

European legislative framework for Solar Thermal Obligations

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Description:	<p>For the first time, the new European Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (2009/28/EC) covers the heating and cooling sector, which is responsible for nearly half of Europe's energy demand. For the first time, it is established that "Member States shall ensure that certification schemes or equivalent qualification schemes become or are available by 31 December 2012 for installers ...", and that "Member States shall promote certified equipment and systems based on European standards where these exist, including eco-labels, energy labels and other technical reference systems established by the European standardisation bodies."</p> <p>In June 2010, the EPBD recast of the Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings (2002/91/EC) was published (Directive 2010/31/EU). It introduces for the first time a European-wide definition of "nearly zero energy buildings", establishing that Member States "shall take the necessary measures to ensure that minimum energy performance requirements for buildings and building units" (new and existing buildings when undergo major renovation)", are set with a view to achieving cost-optimal levels", and "shall set system requirements in respect of the overall energy performance, the proper installation, and the appropriate dimensioning, adjustment and control of the technical building systems which are installed in existing buildings".</p> <p>In relation with the EPBD Directive, the ongoing adoption process of the eco-design and energy labeling measures for space and water heating systems can also be pointed out.</p> <p>With both the Renewable Energy Directive and the EPBD paving the way for a gradual phase-in of renewable energy in buildings, it is crucial that not only EU Member States but also local communities take a proactive stance and do their utmost to coordinate the implementation of both pieces of legislation.</p>
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