

COUNTRY REPORT: Albania

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This short report includes a brief description of the most important elements in Albanian regulations and certification / subsidy schemes related to solar thermal products. The description is valid for March 2012¹.

Regulatory Framework

Building Regulation (general)

- There are no special rules / regulations for solar thermal systems / components in the building regulation. The general regulations for buildings and installations shall be fulfilled. Some examples of these regulations are listed in the following documents:
 - National Strategy of Energy - approved by Albanian Government, June 2003.
 - Energy Building Code - approved by Albanian Government, January 2003
 - Energy Efficiency Law - approved by Albanian Government in April 2005.
 - National Energy Efficiency Action Plan - approved by Albanian Government, September 2011.
- The new Energy Building Code (not yet approved) will include in the calculation of energy loads also the contribution of the solar thermal systems.

National Action Plan for Renewable Energy Sources

- The National Action Plan for Renewable Energy Sources (NAPRES) is recently prepared, but not yet approved. NAPRES takes into account all sources of renewable energy including specific targets for the solar energy. This plan involves technical and legislative measures for the country until the year 2018 that are in line with the relevant EU directives; the obligations that the country has as a party to the Energy Community Treaty; as well as the objectives of the National Strategy of Energy.

Registration

- There are no particular requirements for the registration of a solar thermal system to the local authorities.

Safety control

- There is no any particular regulation related to the safety control of a solar thermal collector / system.

¹ The original report was published in 2007 and was developed in the framework of the project Solar Keymark II with the support of the Intelligent Energy Europe programme.

Public Incentives (subsidies, ordinances or other)

Relevant incentives:

- There is no national subsidy scheme for installation of solar thermal collectors and systems (both for individuals and companies).

Testing

- There is a Solar Test Facility equipped to perform testing of solar collectors according to EN/ISO standards for solar collectors. This facility is installed at the premises of “Harry Fultz” Institute in Tirana but it is not yet accredited.
- A first set of trial tests, and the performance tests for 4 different Albanian, Italian and Greek solar thermal collectors, is accomplished by the Solar Test Facility. The performance of these 4 solar thermal collectors is tested according to the EN 12975-2 standard.
- The results derived by the performed tests at this facility such as: the performance curve, the power curve and the stagnation temperature of the solar collector can be further used for the comparison of different solar collector types that are available in the Albanian market.

Certification

Product certification:

- There is no national certification scheme for products of solar thermal systems.
- There is no national energy labelling scheme for hot water tanks.
- A draft certification scheme for products of solar thermal systems is developed in the frame of the GEF/UNDP Project “Albania - Solar Water Heating Market Transformation and Strengthening Initiative”.

Installer certification:

- There is no national certification scheme for installers of solar thermal systems.
- A draft training and certification scheme for installers of solar thermal systems is developed in the frame of the GEF/UNDP Project “Albania - Solar Water Heating Market Transformation and Strengthening Initiative”.

Insurance

- There is no particular insurance for solar thermal collectors and systems.

- Some insurance companies insure solar thermal collectors and systems as part of their insurance of the building.
- Usually, the installation of solar thermal collectors and/or systems does not change / affect the house insurance practice.

Other relevant information

- The General Directorate of Standardization has adopted 100% of all the EU/International Standards related to solar thermal collectors and systems. Three of those standards are translated into Albanian for the needs of the manufacturers, installers and other end-users.
- Both, the reduced VAT and zero import taxes on solar thermal systems and related components are applicable in Albania.
- There is no national trade association of solar thermal manufacturers, dealers, distributors, and installers.

Trade Barriers

There are no any special trade barriers in Albania.

Actions needed

- Regulation:
 - Supportive actions for the actual implementation of the revised Energy Building Code:
 - Training of the inspectors,
 - Elaboration of calculation tools for the energy requirement for space heating and cooling,
 - Training of the building engineers,
 - Etc.
- Subsidies:
 - Establishment and functioning of subsidy schemes, both for family size and especially for large size solar thermal systems.
 - Stable subsidies and/or other incentives should be given to the proven quality solar thermal collectors.
 - Subsidies should be based on the energy output of the solar systems:
 - Certified test results for factory made systems,
 - Measurements for large custom made systems.
- Testing:
 - Establish the management of the Solar Test Facility according to the ISO/IEC 17025 standard.

- Secure additional funds for financing the upgrade of the Solar Test Facility in order to conduct also the performance testing of solar thermal systems according to the ISO 9459-2 standard.
- Accreditation of the Solar Test Facility.

- Certification:
 - Approve the draft certification scheme for products, which is developed in the frame of the GEF/UNDP Project, as the national scheme for certification of solar collectors and systems.
 - Approve the draft training and certification scheme for installers, which is developed in the frame of the GEF/UNDP Project, as the national scheme for certification of installers
 - Educate the consumers to understand the importance of buying solar collectors with proven quality.
 - Introduce the Solar Keymark scheme in Albania.

- Other:
 - The creation of the Albanian Solar Thermal Industry Association (ASTIA) as the national trade association of solar thermal manufacturers, dealers, distributors, contractors, installers, architects, researchers, consultants, marketers, and etc.