**Werner Weiss, Monika Spörk-Dür**

Global Market Development and Trends 2023 Detailed Market Figures 2022



Edition 2024



Federal Ministry Republic of Austria Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

## SOLAR HEAT WORLDWIDE

#### **Global Market Development and Trends 2023 Detailed Market Figures 2022**

2024 Edition

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AEE - Institute for Sustainable Technologies 8200 Gleisdorf, Austria



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in operation

# **Background**

The Solar Heat Worldwide report has been published annually since 2005 within the framework of the Solar Heating and Cooling Technology Collaboration Programme (SHC TCP) of the International Energy Agency (IEA). This unique series of reports documents solar thermal energy development over the last twenty years.

The 2024 edition and past editions can be downloaded from the website, http://www.iea-shc. org/solar-heat-worldwide.

The report aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1. Provide an overview of the general trends in the solar thermal industry.
- 2. Highlight unique applications and noteworthy projects within the sector.
- 3. Document the installed solar thermal capacity across key global markets.
- 4. Assess the contribution of solar thermal systems to energy supply and quantify the reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulting from their operation.

The collector types detailed in the report are unglazed collectors, glazed flat plate collectors (FPC), evacuated tube collectors (ETC) with water as the energy carrier, and glazed and unglazed air collectors.

Photovoltaic Thermal (PVT) systems are included, as this market has grown in relevance in recent years.

Photovoltaic-generated heat systems are a pioneering technology, and this edition documents them in more detail for the first time.



The report's data was collected through a survey of the national delegates of the SHC TCP Executive Committee, Solar Heat Europe, and national experts active in the field of solar thermal energy. As some of the 72 countries included in this report have very detailed statistics and others have only estimates from experts, the data was checked for plausibility based on various publications.

The collector area, also known as the installed capacity, served as the basis for estimating the contributions of solar thermal systems to the energy supply and reductions of  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  emissions.

The 2024 edition and past editions can be downloaded from the website, **http://www.iea-shc.org/solar-heat-worldwide.**

**Figure 1: Countries shown in color have detailed market data. Countries shown in grey have estimated market data.** Source: Natural Earth v.4.1.0, 2020/ AEE INTEC





This report is divided into three sections: The first part (Chapters 3 - 5) provides an overview of the global solar thermal market in 2023, highlighting key trends and showcasing successful applications such as solar-assisted district heating, solar heat for industrial processes, hybrid photovoltaic thermal systems, and photovoltaic generated heat systems. Additionally, Chapter 5 offers insights and projections for developments expected in 2024.

The second part (Chapters 6 - 8) offers detailed market data for 2022 from 72 surveyed countries. Notably, this year's edition includes data from Nepal, a new country, in the survey. Alongside figures for installed collector area and related capacity, this section delves into the distribution of collectors across various systems and applications, as well as solar yields and emissions reduction.

The third part (Chapter 9) outlines the methodological approach, reference systems, climate and population data, literature references, and data sources used in the report.

#### **Global solar thermal market developments in 2023**

As of the end of 2023, the total operational solar thermal capacity reached  $560$  GW<sub>th</sub>, equivalent to 800 million square meters of collector area. This means a net increase of 18 GW $_{th}$  or 26 million square meters of collector area in 2023, or in other words, an increase in cumulative global installed capacity of 3% in 2023 compared to 2022.

The annual solar thermal energy yield of this installed capacity amounted to 456 TWh, which correlates to savings of 49.1 million tons of oil and 158.4 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Despite the overall increase in total installed capacity, it's noteworthy that the installed capacity of  $21$  GW<sub>th</sub> or 30 million square meters of collector area in 2023 marked a decrease from the previous year's figure of 22.7 GW<sub>th</sub>. This indicates a 7% decline in the global solar thermal market compared to 2022.

#### **Large-scale solar heating systems for district heating or residential, commercial, and public buildings**

In 2023, 28 new large-scale solar heating systems ( $>350$  kW<sub>th</sub>, 500 m<sup>2</sup>) were constructed, totaling 139  $MW_{th}$  capacity. This brought the global count to 598 systems, with a combined capacity of 2,285 MW<sub>th</sub>, corresponding to 3.3 million square meters of collector area.



Photo: Abora Solar, Spain

The largest sub-sector of large-scale solar thermal heating systems is solar district heating, comprising 336 systems with 1,908 MW $_{th}$  capacity (2.73 million square meters).

#### **Solar heat for industrial processes (SHIP)**

In 2023, at least 116 new SHIP plants with a capacity of 94 MW<sub>th</sub> were installed worldwide.

This means a tripling of installed capacity compared to 2022. Even though this is a very good development, it should be noted that this corresponds to the average installed capacity in the solar process heat sector over the last seven years.

The total number of SHIP plants is approximately 1,200 systems, with a 1.4 million square meters collector area and a capacity of 951 MW...

#### **Photovoltaic-Thermal (PVT) collectors**

After experiencing steady growth averaging 9% annually between 2017 and 2020, followed by an alltime high of 13% in 2021, the trend took a sharp turn in 2022. The decline, driven by the end of subsidies for PVT in certain countries, led to market slumps of 51% in 2022 and 30% in 2023.

The newly installed capacity in 2023 was  $29.5$  MW<sub>th</sub> and 14.5 MW<sub>peak</sub>. Thus, the cumulative installed PVT collector area is 1.6 million square meters, which relates to a thermal capacity of 822 MW<sub>th</sub> and an electrical capacity of 292 MW<sub>neak</sub>.

#### **Photovoltaic-generated heat systems**

An emerging trend is the utilization of photovoltaicgenerated heat. This can be seen in the small system sector with directly coupled "PV2Heat" systems in South Africa, where 34,000 systems of this type have been installed. In addition, with a growing number of solar combisystems providing hot water and space heating supply in residential buildings, and the two PV district heating systems built in 2023.

#### **Market status worldwide in 2022**



While 2023 data is only available for 20 leading countries, the report includes detailed 2022 data on 72 countries.

**122 million solar thermal systems were in operation at the end of 2022.**

**The top 5 countries by total installed capacity at the end of 2022 were again The People's Republic of China (hereinafter China), Turkey, the United States, Germany and Brazil.** 

However, the picture is different when comparing the data on a per capita basis.

The top 5 countries by installed capacity per 1,000 inhabitants are Barbados, Cyprus, Israel, Austria, and Greece.

In 2022 **evacuated tube collectors represented 59%**  of the newly installed capacity, followed by flat plate collectors with a share of 34%.

In the global context, this breakdown is mainly driven by the dominance of the Chinese market, where around 73% of all newly installed collectors in 2022 were evacuated tube collectors, but also by the Indian market, with 95% of newly installed collectors being evacuated tubes.

Nevertheless, it is notable that the share of evacuated tube collectors worldwide decreased from about 82% in 2011 to 59% in 2022, while flat plate collectors increased their share from close to 15% to 34%.

In Europe, the situation is almost the opposite of that in China, with 72% of all solar thermal collectors installed in 2022 being flat plate collectors. In the medium term, however, the share of flat plate collectors decreased in Europe from 81% in 2011 to 72% in 2022. In contrast, Europe's share of evacuated tube collectors increased between 2011 and 2021 from 16% to 28%.

#### **Distribution by system type**

Pumped systems accounted for 61% of all newly installed systems in 2022, while 39% were thermosiphon systems.

#### **Employment and turnover**

Based on a comprehensive literature survey and data collected from detailed country reports, the number of jobs in the production, installation, and maintenance of solar thermal systems is estimated to be 345,000 worldwide in 2022.1

The estimated worldwide turnover of the solar thermal industry in 2022 is  $\epsilon$  15.3 billion (US\$ 16.4 billion).

<sup>1</sup> Background information on the methodology used can be found in the Appendix, Chapter 9.3.

Photo: Savo Solar / Solar Heat Europe

Worldwide solar thermal capacity in 2023 3

As shown in the figure below, the global solar thermal capacity of unglazed and glazed water collectors grew from 62 GW<sub>th</sub> (89 million m<sup>2</sup>) in 2000 to 560 GW<sub>th</sub> (800 million m2) in 2023. The corresponding annual solar thermal energy yields amounted to 51 TWh in 2000 and 456 TWh in 2023. The cumulated worldwide installed capacity increased by 3% in 2023 compared to 2022. (Figure 2).

Figure 3 shows the annual installed collector capacities and the net additions.<sup>2</sup> In 2023, a total capacity of 21 GW $_{\text{th}}$ , or 30 million square meters of collector area, was installed. This means the global solar thermal market declined 7% compared to 2022.

Over the past decade, it's evident that the yearly rate of new installations has decreased by over fifty percent. Most of this development is due to the ongoing challenges in the real estate sector in China, which have persisted for several years. This became clear again in 2023, as the globally dominant Chinese market experienced a significant slump of 7.7%.

<sup>2</sup> The net addition is the difference between the annually installed collector capacity minus the collector capacity of those collectors that have reached their statistical lifespan of 25 years. For details in the lifespan see chapter 6.



#### **Figure 2: Global solar thermal capacity in operation and annual energy 2000-2023**

Global solar thermal capacity in operation  $\text{[GW]}_{\text{th}}$ Global solar thermal energy yield [TWh]



Annually installed capacity of water collectors  $[GW_{\mu}]$ 

Water collectors NET additions  $[\textsf{GW}_{\scriptscriptstyle{\textsf{th}}}]$ 

Figure 4 illustrates the annual installed collector capacity categorized by collector type and total installed collector capacity. This clearly shows how different the various collector types have developed globally. While the market for flat plate (FPC) and unglazed collectors remained almost constant, the market for evacuated tube collectors (ETC) contracted. This is again primarily due to market developments in China and, to some extent, India, as evacuated tube collectors dominate these two countries.

#### **Environmental effects and contribution to climate goals**

In 2023, the global solar thermal energy yield from all installed systems corresponds to savings of 49.1 million tons of oil and 158.4 million tons of  $CO<sub>2</sub>$ . This underscores the substantial contribution of this technology toward mitigating global greenhouse gas emissions.



**Figure 4: Annually installed capacity by collector type and total installed capacity 2010-2022**

FPC  $ETC$ unglazed air collectors in operation

#### Annually installed capacity and NET additions 2001-2023



**Parabolic trough collectors at Iberafrica in Kenya**  Photo: Absolicon Solar Collector AB, Sweden

#### **3.1**

#### **Solar thermal capacity in relation to the capacity of other renewable energy technologies**

The cumulated solar thermal capacity in operation by the end of 2023 was 560 GW $_{\rm th}^{3}$ , which trailed behind wind power's installed capacity of 1,021 GW $_{el}$ and photovoltaics 1,581 GW $_{el}$  of installed capacity (Figure 5). Geothermal energy and concentrated solar (thermal) power (CSP) lag behind these three technologies in installed capacity. The total capacity of geothermal power was 15 GW<sub>ol</sub>. and CSP was 7 GW<sub>ol</sub>.

In terms of energy, solar thermal systems supplied 456 TWh of heat, whereas wind turbines supplied 2,496 TWh and photovoltaic systems 1,805 TWh of electricity.

<sup>3</sup> The figures for 2023 are based on the latest market data from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Mozambique, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and USA which represent about 95% of the cumulated installed capacity in operation in 2023.



#### Global capacity in operation  $[GW_{ab}]$ ,  $[GW_{ab}]$  and Energy supplied  $[TWh_{ab}]$ ,  $[TWh_{ab}]$ , 2023

Figure 5: Global capacity in operation [GW<sub>el</sub>], [GW<sub>th</sub>] 2023 and annual energy yields [TWh<sub>el</sub>], [TWh<sub>th</sub>] (Solar Thermal: AEE INTEC, Wind Power: Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), Photovoltaic: IEA Solar PVPS (https://iea-pvps.org/

snapshot-reports/snapshot-2024/), Geothermal Power and Solar Thermal Power: Irena Renewable Energy Capacity Statistics 2023

Total capacity in operation  $\textsf{[GW}_{_{\textsf{th}}},\textsf{GW}_{_{\textsf{el}}}]$ Energy supplied [TWh]

# Outlook 2024 and beyond

Even if the annual heat consumption expanded by 6% over 2017-2022 4, the global final energy consumption for heating and cooling has remained virtually unchanged at around 50% of the total final energy consumption for many years. According to the IEA Renewables 2022 report, industrial processes are responsible for 53% of the final energy consumed for heat, while another 44% is used in buildings for space and water heating.<sup>5</sup> The remainder is used in agriculture, primarily for greenhouse heating.

The heating sector is dominated by fossil fuels. Apart from traditional biomass, only 13% of the global heating needs were met by modern renewables in 2022.4 According to Eurostat, the share of renewables for heating and cooling in the European Union was 22.9% in 2021. This is twice the global share but still did not cover even a quarter of heat consumption.

The IEA Renewables Report 2023 assumes that the share of heat from renewable energy will increase by more than 40% (+12 EJ) worldwide in 2023-2028. However, this growth corresponds to only 70% of the projected global increase in total heat demand, leading to a rise in fossil fuel consumption for heat and the associated  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  emissions (+5%/+0.6 Gt  $CO<sub>2</sub>$ in annual emissions).

This means that we must significantly accelerate the implementation of renewables if we want to achieve the international targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions on time.

This demand for renewables can only be met through the intensive utilization of solar thermal energy, modern biomass applications, geothermal energy, and carbon-free electricity.

With the building and industrial sectors consuming about 97% of the final energy consumed for heat, there is enormous potential for solar thermal to not only provide hot water and space heating but also be used for district heating in urban areas and industrial process heat.

Based on the data available, demand for large-scale solar thermal systems appears to increase in 2024. If one also considers that the development of largescale systems for solar district heating and industrial process heat has a long lead time and that most of the policies related to renewable heat were only implemented in 2022, then it can be assumed there will be significant growth in the number of solar thermal systems in the coming years.

As mentioned above, increased demand is expected in the building and industry sectors. Solar thermal energy offers a cost-effective way to make urban district heating systems CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral. As shown by plants already installed, solar heat can be provided at costs between 20 and 50 €/MWh under favorable conditions. This is significantly lower than the prices end customers currently pay for district heating.

