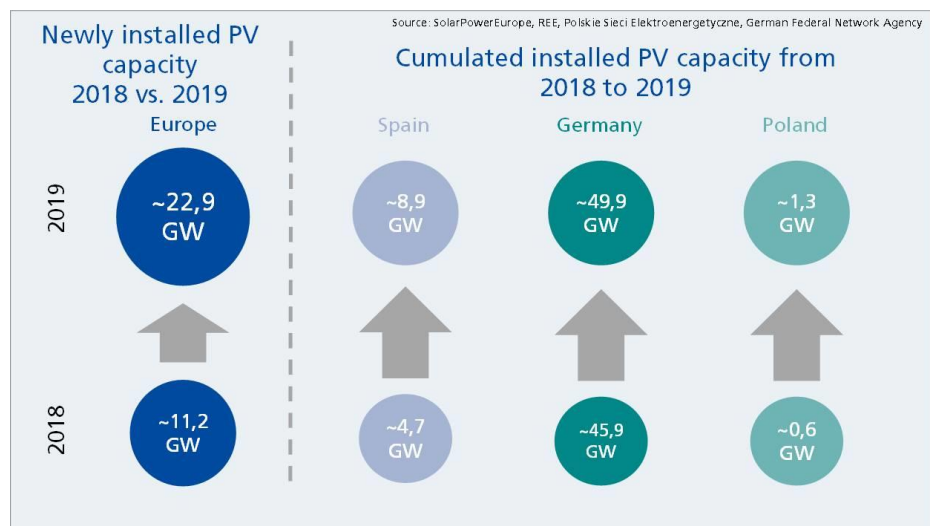


## Powering the European Energy Transition with Solar

**Bonn, August 31, 2020.** *Becoming the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050 is the objective behind the European Green Deal, the most ambitious package of measures that should enable European citizens and businesses to benefit from sustainable green transition. While favorable political frameworks are still necessary to scale deployment, solar-PV is the fastest growing renewable energy technology. Three markets stood out in particular in 2019 and the first half of 2020; Spain, Germany and Poland.*

The energy transition has long moved on from a utopian dream, into the mainstream segment of national political, structural and societal development. While many countries in Europe hold on to nuclear power or fossil fuels such as coal, renewable energy sources are undeniably the future of power supply. Solar PV is the strongest growing technology in the past three years, with particularly high rates in Europe. The International Energy Agency reported that: "In the European Union, solar PV additions increased 98% year-on-year in 2019 owing to faster deployment in Spain, Germany and the Netherlands."<sup>1</sup> In fact, 2019 was the strongest growth year for solar power in Europe since 2010.

Such high growth rates can be traced to the multitude and simple integration options for solar into the existing infrastructure of buildings and a relatively low investment when compared to a water dam or wind park for example. Most European countries included solar energy as one technology to reach national sustainable development goals, accelerating development and deployment with political incentives. The German research organization EUPD Research identified Spain, Germany, Ukraine, Netherlands, France, Turkey, Italy and Poland as the top markets in Europe for solar PV development in 2019<sup>2</sup>. Three countries stand out in particular due to significant changes in political regulations to (re)enable growth as well as a surprising newcomer; Spain, Germany and Poland.



<sup>1</sup> International Energy Agency, 2020. [Tracking Report Solar PV 2020](#).

<sup>2</sup> EUPD Research 2020.

Spain was once dealt as the leading European solar market when regulatory changes made it unaffordable to install solar. In 2019, regulatory changes have not only helped Spain reemerge as Europe's biggest market – Spain installed 4.7 GW in 2019 – for large-scale solar projects, but also animated a big new market for distributed solar systems for on-site consumption<sup>3</sup>. The International Renewable Energy Agency listed Spain as a country with notable capacity growth<sup>4</sup>. A reactivated tender system, part of the national funding mechanisms to accelerate the energy transition boosted deployment activities after several years of hardly any new solar projects. Whether Spain will indeed experience a full revival of its potential is highly dependent on political regulations in the future.

Germany has the second-largest installed solar capacity in Europe, mainly driven by regular tenders but also a strong residential segment. While coal is still a major energy source with a long phase-out period until 2038<sup>5</sup>, the elimination of the 52 GW cap has set the scene for further solar expansion in Germany.

Poland is a newcomer among the European solar players with surprising expanding potential in the past two years. At the end of July, a total of 2261.3 megawatts of photovoltaic power was installed<sup>6</sup>. In July alone, the number of new photovoltaic installations was 204.7 megawatts. The country added around 916 megawatts of new photovoltaic capacity in the first seven months of the year. Again, regulations and funding mechanisms are the reason for the sudden increase in capacity. In Poland, these focus largely on residential and smaller segments of up to 10 kW. Driving funding schemes are net metering, the investment grant Mój Prąd as well as tax regulations (consumption tax exemption, VAT reduction). Tender procedure is available for industrial installations.

Scaling solar accelerates the energy transition beyond panels on a roof. For example when making the decision to install a solar system, home owners as well as owners of commercial spaces often include storage solutions and increasingly will also add the infrastructure to charge electric vehicles. According to the EndCustomer Monitor 9.0<sup>®</sup>, the annual survey carried out by EUPD Research among German end customers owning a PV system, the main driver motivating the purchase of an electric car is the possibility to charge its battery with a wall-box using the electricity generated by a rooftop PV system. Such set-up increases the share of self-consumption and makes the investment in both a PV system and an electric car very convenient from an economic perspective.

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<sup>3</sup> Solar Power Europe 2019. [EU Solar Boom Over 100% Solar Market Increase in 2019](#).

<sup>4</sup> International Renewable Energy Agency, 2020. [Renewable Capacity Statistics 2020](#).

<sup>5</sup> Bundesministerium fuer Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit, 2020. [Kohleausstieg](#).

<sup>6</sup> PV Magazine 2020. [Polens installierte Photovoltaik-Leistung erreicht 2,26 Gigawatt](#).

The potential of solar energy in combination with storage leading Europe into a new energy age seems limitless. On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, industry experts from leading international and European companies will share their insights on how solar PV and energy storage technology contribute to the European energy renaissance on the first digital marketplace for solar and storage worldwide, the Solar and Storage DigiCon. The full-day conference brings together researchers and high-level representatives from leading companies in the European energy market. Join the discussions for free and register for the Solar and Storage DigiCon.

The two business platforms JF4S and IBESA launched the Solar & Storage DigiCon, the first of its kind, to connect the solar and storage industry in a virtual trade fair environment. Next to visual highlights, a multi-lingual chat function and easy access, the DigiCon also offers conference programs that cover the entire spectrum of the solar and storage industry, from regional programs to exclusive workshops, segment specific days and launch events to high-level round tables and market briefings - free of charge and accessible 24/7 until the end of this year. Log in here: <https://jf4s.6connex.eu/event/Digicon/login>

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