

Press Release

EUROGAS General Assembly in Milan on 10 June 2011, hosted by the Italian energy company EDISON, is unanimous:

Gas is key in a low-carbon energy future

Gas has what the energy future needs. This was confirmed at the General Assembly of EUROGAS, which met today in Milan, Italy, hosted by the Italian energy company EDISON.

Gas emits about 50% less carbon dioxide when burnt than coal and has lower emissions of nitrogen oxide, sulphur oxide and particles. Gas is a versatile fuel: Apart from large-scale power generation, households can be equipped with small combined-heat-and power (micro-CHP) appliances. Gas can be used in fuel cells, as compressed natural gas in cars etc. etc. Moreover, it is flexible in generating backup power to intermittent renewable sources of energy, e.g. when the wind is not blowing or the sun is not shining.

Gas is also a reliable fuel: Sources are already diverse and will be even more diverse in the future. Imports will increase, but the potential for gas production in Europe is still high. Today 53% of supplies come from the EU and Norway. 23% reach the EU from Russia and 10% from Algeria. No fewer than 21 countries supply liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the EU (Source of all data: EUROGAS). Access to reliable and cost-competitive global supplies is essential for the EU's economic competitiveness. They will find their way to Europe via new and existing pipelines and more LNG. Clear demand signals and good relations with producer and transit countries are important.

A full and speedy, harmonised implementation of the EU internal market for gas, supported by sensible trading rules, will be key to making gas available to both wholesale and retail consumers, at all times and on a competitive basis. The market must be capable of responding to the needs of consumers.

On the physical side, the general public is often hesitant to say 'yes' to energy projects, whichever type of energy they relate to, particularly if they are to be realised in people's backyards. Better information to the public on Europe's energy needs, as well as sound project execution can improve people's attitude and positive personal engagement.

All these issues were addressed by speakers from the EU, Italian authorities, WWF and EUROGAS member companies. Three panel discussions were held on the issues of sustainability, external energy policy and the internal market.

EUROGAS was particularly pleased to welcome the external participants Fabrizio Barbaso (Deputy Director General, DG Energy, European Commission), Alberto Pototschnig (Director of the EU Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators ACER), Alfredo Mantica (Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, Italy), Corrado Cini (Director General, Ministry of Environment, Italy), Professor Sergio Garribba (Senior Government Adviser on Energy, Italy) and Jason Anderson (Head of Climate Change and Energy Policy, WWF European Policy Office).

In the closing ceremony, EUROGAS President Jean-François Cirelli said that *"a cost-effective low-carbon energy future is in the hands of the industry, consumers and policy makers alike. European industry and citizens should not be burdened with price rises. Gas is certainly a cost-effective low-carbon fuel and EUROGAS members stand ready to supply it. But gas is also the ideal partner to renewables and to the expected importance in the future energy mix."*

EUROGAS is the association representing the European gas wholesale and retail sector. It recently welcomed Beate Raabe as its new Secretary General. The association's aim is to provide data and information relevant to EU decision makers and opinion formers in making the right policy choices.

EUROGAS is a Brussels based non-profit making organisation and has the following members:

AFG - Association Française du Gaz (FR), BDEW - Bundesverband der Energie - und Wasserwirtschaft e.V. (DE), Bord Gáis Éireann (IE), BOTAS* (TR), BP (UK), Bulgargaz* (BG), Centrica (UK), CPU - Czech Gas Union (CZ), DEPA (GR), DISTRIGAS (BE), DONG Energy (DK), EDF - Electricité de France (FR), Edison (IT), EGL AG (CH), ENA - Energy Networks Association (UK), Energie-Nederland (NL), Energigas Sverige (SE), ENI (IT), ENOVOS Luxembourg S.A. (LU), E.ON Ruhrgas AG (DE), Febeg (BE), FGW - Fachverband der Gas- und Wärmeversorgungsunternehmen (AT), Galp Gas Natural s.a. (PT), Gas Natural Fenosa (ES), GasTerra (NL), Gasum (FI), GAZBIR* Natural Gas Distribution Companies Association of Turkey (TR), GDF SUEZ (FR), Geoplin (SI), GERG - European Gas Research Group (EU), HMN Naturgas (DK), Latvijas Gaze* (LV), Lietuvos Dujos* (LT), Marcogaz (EU), MGE - Hungarian Gas Association (HU), Naftogaz of Ukraine* (UA), OMV Gas and Power GmbH (AT), PGNIG - Polish Oil and Gas Company (PL), Romgaz*(RO), Russian Gas Society*(RU), RWE Supply & Trading GmbH (DE), SEDIGAS - Asociación Española del Gas (ES), SHELL Energy Europe Ltd. (UK), South Hook Gas Ltd (UK), Slovenský plynárenský priemysel, a.s. (SPP) (SK), Swiss Association of Gas Industry (CH), Swissgas (CH), Total S.A. (FR), VNG AG - Verbundnetz Gas AG (DE)

* Associate Members

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