The following paragraphs highlight recent developments and trends in solar district heating and solar heating for industrial processes (SHIP).

> Solar heat costs range from €20 to €50/MWh

<sup>4</sup> Renewables 2023 – Analyses IEA, January 2024 <sup>5</sup> Renewables 2022: Renewable analysis and forecasts to 2027, IEA, January 2023

#### **Increasing demand for solar district heating in Europe**

According to the German Steinbeis research institute Solites, in March 2024, six new solar thermal systems for district heating networks with a total collector area of 13,955 square meters (9.4 GW<sub>th</sub>) went into operation in 2023. Although this is less than expected, it is because the announced federal funding program for efficient district heating networks was released with a delay. Nevertheless, the positive trend of previous years appears set to continue in 2024 and beyond. Nine systems representing a collector area of 112,000 m<sup>2</sup> (78 MW<sub>th</sub>) are under construction or in an advanced planning stage. Another 70 systems with a collector area of 400,000 m<sup>2</sup> (280 MW<sub>th</sub>) are under concrete discussion or construction, according to Solites.

### 78 MW<sub>th</sub><br>solar district heating in the pipeline in Germany

One of these German systems is in Sonderhausen with 4.3 MW $_{\text{th}}$  of high-vacuum flat plate collectors  $(6,086 \text{ m}^2)$ . This system should start operating at the end of the first half 2024. In March 2024, in the city of Leipzig, construction began on the largest solar district heating plant in Germany. It has a capacity of 41 MW<sub>th</sub> (58.500 m<sup>2</sup>). During summer, the plant is expected to supply up to 20% of Leipzig's heat demand, contributing an average of around 2% annually. The plant is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2025 and will feed heat into the city's district heating network starting in 2026.

Another large-scale solar district heating system with a collector area of 48,000 m<sup>2</sup> (33.6 MW<sub>th</sub> capacity) is nearing completion in Groningen in the Netherlands. According to information from the installation company, this system is scheduled to be completed in June 2024.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Large-scale SHIP plants in the pipeline**

In 2023, 116 solar thermal systems were built and put into operation, supplying industrial processes in various sectors. A clear trend here was that the large industrial process heat systems were predominantly built with concentrating collectors that enable the provision of higher temperatures (see Chapter 5.3.1).

This trend will continue in the coming years, as shown by currently planned systems worldwide. Some of these SHIP systems are presented below.

#### 1.5 GW<sub>th</sub> for an Aluminum Refinery

By far, the largest solar thermal plant in the project planning phase is the first GW-scale plant for an aluminum refinery of the Saudi Arabian mining

company Ma'aden Group. As reported in the 2023 edition of the Solar Heat Worldwide report, the system builder Glasspoint and Saudi Arabia's leading mining company signed a memorandum of understanding in 2022 to build the world's largest solar process heat plant. The plant is to be built in Ras al Khair with a capacity of 1.5 GW $_{\text{th}}$ , corresponding to a collector area of 6 km². It will produce 3,000 GWh annually using parabolic trough collectors and reduce the refinery's carbon emissions by 600,000 tons annually. The average daily steam production is expected to be 14,000 tons. Construction is scheduled to start in 2024, and the first solar steam will be used to refine bauxite ore into aluminum oxide in 2026.7

#### 154 MW<sub>th</sub> for Chilean copper mines

Building on the good experiences that began in 2013 with the commissioning of the 38 MW $_{th}$  system for the Gabriela Mistral copper mine in Chile's Atacama Desert, the Chilean energy supply company Gasco is planning to build three large industrial solar thermal systems for electrolysis baths in copper mines. A total of three flat-plate collector fields with a total capacity of 154 MW<sub>th</sub> are planned. Two solar thermal systems with 90 M $\hat{W}_{th}$  and 23 MW<sub>th</sub> for the Minera Escondida copper mine and another with 41 MW $_{\text{th}}$  for the Spence copper mine. Commissioning is scheduled for 2025.8

### 154 MW for Chilean copper mines scheduled

#### **First commercial Fresnel collector system in Latin America**

The first commercial Fresnel collector system in Latin America is at an advanced stage of implementation. The planning for the solar process heat system for the Unilever plant in Cuernavaca, Mexico, has been completed. The steam produced is intended to be used in the factory's production of personal care products. The construction of the solar heat system with a capacity of 365 kW<sub>th</sub> (521 m<sup>2</sup>) is planned for the second half of 2024.<sup>9</sup>

#### 16.4 MW<sub>th</sub> malting plant in Croatia

Despite some delays in planning and constructing a solar thermal heating plant, heat pumps and a storage facility for a malting plant in Croatia are being implemented with the support of the European Innovation Fund. The solar plant consists of 23,400 m<sup>2</sup> (16.4 MW<sub>th</sub>) of flat plate collectors in combination with a 5,000  $m<sup>3</sup>$  hot water storage tank.

<sup>6</sup> TVP Solar, April 2024

<sup>7</sup> Source: https://www.glasspoint.com/projects/maaden-solar, March 2024

<sup>8</sup> https://solarthermalworld.org, 23 February 2024

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Source: Miguel Frasquet Herraiz, Solatom

## Solar thermal market development and trends in 2023 5



**Multi-family house solar system "Im Werk" in Uster, Switzerland** Photo: Soltop Energie AG, Switzerland

The global market development in 2023 presents a varied landscape. Despite an overall decline of 7% in the global solar thermal market, mainly due to a decline of 7.7% in China, there are notable areas of growth.

In India, also one of the world's most important markets, the market for solar thermal energy grew by 27 %.

Growing markets are emerging in Southern Africa and Latin America, with some small African markets showing significant increases. Mozambique reported a notable 40% market increase, while South Africa experienced a 12% growth. Similarly, Mexico and Brazil saw growth rates of 5% and 3% respectively.

In Europe, only a handful of countries, including the United Kingdom and Greece, saw positive market growth in 2023. The UK solar thermal market grew by

an impressive 66%, and Greece experienced a 10% growth. With this, Greece is the sole European country to have sustained uninterrupted growth for many years. Meanwhile, former European market leaders like Denmark faced a 25% decline. Similarly, traditionally strong countries such as Spain saw declines of 26%, along with Germany, Poland, and Cyprus experienced decreases of 46%, 38%, and 10%, respectively. The situation is similar in Australia, where the market declined by 8% in 2023.



**Figure 6: Reporting countries with the highest growth rates in 2023** 



**Roof-integrated solar system for hot water preparation** Photo: Velux / Solar Heat Europe

#### **5.1 Small-scale solar thermal heating systems**

Approximately 60% of the world's annual installations consist of small-scale solar water heating systems and solar combi-systems for combined hot water preparation and space heating for single-family and multi-family houses, apartment buildings, hotels, and public buildings.

66%

market growth in the UK in 2023

However, in many parts of Europe and China, these systems face growing competition from photovoltaic systems and heat pumps, resulting in a decline in market share in recent years. The systems are predominantly pumped systems that are characterized by complex system technology.

In contrast, thermosiphon systems dominate in Asia (excluding China), Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Mediterranean region. The market for this type of system is relatively stable and so far, has come under less price pressure from photovoltaic systems. Only in South Africa there is increasing competition from PV2Heat systems. For detailed information, see also section 5.5.



**Learn more about Solar Energy in Buildings at: https://task66.iea-shc.org/**



Photo: GREENoneTEC Solarindustrie GmbH, Austria

#### **5.2 Large-scale solar thermal heating systems**

Since the early 1980s, several large-scale solar thermal systems have been operational in Scandinavian countries and Central Europe, serving local or district heating networks and installed on large residential, commercial, and public buildings.

Since 2010, Denmark has been the dominant player in the large-scale system market and for nearly a decade in solar district heating. However, a significant shift in energy technology policy and funding conditions led to the collapse of the Danish solar district heating market in 2020. Subsequently, since 2020, Denmark has only seen the construction of three new plants and the extension of three existing ones. Compared to the very large systems built in previous years, it is remarkable, that one of the new systems added in 2023 was relatively small, with a collector area of only 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> (1.4 MW.). Consequently, Denmark has slipped from first to fourth place among newly installed large-scale plants.

In 2023, China reported installing five new district heating systems with a collector area of 147,206 m<sup>2</sup> (103 MW<sub>th</sub>) and 16 other large-scale systems with a 33,734  $\text{m}^2$  (23.7 MW<sub>th</sub>) collector area. In addition to China and Denmark, new plants were commissioned in Germany and Austria in 2023. In Germany, six solar district heating systems were installed with a collector area of 13,955  $m^2$ , and there are nine systems with a collector area of 112,000  $m<sup>2</sup>$  under construction or in the planning phase and 70 further systems in the pipeline.

In 2023, Austria reported two expansions of existing large-scale district heating systems. The newly installed collector area totaled 2,173 m<sup>2</sup> (1.5 MW<sub>th</sub>); The total collector area of these district heating systems is now 1,954 m<sup>2</sup> (1.4 MW<sub>th</sub>) and 6,807 m<sup>2</sup>  $(4.8 \text{ MW}_{\text{th}}).$ 

By the end of 2023, 598 large-scale solar thermal systems (>350 kW<sub>th</sub>, 500 m<sup>2</sup>) were operating worldwide. Their total installed capacity equaled 2.3 GW $_{th}$ , corresponding to a 3.3 million square meters collector area.





#### **Figure 7: Large-scale systems for solar district heating and large residential, commercial, and public buildings worldwide – annual installations and cumulated area in operation in 2023**

Data sources: Daniel Trier - PlanEnergi, DK, Jan-Olof Dalenbäck - Chalmers University of Technology, SE, Sabine Putz - IEA SHC Task 55, AT, Bärbel Epp - solrico.com/, DE, AEE INTEC, AT, Janusz Starościk – SPIUG, PL, Zheng Ruicheng, China Academy of Building Research, CHN.

Cumulated collector area in operation in Europe  $[m^2]$ Cumulated collector area in operation in China  $[m^2]$  $\blacksquare$  Number of systems installed in "Other countries"  $[m^2]$  **Cumulated collector area in operation "Other countries"** [m<sup>2</sup>] **Number of systems installed in Europe [-]** Number of systems installed in China [-]

#### **\* Other countries:**

Number. of systems [-]

Number. of systems [-]

**MENA countries:** Dubai, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE **Latin America:** Brazil, Colombia, Mexico **Other Asia:** Cambodia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, India, Russia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey **Plus:** Australia, Canada, South Africa, USA

#### **5.2.1 Solar district heating (SDH) systems**

The largest sub-sector of large-scale solar thermal heating systems is solar district heating. By the end of 2023, 336 large-scale solar district heating systems (>350 kW<sub>th</sub>, 500 m<sup>2</sup>) with an installed capacity of 1,908 MW $\int_{th}^{th}$  (2.73 million square meters) were reported in operation.

As shown in Figure 8, Denmark leads in this market segment, boasting the highest number of systems and installed area. Alongside Denmark (124 systems) and China (72 systems), several other countries have a growing interest in this plant type. Solar district heating systems present a compelling opportunity to decarbonize the heat sector in neighborhoods and entire cities.

Countries to note are Germany (56 systems, some with seasonal storage), Sweden (23 systems), Austria (20 systems), Poland and France (with 8 systems each). Outside China and Europe, solar district heating systems are installed in Saudi Arabia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia (Other Asia), the USA, Canada, and South Africa.

336 Solar district heating systems with in operation

 $\mathbf{P}$ **SHWW 19 18** $\mathbf{a}$ **NAMAS** 

#### Large-scale systems for solar district heating Collector area, capacities installed and number of systems by country (2023)



Data sources: Daniel Trier - PlanEnergi, DK, Jan-Olof Dalenbäck - Chalmers University of Technology, SE, Sabine Putz - IEA SHC Task 55, AT, Bärbel Epp - solrico.com, DE

Table 1 lists the 20 largest solar district heating systems. By far, the largest system is in the Danish city of Silkeborg, built in 2016. It has a collector area of almost 157,000 m<sup>2</sup>, corresponding to a capacity of 110 MW<sub>th</sub>. The second largest plant, with 65 MW $_{th}$ , is in China.

The table also clearly shows the dominance of these two countries in terms of the number of largest solar district heating systems. Eleven of the 20 largest plants are in Denmark and seven are in China.

#### **Table 1: The twenty largest solar district heating systems**



Sources: PlanEnergi, Solarthermalworld.org, Bärbel Epp, China Academy of Building Research



**Solar district heating plant in Søllested, Denmark, consists of 4,700 m² double glazed flat plate collectors** Photo: SavoSolar / Solar Heat Europe

#### **5.2.2**

#### **Large-scale systems for buildings in the residential, public and commercial sector**

Beyond solar district heating, another significant market segment in the large-scale sector involves solar applications for residential, commercial, and public buildings. By the end of 2023, 262 large-scale solar thermal systems (>350 kW<sub>th</sub>, 500 m<sup>2</sup>) were providing heat to these buildings globally. The total installed capacity of these systems is 377 MW $_{th}$  $(538, 216 \text{ m}^2)$ .

China leads this market segment with 114 installed systems and a capacity of 275 MW $_{th}$ , followed by Turkey with 18 systems and an installed capacity of 14.2 MW $_{\text{th}}$ . Latin America ranks third with 16 systems and an installed capacity of approximately 12 MW.

Moreover, alongside European countries like Greece, France, Austria, Switzerland, Poland, and Spain, an increasing number of large-scale systems are being constructed in Latin America (Brazil and Mexico), the MENA region (Dubai, Jordan, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates), and Other Asia (Cambodia, India, Thailand). These systems are commonly installed in hospitals, hotels, and sports centers.



**Solar thermal system for an apartment building in Zurich, Switzerland** Photo: Soltop Energie AG, Switzerland



**Learn more about current research results and international cooperation on the topic of solar district heating: https://task68.iea-shc.org/**

#### Large-scale systems for residential, public and commercial buildings Collector area, capacities installed and No. of systems by country (2023)



**Figure 9: Large-scale systems for residential, public, and commercial buildings – capacities and collector area installed and number of systems in 2023**

#### **5.3 Solar heat for industrial processes**

According to the IEA analysis, industrial accounts for two-thirds of industrial energy demand and almost one-fifth of global energy consumption.10 It also constitutes most of the direct industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emitted yearly, as most industrial heat still originates from fossil-fuel combustion. At the same time, many companies have clear targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The challenge in decarbonizing industry is that industrial heat covers a wide range of temperature levels for different processes and end applications.

