neutrality’ is the wrong answer

Looking at the sales potential identified by EHPA: if European markets would reach the same maturity level as the Swedish one, the European heat pump stock could realistically grow to 60 million units, enough to replace today’s imported Russian gas for heating purposes.

‘We are not yet there!’, says Thomas Nowak, Secretary general of EHPA. ‘but interest in heat pump technology is on the rise across Europe. A growing number of experts conclude that decarbonisation of the heating sector is impossible without heat pumps. Civil society is also turning to the technology. We see a growing number of cities applying to our ‘heat pump city of the year award’. Yet, EU policy-makers prefer to remain technology-neutral. Instead, they should create framework conditions that favor the most efficient and best performing technologies’. When the state of our planet requires immediate action, high ambition must be the answer.

Integrated solutions = Heat pumps

Thomas Nowak added: ‘A catchy word in “Brussels” energy discussion nowadays is ‘integrated approach’. Heat pumps are the perfect system integration technology for a resilient Energy Union. They are a bridge between the electricity and the thermal sector, between heating and cooling. They can be combined with residual heat, district heating, cogeneration and other RES solutions.’

He concluded: ‘Maybe system integration could be the new way forward to unleash the potential of heat pumps?’
EHPA Key policy messages:

Meeting EU's climate and energy goals entails the decarbonisation of the heating sector. The latter requires a full decarbonisation of the building sector by 2050.

According to several studies, this can only be achieved in time by exploiting the full potential of heat pumps, the most efficient and renewable technologies.

Due to the ‘lock in’ effect of investment in thermal appliances, heat pumps need to be given strong political recognition as of today. This means:

- Heat pumps need to be openly supported by policy makers to reassure consumers and investors. Best available technologies must be promoted in EU and national policies, on the basis of a consumer-friendly energy label (that has no empty ‘A’ class and compares functionally equivalent products).

- Heat pumps need a stimulating climate-friendly regulatory framework, such as strong building requirements, policies to foster the renovation sector, defined phase-down objectives for fossil fuel boilers and a forward-looking primary energy factor.

- Heat pumps play a key role in system integration, to be valued and promoted. They are a bridging technology between the electricity and the thermal sector, between heating and cooling. They can be combined with residual heat, district heating, cogeneration and other RES solutions. They offer a huge flexibility potential through demand-response and thermal storage.

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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 119 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.