

## **Solar heat: made in Europe for the benefit of the Planet**

***Brussels, 12 December 2019 – Solar Heat Europe welcomes the European Union’s refreshed commitment to tackle climate and environmental-related challenges. Solar Heat Europe emphasises its commitment to contribute to this new growth path for a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy.***

Yesterday, European Commission’s President, Ursula von der Leyen presented the much-awaited European Green Deal for the European Union and its citizens. The European Solar Heating and Cooling sector contributed to a sustainable green transition over the past decades. We therefore welcome this strong commitment from the EU addressing climate and environmental-related challenges.

### **‘Humankind on the Earth’ challenge**

*“We believe this is much more than a Europe’s “Man on the Moon” moment. This is our ‘Humankind on the Earth’ challenge” stated Pedro Dias, Secretary General of Solar Heat Europe. “It is our goal to continue contributing to tackle the climate and pollution challenges, by providing Europeans with clean, sustainable hot showers and heated and cooled houses. As well as supplying industry and agriculture with sustainable heating and cooling.” Mr. Dias added.*

### **Solar thermal is a solution made in Europe for the Planet**

Most of the solar heating systems sold in the internal market are made in Europe, by small and medium size companies, spread all over the continent. While creating jobs in Europe (18 000 jobs by the end of 2018), the European solar thermal industry is also leading globally this sector in terms of innovation. On top of this, it is one of the main renewable sources in Europe in terms of exports, contributing each year with hundreds of millions of Euros in net exports.

This economic contribution is even more relevant given that solar thermal is one of the most environmentally friendly renewable solutions, considering the full product lifecycle, from manufacturing to decommissioning and recycling. With a minimal carbon footprint and a reduced carbon payback time, solar heat is a technology made in Europe for the benefit of the planet.

### **Sustainable Buildings**

We support the ambition and urgency of the European Green Deal in terms of sustainable heating of buildings, since a renovation wave is necessary, as referred in the Green Deal. Given the average lifetime of heating systems (over 20 years) most of those installed after 2030 will be there in 2050, and hence it is important to step up the pace for building and heating systems renovation.

Solar thermal provides sustainable heat from hybrid decentralised systems and from solar district heating networks. In fact, solar district heating is one of the solutions where Europe is a world leader.

### **Sustainable Industry**

Solar heating already presents innovative solutions for the industrial sector. The use of solar heat for industrial processes is an extremely promising market in different sectors, as for example the food and beverage industry. These solutions have been growing in number and size, reaching new records every year. The European Green Deal can help European businesses to speed up this transition, by means namely of solar thermal energy.

### **New growth strategy**

Currently, there are over 10 million solar thermal systems operating in European households and businesses. If the right measures to promote a fast-paced transition are put in place, the number of households benefitting from sustainable solar heat can grow more than threefold in the next decade.

*“As President von der Leyen mentioned, this is the beginning of a new path and a new growth strategy. The Solar Heat Industry is ready to continue that path today, as we were yesterday, providing solutions to reduce the emissions and decarbonise heating and cooling, which represents 49% of the energy consumption in Europe”* stated Costas Travasaros, President of Solar Heat Europe. *“With the right measures stemming from this European Green Deal for the European Union and a stronger commitment of citizens and corporations, we will outperform expectations”* Mr. Travasaros added.

### **About Solar Heat Europe/ESTIF**

Solar Heat Europe/ESTIF’s mission is to achieve the prioritisation and acceptance for solar heat as a key element for sustainable heating and cooling in Europe and to work for the implementation of all necessary steps to realise the high potential of solar heat. With members in more than 20 European countries, Solar Heat Europe represents directly or indirectly over 90% of the industry, across the value chain. Solar Heat Europe also ensures that solar heat technology develop and grow in Europe through different actions such as providing information and statistics on the sector or by advocating for better regulation or encouraging the EU policy makers to shape a favourable environment for heating and cooling technology.

### **Contact:**

Pedro Dias, Secretary General  
[pedro.dias@solarheateurope.eu](mailto:pedro.dias@solarheateurope.eu)  
Tel: +32 2 318 40 55

Ana Alegre, Communications Assistant  
[ana.alegre@solarheateurope.eu](mailto:ana.alegre@solarheateurope.eu)  
Tel: +32 2 318 40 56