Electrification can be a solution for certain hightemperature industrial processes, such as steel production. For industrial low-temperature process heat up to 400°C, solar thermal systems are an excellent option. More than a thousand systems operating across various industry sectors worldwide impressively demonstrate this.

Depending on the temperature level of the needed heat, different types of solar thermal collectors are used, from air collectors, flat plate, and evacuated tube collectors for temperatures up to 100 °C to concentrating solar thermal collectors, such as Scheffler dishes, Fresnel collectors and parabolic troughs for temperatures up to 400 °C.

According to a study published by the German agency solrico<sup>11</sup> in March 2024 and the SHIP database, the number of SHIP systems in operation totals at

**Parabolic trough collectors for one of the breweries of the Carlsberg Group in Salonika, Greece**  Photo: Absolicon

China: Collector area: 392,897 m<sup>2</sup> Capacity: 275 MW No. of systems: 114

least 1,209 systems with 1.359 million square meters collector area related to a capacity of 951 MW<sub>th</sub>.

Although the market for solar thermal systems for industrial processes (SHIP) fluctuates in the number of systems installed per year and the annual installed capacity, it is a relatively stable market. Between 2017 and 2023, approximately 100 new SHIP systems with an average capacity of 1.1 MW $_{\rm th}$  each were commissioned each year.

<sup>10</sup> https://www.iea.org/commentaries/clean-and-efficient-heat-for-industry

<sup>11</sup> https://solarthermalworld.org/news/the-netherlands-and-spaindrive-ship-market-2023/



**Table 2: Development of commissioned SHIP systems over the past seven years**  Source: Solrico with additions from AEE INTEC

The analysis of the top 3 countries in terms of the number of installed systems and installed capacity also shows how diverse the SHIP market is. Mexico is ahead of Germany and the Netherlands in the total number of systems installed. In terms of the installed capacity of SHIP systems, the picture is entirely different, with Oman in first place, followed by China and Spain. For details, see Figure 13.

#### **5.3.1. New trends in solar process heat in 2023**

**In 2023, at least 116 new SHIP systems with a**  capacity of 94 MW<sub>th</sub> were installed worldwide, according to the solrico study mentioned above. One hundred five of these newly installed systems (total collector area 133,000 m<sup>2</sup>, 93 MW<sub>th</sub>) are also documented in detail in the SHIP database.12

Two factors were particularly noteworthy in 2023. Even if the total number of documented solar process heat systems has not increased, it is remarkable that after two years with relatively small systems, the average system size has more than tripled compared to the systems installed in 2022. The second change in the market concerns the types of collectors used. In previous years, flat-plate collectors were primarily utilized for industrial applications. However, by 2023, **concentrating collectors** became the predominant choice, especially in larger systems. From the beginning of 2023 to March 2024, a total of 11 solar systems for industrial process heat with concentrating collectors with a total installed capacity of 120 MW<sub>th</sub> were installed. It is worth noting that most of **the systems were installed in breweries**. In addition, an extraordinary plant was completed for the tourism industry in China in the first quarter of 2024.

Some of these systems are presented in more detail below.

#### **Solar Snow for the Handan Bay Water World in China**

A 80 MW<sub>th</sub> solar plant for the Handan Bay Water World resort in the province of Hebei opens a new dimension. The 114,000 m² parabolic trough collector system provides heat to a thermal oil loop. Forty percent of the solar heat supplies an ice and snowmaking system for an indoor ski slope, as well as the hotel's HVAC and hot water systems and the indoor swimming pool.



An 80 MW<sub>n</sub> parabolic trough collector system supplies snow for an indoor ski hall, as well as heating and cooling at the **Handan Bay Water World in China**  Photo: Inner Mongolia Xuchen Energy Co., Ltd

#### **Breweries point the way**

With four solar industrial process heat plants built in 2023, the brewing industry is pointing the way to a sustainable future for the food and beverage industry.

What Heineken, one of the world's largest brewery groups, began in 2013 at the Gösser Brewery in Austria has been impressively continued. At the Göss plant, the brewing process was converted from steam to hot water supply with the help of a 1 MW $_{\rm th}$  flat-plate collector system. The brewery group has now opted for concentrating collector systems to reach higher temperatures at their Spanish breweries in Sevilla and Valencia.

With a 30 MW<sub>th</sub> parabolic trough collector system, now the largest solar industrial heating system in Europe, Heineken is setting new standards in the field of solar process heat in Sevilla. The parabolic troughs generate pressurized water at 210°C. To compensate for the fluctuations in production and demand, a thermal storage consisting of eight stratified, pressurized steel tanks with a total volume of 800  $m<sup>3</sup>$ completes the system. The expected annual solar yield is 35,000 MWh, with heat being available for 15 to 20 Euro/MWh.

By switching to renewable heat, the brewery can reduce its gas consumption by more than 60% and reduce its carbon footprint by almost 7,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per year.

What is also interesting about this project, built by the AZTEQ group, is that the heat supply is handled via a thermal power purchase agreement (TPA). The energy service provider Engie España operates the plant and supplies heat at a fixed price. At the end of the 20-year term of the agreement, ownership of the solar thermal plant is transferred to Heineken.



**A section of Europe's largest solar industrial heat plant,**  with a capacity of 30 MW<sub>th</sub>, was installed by Engie in **cooperation with Azteq-Solarlite Spain at the Heineken brewery in Sevilla, Spain** Photo: Wolfgang Gruber-Glatzl, AEE INTEC

Another Heineken SHIP system, equipped with 6,000 m2

of linear **Fresnel collectors**, began operation in March 2024 in Valencia, Spain. The solar field consists of 182 modules with a peak output of 4.2  $MW_{th}$  and covers 10% of the brewery's steam needs. In addition, its 1.5 MWh storage allows it to operate in transition periods and store part of the energy generated on weekends.

This system also sets new standards, as it is the world's largest solar thermal system with Fresnel collectors.13 The brewery also signed a steam purchase agreement with the turnkey supplier.

Two further solar process heat systems for breweries were built in 2023 in Bari, Italy, for Birra Peroni, and in Salonika, Greece, for the Carlsberg Group by the Swedish company Absolicon. Both systems, with a thermal capacity of 660 kW $_{th}$ , supply the pasteurization process of the breweries.

#### **Drying of spent grain from breweries**

In connection with the solar thermal boom in breweries, two solar process heat systems with  $7 \, \text{MW}_{th}$ air collectors should not go unmentioned. The Spanish animal feed specialist L. Pernía uses the Solar Wall air collector systems at its two locations in Sevilla and Madrid to dry spent grain from breweries, which is processed into animal feed.

#### **3.9 MW<sub>th</sub> parabolic trough collector system supplies drying ovens**

A parabolic trough collector system with 5,540 m² of collector area (3.9 MW<sub>th</sub>) and a heat storage supplies an Avery Dennison plant in Turnhout, Belgium, with solar-generated process heat. Avery Dennison is a global leader in self-adhesive materials and technologies. The products are used, among other things, in the automotive industry, construction, medical technology, and personal care. The solar field generates heat at temperatures of approximately 280°C. This is used for the partial solar operation of the drying ovens in the production lines for coating adhesive tapes. An annual yield of up to 2.7 GWh of thermal energy is expected, saving 2.3 GWh of gas annually.



3.9 MW<sub>th</sub> Parabolic trough collector system at the **company Avery Dennison in Turnhout, Belgium** Photo: Avery Dennison



**660 m² parabolic trough collectors for the Brewery Birra Peroni in Bari, Italy** Photo: Absolicon, Sweden

12 http://ship-plants.info/ data retrieved by 31st March 2024 <sup>13</sup> https://www.theheinekencompany.com/newsroom/heinekenand-csin-open-worlds-largest-solar-thermal-plant-with-innovativefresnel-technology-for-industrial-use-in-spain/

#### **5.3.2. Distribution of solar process heat systems across processes, countries, and sectors**

As mentioned above, out of the 1,209 documented systems with a size of at least 50 m<sup>2</sup> collector area or 35 kW<sub>th</sub>, 615 systems are detailed (collector area, installed capacity, and the type of application and collector) in a SHIP database. This database is an online portal operated by AEE INTEC in Austria.14 These 615 SHIP systems account for a total collector area of 1,325,853 m² and a thermal capacity of 823 MW $_{\rm th}^{\rm -15}$  Only the data of these 615 SHIP systems are presented in the following figures. The data includes installed systems through March 2024.

The following figures are dominated by the world's largest solar process heat application in Oman, commissioned in 2017 and continuously expanded. The plant's current thermal capacity is  $330$  MW... accounting for 40% of the total installed thermal capacity of the 615 documented solar process heat applications worldwide. The figures include the new and second largest system at Handan Bay Water World, with 79.8 MW<sub>th</sub>. Arguably, a unique application of SHIP. The third largest system is a greenhouse project in Australia with a capacity of 36 MW $_{th}$ . In fourth place is the Heineken brewery in Sevilla, commissioned in 2023, with a capacity of 30.3  $MW_{\text{th}}$ . A copper mine in Chile with a thermal capacity of 27.5 MW $_{\text{th}}$ , once the largest system, is now fifth in the SHIP ranking.

Together, these five plants make up 61% of the total installed thermal capacity.

Figure 10 shows the distribution of the 615 systems in terms of size. The five systems mentioned above exceed 21 MW<sub>th</sub> of thermal capacity (30,000 m<sup>2</sup>), 85 systems have installed capacities between  $0.7 \, \text{MW}_{th}$ and 21 MW<sub>th</sub> (1,000 m<sup>2</sup> - 29,999 m<sup>2</sup>) of thermal capacity, 79 systems have installed capacities between 0.35 and 0.7 MW<sub>u</sub> (500 – 999 m<sup>2</sup>), and 446 systems are below 0.35 MW<sub>th</sub> (<500 m<sup>2</sup>).





Source: SHIP database

Collector area  $\lceil m^2 \rceil$  Thermal Power  $\lceil M W_{n} \rceil$  Number of systems  $\lceil \cdot \rceil$ 

The process heat systems by collector technology are presented in Figure 11. The majority of the systems use flat plate collectors to produce solar process heat, followed by parabolic trough collectors and evacuated tube collectors.

Parabolic trough collectors have solidified their dominance in installed capacity and average system size. Three of the five largest SHIP systems use parabolic trough collectors. The average size of the 72 documented plants is 6.7 MW $_{th}$ , showing the trend towards large systems that operate at higher temperatures.

<sup>14</sup> http://ship-plants.info/ data retrieved by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 <sup>15</sup> According to an agreement within the IEA SHC Task 64/IV, the conversion of  $m^2$  collector area into kW<sub>th</sub> is also done for concentrating solar thermal systems with a factor of 0.7. Only the Mirrah system in Oman was converted with a lower factor due to the special glass house construction.

**Lactosol is the largest SHIP plant in France. It combines**  a 10.4 MW<sub>th</sub> solar thermal flat-plate collector field with a **3,000 m³ water tank to supply hot air to the spray drying tower of a whey-powder facility of Lactoserum France. Project: Newheat** Photo: IMAGESinAIR Productions

Global solar process heat applications in operation, by collector type (end of March 2023)



**operation in March 2024 by collector type**  Source: SHIP database

Figure 12 shows the industry sectors of the 615 documented systems. The food and beverage sectors continue to grow and is the dominant sector in terms of number of installed systems. This sector accounts for 199 systems with an average size of 1,083  $m^2$  and an installed thermal capacity of 151 MW...

In contrast, the mining sector includes two of the five largest SHIP systems and thus is the dominant sector in terms of installed thermal capacity. However, its share has decreased from 59% to 47%, while the share of food and beverage has increased from 13% to 18%.

Number of systems [-], Installed capacity [MW.,]

 $\overline{\circ}$ 

Number

systems [-], Installed capacity [MW,

Collector area [m ]  $\blacklozenge$  Thermal Power [MW<sub>m</sub>] Number of systems [-]



**Figure 12: Global solar process heat applications in operation at the end of March 2024 by industry sector** Source: SHIP database

Installed collector area [m2]

Installed collector area [m<sup>2]</sup>

Figure 13 presents the globally installed solar process heat systems by country. Mexico has achieved 119 installed SHIP systems with a thermal capacity of 21 MW<sub>th</sub> and leads when it comes to the number of installations.

The order looks different if it is related to the installed capacity. Oman leads in terms of installed thermal capacity (342 MW $_{\text{th}}$ ) with the two systems at the Amal Oilfield (Miraah and Amal II). China ranks second in this category with 55 systems and an installed capacity of 153 MW<sub>th</sub>. However, it should be noted that according to information from the China Academy of Building Research, significantly more solar process heat systems have been built since 2021. Unfortunately, the China Academy of Building Research could not

provide detailed data on the individual systems, so they could not be included in these figures.

The leading countries in Europe in terms of installed capacity in the SHIP segment are Spain (59 MW.), the Netherlands (29 MW $_{\text{th}}$ ) and France (28 MW $_{\text{th}}$ ). The USA and Chile are also among the top 10 countries with  $28$  MW<sub>th</sub> of installed capacity each.

Industrial process heating systems developed enormous momentum in Europe in 2023. In this year alone, 77 new systems were installed (+90%). This corresponds to an increase in area by 110,183  $m<sup>2</sup>$  and in thermal capacity of 77.1 MW $_{th}$  (+792%) compared to 2022.



Only countries with at least 0.7 MW<sub>th</sub> (1,000 m<sup>2</sup>) collector area) are shown in Figure 13 (593 of 615 systems accounting for >99% of installed thermal capacity).

**LEARN MORE** 

Table 3 documents all SHIP systems with a collector area larger than 5,000  $m^2$  corresponding to 3.5 MW<sub>th</sub>.

