



European Energy Forum

ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

ACTIVITY REPORT 2023



Jerzy Buzek

Member of the European Parliament (EPP, Poland)
President of the European Energy Forum

We bid farewell to 2023 - the last full year of the current term in office of the EU institutions (2019-2024). Between 6 and 9 June 2024 European citizens in every Member State will vote for their representatives to the European Parliament - for the tenth time already since the first direct elections in 1979; the procedure of appointing of new European Commission will begin shortly thereafter.

The last almost five years have been nothing but "interesting times" from the well-known quote. It started with Brexit becoming finally a reality, followed by the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic that in so many ways turned our world and lives - including daily routine of the European Energy Forum - upside down for two years. And then, just when it seemed that the worst is behind us, Russia's horrible war of aggression against Ukraine began. As a result, we were faced, among others, with perhaps the most serious energy crisis in the EU history.

However, at the end, not only did we survive as the European Union, but we also became more resilient and united - this is thanks to the historic **NextGenerationEU** economic recovery package or unprecedented measures under the **REPowerEU** Plan framework. Undoubtedly, none of this would be possible without the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council working hand in hand to design the most appropriate actions and responses to the multifaceted and ever-changing reality we live in.

This is about multilateral dialogue, joint efforts as well as openness and inclusiveness in looking for desired solutions; this is about hearing each other but also listening to each other; and this is about the spirit and way of fair, transparent and fruitful cooperation that has been so natural at our European Energy Forum for almost three decades now.

Let us not be too modest and recall the messages of Commissioner Kadri Simson as well as Executive Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič who both honoured us by participating in our dinner-debates in recent months: as a Forum, we have also contributed - in the field of energy and climate - to the fact that while the past few years have been rather difficult, we can look to the future with hope. And for that I would like to sincerely thank all EEF Active Members - my fellow colleagues, Members of the European Parliament - but also Associate Members - representatives of the European energy sector and industry. Your involvement is highly appreciated - and remains my serious commitment.

I am sure that in 2024 we will have enough important topics to work and discuss on: from the new CO2 emission reduction target for 2040 and the CCS strategy, through priorities in the field of energy, climate and just transition for the new Parliament and the Commission - including their implications for the EU long-term budget (MFF) post-2027, to preparations for the likely revision of the Regulations on the Energy Union Governance as well as the Security of Gas Supply. Moreover, I believe that our EEF family will keep growing: with 92 Associate Members, including 13 new in 2023, it seems that "Fit for 100" should be our minimum plan for 2024 - on our way to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the European Energy Forum in 2025!

So let us be "Fit for 100" - not only in terms of climate goals - and let us enjoy every day of the New Year 2024!



Maroš Šefčovič

Executive Vice-President, European Commission

European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight

Over the past few years, Europe faced unprecedented challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the illegal Russian aggression against Ukraine. The latter has had a considerable impact on energy markets and the economic conditions across Europe.

Russia's war of aggression has highlighted the need for greater resilience in our energy system, illustrating how important it is to accelerate the development of clean energy sources in order to reduce our dependencies on external suppliers. It is crucial to ensure secure and affordable energy for our citizens and to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of our businesses in the current global and economic trade context.

The European Green Deal stands at the forefront of this endeavour as Europe's social and growth strategy, transforming our industrial landscape and helping us transition towards a decarbonised energy system. It is a comprehensive and long-term approach, which prioritises energy autonomy and relies on the principle of technology neutrality. The European Green Deal is our response to address the climate and biodiversity crises, and to position Europe on the track to sustainable growth and economic resilience in the years to come. It is an opportunity that cannot be missed.

As we approach the end of the current political mandate, the European Commission will focus on the completion of trilogues and the adoption of the remaining key legislative files and initiatives, including the communication on the 2040 objectives. Swift and homogenous implementation of the agreed framework across all EU Member States will also be pivotal.

In addition, we should look for new instruments and solutions. The success of the joint purchase of gas under the EU Energy Platform gives us an excellent blueprint how to pool resources to buy other strategic commodities, such as hydrogen or critical raw materials. This should become an important component of our strategic approach to securing supplies for our internal market.

Furthermore, in the spirit of societal and economic cooperation, our strengthened engagement through Green Dialogues with the citizens and Clean Transition Dialogues with industry will be crucial in cultivating public support to the European Green Deal. They are a means of facilitating meaningful exchanges and acquiring better understanding of the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders. We are committed to a just transition, one that is inclusive and equitable, leaving no one and nowhere behind, and to a thriving European industry.

The European Green Deal is more than a policy framework - it is a pledge to future generations and our commitment to turn the tide against climate change and biodiversity loss. In this spirit, let us continue our efforts to shape a greener, cleaner and more just future for all.



Inese Vaidere
Member of the European Parliament (EPP, Latvia)
Vice-President and Treasurer of the European Energy Forum

We are currently living through the times where energy sector faces a rapid transition. For the first time ever, the entire world has committed to move away from the fossil fuels. We, the EU are the leaders of this transformation.

Many difficult challenges lie ahead next year - besides the EP elections, also ensuring security of supply and transition to greener energy sources - but I am sure that the EEF will help us to find the way forward.

