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On 17 December 2015 the European Commission published its Draft Issue Paper 4 on 'Energy Systems' in the course of the new SET-Plan process. The DHC+ Technology Platform warmly welcomes this initiative and supports the approach to clarify research needs in specific areas and matching them to the pillars of the Energy Union.

The DHC+ Technology Platform welcomes the focus on the energy system. DHC+ acknowledges the importance of an integrated electricity grid. However, about half of Europe's primary energy consumption is due to thermal needs, i.e. heating and cooling, and not due to electricity needs as such. A focus on energy systems can therefore not be limited to the share of RES in the electricity grid but must aim at the integration of different energy services and grids.

Having said this, it must be stated that the current issue paper does not aim at the integration of the energy system. Its main target is increasing the share of variable RES in the electricity mix. This approach neglects the role of grids other than the electricity grid such as DHC and local renewable gas grids as well as the important role that efficiency improvements must play in the future energy systems. Efficiency improvements can be achieved mainly through system integration and linking different energy services, e.g. through links between electricity and heat for example through power to heat, CHP and other technologies. Distributed generation and district-level self-production play an increasingly important role that is not reflected in an overall RES share in only one part of the energy system.

The DHC+ Technology Platform suggests using a target that aims at what actually needs to be achieved, e.g. a CO₂ emission reduction of 40% in 2030. To achieve this target the level of integration must be increased rapidly which can be achieved by deploying a number of solutions. Amongst these solutions are the integration of electricity and thermal needs and grids, an increased share of cogeneration on all levels, district level self-production, the integration of (thermal) storage and others. Additionally, the management of the current and future system plays an integral role in utilizing available resources in the most efficient and therefore environmentally most beneficial way.

DHC+ would like to ask the European Commission to consider these points and change the focus of the issue paper accordingly before identifying key actions for the future.

The DHC+ Technology Platform is an initiative set up under the umbrella of [Euroheat & Power](#) and represents the voice of Research & Innovation for District Heating and Cooling in Europe and beyond. <http://www.dhcplus.eu/>