**Learn more about current IEA SHC research results and international cooperation at: Solar Process Heat: https://task64.iea-shc.org/ Solar Energy in Industrial Water & Wastewater: https://task62.iea-shc.org/**

**EU Projects: https://friendship-project.eu http://www.inship.eu/ http://ship2fair-h2020.eu/ www.indheap.eu** 





Source: ship-plants.info

In addition to the more traditional industrial sectors that use thermal solar systems highlighted above, is horticulture. Solar thermal plants are being used to heat greenhouses for flower and vegetable

cultivation. The following table provides an overview of the top 10 systems with collector areas larger than 50 m² between 2013 and 2020.

#### **Table 4: Overview of the 10 largest solar thermal systems for flower and vegetable cultivation**



Source: Bosman Van Zaal, G2 Energy, Solar Payback SHIP Supplier Survey 2020, AEE INTEC



**Domestic hot water and swimming pool system with 2,082 m² PVT in Barcelona, Spain** Photo: Abora Solar, Spain

#### **5.4 PVT – Photovoltaic Thermal Systems**

Photovoltaic-Thermal collectors (PVT) are hybrid solar panels that generate both electricity (photovoltaic) and heat (thermal) from sunlight. These collectors integrate photovoltaic cells, which convert sunlight into electricity, with a thermal absorber to capture heat energy, thus reaching higher yields per area. This is particularly important if the available roof area is limited and integrated solar energy concepts are needed to achieve a climate-neutral energy supply for consumers, such as in residential and commercial buildings.



**Figure 14: Distribution of the total installed collector area by economic region in 2023**  Source: AEE INTEC

The technology is more complex than just a PV or a solar thermal collector but provides additional significant advantages. The PV production can be slightly higher if the collectors operate at temperatures below that of PV-only modules. Depending on the type of PVT collectors, the produced temperature ranges from about -20°C up to +150°C and serves a wide range of applications. The solar thermal energy generated by PVT systems offers significant flexibility in the system design. The energy can be stored in many ways, including onsite tanks, aquifers, ground strata, and pit storage systems. It can be used directly for hot water, space heating, or a secondary system such as a heat source (heat pumps). Cooling (radiative and convective) can also be provided directly during the night using the PVT collector's thermal absorber or indirectly through a machine driven by the PV electricity.

#### **General market overview**

In 2023, the total installed PVT collector area was 1,589,553 m<sup>2</sup> (822 MW<sub>th</sub>, 292 MW<sub>peak</sub>). The vast majority of this collector area was installed in Europe (1,011,212 m<sup>2</sup>) followed by Other Asia (318,329 m<sup>2</sup>) and China (146,926  $m<sup>2</sup>$ ), which together accounted for 822 MW<sub>th</sub>, 292 MW<sub>neak</sub> of the total installed capacity. The remaining installed collector area was shared between the MENA countries (Egypt, Israel, and Iraq (70,130 m²), Sub-Sahara African countries (Ghana, Lesotho, and South Africa (22,926 m²), United States and Canada (11,133 m<sup>2</sup>), Australia (3,576 m<sup>2</sup>), Latin America (766 m<sup>2</sup>), and others (4,555 m<sup>2</sup>).

**PVT system (240 collectors, 617 m<sup>2</sup>, 390 kW<sub>th</sub>, 17 kW<sub>el</sub>) installed at the British Library in Central London, UK.**  Annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings of 58 tons Photo: Naked Energy Ltd, UK

In the European Market, France is the market leader with an installed collector area of 616,551 m<sup>2</sup> followed by Germany with 162,549 m<sup>2</sup> and the Netherlands with 127,303 m<sup>2</sup>. In Spain, Italy, and Switzerland, collector areas range between 25,915 m<sup>2</sup> and 34,192 m<sup>2</sup>. In the remaining European countries, collector areas of at least 23,664 m² were reported.

With a global share of 63% of installed thermal capacity, uncovered PVT water collectors were the dominating PVT technology, followed by air PVT collectors with 33% and covered PVT water collectors with 4%. Evacuated tube collectors and concentrators play only a minor role in the total numbers. Table 5 shows the cumulated installed collector area by PVT collector type at the end of 2023.

> 1.6 million m2 PVT collector area installed worldwide



#### **Table 5: Cumulated collector area by PVT collector type at the end of 2023**



Source: AEE INTEC

#### **Table 6: Total installed PVT capacity in 2023 divided into thermal and electrical power**



**NAMAS** 

Source: AEE INTEC

As shown in the table, PVT collectors' total cumulative thermal capacity by the end of 2023 was 822 MW $_{_{\rm th}}$ , and the PV power was 292 MW $_{\rm peak}$ .

#### **Market development of PVT collectors between 2017 and 2023**

Based on the market data provided by 46 PVT manufacturers, the market experienced robust growth of 9% on average between 2017 and 2020. In 2021, it reached its highest value at +13%, but in 2022, it faced challenges leading to a significant decline of 37%. Unfortunately, this trend continued in 2023. The newly installed capacity in 2023 amounted to 29.5 MWt $_{_{\mathrm{h}}}$  and 14,5 MW $_{_{\mathrm{peak}}}$ . This is a decrease of 30.4% compared to the installed thermal capacity in 2022.

### In 2023, the global PVT market shrank by 30%





**100 PVT solar panels at the town hall Offenbach an der Queich, Germany, operate in combination with a 50 kW heat pump** 

Photo: Consolar Solare Energiesysteme GmbH, Germany



and 2021. However, in 2022, the PVT market was negatively affected by declining or discontinued subsidies in some countries. At the same time, the demand for photovoltaic systems increased significantly worldwide due to large-scale subsidies and support measures.

As mentioned above and shown in Figure 15, global interest in PVT systems grew steadily between 2017

**Market development in 2023**

Some PVT manufacturers responded to the increased demand for PV technologies by focusing mainly on the PV market. However, PVT was not able to capitalize on the PV momentum in every country. As a result, strong, previously dominant markets like France came to a near halt while smaller markets continued to grow.16

The significant global marked decline started in 2022, mainly due to the downturn in the French market. Changes in the French funding scheme led to the Air PVT collector market collapse in 2022 (-90%) and continued in 2023 (-16%). Other traditionally strong PVT markets in Europe, Germany (-22%), and the Netherlands (-59%) also reported market declines in 2023.

On the positive side, there were European countries with growing PVT markets. Spain reported a growth of +34% (7,832 m<sup>2</sup>), and Belgium 20% (1,018 m<sup>2</sup>). However, the increase in these countries could not compensate for the overall market slumps.

The fact that France suffered a major market decline in Air PVT collectors in 2022 is also reflected in the breakdown of the different PVT collector types in 2021, as shown in Figure 16. Air PVT collectors were the dominant collector type in 2021 at 45.5%, ahead of uncovered PVT collectors at 44.2%. In 2023, the market share of uncovered PVT collectors decreased slightly from 87% to 78 %, while covered PVT collectors increased by 10%. Air PVT collectors, evacuated tube PVT, and concentrated PVT have almost disappeared from the market.

<sup>16</sup> The 2023 PVT data are based on feedback from 28 PVT collector manufactures and PVT system suppliers from 12 different countries.

**Figure 16: Distribution of newly installed PVT collector area worldwide by collector type from 2021 to 2023** Source: AEE INTEC



**Figure 17: Newly installed PVT collector area in selected countries from 2018 to 2023** Source: AEE INTEC

#### **5.5 Photovoltaic generated heat - PGH**

In its Renewables 2023 report, the International Energy Agency expects global heat consumption in the building sector to stagnate over the period 2023- 2028.17

Modern uses of renewable energy sources for space and water heating, as well as for cooking, are projected to expand nearly 40% in the meantime, raising the share of renewables in the building sector's heat consumption from 15% in 2023 to 21% in 2028, and displacing 5.7 EJ of fossil fuel consumption by 2028.

According to the IEA report mentioned above, renewable electricity will be the fastest-growing renewable heat source in buildings between 2023 and 2028. Its use will expand by two-thirds globally (+2.2 EJ) and contribute almost 40% of the sectoral increase in renewable heat consumption. This means that in the building sector, too, the electrification of the heating sector will take the largest share in the transition from traditional fossil fuel-based heating systems to renewable heating technologies.



<sup>2</sup>2019

2021

2023

**PV2Heat systems installed in South Africa** Photo: Bongani Xakaza, SANEDI, South Africa

This shift is driven by various factors, including efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency, and increase the integration of renewable energy sources into the heating sector.

However, challenges to widespread electrification of the heat sector remain, including the need for sufficient renewable energy generation capacity and grid infrastructure upgrades to support increased electricity demand.



In addition to these factors, the discussion about the electrification of the heating sector is also about questioning renewable heating technologies such as biomass, geothermal energy, and solar thermal energy and replacing them with photovoltaics (PV). While PV panels are primarily associated with generating electricity for various applications, including powering homes and businesses, they can also be utilized for heating purposes through electrification. Electric heating technologies, such as heat pumps or electric resistance heaters, can efficiently convert the electricity generated by PV panels into heat for space heating, water heating, or industrial processes. This Photovoltaic Generated Heat (PGH) discussion is being driven above all by the significant and ongoing price reductions in photovoltaics, which put traditional renewable heating technologies under economic pressure.

When photovoltaic solar collectors were >100 USD/ Watt, solar thermal hot water was the vanguard technology for households to utilize their own solar resources. This has led to a large installed base of solar thermal systems. In 2024, a residential photovoltaic system can be installed for <1 USD/Watt in most markets. This dramatic cost reduction has made PV-driven electric hot water options viable. In fact, a directly connected "PV2Heat" system may now represent the most affordable and reliable option in some markets. In high PV penetration markets, several emerging solutions are being brought to market to increase the solar electricity consumed in water heating, space heating, and even district heating.

Examples of PGH system concepts and installations are presented below.



Source: Lavhe Maluleke, Stellenbosch University, South Africa

#### **5.5.1. Direct Coupled "PV2Heat" Technologies**

So-called "PV2Heat" systems couple the direct current (DC) from rooftop PV panels directly to a DC resistance heating element in the hot water tank (i.e., no inverter and minimal intermediary electronics). In areas with unreliable grid service, high connection costs, or low up-front capital, "PV2Heat" systems represent an ideal hot water technology.

PV2Heat systems are increasingly offered at a lower cost than solar thermal thermosyphon systems. In addition to cost benefits, this type of system also has the advantage that hot water storage tanks no longer need to be installed on the roof and do not have any stagnation or frost issues.

As presented for the first time in the 2021 edition of the Solar Heat Worldwide report, a considerable and growing market has developed in recent years, particularly in some countries in southern Africa. As shown in Figure 18, by the end of 2023, 34,000 "PV2Heat" systems had been installed in South Africa.



**A 144 kWpeak photovoltaic system supplies the multifamily house with electricity, hot water, and space heating18** Photo: Markus Ursprung, Switzerland

#### **5.5.2.**

#### **Partially Coupled PV Hot Water Technologies**

Partially coupled systems are particularly interesting in markets with high levels of installed PV on the electrical grid (e.g., a pronounced 'duck' curve). This has led to a dramatic reduction in the export value of generated PV electricity. Australia is a leader in PV penetration, with >1kWe installed capacity per person in 2024. Pure electric water heaters represent onethird of the Australian hot water market. The humble hot water storage tank in these systems can easily store ~10kWh of energy, and emerging products can unlock the value of this energy storage through PV self-consumption schemes that optimize usage patterns and real-time pricing and work together with other grid-connected systems.

Another option is PV diverters, which ensure excess PV electricity is routed to thermal loads when PV generation exceeds the house's other energy requirements. These devices have been developed predominantly by manufacturers in the United Kingdom.

#### **5.5.3. Solar Combisystem powered by PV**

A solar combisystem, is a type of solar thermal system that integrates solar energy for both space heating and domestic hot water (DHW) production in residential or commercial buildings. This type of system still has a significant market share, particularly in some central and northern European countries. It combines solar thermal collectors with other components, such as a hot water storage tank, backup heating source (e.g., a boiler or electric heater), and control systems to provide space heating and DHW throughout the year. A solar combisystem powered by PV instead of thermal collectors has a few examples in Germany and Switzerland where it provides 100% of the building's heat supply.

The following picture shows a multi-family house in Switzerland with a building-integrated  $144$  kW<sub>peak</sub> photovoltaic system. The PV electricity is used to heat a 100 m<sup>3</sup> hot water tank with a diameter of four meters and a height of 12 meters. The water in the well-insulated tank is heated to 95°C in summer using electric heating elements. This hot water supplies the multi-party and communal house with hot water all year and space heating in winter.

#### **5.5.4.**

#### **PV district heating in Germany**

A new solar heating concept for municipalities in Germany is to use photovoltaic systems with heat pumps to supply municipalities with district heating from the sun instead of the traditional solar thermal systems used for district heating.

In September 2023, a ground-mounted photovoltaic system with a capacity of 125 MW was commissioned in the German municipality of Bundorf.

1.5 MW of the PV plant is directly connected to the neighboring heating center of the district heating network. There, a 400 kW electric boiler and a 200 kW air heat pump process the solar power into heat. Solar power will generate approximately 54% of the heat demand for an initial 30 connected buildings throughout the year. A few more buildings will be connected in the coming years.

A 75  $m<sup>3</sup>$  buffer storage tank ensures the balance between daytime and nighttime heating demands and reserves for rainy days. In cases where this capacity falls short of meeting the district heating grid's winter requirements, a 200 kW wood-chip boiler can step in.

According to the Bundorf plant's general contractor, further projects using the PV-heat pump-biomass concept are in progress.19



125 MW<sub>peak</sub> PV system in Bundorf, Germany, uses part of **the solar power to supply the district heating network** Photo: MaxSolar, Germany
A second German example of the solar electrification of district heating systems was built in Altensteig Wart. Heat for the hybrid district heating system is provided by an 800 kW biomass boiler, a 375 kW heat pump, and a 100 kW combined heat and power (CHP) unit. In summer, the heat pump is supplied with power by a 70 kW<sub>neak</sub> photovoltaic system. As the PV system cannot provide all of the electricity during the heating period, the electricity is generated by the CHP plant.<sup>20</sup>

While these two PV-powered district heating systems may still be relatively small in capacity, they represent innovative approaches to how sector coupling could revolutionize the electrification of the heating sector.

