

## Renewables in heating and cooling, a potential job goldmine if R&D investments scaled up

Around two hundred people gathered today in Dublin for the launch of the European Technology Panel's<sup>1</sup> Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) at the 4<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Renewable Heating and Cooling<sup>2</sup>.

Pat Rabbitte, Irish Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, opened the conference by reminding those present that Ireland currently imports around 6 billion euro of fossil fuels each year. He then went through the Irish Presidency's core themes: stability, growth and job creation, saying 'A strong renewable energy sector can do all this and generate jobs, contribute to increased security of supply and sustainability.'

The SRIA identifies the R&D (research and development) activities and investments needed to make RHC technologies cost-competitive in all market segments (residential, non-residential, and industrial) in the short term (by 2020) or in the medium term (by 2030). Gerhard Stryi-Hipp, President of the RHC-Platform underlined that it is imperative to reduce costs, enhance system performance and reliability, and reduce system payback time.

The document also explains how to prioritise the allocation of resources for R&D under 'Horizon 2020', the successor to the seventh framework programme for research and development. The total volume of resources required to implement the RHC-SRIA until 2020 is estimated at around 4 billion Euro, approximately 60% of which is expected to come from the European industry. 'We expect that 3 out of 5 euros will be spent by the private sector if the European Commission as well as Member States will spend 1 euro each in addition', said Gerhard Stryi-Hipp.

Marie Donnelly, DG Energy Director, New and Renewable Sources of Energy welcomed the 'excellent' publication and noted that it was a 'major support' to the European Commission in its upcoming work before the SET-Plan conference in May. She emphasised the need for a holistic approach in the energy sector and went on to say that heating and cooling is a key sector 'provided we can get the sales pitch of what is the benefit for society'.

In 2010, heat accounted for 47% of final energy consumption in the EU. The SRIA sets out what is needed for an increased share of our heating and cooling demand to be met by renewable energy sources (RES), and the achievement of the EU's energy and climate objectives. At the moment, RES supply 14% of the heat used in Europe, but could account for 25% in 2020, reaching up to 50% by 2030.

For more information contact:

Alexandra Latham  
Communication Officer  
+32 2400 1027 / [a.latham@egec.org](mailto:a.latham@egec.org)

<sup>1</sup> The European Technology Platform on Renewable Heating & Cooling (RHC-Platform) brings together stakeholders from the biomass, geothermal and solar thermal sector - including the related industries - to define a common strategy for increasing the use of renewable energy technologies for heating and cooling. <http://www.rhc-platform.org/>

<sup>2</sup> The 2013 European Conference on Renewable Heating and Cooling is an associated event of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the EU and it is organised by the Secretariat of the RHC-Platform with the support of the European Commission.