



Dominique Ristori
Director General
DG Energy
European Commission

Brussels, 10 July 2015

Heating and cooling technologies: in our diversity lies Europe's strength

Dear Director General,

With the Heating and Cooling Strategy, Europe has embarked on a complex, yet crucial quest: shaping the future of its heating and cooling sector. Crucial, because succeeding will reduce our energy imports, cut carbon emissions and boost the economy. Complex, because modernizing this sector – which accounts for half of Europe's energy demand – will require that we mobilize all economic actors and all energy users and get them to invest in the future.

Consumers in Europe have diverse needs and preferences when they decide how to heat or cool their homes and their businesses. High performance heating, cooling and ventilation solutions, which fit all these needs, are already available in the market. There is a huge savings potential, if consumers can be encouraged to replace old systems with more efficient and cleaner state-of-the-art technologies.

Therefore the heating and cooling strategy shall be based on and shall promote these technologies. How?

In the short run, simply replacing outdated systems with a state-of-the-art technology can deliver at least 25% energy efficiency gains. Even deeper cuts in energy consumption and carbon emissions are possible: decentralized hybrid and renewable solutions, such as solar thermal, heat pumps or biomass boilers, as well as heat recovery systems, can bring them.

With the consumer increasingly at the centre of the energy system, smart home technologies and demand-response solutions, as well as micro combined heat and power will allow end-users greater control over their energy use and production. The role of cooling is noteworthy as a flexible response of these applications as it can add necessary and valuable flexibility to this emerging new energy scenario.

To release this potential, the heating and cooling strategy must focus on:

- consumers, encouraging them to opt for more efficient and renewable technologies. This includes, among others, promoting the labelling of existing systems, facilitating the access of end users to adequate financing instruments or demand aggregation mechanisms;
- the public sector to lead by example, incentivizing the use of high performance and cleaner solutions;
- vocational training and university education, preparing the next generation of installers, planners and architects towards modern efficient and renewable solutions;
- industry, providing a stable and transparent framework, enabling research, innovation, job creation and competitiveness. Attractive business models are needed to facilitate and accelerate change, in particular for the often overlooked cooling segment.



Today, the heating, cooling and ventilation industry exports ‘made-in-Europe’ technology for space and water heating, cooling and refrigeration all around the world, employing directly over 400,000 people in Europe and engaging a vast upstream and downstream network of micro and small sized enterprises.

The future heating and cooling sector must use less energy, be greener and help Europe’s economy. This is why we should open the doors to renewable and efficient solutions. That must be the role of the heating and cooling strategy.

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