#### **5.6 Solar air conditioning and cooling**

#### **Small and medium-sized applications**

The global market for cooling and refrigeration will continue to grow, particularly in the Global South, and by 2050, 37% of the total electricity demand growth will be for air conditioning.<sup>21</sup> Thus, there is enormous potential for cooling systems that use solar energy, both solar thermal and PV-driven solar cooling and air conditioning systems, as presented, for example, in the GIZ 2022 technical, economic analysis for PV-powered air-conditioning in buildings of 13 developing countries<sup>22</sup>, GIZ 2017 feasibility study for social housing buildings in Mexico<sup>23</sup>, and RCREEE/UNDP 2015 study on commercial buildings/ applications in the Arab region<sup>24</sup>.

A central argument for solar thermal-driven systems is that they consume less conventional energy (up to a factor of five<sup>25</sup>) and use natural refrigerants, such as water and ammonia. In Europe, their application is also pushed by the European F-gas Regulation No. 573/2024<sup>26</sup> to establish the total elimination of hydrofluorocarbons by 2050. Another driver for solar cooling technology is its potential to reduce peak electricity demand, particularly in countries with significant cooling needs and grid constraints. Today, for example, 30% of India's total energy consumption in buildings is used for space cooling, and it reaches 60% of the summer peak load, which is already stretching the capacity of the Indian national

electricity supply.<sup>27</sup> In other countries, like the USA, the peak load through air conditioning reaches >70% on hot days.

There are mature cooling technologies grabbing the attention of the OECD and developing countries because cooling demand will continue to grow over the next decades, and national electric grids need protection against overloads. Solar sorption cooling applications are particularly adapted for medium to large-size units (100 kW to several MWs). For several years now, China has been promoting a voluntary policy to develop such green sorption devices. And in 2019, Germany changed its incentives scheme for both vapor compression and sorptionbased technologies to only support chillers and air conditioners that use natural refrigerants (sorption chillers 5 kW to 600 kW) in combination with a minimum required performance. 28



**Heat from 294 m² of flat plate CPC (Compound Parabolic Collector) solar collectors drive a 70 kW water/LiBr absorption chiller for airconditioning at the CERMI center in Praia, Cape Verde, since 2013** Photo: JER

Solar thermal cooling is still a niche market, with over 2,000 systems deployed globally as of 2023. Due to changing distribution channels and B2B sales of the sorption chillers, tracking newly installed solardriven systems is difficult and can only be estimated. Small units with a capacity lower than 20 kW are getting more compact (thus cheaper upfront costs) and targeting the mass markets. Medium to largescale projects, 30 kW to 2,000 kW, are dominated by engineered systems. Of the small and medium

<sup>18</sup> www.synergieplus.ch

- <sup>23</sup> http://task53.iea-shc.org/Data/Sites/53/media/events/meeting-09/workshop/09-jakob\_results-from-feasibility-studies-of-solar-coolingsystems-in-mexico-and-the-arab-region.pdf
- <sup>24</sup> https://www.solarthermalworld.org/sites/default/files/story/2016-04-05/solar\_cooling\_in\_arab\_region\_0.pdf
- <sup>25</sup> http://task53.iea-shc.org/Data/Sites/1/publications/IEA-SHC-Task53-C3-Final-Report.pdf
- <sup>26</sup> https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/573/oj
- <sup>27</sup> Low energy cooling and ventilation in indian residences, https://doi.org/10.1080/23744731.2018.1522144 <sup>28</sup> https://www.bafa.de/DE/Energie/Energieeffizienz/Klima\_Kaeltetechnik/klima\_kaeltetechnik\_node.html



**Learn more about Solar Water Heating for 2030 at: https://task69.iea-shc.org/**

<sup>19</sup> Source: Personal communication with AGFW and Maxsolar

<sup>20</sup> Sources: AGFW and Stadtwerke Altensteig, Germany

<sup>21</sup> https://www.iea.org/futureofcooling/

<sup>22</sup> https://www.green-cooling-initiative.org/fileadmin/user\_upload/220607\_Proklima\_Solar\_AC\_med.pdf

capacity (<350 kW) solar cooling systems worldwide, 70% are installed in Europe. According to a survey carried out in early 2019 by solrico for REN2129, only a few new solar cooling systems in the small and medium range were installed in 2018, mainly in Italy and Germany.

However, awareness of small to medium-scale solar thermal-driven systems is rising. There are several international initiatives (e.g., Global Cooling Pledge, MI IC7, K-CEP, IEA SHC Programme), research projects (e.g., SunBeltChiller30, FRIENDSHIP31, SHIP2FAIR32,  $HyCool<sup>33</sup>$ , sol.e.h.<sup>234</sup>, Zeosol<sup>35</sup>) and commercial solar thermal cooling projects (e.g., China, the USA, Mexico, Mali, Uganda, Nigeria, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Dubai, Greece, Spain, Austria, Netherlands, Ukraine, India, and Thailand). This is also reflected in the development and activities of small-capacity components and system manufacturers/suppliers targeting the high-volume market segment of cooling and air conditioning devices, i.e., 2.5 kW to 25 kW. A market and sales uptake can be observed at the manufacturing level, with an increase in sales of almost 15% last year.<sup>36</sup> Most of the cooling systems sold are powered by solar thermal systems. Some systems are configured for use with a backup heat supply (e.g., district heating); others are configured with a thermal energy storage system. The global market for low-capacity cooling and air conditioning systems is focused on exporting to Asia, the Middle East, African countries, North and South America, and the EU.

#### **Solar Cooling with a cooling capacity larger than 350 kW**

Solar cooling using thermal absorption chillers with a cooling capacity larger than 350 kW/100 RT<sup>37</sup> has improved significantly in performance and decreased in cost. In addition, there have been significant improvements in the performance of large flat plate collectors at temperatures up to 120 °C. This increase in performance, combined with an economy of scale, makes solar cooling applications cost-competitive for large office buildings, hotels, hospitals, and commercial/industrial applications.

The advantage of solar energy for cooling is that the supply, solar radiation, is available when the demand, cooling, is at its peak. In other words, cooling is needed when the sun is shining, which means during

29Not published internal communication

<sup>31</sup> https://friendship-project.eu/ship-200-300/

peak demand. Solar cooling saves money by avoiding purchasing electricity at its highest cost. Plus, solar thermal energy is an easy way to store the solar heat and shift it for cooling demands in the evenings and nights while keeping the remaining energy for morning cooling.

The electricity a solar cooling system needs to run pumps and a cooling tower is relatively low. Depending on the climate, it may give Energy Efficiency Ratios (kW<sub>th</sub>/kW<sub>el</sub>) of 20 to 40 in systems with optimized variable speed-driven auxiliaries. Thus, the electric demand for air conditioning in a building is cut by more than 80% compared to conventional HVAC equipment. Even though the technical and economic conditions for solar cooling and air conditioning have improved significantly, this remains a challenging market, as reflected in the comparatively low number of solar cooling systems built in recent years.

The world's largest solar cooling system with a cooling capacity of 3.5 MW for a packaging factory is in Izmir, Turkey.38 The plant was commissioned at the end of 2021 and formally inaugurated in June 2022. The installation covers two solar thermal collector fields with a total capacity of 2.5 MW<sub>th</sub> (5,000 m<sup>2</sup>). The solar system supplies heat to two double-effect lithium bromide absorption chillers with a cooling capacity of 1.4 MW and 2.1 MW, respectively, to match the size of the associated solar collector fields. The installed double-effect absorption chillers can achieve a COP of up to 1.40.

In 2022, three larger solar cooling systems with a 972 kW cooling capacity were commissioned. Their total collector capacity is 1.86 MW<sub>th</sub>, corresponding to a 2,660 m² collector area.

<sup>30</sup> https://forum.iea-shc.org/Data/Sites/1/publications/2023-12-Task65-Sunbelt-Chiller.pdf

<sup>32</sup> http://ship2fair-h2020.eu/demo-2-bodegas-roda

<sup>33</sup> Jakob, Uli; Kiedaisch, Falko (2019) Analysis of a solar hybrid cooling system for industrial applications, ISES SWC 2019-SHC 2019, doi:10.18086/swc.2019.55.07.

<sup>34</sup> Neyer, Daniel; et al. (2019) Solar Heating and Cooling in hot and humid climates – sol.e.h.² Project Introduction, ISES SWC 2019-SHC 2019, paper ID 10400.

<sup>35</sup> Roumpedakis, Tryfon; et al. (2019) Performance results of a solar adsorption cooling and heating unit, ISES SWC 2019-SHC 2019, paper ID 11465 <sup>36</sup> Internal IEA SHC Task 65 communication

<sup>37</sup> Ton of refrigeration is a unit of power used in North America to describe the capacity of heat extraction in industrial air conditioning and refrigeration equipment.

<sup>38</sup> Lokurlu, Ahmet; Ramesh, Akshay (2022) Parabolic Trough Collector (PTC) system for combined cooling and heating supply for a factory building in Turkey. EuroSun 2022, paper ID 1558.

**Table 7: Large-scale solar cooling systems installed between 2008 and 2022**



Sources: Blackdot Energy, Industrial Solar, Ritter XL Solar, SOLID Solar Energy Systems, SOLRICO, Vicot Solar Energy, Cosmosolar, SOLITERM Group, R2M Solution Srl., IEA SHC Task 65

#### **Solar Refrigeration for the process industry**

Solar thermal collectors and sorption chillers can also provide cold energy for process refrigeration at industrial sites. From the technical perspective, the main challenge is the lower temperatures often required by refrigeration processes, which can be close to 0 °C or even negative. In turn, this reflects a higher temperature needed for the chiller to drive the sorption process. Medium temperature collectors such as Fresnel, parabolic troughs, and vacuum collectors can be employed to meet such high activation temperatures. Alternatively, hybrid chillers have been tested in combination with solar thermal<sup>39</sup>, connecting an electric chiller and a sorption chiller in series. In this way, the sorption device cools down the condenser of the electric chiller, thus increasing its efficiency without the need for the sorption chiller to reach very low temperatures.

According to the EU HyCool project, energy demand for process refrigeration is some 4% of industry's final energy demand end-use in 2015 in EU28 (100 TWh/y). Cold energy is required at temperatures 0 to 15 °C (2%), 1% is required at -30 to 0 °C, and 1% at below -30 °C. Space cooling at industrial sites uses another 1% of industry's final energy demand.

A newly launched EU-HEU-funded project called RE-WITCH<sup>40</sup> will demonstrate advanced thermallydriven industrial cooling technologies in four industrial applications (brewery, food, biodiesel, and machinery industry). This includes hybrid systems based on adsorption and absorption processes (different sizes from 40 to 400 kW cooling capacity) driven by an optimized mix of low-grade waste heat and renewable sources (innovative high vacuum flat plate solar collector fields). Another approach for hospitals, such as containerized solutions using natural refrigerant chillers and photovoltaics, is being pursued in the EU-funded project SophiA.<sup>41</sup> A threestage refrigeration cascade with natural refrigerants (propane,  $CO<sub>2</sub>$ , and ethane) reliably ensures the three required temperature levels. The most spacious room inside the container is cooled down to +5°C. Lockable shelves on the wall allow the storage of medicines and food products. The freezer chamber at –30°C is accessible only through the refrigerated room. Besides the storage possibility, there are two deep freezer boxes that can cool down to -70°C. Everything is powered by the PV panels installed on the roof of the containers.

The potential for solar thermal cooling and industrial applications was investigated in the SunBeltChiller project<sup>42</sup>, using a newly developed GIS tool to amalgamate geographical data in a manner conducive to ascertaining localized reference conditions for solar cooling systems within Sunbelt regions. Moreover, this methodology can be adapted to generate insights into potential deployment sites and the feasibility of specific solar cooling systems. Supplementing this approach with data such as population density, industrial areas, and purchasing power (GDP) lays the groundwork for prospective market studies focusing on particular products or technologies. Consequently, prospective sites can be pinpointed, and economic variables can be factored into identifying current and future markets, as shown on the following map.



**1 MW Solar cooling system at the Hospital Militar Escuela in Managua, Nicaragua**  Photo: SOLID Solar Energy Systems



**Learn more about Solar Cooling for the Sunbelt Regions at: https://task65.iea-shc.org/**



**Figure 19: World map cut-out identifying the potential for the SunBeltChiller for industrial purposes (e.g., process cold) in the Mediterranean region (conducted on a 10 km raster grid, considering the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) levels)** Source: ZAE Bayern, 2023

#### **Trends and outlook**

The demand for cooling and refrigeration will continue its rapid growth, particularly in the Global South (several hundred million AC units are estimated to be sold annually by 2050<sup>43</sup>). This means there is a huge potential for cooling systems that use solar energy, such as thermal and photovoltaic (PV) systems.

Therefore, current and future product development focuses on compact, small-scale solar air conditioning units with air-cooled absorption and adsorption chillers and small-scale and large multi-stage desiccant systems with solar thermal collectors or desiccant-coated components. In addition, the development and market launch of x.N stage chillers (half, single, 1.N, double, triple) with new, medium temperature collectors and thermally driven heat pump systems for heating and cooling, also in hybrid operation with vapor compression chillers. Not to forget the future market penetration of small PVdriven components with new heat pumps/chillers using natural refrigerants like propane.<sup>44</sup>

Table 7 shows the trend regarding medium to largescale solar cooling. In the past 15 years, very few large installations were realized each year. A change in this trend is not foreseeable at present. Despite the potential presented in many studies, exploiting it will not be possible until system prices and complexity are significantly reduced.

On the other hand, the most recently signed Global Cooling Pledge at the COP28 conference45 shows that cooling is a very serious and important global issue. According to the Global Cooling Watch 2023 report<sup>46</sup>, cooling-related emissions could be reduced by over 60% compared to normal operations by 2050 while expanding access to cooling to 3.5 billion people. Combined with a decarbonized power grid, emissions reductions could be up to 96%.

