

Eurogas urges European Council to agree a clear and predictable energy and climate policy

Brussels, 13 October 2014. *“Even in these challenging times, it is important to let companies use their resources and expertise. This is part of their business and their portfolio of options is much larger than that of governments,”* says Beate Raabe, Secretary General of Eurogas, addressing both energy security concerns and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

An energy and climate policy based on this principle is vital to lead Europe into a low-carbon energy future while ensuring that energy supply is secure, competitive and clean. All eyes will be on the European Council on 23 and 24 October to make this happen.

Recent events in Ukraine have understandably pushed energy security concerns to the top of the political agenda, but it need not be at the expense of Europe’s climate policy objectives. The 2030 framework for energy and climate policy is an integral part of energy security discussions and vice-versa.

For security of supply, it is paramount that the gas continues to flow across borders and that each company is free to choose whether and how much supply is procured via pipeline, as LNG, from storage or through interruptible contracts. A well-functioning, internal energy market and market-based investment in energy infrastructure will increase security of supply. Therefore, any measures taken to safeguard energy supply should neither distort competition nor affect the functioning of the market.

The Ukraine crisis has been a wake-up call. It is high time that missing links in the gas network are completed. *“Not doing so prevents the market from being more competitive and secure,”* explains Ms Raabe. Moreover, she appeals to governments to remove the remaining barriers hindering some cross-border links and, therefore, a true internal energy market that would benefit both European citizens and industries.

For a low-carbon energy mix to develop, while building a more energy secure and competitive economy, Europe needs to remain open to all technological advances. Therefore, a technology-neutral approach of a binding EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels should be the centre piece of 2030 policy, together with a fast reformed Emissions Trading System that is not hampered by other targets.

Renewables and gas are two solid pillars of a low-carbon energy mix. Large efficiency gains and emissions reductions can be achieved by using gas or gas in combination with renewables in the power, heating and transport sectors.

“Proposals to intervene in the free market by reducing energy imports and the use of gas are not helpful. Both stand in the way of diverse supplies and competitive low-carbon energy, thus affecting security of supply and the economy. What the EU needs is a clear and predictable energy and climate policy that can balance security of supply, environmental sustainability and competitiveness in equal measure. We urge heads of state and government to agree on this,” concludes Ms Raabe.

Eurogas has published two papers setting out details on:

- a sustainable [energy security strategy](#), and
- an effective [2030 framework for energy and climate policy](#).

Note to Editors: Eurogas is an association representing 44 companies and associations engaged in the wholesale, retail and distribution of gas in Europe. Eurogas provides data and information relevant to EU decision makers and opinion formers in making the right policy choices.

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