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“BIPV producers create enthusiasm for their products among architects, developers and real estate companies”

Hosted by the Royal Institute of British Architects in London, the annual conference of the European Photovoltaic Technology Platform on Wednesday this week was fully dedicated to the growth opportunities for building-integrated photovoltaics (BIPV) in Europe. Architects, designers, real estate and photovoltaic industry representatives got together to compare their experience, technologies and visions.

"As the costs of photovoltaics decrease, it makes more and more sense to focus on solutions to better integrate them into our buildings and infrastructure" - commented Marko Topic, Chair of the PV Platform. "Some building-integrated photovoltaic technologies are still more expensive than simple PV; however, taking into account their multiple functionality, already today BIPV applications can be more interesting than conventional building elements that do not produce electricity" - he continued.

"BIPV is a sub-sector of the PV industry where manufacturing stays close to the place of installation" - said Gaëtan Masson, Vice-Chair of the Platform. Indeed, BIPV needs to be very well tailor-made around the local architectural specifications. This is good news for job creation and economic growth in Europe.

But what are the absolute preconditions for upscaling BIPV deployment in Europe?

On the one hand, the industry should identify a limited number of market segments that are close to competitiveness. That way, companies could start manufacturing pre-fabricated BIPV elements. This would bring the costs of this technology significantly down, following the same path that simple PV has gone down in recent years.

On the other hand, policies and regulations need to be designed or adapted to support the use of BIPV. "The industry would be greatly helped by a set of clear and harmonised technical specifications and by financial backing in the areas of research and innovation as well as industrialisation" - commented Wim Sinke, Vice-Chair of the Platform.



The EU PV Platform has just issued a fact sheet on BIPV and will continue discussions on this important topic at the conference titled "Reaching out for opportunities in BIPV - technology and industry developments" on 15 September at the EU PV SEC in Hamburg. More information can be found here: www.eupvplatform.org.

Note to editors:

The European Photovoltaic Technology Platform is an initiative which aims at mobilising all the actors sharing a European vision and ambition for photovoltaic solar energy. The PV Platform is an independent and objective body which aims to be the recognised point of reference for key decision and policy makers. The Platform's Mission is to develop a strategy and corresponding implementation plan for education, research and technology development, innovation and market deployment of photovoltaic solar energy.

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