#### **5.7. Solar air heating systems**

Solar air heating systems are designed to heat air directly for applications requiring warm air. They are primarily used to heat buildings, including ventilation air, and to process and dry crops. Solar air heating is currently an under-utilized solar technology. Triggered by the COVID-19 requirements to increase fresh air in buildings, energy demand and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have increased. Solar heating this fresh air is an excellent solution to minimize increased energy demand.

Space heating consumes more energy than hot water in most buildings. In colder climates, space heating is usually the largest consumer of energy in a building. As it is the air in buildings that is heated, air collectors are ideally suited to heat this air directly without heat exchangers. Most solar air collectors for heating

<sup>39</sup> https://hycool-project.eu

<sup>40</sup> https://ieecp.org/projects/re-witch/

<sup>41</sup> https://sophia4africa.eu/de/

<sup>42</sup> https://task65.iea-shc.org/Data/Sites/1/publications/IEA-SHC-Task65-DA1--Climatic-Conditions-and-Applications.pdf 43 https://www.iea.org/futureofcooling/

<sup>44</sup> Jakob, U. (2023) Solar Cooling for emerging markets. Keynote ISES Solar World Congress 2023, New Delhi, India

<sup>45</sup> https://www.cop28.com/en/global-cooling-pledge-for-cop28

<sup>46</sup> https://www.unep.org/resources/global-cooling-watch-2023

The following table lists the countries with more than 10,000 m² of solar air collectors.



**Solar air heating systems on the mechanical room penthouses at the Canary Commons, a condo community in Toronto, Canada**  Photo: SolarWall Conserval Engineering Inc.

> buildings are wall-mounted to take advantage of the lower winter sun angles and eliminate snow accumulation on roof-mounted systems. When heat is not needed during the summer, the panels are generally left dormant, as stagnation temperature is not usually an issue.

> Solar air heating systems can be building integrated and typically reduce 20 to 30% of the conventional energy used to heat a building. The air is generally taken off the top of the wall, and the heated or preheated fresh air is then connected to existing or new fans and ducted into the building via the ventilation system.

> Process applications are different as they operate all year or during the harvest season, allowing the panels to be roof-mounted to capture the higher sun angles.

> Solar air heaters in agriculture are primarily for drying applications requiring low temperatures.

> For the past 30 years, solar air heating systems have been used worldwide by schools, municipalities, military, agricultural, commercial, and industrial entities, and residential buildings.

> Heat storage is possible, but most solar air systems do not include storage to minimize costs.



**Table 8: Largest solar air collector markets - total installed air collector areas in 2022** 

By the end of 2022, 954 MW $_{th}$  (1.36 million square meters) of glazed and unglazed air collectors were installed worldwide. The annual worldwide market in 2022 was in the range of 60 MW<sub>th</sub> (85,735 m<sup>2</sup>).

Using solar air collectors for space heating is not common in Europe. In North America, however, building-integrated solar air collectors are the most popular form of solar thermal systems in the commercial, industrial, and institutional markets due to their low cost and architectural integration into buildings. Architects can be creative in integrating solar air heaters into building facades.

> Canada leads solar air collector market with **350 MW.**

### Detailed global market data and country statistics in 2022 6



**At the Rothaus brewery in Germany, almost 1,000 m² of vacuum tube collectors supply the bottle washing machines with heat**  Photo: Rothaus brewery, Germany

The following chapters of the report provide detailed solar thermal market figures for the year 2022 and country figures for 72 countries.

#### **Background of the 2022 data**

The figures in the following chapters represent the collector area in operation in 2022, not the cumulated collector area installed in a country, meaning that system lifetimes are considered. To determine the collector area and operation capacity, official country reports on the lifetime were used, or, if such reports were not available, a 25-year lifetime for a system was calculated. The collector area in operation was then calculated using a linear equation. For China, the methodology of the Chinese Solar Thermal Industry Federation (CSTIF) was used until 2018. According to the CSTIF approach, the operation lifetime was ten years. From 2019 on, an increased lifetime is used to calculate the cumulated collector area, accounting for the fact that the share of large systems in China has increased over the past few years. According to this approach, a lifetime of 13 years is used for 2021, increasing to 14 years in 2022. For Germany, a lifetime of 25 years was used in accordance with accumulated market statistic figures for Germany published by BSW.47

The analysis further distinguishes between different types of solar thermal collectors: unglazed water collectors, glazed water collectors including flat plate collectors (FPC) and evacuated tube collectors (ETC), and unglazed and glazed air collectors. Concentrating collectors are not within the scope of this report.

#### **6.1 General market overview of the total installed capacity in operation**



**Installation of Sunpad systems in Cairo, Egypt** Photo: GREENoneTEC Solarindustrie GmbH, Austria

By the end of 2022, an installed capacity of 542.7 GW<sub>th</sub>, corresponding to a total of 775 million m<sup>2</sup> of collector area, was in operation worldwide.

#### **Figure 20: Share of the total installed capacity in operation (glazed and unglazed water and air collectors) by economic region in 2022**

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe **Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, Nepal, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand **Latin America and Caribbean:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay **Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom **MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia The vast majority of the total capacity in operation was installed in China (396.4  $GW$ <sub>th</sub>) and Europe  $(63.2 \text{ GW})$ , which accounted for 84.7% of the total installed capacity. The remaining installed capacity was shared between the United States and Canada (19.3 GW<sub>th</sub>), Latin America and Caribbean (20.6 GW<sub>th</sub>), Other Asia (18.5 GW<sub>th</sub>), the MENA countries Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories and Tunisia (8.1  $GW_{th}$ ), Australia and New Zealand  $(6.8 \text{ GW}_{\text{th}})$ , and the Sub-Sahara African countries Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe (2.6 GW<sub>th</sub>). The market volume of "all other countries" is estimated to be 5% of the total installations, excluding China  $(7.3 \text{ GW})$ .

<sup>47</sup> Bundesverband Solarwirtschaft e.V.

<sup>48</sup> Middle East and North Africa



#### Table 9: Total capacity in operation in 2022 [MW<sub>th</sub>]



Note: If no data is given: no reliable database for this collector type is available

\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2014

\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2015

\*\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2009

\*\*\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2016

+ Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2020

++ Calculated based on 0% growth 2022

+++ Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2021 ++++ New in ed. 2024

**SHWW 45 44**SHWW

#### **Table 10: Total installed collector area in operation in 2022 [m²]**



Note: If no data is given, no reliable database for this collector type is available

\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2014

\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2015

\*\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2009

\*\*\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2016

Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2020

++ Calculated based on 0% growth 2022

+++ Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2021

++++ New in ed. 2024

The total installed capacity in operation in 2022 was divided into flat plate collectors (FPC):

136.4 GW $_{\text{th}}$  (194.8 million m<sup>2</sup>), evacuated tube collectors (ETC): 372.8 GW<sub>th</sub> (532.7 million m<sup>2</sup>), unglazed water collectors:  $32.5$  GW<sub>th</sub> (46.5 million m<sup>2</sup>), and glazed and unglazed air collectors:  $0.9 \text{ GW}_{th}$  $(1.2 \text{ million m}^2)$ .

With a global share of 68.7%, evacuated tube collectors were the predominant solar thermal collector technology, followed by flat plate collectors at 25.1% and unglazed water collectors at 6.0% (Figure 21). Air collectors play only a minor role in the total numbers.

In Europe, the second largest market after China, flat plate collectors were the dominant collector type in 2022 (Figure 22). Europe's share of evacuated tube collectors was 18.7%.



**Installation of a ground-mounted solar thermal hot water system in Bhutan** Photo: Rudi Moschik, AEE INTEC



**Figure 21: Distribution of the total installed capacity in operation by collector type in 2022 – WORLD**

**Figure 22: Distribution of the total installed capacity in operation by collector type in 2022 – EUROPE** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom



installations in 2022 (absolute figures in MW<sub>th</sub>)

Compared to the year 2021, the rankings remain the same. China remained the world leader in total capacity and a market dominated by evacuated tube collectors. The United States held its third position due to its high number of installed unglazed water collectors. Besides the United States, only Australia and, to some extent, Brazil have large numbers of unglazed water collectors installed. In the large European markets, Germany, Austria, and Greece, flat plate collectors were the dominant collector technology. In Turkey, there has been a strong trend toward evacuated tube collector technology over the past several years.

The top 10 countries with the highest market penetration per capita are shown in Figure 24. The leading countries in cumulated glazed and unglazed water collector capacity in operation in 2022 per 1,000 inhabitants were Barbados (597  $kW_{th}/1,000$  inhabitants), Cyprus (478 kW $_{th}/1,000$ inhabitants), Israel (391 kW<sub>th</sub>/1,000 inhabitants), Austria (362 kW<sub>th</sub>/1,000 inhabitants), Greece (360 kW<sub>th</sub>/1,000 inhabitants), China (281 kW $_{th}$ /1,000 inhabitants), the Palestinian Territories (268 kW $_{th}$ /1,000 inhabitants), France (overseas)  $(254 \text{ kW}_{\text{th}}/1000 \text{ inhabitants})$ Australia (254 kW $_{th}$ /1,000 inhabitants), and Turkey  $(231 \text{ kW}_{1.}/1,000 \text{ inhabitants}).$ 



Cumulated capacity of water collectors 2022: Top 10 Countries (per 1,000 inh.)

**Figure 24: Top 10 countries by cumulated water collector installations Figure 24: Top 10 countries by cumulated water collector installations** per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022 (relative figures in kW<sub>1</sub>)

#### **6.2 Total capacity of glazed water collectors in operation**

In 2022, China maintained its dominant position as the leading country in total installed capacity of glazed water collectors, with 396.3 GW $_{th}$ . Turkey, Germany, and India followed closely, with installed capacities ranging from 19 GW $_{th}$  to 9 GW $_{th}$ . (Figure 25).



Cumulated installed capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022

In terms of the total installed capacity of glazed water collectors in operation per 1,000 inhabitants, five countries continued their dominance: Barbados, Cyprus, Israel, Austria, and Greece. China ranks sixth in terms of market penetration. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that China, with its 1.41 billion inhabitants, exceeds the solar thermal per capita levels of the large European markets in Germany, Turkey, Denmark, and Spain (Figure 26)



Cumulated capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022 per 1,000 inhabitants

Figure 26: Total Capacity of glazed water collectors in operation in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022

**Figure 25: Total capacity of glazed water collectors in operation by the end of 2022**

The following figures show the solar thermal market penetration per capita worldwide and in Europe.



Figure 27: Solar thermal market penetration per capita in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants – WORLD



Figure 28: Solar thermal market penetration per capita in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants – EUROPE

#### **6.3 Total capacity of glazed water collectors in operation by economic region**

When considering market penetration per capita by economic region, China remains at the forefront. Notably, the MENA countries and Australia surpass Europe in this regard, highlighting the significant imbalance in market distribution across Europe (Figure 29). Whereas some European countries like Cyprus, Austria and Greece belong to the world market leaders in terms of high market penetration, others like the Baltic countries have negligible solar thermal market penetration.



**Heat storages for the Heineken brewery in Seville, Spain** Photo: Engie, Spain

Cumulated capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022 by economic region



**Figure 29: Total capacity of glazed flat plate and evacuated tube collectors in operation by economic region in 2022**



Cumulated capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022 per 1,000 inhabitants by economic region

#### **Figure 30: Total capacity of glazed flat plate and evacuated tube collectors**  in operation by economic region and in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, Nepal, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay **Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

**MENA countries**: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

Capacity [MW $_{\rm th}$ ]

Capacity [MW

#### **6.4 Total capacity of unglazed water collectors in operation**

Unglazed water collectors are mainly used for swimming pool heating. This type of collector has lost a significant market share over the past decade. The percentage of unglazed water collectors in the total installed collector capacity was reduced from 21% in 200549 to just 6% in 2022. Figure 31 and Figure 32 show the total installed capacity of unglazed water collectors and the total installed capacity per 1,000 inhabitants at the end of 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Solar Heat Worldwide (Ed.2008), Figure 3



**Flat plate collector system in Mexico** 



**Figure 31: Total capacity of unglazed water collectors in operation in 2022**



Cumulated capacity of unglazed water collectors in 2021 per 1,000 inhabitants

Figure 32: Total capacity of unglazed water collectors in operation in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants in 2021

#### **6.5 Newly installed capacity in 2022 and market development**

In 2022, a total capacity of 22.7 GW<sub>th</sub>, corresponding to 32.5 million  $m^2$  of new solar collectors, was installed worldwide.

The main markets were China (15.0 GW<sub>th</sub>) and Europe  $(3.0 \text{ GW}_{th})$ , accounting for 79% of all 2022 collector installations. The rest of the market was shared between Latin America and the Caribbean (1.6 GW.), Other Asia (1.2 GW.), the United States and Canada (0.6 GW<sub>th</sub>), MENA countries (0.5 GW<sub>th</sub>), Australia  $(0.3 \text{ GW}_{1.})$ , and Sub-Sahara African countries  $(0.1 \text{ GW}_{1.})$ . The market volume of "all other countries" is estimated to be 0.4 GW<sub>th</sub> (550,867 m<sup>2</sup>).

#### **Figure 33: Share of newly installed capacity (glazed and unglazed water and air collectors) by economic regions in 2022**

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**Latin America:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay

**Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom **MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco,

Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

**Thermosiphon systems at the CPS Sisters youth hostel in Harare, Zimbabwe**  Photo: Werner Weiss, AEE INTEC





#### Table 11: Newly installed capacity in 2022 [MW<sub>th</sub>/a]



Note: If no data is given, no reliable database is available for this collector type.

\* 0% growth assumed

+ only air collectors reported (provided by John Hollick)

#### **Table 12: Newly installed collector area in 2022 [m²/a]**



Note: If no data is given, no reliable database is available for this collector type.

