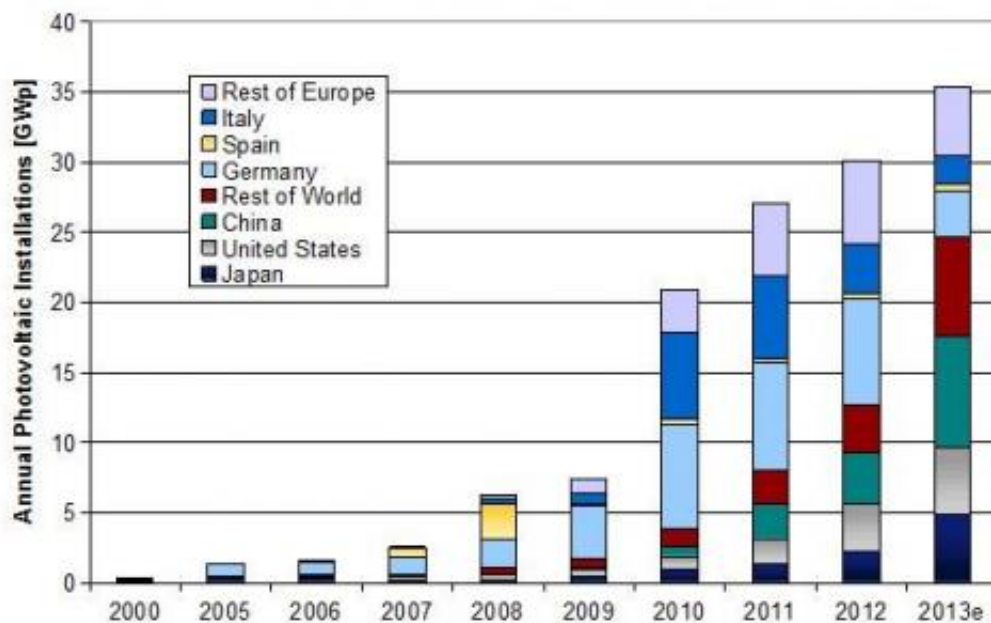


PV production grows despite a crisis-driven decline in investment

September 30 2013



Annual PV installations from 2000 to 2013 (data source: [Epi 2013, NEA 2013, Sys 2013] and own analysis)

Global production of photovoltaic (PV) cells grew by 10% in 2012 in comparison to 2011 despite a 9% decline in solar energy investments according to the annual "PV Status Report" released by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre. Europe remained a leader in newly installed capacities accounting for 51.7% (16.8 GW) of the 30 GW installed worldwide.

Abundant solar resources in combination with zero emissions from solar installations have attributed to PV [energy](#) systems a key role in the transition to a low carbon energy supply. This potential has driven development of more efficient PV modules and transformed the sector into one of the fastest growing industries. Production of PV cells and modules has gone from 46 MW in 1990 to 38.5 GW in 2012. Statistically documented cumulative installations worldwide accounted for almost 100 GW in 2012 placing the EU in the lead position with its share of over 69 GW.

Within the EU, Germany has kept its leading position in PV installation with an additional 7.6 GW in 2012, while Italy's newly installed 3.5 GW have allowed it to reach an electricity production covering 7.3% of the total electricity demand during the first seven months of 2013.

A steep, 80% drop of solar modules prices between 2008 and 2012, triggered by an overcapacity of production, created serious financial problems for manufacturers, but led to a consolidation of the industry and fuelled an extensive growth for the PV market in Asia: 60% in 2012 and a projected 100% in 2013. The rise in annual production has resulted in China and Taiwan to accounting for 70% of the global production.

Even with the on-going difficult economic conditions, the number of the new PV markets is increasing. This, along with rising energy prices and the pressure to stabilise the climate will maintain a high demand for solar power systems. Electricity production from PV modules has already proved that it can be cheaper than current conventional consumer electricity prices in many countries. In addition, renewable energies which are not fuel-dependent, are, in contrast to conventional energy sources, among the technologies to offer the prospect of a reduction in prices.

More information: iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/remea/pv-status-report-2013

Provided by European Commission Joint Research Centre

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