

To

Ursula von der Leyen

Frans Timmermans - Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal

Margrethe Vestager - Executive Vice-President for a Europe fit for the Digital Age

Thierry Breton - Commissioner for Internal Market

Kadri Simson - Commissioner for Energy

Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear Executive Vice-President Timmermans,
Dear Executive Vice-President Vestager,
Dear Commissioner Breton,
Dear Commissioner Simson,

The European Commission's long-term strategy, "A Clean Planet for All", clearly demonstrates that in order to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, the share of renewable electricity will have to increase significantly across all sectors, accounting for at least 80% of Europe's electricity generation. Without renewables and without solar, the European energy transition and ambition to become the first climate neutral continent will not happen.

As the cleanest and most cost-effective energy source with the highest levels of public acceptance across Europe,¹ solar energy will be a major driver of Europe's renewable growth. In 2019 alone, solar installations are expected to rise by 110%, translating into at least 20GW of installed solar capacity; a growth that is expected to continue in the coming years. From 5% of Europe's electricity mix today, solar could account for 36% of Europe's power generation by 2050, and up to 62% according to scenarios from the Finland's Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology. Solar energy will not only play a key role in delivering Europe's renewable electricity targets, it also has significant potential to produce renewable hydrogen, which is required for the decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors.

European policymakers must ensure that an optimal share of the products and technologies necessary for facilitating the European Green Deal originate in Europe. For this reason, supporting the growth of a robust European solar industry is vital. Beyond solar deployment, the EU must remain a global solar industrial leader.

- Europe leads the world when it comes to R&D institutes developing PV innovations.
- Europe should strategically not solely rely on PV products coming from outside of the continent.
- PV production can deliver valuable growth activities in economically restructuring territories. The European solar industry will ensure a socially-just energy transition, creating over 500,000 highly-skilled jobs in Europe by 2030, with socio-economic benefits redistributed across all member states. Coal regions also represent a tremendous opportunity for further solar growth, and for the deployment of cutting-edge manufacturing sites supporting their industrial conversion.

What is now required is a consistent strategy to support the industrial deployment of already-available EU technologies, providing EU solar companies with the means to compete at a global level. Public and private funding, competitive electricity costs, tax exemptions, and comprehensive administrative processes are needed fast to ensure that the EU can fully benefit from the next solar decade.

The undersigned signatories of this declaration, representing 18 European National Solar Associations and 10 major European research institutes, **urge you to acknowledge the strategic importance of the solar industrial value chain for a successful and inclusive European energy and climate transition.**

We remain entirely committed to cooperating with and supporting the European Commission in the development of this strategy.

Sincerely yours,

¹ European Social Survey (ESS) on 'European Attitudes toward Climate Change and Energy'



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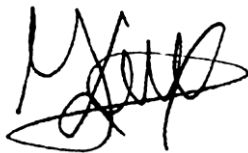
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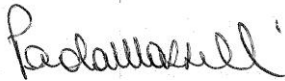
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