In 2023, the EEF has once again proved its great value as an influential platform to debate the necessary changes in the energy sector thanks to the support of its members and the great work of the EEF team. I particularly want to greet the new members of the EEF and stress that you have joined a very dynamic platform.



Franc Bogovič
Member of the European Parliament (EPP, Slovenia)
Director of the European Energy Forum

Being a member of the European Parliament, I can only confirm that my membership and participation in the EEF Forum and at its events was invaluable. Working with leaders and experts from the energy sector and European industry provides a well-grounded perspective in the European Parliament. Insights from those actively involved in the real economy help us better understand the energy landscape and various companies, allowing us to make better judgments, decisions and laws. I appreciate the inclusive approach of the EEF, where we deal with various energy issues, from energy efficiency to the spectrum of resources such as renewables and nuclear energy. Our commitment to technical neutrality ensures that energy policy is balanced and comprehensive.



Ondřej Knotek
Member of the European Parliament (RE, Czechia)
Director of the European Energy Forum

The European Energy Forum proves to deliver realistic debate among key energy and climate stakeholders and thereby contributes to more added value legislation.



Tsvetelina Penkova
Member of the European Parliament (S&D, Bulgaria)
Director of the European Energy Forum

The current mandate of the European Parliament was very much focused on setting up the road towards the net-zero economy we have to build by 2050. The European Energy Forum is particularly important to our work because the connections we have here give us valuable input on our mandate as policymakers. The EEF debates are extremely relevant because, quite often, there is a risk that we overlook what is being done on the ground and we are setting ambitious targets without understanding the practicality and pragmatism of what can be achieved. This is why I think that the dialogue with the industry is essential in order to improve the value of our work and to make it actually matter, so that it is not just wishful thinking but is has real and practical applications.



Massimiliano Salini
Member of the European Parliament (EPP, Italy)
Director of the European Energy Forum

CO₂ neutral fuels play a key role in decarbonizing road transport, especially when dealing with hard-to-abate sectors such as the one of heavy-duty vehicles. This is why we proposed a definition of CO₂ neutral fuels in the CO₂ emission standards for heavy duty that includes both e-fuels and biofuels with the aim of mitigating the distortive effects of a Tank-to-Wheel approach, that is totally against the principle of technological neutrality. It was a pleasure to discuss this topic in the framework of the European Energy Forum with experts and relevant stakeholders.



Carlos Zorrinho
Member of the European Parliament (S&D, Portugal)
Active Member of the European Energy Forum

Given the systemic complexity of strategies and policies in the energy sector, the role of the EEf as a platform for dialogue and a holistic approach has become highly relevant.

At a time when a new technological wave is approaching maturity, forcing the reform of regulatory and governance models, the EEf will be even more crucial for making choices that best serve competitiveness, open strategic autonomy, supply security, and tackling energy poverty in Europe and in the world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The EEF in a nutshell	9
1. Our core values and mission	9
2. Active Members	10
3. Associate Members	12
4. Team	14
5. Erasmus+ Traineeship	15
6. Extended network	16
 The Parliamentary term 2019-2024	 19
2019	19
2020	20
2021	20
2022	21
2023	22
2024	23
 EEF discussions in 2023	 25

The EEF in a nutshell

BIOGAS REGULATION GRID BIOENERGY
THIRD COUNTRIES INTENSIVE ENERGY USERS
PHOTOVOLTAICS RENEWABLES
ENERGY GENERATION GEOTHERMAL ENERGY
SUSTAINABLE FUELS HYDROGEN
MARKET DESIGN DISTRIBUTION OIL
INTERCONNECTORS GAS
RENEWABLE ENERGY NETWORK
HIGH VOLTAGE COAL SCIENCE
COGENERATION CONSUMERS
INNOVATION GREEN DEAL
ENERGY DECARBONISATION
DISTRICT HEATING WIND ENERGY
INDUSTRY
NUCLEAR TRANSPORT
DISTRIBUTION
NETWORK TRANSMISSION
HOUSEHOLDS
DISCUSSION RENEWABLE FUELS LOW-CARBON
HYDROPOWER FOSSIL FUELS ENERGY TRANSITION
COOPERATION LOW-CARBON R&D
E-FUELS SOLAR THERMAL
HEAT PUMPS RAW MATERIALS

The EEF in a nutshell

For more than 25 years, the European Energy Forum has proved to be a key platform of discussion for decision-makers and stakeholders because open and transparent exchange of knowledge and opinion is needed in the decision-making process.

Our core values and mission

No economic activity is possible without energy!

The European Energy Forum offers a place where EU policymakers can acquire accurate **information**, listen to **varied points of view**, share their **opinion** and understand the energy related issues more deeply so as to create a favourable operating environment for citizens and businesses and allow for a full-fledged energy transition.

The EEF has a neutral stance towards energy technologies and sources supporting our energy transition.

In the last EP term, the discussions have touched an immense spectrum of topics, providing added value to the unprecedented decarbonisation commitment that started in 2019 with the EU Green Deal.

As a membership-driven association, the EEF works for the benefit of its members, whose cooperation is fundamental to the organisation and success of the Forum's discussions.