\* 0% growth assumed

+ only air collectors reported (provided by John Hollick)

New installations in 2022 by collector type: flat plate collectors: 7.7 GW<sub>th</sub> (11 million m<sup>2</sup>), evacuated tube collectors: 13.3 GW $_{\text{th}}$  (19.1 m<sup>2</sup>), unglazed water collectors: 1.7 GW<sub>th</sub> (2.4 million m<sup>2</sup>), and glazed and unglazed air collectors: 0.06 GW<sub>th</sub> (0.085 million m<sup>2</sup>).

Evacuated tube collectors, with a 59% share, remain the most important solar thermal collector technology worldwide (Figure 34).

In a global context, this breakdown is mainly driven by the dominance of the Chinese market, where around 73% of all newly installed collectors in 2022 were evacuated tube collectors. Nevertheless, it is notable that the share of evacuated tube collectors decreased from about 82% in 2011 to 59% in 2022, while flat plate collectors increased their share from 14.7% to 34% in the same time frame.

In Europe, the situation is almost the opposite of China, with 71.9% of all solar thermal collectors installed in 2022 being flat plate collectors (Figure 35). In the medium term, the share of flat plate collectors decreased in Europe from 81.5% in 2011 to 71.9% in 2022. Driven mainly by the markets in Turkey, Poland, Switzerland, and Germany, evacuated tube collectors increased their share in Europe between 2011 and 2020 from 15.6% to 27.6%.



**Pumped 210 m² flat-plate collector system at the Lady Pohamba hospital in Windhoek, Namibia**  Photo: Werner Weiss, AEE INTEC

Figure 36 shows the total capacity of newly installed glazed and unglazed water collectors for the 10 leading markets in 2022. China remained the market leader in absolute terms, followed by Turkey and Brazil. India and the United States rank fourth and fifth, ahead of Germany and Australia. Mexico, Greece, and Israel are among the top 10 countries, ranking ninth and tenth.



#### **Figure 36: Top 10 markets for glazed and unglazed**  water collectors in 2022 (absolute figures in MW<sub>th</sub>)

In terms of newly installed solar thermal capacity per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022, the top 10 countries are shown in Figure 37.

Cyprus, Greece, Israel, and France (overseas) rank first to fourth, followed by Lebanon, Turkey, Australia, and China, ranking fifth to eighth, the Palestinian Territories ninth place, and Germany tenth.

flat plate collectors



**Figure 37: Top 10 markets for glazed and unglazed**  water collectors in 2022 (in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants) **unglazed water collectors evacuated tube collectors** flat plate collectors

#### **6.6 Newly installed capacity of glazed water collectors**

In 2022, glazed water collectors accounted for 92% of the total newly installed capacity. China was the most influential market in the global context (Figure 38).



**Figure 38: Newly installed capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022**

In terms of newly installed glazed water collector capacity per 1,000 inhabitants, Cyprus is again the leader ahead of Israel, Greece, and France (overseas). In this respect, China ranks in 7<sup>th</sup> place (Figure 39).



Newly installed capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022 per 1,000 inhabitants

Figure 39: Newly installed capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022 in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants

Newly installed capacity of glazed water collectors in 2022

The following figures show the solar thermal market penetration per capita of the newly installed capacity in 2022 worldwide and in Europe.



**Figure 40: Newly installed capacity in 2022 in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants – WORLD<br>Source: Natural Earth v.4.1.0, 2020/ AEE INTEC)** 



**Figure 41: New Installed capacity in 2022 in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants – EUROPE<br>Source: Natural Earth v.4.1.0, 2020/ AEE INTEC** 

#### **6.7 Market development of glazed water collectors between 2000 and 2022**

The worldwide market of glazed water collectors saw a steady upward trend between 2000 and 2013, with a high of around 50 GW $_{\rm th}$  in 2013. However, from 2014 onwards, the market for glazed collectors experienced a continuous decline, reaching a low of 21 GW<sub>th</sub> in 2022. (Figure 42).





#### **Figure 42: Global market development of glazed water collectors from 2000-2022**

Figure 43 illustrates the market development in two key regions, Europe and China, from 2000 to 2022. In Europe, the installed capacity tripled from 2000 to 2008, followed by a continuous decline from 2009 onwards. China experienced rapid annual growth

in installed capacity since the early 2000s, with a tenfold increase in annual installed capacity by 2013 compared to the year 2000. However, from 2014 onwards, China has seen a continuous decline.

Europe **- market growth** [%]



**Figure 43: Market development of glazed water collectors in China and Europe 2000-2022**

The European market peaked at 4.4 GW $_{th}$  installed capacity in 2008 and has decreased steadily to 2.8 GW<sub>th</sub> in 2017, with a slight recovery in 2019 and then down to 2.8 GW<sub>th</sub> in 2020. In Europe, a slight increase can also be seen again in 2021. In the "remaining markets worldwide" (RoW), an upward trend is observed between 2002 and 2012. With the exception of 2016 and 2020, there has been continuous market growth in these countries since 2013 (Figure 44).

#### Annual installed capacity of glazed water collectors 2000 - 2022 Europe and RoW



**Rest of World (RoW, excluding China):** Asia (Bhutan, India, Japan, Nepal, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand), Australia, Canada, United States

Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay)

MENA countries (Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia)

Sub-Sahara Africa (Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia,

Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe),

"All other countries" see figures for 2022 in Tables 4 and 5

The Rest of the World (RoW) includes all economic regions other than China and Europe. Of these regions, Other Asia, Latin America, and the MENA countries hold the largest market shares (see Figure 45).

"Other Asia" is mainly influenced by the large Indian market. Other countries in this economic region with a significant solar thermal market are Japan and South Korea. The growth phase in this region reached its first peak in 2012. In the following decade, up to 2022, the market stabilized with some ups and downs at an annual installed capacity of around 1.2 GW<sub>th</sub>.

Latin America demonstrated the most consistent and dynamic upward trend among all economic regions. The annual installed capacity surged ninefold between 2000 and 2022. This growth can be attributed to the dominant Brazilian market, the substantial Mexican market, and the emerging markets in countries like Chile and Argentina.

The glazed water collector markets in the MENA countries experienced steady growth from 2000 to 2013. However, the decline in the market starting in 2014, as depicted in Figure 45, can be attributed to the absence of data for the two major markets – Morocco and Jordan – from 2015 onwards. Additionally, sales in the key market, Israel, saw a slight decrease in 2020. Since 2021, the MENA region has witnessed a slight upward trend again, primarily driven by the solar thermal markets in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories.

The Australian market saw continuous growth from 2000 to 2009. However, from 2010 to 2022, a clear and sustained decline in annual sales is evident.

Sub-Saharan African markets have grown continuously since 2000, overtaking previously strong players like Australia, the USA, and Canada.

After a period of growth in the United States and Canada until 2013, there were severe slumps, and in 2020, the installed capacity fell well below the level of the sub-Saharan countries.



**Figure 45: Market development of glazed water collectors in Latin America, United States / Canada, Sub-Sahara Africa, Other Asia, the MENA region, and Australia (excluding China and Europe) from 2000 to 2022**



**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, Nepal, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand **Latin America:** Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay **MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia **Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

In relative figures, the annual global market volume for glazed water collectors grew from 1.2  $kW_{th}$  per 1,000 inhabitants in 2000 to 7.1  $kW_{th}$  per 1,000 inhabitants in 2013 and dropped to 2.7  $k\ddot{W}_{th}$  per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022 (Figure 46).



Annual installed capacity of glazed water collectors 2000 - 2022 per 1,000 inhabitants

**Figure 46: Annually installed capacity of glazed water collectors**  in kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants from 2000 to 2022



The fact that China suffered major market declines from 2014 to 2016 is reflected in the market penetration of glazed water collector installations per capita. The annual installed capacity rose from  $3.5$  kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants in 2000, peaked at 32.2 kW $_{\textrm{\tiny th}}$  per 1,000 inhabitants in 2013, and then fell to 10.6 kW $\ddot{\,}$  per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022.

In Europe, market penetration peaked in 2008 at 5.9 kW $_{\text{th}}$  per 1,000 inhabitants. The downward trend between 2009 and 2013 seems to have stabilized from 2014 onwards and was 2.7 kW<sub>th</sub> per 1,000 inhabitants in 2022.

#### **6.8**

#### **Market development of unglazed water collectors between 2000 and 2022**

With a newly installed capacity of 1.7 GW<sub>th</sub> in 2022, unglazed water collectors accounted for 7.4% of the total installed solar thermal capacity (Figure 34). Compared to 2021, the market slightly decreased by -3.0% because of decreases in Brazil (-3%) and Australia (-7.9%). The second largest market, the United States, saw a market increase (+3.8%).

The most important markets for unglazed water collectors in 2022 were the United States (587 MW.), Brazil (644 MW<sub>u</sub>), and Australia (245 MWth). Mexico reported 79 MW<sub>th</sub> installed unglazed water collector area and South Africa 29  $MWt_{th}$ . The capacity in these countries accounted for 94% of the recorded unglazed water collector installations worldwide. Switzerland (2.2  $MW_{th}$ ), Spain (1.4  $MW_{th}$ ), and the Netherlands (1.8 MW<sub>th</sub>) also reported unglazed water collector installations in 2022.



**Solar district heating Jelling, Denmark** Photo: SavoSolar / Solar Heat Europe

The unglazed water collector market in the United States peaked in 2006 (1.01  $GW_{th}$ ) and has about halved since then (0.47 GW<sub>th</sub> in 2019). Nevertheless, the annual global market volume for unglazed water collectors has remained nearly constant because of the Brazilian market, which entered in 2007 and peaked in 2021 at 0.66 GW<sub>th</sub>. Australia has faced a market decline since 2010 and is now the third largest market for unglazed water collectors, behind the United States and Brazil.



Annual installed capacity of unglazed water collectors 2000 - 2022

**Figure 47: Global market development of unglazed water collectors from 2000 to 2022**

United States **Australia Brazil ROW** 

## Contribution to the energy supply and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in 2022

This section reports on the total installed glazed and unglazed water collectors' contribution to the thermal energy supply and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

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At the end of 2022 in the 72 recorded countries, the annual collector yield of all water-based solar thermal systems for the simulated applications (swimming pool, DHW for single-family houses, DHW for multifamily houses, and solar combi-systems) is 443 TWh (= 1,594 PJ). This corresponds to a final energy savings equivalent to 47.6 million tons of oil and 150.7 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. The calculated number of solar thermal systems in operation is around 122 million (Table 13). Therefore, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions saved by the thermal solar systems in operation is about 150.7 million t/a or 3.6 times the  $CO<sub>2</sub>$  emissions of Switzerland (2022).<sup>50</sup>

The basis for these calculations is the total glazed and unglazed water collector area in operation in each country, as shown in Table 10. The  $0.9 \text{ GW}_{th}$  contribution of the total installed air collector capacity in operation in 2022 is omitted from the calculation due to its small 0.2% share of the total installed collector capacity.

The results are based on calculations using the simulation tool, T-SOL expert 4.5, www.valentinsoftware.comfor each country. For the simulations, different types of collectors and applications and characteristic climatic conditions are considered for each country. A more detailed description of the methodology can be found in the appendix (see Chapter 9).

Table 13 summarizes the calculated annual collector yields and the corresponding oil equivalents and CO<sub>2</sub> reductions of all water-based solar thermal systems in 2022.

<sup>50</sup> https://www.bafu.admin.ch/bafu/de/home/themen/klima/inkuerze.html

- Total capacity in operation
- refers to the year 2014 Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2015
- Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2009
- \*\*\*\* Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2016
- Total capacity in operation refers to the year 2020
- Calculated based on 0% growth 2022
- +++ New in ed. 2024

Table 13: Calculated annual collector yield and corresponding oil equivalent and  $\mathsf{CO}_{_2}$ **reduction of glazed and unglazed water collectors in operation by the end of 2022**



## Distribution of systems by type and application in 2022

The use of solar thermal energy varies significantly from region to region. It can be roughly distinguished by the type of solar thermal collector used (unglazed water collectors, evacuated tube collectors, flat plate collectors, glazed and unglazed air collectors, concentrating collectors), the type of system operation (pumped solar thermal systems, thermosiphon systems), and the main type of application (swimming pool heating, domestic hot water preparation, space heating, others such as heating of industrial processes, solar district heating or solar thermal cooling).

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#### **8.1 Distribution by type of solar thermal collector**

In terms of the total water collector capacity worldwide in 2022, evacuated tube collectors dominated with 68.7% of the cumulated capacity in operation (Figure 48) and a share of 58.7% of the newly installed capacity (Figure 49). Worldwide, flat plate collectors accounted for about 25.3% of the cumulated capacity in operation (Figure 48) and a 33.8% share of the newly installed capacity (Figure 49). Unglazed water collectors accounted for 6% of the cumulated water collectors installed worldwide and 7.4% of the newly installed capacity.

In China, evacuated tube collectors are dominant. In North America, Australia, and Sub- Sahara Africa (mainly driven by South Africa), unglazed water collectors are the collector type with the largest share. In the other regions, flat plate collectors are dominant.





#### **Figure 48: Distribution by type of solar thermal collector for the total installed water collector capacity in operation by the end of 2022**

flat plate collectors

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay **Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

**MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

The distribution of the newly installed collector area is shown below. Evacuated tube collectors are dominant in China, Other Asia, driven by development in India, and with an increasing share in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Unglazed collectors are dominant in North America and Australia. Flat plate collectors are dominant in Latin America, Europe, and the MENA region.

Distribution by type of solar thermal collector for newly installed water collector capacity in 2022



**for newly installed water collector capacity in 2022**

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria,

Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**Latin America:** Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay

**Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

**MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia



Photo: Werner Weiss, AEE INTEC

#### **8.2 Distribution by type of system**

Worldwide, about 55% of all solar thermal systems installed are thermosiphon systems; the rest are pumped solar heating systems (Figure 50).

Similar to the distribution by type of solar thermal collector in total numbers, the Chinese market influenced the overall figures the most. 28% of all newly installed systems in China were thermosiphon systems, while pumped systems accounted for 72%. The share of thermosiphon systems has decreased in China for several years (Figure 51).

