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UK tops Europe's utility-scale solar market for 2013

Figures published today show that the United Kingdom is now Europe's most attractive market for large solar installations.

The research by utility solar experts Wiki-Solar shows that the UK topped Europe in the first five months of the year with over 1/3GW of new installations of 5MW and over^[1].

Cumulative and year-to-date capacity figures for all countries^[2,3] are as follows:

Plants over 5 MW			Cumulative		2013 to date		
Rank	Chg	Country	Sites	MWp	Sites	MWp.	Rank
		Total	1,072	17,219	191	3,684	
1	→	Germany	194	3,412	3	87	8
2	↑	United States	129	3,207	25	1,262	1
3	↓	China	143	3,096	38	909	2
4	→	Spain	156	1,683	0	0	
5	→	India	128	1,473	45	508	3
6	→	Italy	61	838	0	0	
7	→	France	27	590	2	30	10
8	→	Canada	27	539	9	121	7
9	↑	United Kingdom	86	526	49	336	4
10	↓	Ukraine	9	441	3	128	6
11	→	Thailand	32	359	10	159	5
12	↓	Czech Republic	24	276	0	0	
13	→	Bulgaria	8	181	0	0	
14	↑	Greece	12	140	2	76	9
15	↓	Korea (South)	7	95	1	13	13
16	↑	Peru	4	80	1	20	11
17	↓	Portugal	5	78	0	0	
18	→	Japan	5	48	0	0	

Top markets for 5MW+ solar power stations, showing their cumulative capacity at end May 2013

Source: Wiki-Solar.org

The UK is not simply top in Europe, but also ranks as the fourth-highest growth market in the world this year, behind The US and China, which are locked in a race to reach the world #1 slot^[4], and Asia's other growth market India.

European focus shifts to UK

The emergence of the UK as Europe's key market is recognised by a new conference scheduled to coincide with Intersolar in Munich this month. 'Doing Solar Business in the UK' is organised by Solar Media^[5] and co-sponsored by Wiki-Solar.

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Under existing UK regulations solar power plants at any scale are eligible for support under the Renewables Obligation, while installations up to 5MW can alternatively receive support under the Feed-in Tariffs. While support under both mechanisms has recently been reduced, the continuing price reductions mean that good projects in the South and in the Midlands are still viable. Planning consent for over 160 projects was approved in the 16 months to April 2013, and new applications are still flooding in.

The Munich event will explain why the market continues to provide an interesting focus for European businesses, and aim to demystify the unique regulatory environment, with its two separate but overlapping support mechanisms. The potential impact of the new EU tariffs on Chinese solar modules will also be considered.

E N D S

Notes for editors:

- [1] The figures in this release are analysed for projects of 5MW and over, because of the UK FITs threshold of 5MW. For most of its analyses, Wiki-Solar defines 'utility-scale' as projects of 10MW and over.
- [2] The list of top countries is available at: <http://www.wiki-solar.org/country.html>
- [3] The statistics on 5 MW installations should be reasonably accurate for the UK, but may be less representative in other markets, because Wiki-Solar's primary database is for projects 10 MW+. The UK's 5 MW+ relative position may therefore be overstated.
- [4] See: <http://goo.gl/FRh1O>
- [5] *Doing Solar Business in the UK* takes place on 18th June at the Novotel City Centre in Munich see: <http://dsb.solarenergyevents.com/>.

The statistics for utility-scale solar projects are collated by wiki-solar.org, and shown on an interactive global map at: <http://www.wiki-solar.org/map.html>. Its database includes almost 600 operational solar generating stations of 10MW+ (over 1,000 of 5MW+). A further 300 sites (400 at 5MW+) are under development, but not included in the statistics until they become operational.

Though many owners, developers and contractors have validated Wiki-Solar's data, some is dependent on other published sources. Some totals may be understated due to publication delays. Wiki-Solar updates its records continuously, with input from industry participants.

Projects of 10MW have typical annual output equivalent to the consumption of 3,000 households.

Philip Wolfe's book "Solar Photovoltaic Projects in the mainstream power market" was published by [Routledge](#) in October.

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