

Bioheat: essential for the EU's energy independence and energy security

Brussels, 27 September 2022 – Bioenergy Europe is pleased to announce the release of its [2022 Statistical Report Bioheat](#) and its accompanying [Policy Brief](#). This report analyses the current state of play of biomass in the heating sector.

With skyrocketing prices of gas, oil and electricity, the EU is facing a major energy crisis this winter, and many citizens are at risk of not being able to afford heating their homes. Today's debate on the EU's heat supply looks at affordability, sustainability and renewability, but now more than ever, energy security is at the core of the discussion. Currently, the question of how to provide half of the EU's energy supply – namely heat – remains difficult to answer.

When thinking about available solutions to decarbonise and securely supply the heating sector, let us take a closer look at bioheat. Bioenergy is often wrongly linked to power generation; however, it is remarkable that bioheat accounts for 74% of all bioenergy consumption in the EU. In 2019, out of all renewables in heating (RES-H), bioenergy contributed 85%, allowing for a reduction in emissions by approximately 160MtCO_{2eq}.

Still, one of the biggest challenges of the heating sector is its reliance on fossil fuels, with 36% of all GHG emissions in Europe coming from heat. To achieve its climate neutrality goal, the EU cannot afford to delay its commitment to a higher RES-H penetration. In the current legislative proposals, more ambitious targets for heat are welcomed as they show a clear recognition of the sector's importance to the EU's climate targets as well as the REPowerEU objectives.

Bioheat offers a solution for another big challenge of the sector – i.e. the obsolescence of aging appliances. Modernising the EU's heating stock is key, as today a quarter of heating installations in the EU are over 30 years old. In order to meet higher air quality objectives by 2030, the slow substitution rate of inefficient and outdated appliances needs to be accelerated so that new, modern bioheat appliances can contribute to increased GHG emissions savings. When looking at pollution reduction, one open fire emits the same amount of fine particles as 300 modern bioheat appliances, which shows the immense potential the sector has in terms of energy efficiency, especially in the building industry.

Beyond domestic heating, RES penetration in the overall EU heating system must be prioritised. Biomass-based district heating provides a concrete solution to further boosting the fuel switch to renewables. Since 2000, bioenergy's share in district heating has more than tripled, reaching a share of 97% of all RES combined in 2020. This remarkable increase proves once more that bioheat provides a viable energy-efficient solution, both at the individual and district level, and constitutes a perfect example of sector integration. Furthermore, 80% of the energy consumption in industry is used for heating purposes, with bioheat covering 10% of the total industrial heat consumption.

“We are all worried about getting through the upcoming heating season, and we see an increase in demand for pellets for individual heating appliances. This shows the interest of end-users in a sustainable and domestically available source of energy” states Bioenergy Europe Secretary General, Jean-Marc Jossart.

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Notes to editors:

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- Bioenergy Europe's [Annual Statistical Reports](#) provides insights on the developments of the European bioenergy market to support industry leaders, decision-makers, investors, and all bioenergy professionals to understand the status of bioenergy in Europe. With more than 150 graphs and figures, readers can get an in-depth overview of the bioenergy sector in Europe.