In general, thermosiphon systems are more common in warm climates, such as in Africa, South America, southern Europe, and the MENA countries. In these regions, thermosiphon systems are more often equipped with flat plate collectors, while in China, the typical thermosiphon system for domestic hot water preparation is equipped with evacuated tubes.

Distribution by type of system for the total installed glazed water collector capacity in operation by the end of 2022



#### **Figure 50: Distribution by type of system for the total installed glazed water collector capacity in operation by the end of 2022**

Pumped solar heating systems **Thermosiphon solar heating systems** 

**Thermosiphon solar heating systems** 

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei Thailand **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay

**Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom **MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia



Distribution by type of system for the newly installed glazed water

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**installed glazed water collector capacity in 2022**

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay **Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom **MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

#### **8.3 Distribution by type of application**

The newly installed water-based solar thermal collector area in 2022 is 32.4 million, corresponding to 22.7 GW $_{th}$  of thermal peak capacity (Table 11).

The largest share of the collector area installed in 2022 was for large domestic hot water systems for multi-family houses, tourism, and the public sector. Domestic hot water systems in single-family homes accounted for about 36% of installations in 2022. The share of swimming pool heating was 7.5%. The share for other applications, such as solar district heating and solar process heat, is about 2% globally (Figure 52).



#### Distribution of solar thermal systems by application for newly installed water collector capacity by economic region in 2022

**Figure 52: Distribution of solar thermal systems by application for newly installed water collector capacity by economic region in 2022**

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand

**Latin America and the Caribbean:** Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay

**Europe:** EU 27, Albania, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

**MENA countries:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

Swimming pool heating

Other (solar district heating, solar processheat, solar cooling) Solar combi-systems (DHW and space heating for singlefamily and multi-family houses)

Large DHW systems (multi-family houses, tourism and public sector)

**Domestic hot water systems for single-family houses** 

# **Appendix**

#### **9.1 Methodological approach for the energy calculation**

To obtain the energy yield of solar thermal systems, the oil equivalent saved, and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided, the following procedure was used:

- Only water collectors were used in the calculations (unglazed water collectors, flat plate collectors, and evacuated tube collectors). Air collectors were not included.
- For each country, the cumulated water collector area was allocated to the following applications (based on available country market data):
	- » Solar thermal systems for swimming pool heating
	- » Solar domestic hot water systems for single family houses,
	- » Solar domestic hot water systems for multi family houses, tourism sector, and public sector (to simplify the analysis, solar district heating systems, solar process heat, and solar cooling applications were included), and
	- » Solar combisystems for domestic hot water and space heating for single- and multi-family houses.

■ Reference systems were defined for each country and each type of application (pumped or thermosiphon solar thermal system).

■ The number of systems per country was determined from the share of collector area for each application and the collector area defined for the reference system.

Apart from the reference applications and systems mentioned above, reference collectors and reference climates were determined. Based on these boundary conditions, simulations were performed using T-Sol [T-Sol, Version 4.5 Expert, Valentin Energiesoftware, www.valentin-software.com], and gross solar yields for each country and each system were obtained. The gross solar yields refer to the solar collector heat output and do not include heat losses through transmission piping or storage heat losses.<sup>51</sup>

The amount of final energy saved is calculated from the gross solar yields considering a utilization rate of the auxiliary heating system of 0.8. Final energy savings are expressed in tons of oil equivalent (toe): 1 toe = 11,630 kWh.

Finally, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided by the different solar thermal applications are quoted as kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e) per ton of oil equivalent: 1 toe =  $3.165$  t CO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>52</sup>. The emission factor only accounts for direct emissions.

To obtain an exact statement about the CO<sub>2</sub>emissions avoided, the substituted energy medium would have to be ascertained for each country. Since this could only be done in a very detailed survey, which goes beyond the scope of this report, the energy savings and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided relate to fuel oil. It is obvious that not all solar thermal systems just replace systems running on oil. This represents a simplification since gas, coal, biomass, or electricity can be used as an energy source for the auxiliary heating system instead of oil.

The following tables describe the key data of the reference systems in the different countries, the location of the reference climate used, and the share of the total collector area in use for the respective application.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, a hydraulic scheme is shown for each reference system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Using gross solar yields for the energy calculations is based on a definition for Renewable Heat by EUROSTAT and IEA SHC. In editions of this report prior to 2011 solar yields calculated included heat losses through transmission piping and hence energy savings considered were about 5 to 15 % less depending on the system, the application and the climate.

<sup>52</sup> Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2020 (07/05/2024)

<sup>53</sup> For some countries no specific estimations are available concerning shares by type of application. In these cases shares given in previous reports were used for the calculation.

#### **9.1.1 Reference systems for swimming pool heating**

Table 14 refers to the total capacity of water collectors in operation used for swimming pool heating as reported from each country by the end of 2022.

**Table 14: Solar thermal systems for swimming pool heating in 2022**



Figure 53 shows the hydraulic scheme of the swimming pool reference system used for the simulations of the solar energy yields.



**Figure 53: Hydraulic scheme of the swimming pool reference system**

#### **9.1.2**

#### **Reference systems for domestic hot water preparation in single-family houses**

The information in Table 15 refers to the total capacity of water collectors used for domestic hot water heating in single-family houses at the end of 2022, as reported by each country.
### **Table 15: Solar thermal systems for domestic hot water heating in single-family houses by the end of 2022**



PS: pumped system TS: thermosiphon system PDS: pumped drain back system



Figure 54 shows the hydraulic scheme used for the energy calculation for all pumped solar thermal systems and Figure 56 refers to the thermosiphon

**Figure 54: Hydraulic scheme of the domestic hot water pumped reference system for single-family houses**



#### **Figure 55: Hydraulic scheme of the domestic hot water thermosiphon reference system for single-family houses**

For the Chinese thermosiphon systems, the reference system above was used, but instead of a flat plate collector, as shown in Figure 55, a representative Chinese vacuum tube collector was used for the simulation.

### **9.1.3**

## **Reference systems for domestic hot water preparation in multi-family houses**

The information in Table 16 refers to the total capacity of water collectors used for domestic hot water heating in multi-family houses at the end of 2022, as reported by each country.

### **Table 16: Solar thermal systems for domestic hot water heating in multi-family houses by the end of 2022**



Figure 56 shows the hydraulic scheme of the domestic hot water reference system for multifamily houses used for the simulations of the solar energy yields. Unlike small-scale domestic hot water systems, all large-scale systems are assumed to be



**Figure 56: Hydraulic scheme of the domestic hot water pumped reference system for multi-family houses**

## **9.1.4**

### **Reference systems for domestic hot water preparation and space heating in single-family and multi-family houses (solar combi-systems)**

The information in Table 17 refers to the total capacity of water collectors used for domestic hot water and space heating in single-family and multi-family houses at the end of 2022, as reported by each country.

#### **Table 17: Solar combisystem reference for single-family and multi-family houses and the total collector area in operation in 2022**



combi-system: system for the supply of domestic hot water and space heating



**Figure 57: Hydraulic scheme of the solar-combi reference system for single and multi-family houses**

## **9.2 Reference collectors**

### **9.2.1**

**Data of the reference unglazed water collector for swimming pool heating**

$$
\begin{array}{rcl} \eta & = & 0.85 \\ a_1 & = & 20 \, [W/m^2K] \\ a_2 & = & 0.1 \, [W/m^2 \, K^2] \end{array}
$$

## **9.2.2**

**Data of the reference collector for all other applications except for China**

> $n = 0.8$  $a_1 = 3.69$  [W/m<sup>2</sup>K]  $a_2$  = 0.007 [W/m<sup>2</sup> K<sup>2</sup>]

### **9.2.3**

**Data of the Chinese reference vacuum tube collector** 

> $n = 0.74$  $a_1 = 2.5$  [W/m<sup>2</sup>K]  $a_2$  = 0.013 [W/m<sup>2</sup> K<sup>2</sup>]

### **9.3 Methodological approach for the job calculation**

The job calculation is based on a comprehensive literature study, information provided by the China National Renewable Energy Centre and IRENA, and data collected from different country market reports. Based on this information, the following assumptions were taken to calculate the number of full-time jobs:

- Countries with high labor costs. Advanced automated production of flat plate or evacuated tube collectors and heat storages – pumped systems with an average 133 m<sup>2</sup> solar collector area installed per full-time job.
- Countries with low labor costs. Advanced automated production of evacuated tube collectors and heat storages – thermosiphon systems with an average 87 m² solar collector area installed per full-time job.
- Countries with low labor costs. Mainly manual flat plate collector production – thermosiphon systems with an average 87 m<sup>2</sup> solar collector area installed per full-time job.
- Swimming pool systems with unglazed polymeric collectors or air collectors – around 200  $m<sup>2</sup>$  solar collector area installed per full-time job.

The numbers presented are full-time jobs and consider the production, installation and maintenance of solar thermal systems.

## **9.4 Reference climates**

**Table 18: Reference climates for the 72 countries surveyed**



## **9.5 Population data**

**Table 19: Inhabitants by the end of 2022 of the 72 surveyed countries in alphabetical order**



Data source: International Data Base of the U.S. Census Bureau

http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php

#### **Table 20: Inhabitants per economic region by the end of 2022**



Data source: International Data Base of the U.S. Census Bureau http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/country.php

**Sub-Sahara Africa:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe

**Other Asia:** Bhutan, India, Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei, Thailand **Latin America:** Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay **Europe:** Albania, EU 27, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

**MENA Region:** Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia

## **9.6 Definition of SHIP systems**

In November 2019, the IEA Solar Heating and Cooling Programme defined solar heat for industrial processes (SHIP systems). This definition refers only to the collection and documentation of SHIP systems in this Solar Heat Worldwide report.

#### **Applications considered as SHIP Systems**

### **Industrial Process Applications**

All solar thermal systems, direct or indirect (via heat storage) connected to an industrial process. Systems that, in addition to the industrial process, also supply the space heating for the production halls, offices or showers are also taken into account.

#### **Agricultural Applications**

Solar thermal systems used for drying wood chips, crops, fruits, etc. and heat for animal breeding.

#### **Greenhouses**

Solar thermal systems supplying heat for commercial food and flower production, nurseries and vegetable farming.

#### **Service Sector**

Solar thermal systems supplying commercial laundries, car/truck washing, and sewage sludge drying facilities with heat.

#### **Solar cooling of industrial processes**

This refers to all cooling processes in industrial plants.

#### **Not considered in this definition:**

- » Solar air conditioning of office buildings or industry halls
- » Tourism sector, like hotels (including laundries of hotels)
- » Health sector: hospitals, clinics
- » Boarding schools
- » Military barracks
- » Showers or canteens for workers

#### **Minimum size of systems**

For the worldwide survey, only installations larger than 50  $m<sup>2</sup>$  are considered. The minimum size of the plants surveyed was determined since small plants in many countries are not recorded separately. This does not mean that there are no SHIP systems with smaller collector areas. In some countries (e.g., Germany), the number of SHIP plants with collector areas below 50  $m<sup>2</sup>$  is significantly higher than the realized plants above that limit.

# **9.7**

## **Methodological adjustments and market data of the previous years**

### **Change in the method for estimating global installed capacity**

Global solar thermal capacity is based on the latest market data from more than 20 of the largest solar thermal markets in terms of added capacity. These were the following countries for the year 2023 listed in order of their added capacity: China, Turkey, United States, Brazil, Germany, India, Australia, Mexico, Greece, Italy, Spain, Austria, Poland, South Africa, Denmark, Portugal, Switzerland, Lebanon, United Kingdom, Cyprus, Belgium, Mozambique and Bhutan which represented 94.9% of the cumulative installed capacity in operation in 2022. The added capacities in the other countries, for which new additions are available until 2022, were projected according to the trend over the past two years. The rest of the world, which means countries without detailed solar thermal market information in 2022 and previous years, was estimated to be 5% of the global market volume without China in 2022.

Until 2019, the "rest of the world" was considered 5% of the global market, including China, which overestimated its market share. This methodological change should be noted when comparing data from this year's edition of Solar Heat Worldwide with earlier editions.

#### **Conversion from square meters to capacity**

The data presented in Chapters 5 to 8 were initially collected in square meters. Through an agreement of international experts, the collector areas of these solar thermal applications have been converted and shown in installed capacity.

Making the installed capacity of solar thermal collectors comparable with that of other energy sources, solar thermal experts from seven countries agreed upon a methodology to convert installed collector area into solar thermal capacity.

The methodology was developed during a meeting with IEA SHC Programme officials and major solar thermal trade associations in Gleisdorf, Austria, in September 2004. The represented associations from Austria, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States, as well as the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF) and the IEA SHC Programme, agreed to use a factor of  $0.7$  kW $/m^2$  to derive the nominal capacity from the area of installed collectors.

#### **Data from the previous years**

The following tables provide data from the previous years to ensure consistency of the calculations within this report. If necessary, the numbers have been revised compared to the data published in earlier editions of this report due to changes in methodology or the origin of the data for each country.

In Table 21, Table 22, and Table 23, these countries are marked accordingly and the respective data source is cited in Chapter 9.8 (References).

#### **Table 21: Newly installed collector area in 2020 [m2]**



\* 0% growth assumed, \*\* revised 2022 according to new database

+ exports excluded, ++ revised 2024 according to new data base

## **Table 22: Newly installed collector area in 2021 [m2]**



\* 0% growth assumed, \*\* revised 2022 due to new data base

+ exports excluded, ++ revised 2024 according to new data base, +++ only air collectors reported (provided by John Hollick)

#### **Table 23: Total collector area in operation by the end of 2021 [m2]**



\*cumulated collector area by end of 2009, \*\* cumulated collector area by end of 2014, \*\*\* cumulated collector area by end of 2015 \*\*\*\* cumulated collector area by end of 2017, \*\*\*\*\* new 2023 + exports excluded ++ calculated based on 0% growth +++ cumulated collector area by end of 2020, ++++ revised 2024 according to new data base+ exports excluded

## **9.8**

**References to reports and persons who have supplied the data**

The production of the report, Solar Heat Worldwide – Edition 2024, was kindly supported by national representatives of the recorded countries or other official sources of information as cited below.











#### **9.9 Additional literature and web sources used**

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