

RHC ETIP Expert Group Germany

Details

- Date: 15 January 2025
- Time: 11h30 – 13h00 (CET)
- Format: Online meeting

Participants

- Saverio Papa (Solar Heat Europe / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Valérie Séjourné (Solar Heat Europe / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Leopoldo Mico (Solar Heat Europe / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Dominik Rutz (WIP / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Olgu Birgi (WIP / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Elisabetta Tillier (EHPA / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Leonie Kuhlmann (EGEC / RHC ETIP Secretariat)
- Paul Bergmann (FNR)
- Charlotte Brauns (BSW)
- Stefan Abrecht (Solar-Experience GmbH)
- Jan Schmidt (FNR)
- Martin Sabel (BWP)
- Anna Billerbeck (Fraunhofer ISI)
- Florian Stanko (Bundesverband Geothermie e.V.)
- Gregor Dilger (Bundesverband Geothermie e.V.)
- Magdalena Berberich (Solites)
- Adam Diana (Z-ESP)

Summary

Introduction

- Saverio Papa presented RHC ETIP and its work to promote renewable heating and cooling (RHC) solutions at EU and national level, particularly on research and innovation.
- Saverio Papa then explained the threefold purpose of the meeting:
 - Connect with national stakeholders working on RHC and foster cooperation among the various solutions.

- Bring together national experts from the different RHC solutions to discuss the state of the art, market trends, main bottlenecks, policy and financing needs (particularly for R&I), and identify common challenges and solutions.
- Gather information and insights to substantiate RHC ETIP activities, starting from the upcoming online national roundtable.
- Dominik Rutz presented the upcoming German national roundtable, which will be organised by RHC ETIP in the first part of 2025. This meeting will support the organisation of the roundtable by offering insights into the German market, contributing to drafting the event concept note, and identifying potential speakers.

Discussion

Saverio Papa opened the discussion introducing three guiding questions:

- What are the main challenges for the uptake of RHC solutions in Germany (both common and technology-specific ones)?
- What are the research and innovation priorities for RHC in Germany (technological and non-technological)?
- What are the regulatory and financing asks to accelerate the uptake of RHC solutions in buildings and industry in Germany?

The insightful interventions by the participants highlighted some recurring themes, which are summarised below:

- **Stable political signals and incentives**
 - a. The upcoming elections create uncertainty around the regulatory and financial measures introduced to support the uptake of renewable heating and cooling.
- **Local heating and cooling plans**
 - a. The lack of technical expertise about RHC solutions within the administrations in charge of developing the plans shall be tackled.
 - b. Since HC plans are not immediately mandatory and will require time to be developed, this can delay action as most municipalities will not be early implementers.
 - c. How can local heating and cooling plans take into account broader aspects linked to the energy system and/or explore synergies with neighbouring local authorities?
 - d. A key challenge for district heating projects is their complexity, since they involve several and different stakeholders and require high investments; as a result, a strong business case is critical.
- **Land availability and use**
 - a. Land availability close to end-users is a common challenge for RHC projects, although to different degrees based on the technology.

- b. In Germany, there is a broader and vibrant public debate on the use of land, which extends to forests and agricultural land.
- **Fossil heating prices**
 - a. Ensuring that the ratio between electricity prices and gas prices is no higher than 2:1 is a priority for heat pumps, including geothermal heat pumps.
 - b. The cost of fossil heating should reflect its negative externalities more accurately, which would incentivise the transition to RHC solutions.
- **Hybridization**
 - a. Digitalisation is critical to enable the hybridisation of different heating and cooling systems as well as demand-side flexibility.
- **Thermal Energy Storage**
 - a. Thermal Energy Storage can be a cheap form of storage to accommodate different energy sources but there is still a research and demonstration gap about their efficient operation and integration within the energy system.
 - b. Large-scale thermal energy storage can accommodate a wide range of sources and does not necessarily need to be in close proximity to end-users.