



Project Fact Sheet

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QAiST – Quality Assurance in Solar Heating and Cooling Technology

Programme area: Promotion / Dissemination
Status: ongoing

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- CSTB, France
- DEMOKRITOS, Greece
- AIT, Austria
- LNEG/INETI, Portugal
- IPIEO, Poland
- ISE, Germany
- ISFH, Germany
- ITC, Spain
- IZES, Germany
- PlanEnergi, Denmark
- SP, Sweden
- TÜV, Germany
- USTUTT-ITW, Germany

Website: www.qaist.org

Objective: The objective of the QAiST project is to improve the quality assurance framework so that the European solar thermal heating and cooling industry can sustainably contribute to the targets agreed by the Member states (20% of RES by 2020) and become a technological world leader.

Benefits: The project will work on the development of European Standards, adapt to the new demands on the solar Thermal market at European Global level, ensuring that these are kept up with new technological developments and remain an important mean for quality assurance in Europe. This will benefit directly the European consumers but will potentially enhance the competitiveness of European manufacturers.

Keywords: Solar thermal; standards; quality; testing

Duration: 06/2009 – 05/2012

Budget: € 1.892.002 (EU contribution: 75%)

Contract number: IEE/08/593/SI2.529236

Short description

It is very important for the growth and development of the solar thermal sector that the standards and test methods keep track with recent developments and allow maximum flexibility for future innovations.

Standards and pre-Standards are established, but work is still needed in order to keep track with recent technological developments in the direct use of solar thermal energy (i.e. new materials, concentrating devices, etc.) and in combination with other technologies (cooling, heat pumps, etc.).

New Member States also bring new opportunities to market development. In order to make this development really strong and quality oriented it is essential to integrate them in the current practices in these countries.



Furthermore, in order to open the world market for European producers, coordination with activities in the international standardisation is required. Now is the ideal time to break down the barriers given that sufficient experience with the certification process has been gained and with relevant European standards being revised.

Finally, the long term objective of the QAISt project is to prepare the quality assurance framework so that the European solar thermal heating and cooling industry can sustainably contribute to the targets agreed by the Member states (20% of renewable energy by 2020) and become a technological world leader.

Expected and/or achieved results

- Support the further development of the solar thermal market in Europe, by developing existing standards and extending Solar Keymark certification activities to new products, actors and countries within Europe.
- Improvement of existing European standards for solar thermal products, supporting the revision of EN 12975, on items such as durability and reliability requirements and including new solutions, such as solar thermal systems in association with heat pumps and cooling machines
- Improve quality assurance for manufacturers and consumers on laboratory tests, through inter laboratory comparisons (Round Robin) and development of guidelines and checklists
- Reduced testing costs for solar domestic hot water systems being part of a common “system family”, by developing flexible certification methods.
- Promote European quality standards globally and incentivise harmonisation at international level, including the possibility of establishing global certification schemes.

Lessons learned

Good, operational and generally accepted European Standards are an essential part of the market conditions and the basis for a large and open European market. Moreover, coordination with activities in the international standardisation is required in order to open the world market for European producers,

Regarding the interaction between partners, the face to face meetings are more effective, but there are limited opportunities for it. Other options such as telephone conferences may be good opportunities but not as effective when trying to reach consensus (Ex: discussion on the revision of the standards). Also some adaptation and trying would help in taking the most out of distance meetings.

Even though the initial planning done at the kick-off meeting is essential, it could have been better to do it with more time, especially to assess better the competences and preferences of different partners in order to do a better allocation of responsibilities. To create intermediate targets within the WP was very important to assure timely work and commitment, due to the fact that the project deliverables have to be presented at the end of the project.

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