

The most attractive sales markets in 2009: Germany, Italy, Spain



Fig. 1: The most attractive sales markets for the collector industry in 2009 in order of the number of responses. The figures in brackets are the number of manufacturers which have their headquarters in that country. 248 questionnaires were evaluated. Countries with over 15 responses are included. The four countries Germany, Italy, Spain and the USA have defended their peak positions from 2008. France, Great Britain and Mexico have slipped back several places. Source: Market survey by solrico in September/October 2010

as fig. 2 shows. During the boom year of 2008, 13 new entrants were shown on the world map: this year it was just 8 companies. Sun Radiant is not one of them. The Italian company postponed its entry planned for the summer of 2010 due to the low general demand: „We are continuing to buy in collectors and are still deciding whether to start with our own production next year,” explains company head Goran Zeponi. The new entrants on the world map come from Azerbaijan, Austria, the USA, Macedonia,

Number of new entrants in collector manufacturing

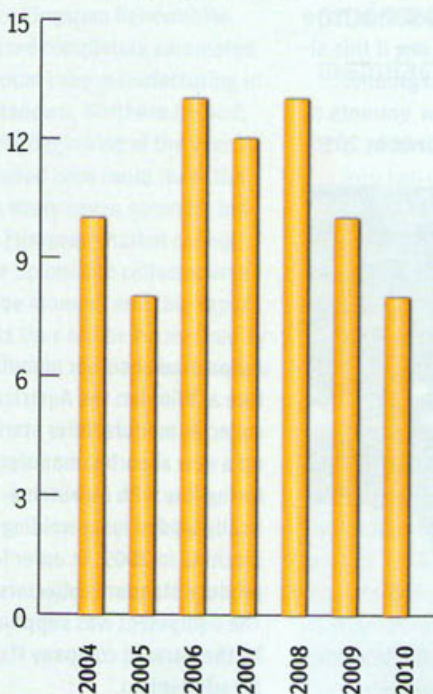


Fig. 2: Number of companies which started flat plate and vacuum tube collector manufacturing in the given years. The air collector industry has not been considered here, as it has its own article starting on page 62. China has also not been considered, as the industry is already too large for an overview.

Source: Market survey by solrico in September/October 2010

Slovenia and Norway, and have all decided on flat plate collector technology:

- the state construction company Azenco in Azerbaijan started the production of flat plate collectors in August 2010. The impulse for this was given by the government, which wishes to install solar thermal systems on public buildings. “The state will be our most important customer,” confirms Samir Mammadov, Procurement Officer at Azenco. The collector has an ultrasonically welded copper absorber, an aluminium frame and a glass cover sealed with EPDM rubber.

- The Austrian company Estec Energiespartechnik Süd has been producing a flat plate collector with a new omega-shaped aluminium absorber. It consists of a harp register with the omega aluminium sheet around it and the sheet wings are clinched to the full-surface absorber. The clinching machine was supplied by the Austrian mechanical engineering company RG Fertigungstechnik.

- The US American solar wholesaler Solarhot, which was founded in 2006 and has so far imported solar collectors from Turkey, started up its own production in March this year in Morrisville, North Carolina. “We wanted to avoid the transportation costs and follow the rapidly growing demand,” says Jeanette Gretsche, one of the founders of Solarhot, explaining the investment. In the autumn, Solarhot has entered into a strategic partnership with the collector manufacturer Bubbling Springs of Menomonie, Wisconsin. “Bubbling Springs will stock Solarhot products and vice versa and we are sharing some staff. At this time only the Bubbling Spring absorbers will be made at both locations,” says Gretsche.

- The US American solar wholesaler SunMaxx and the Austrian flat plate collector manufacturer Geo-Tec entered into a transatlantic strategic partnership in July at the Intersolar North America in San Francisco, USA. The long-term aim of this cooperation is the setting up of a collector factory in the USA. “We entered into the final stage with the US-wide site selection process for the factory and identified possible locations in two US States,” reports Mike Farrell, founder and head of SunMaxx, answering enquiries made in September. Klaus Mischensky, head of Geo-Tec confirms: “We are supplying the technical know-how including the engineering work for planning the ‘made in the USA’ factory.” As of the editorial deadline a final decision on the factory location had not yet been made.

- The company Euroterm in Macedonia was originally a household technology installation company with approx. 35 employees. Two years ago the company management decided to enter collector manufacturing and the production of Solar Keymark certified products should get running properly this year. “We are the only manufacturer in Macedonia with full-surface absorbers,” says Dejan Mickoski, Production Manager at Euroterm. They constructed their ultrasonic welding machine themselves – equipped with frequency generators by the Swiss company Telsonic.