The EEF includes a large network of experts and institutional representatives: the diversity of viewpoints ensures the exchange of information is valuable and stimulating.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to our decarbonisation needs, and the EEF is the proper platform to discuss numerous solutions, keep an open mind and listen to different point of views.

2

Active Members

Elected **Members of the European Parliament** (MEPs) have always been the **leading force** of the EEF.

The EEF Active Members come from **different political parties, different parliamentary committees**, and different Member States. They support the mission of the EEF, and all share an interest in energy-related fields.

Their strong commitment testifies the value they see in the EEF as an important platform for getting informed and exchanging views on all energy-related topics. The transparent, inclusive and open discussions between all involved parties are a key pillar of policy making.

The Association is administered on a voluntary basis by a Board of Directors, composed by MEPs coming from different political groups and of various nationalities. It is elected every five years by the Active Members during the General Assembly that follows the European Parliamentary elections. All Active Members are invited every year to the General Assembly.

The Bureau - the President, MEP Jerzy Buzek, the Treasurer and Vice-President, MEP Inese Vaidere, and the Vice-Presidents MEPs Miapetra Kumpula-Natri and Pilar del Castillo Vera - meets during the year to discuss the EEF activity.

Active Members govern the organisation and support its activities throughout all stages: they help build the programme of the year, actively participate in the discussions and chair discussions.

27

Active Members



Jerzy Buzek
President



Inese Vaidere
Treasurer and
Vice-President



**Pilar del Castillo
Vera**
Vice-President



**Miapetra
Kumpula-Natri**
Vice-President



Franc Bogovič
Director



Seán Kelly
Director



Ondřej Knotek
Director



Tsvetelina Penkova
Director



Daniel Caspary
Director



Massimiliano Salini
Director



Maria Spyrali
Director



Evžen Tošenovský
Director



Cristian-Silviu Buşoi
Active Member



Daniel Caspary
Active Member



András Gyürk
Active Member



Radan Kanev
Active Member



**Zdzisław
Krasnodebski**
Active Member



Liudas Mažylis
Active Member



Iskra Mihaylova
Active Member



Csaba Molnár
Active Member



Angelika Niebler
Active Member



Juozas Olekas
Active Member



Mauri Pekkarinen
Active Member



Silvia Sardone
Active Member



Henna Virkkunen
Active Member



Pernille Weiss
Active Member



Carlos Zorrinho
Active Member

3

Associate Members

The EEF Associate Members are **private and public stakeholders, companies, associations, regulators as well as research organisations**, active in all energy-related sectors.

Their cooperation and involvement are key to the success of the European Energy Forum: they offer their expertise, share suggestions on topics to address and attend EEF discussions.

Associate Members recognise the importance of **having all sides of energy represented** in the debate. They are committed to help our Active Members have access to factual and comprehensive information. They are open to answer questions, listen to different viewpoints and exchange opinions with panellists and the audience.

Associate Member pay a yearly membership fee. They are invited to the Industrial and Technical Advisory Committee meeting (ITAC) where they discuss with the Board the proposed programme for the year. The EEF counts 92 Associate Members from inside and outside the EU's geographical borders.

92

Associate Members



4 Team

The Brussels-based Team is headed by a Director General who acts under the responsibility of the Bureau and directs the EEF daily work, activities, and discussions.

The Team works in close contact with the Forum's political leadership, liaises with Members and maintains relations with the broader EEF network.

The different backgrounds of the Team members, as well as their adaptability, enable them to successfully take care of the wide range of tasks of the Secretariat.



Pascale Verheust
Director General

Tel. +32 (0)2 227 04 60
Mobile +32 475 853427
pascale.verheust@europeanenergyforum.eu



Maud Michiels
Administrative and Financial Advisor

Tel. +32 (0)2 227 04 61
maud.michiels@europeanenergyforum.eu



Camilla Montemurro
Policy and Events Officer

Tel. +32 (0)2 227 04 62
Mobile +32 470 45 38 51
camilla.montemurro@europeanenergyforum.eu

The small Team is involved in every step of the work and carries out legislative research, monitors the latest developments in energy-related fields, takes care of internal and external communication and manages the activities that will allow the key topics to be addressed.

5

Erasmus+ Traineeship

In 2023 the EEF welcomed two students enrolled in the master's course in European Studies at the University of Florence for an internship in the framework of the **Erasmus+ Traineeship** programme: Francesco Gabrielli and Silvia Cossa.

They assisted the EEF Team in their daily work and actively took part in all activities, carrying out tasks aimed at **enhancing their professional skills** and sector-specific knowledge. Thanks to the long-standing cooperation agreement between the EEF and the University of Florence, Francesco and Silvia managed to dive into the world of energy for an enriching work experience.

The work inside the EEF team is based on mutual exchanges of ideas and viewpoints. EEF energy events and activities are characterised by a **technologically neutral approach** and the students get to learn on this **multi-faceted reality of energy sources** enabling the transition to a climate-neutral economy. This contributes to widening their understanding of stakeholders and decision-makers involved, and therefore allows the trainees to stay in close contact with different energy realities.

The interaction between the University students and the EEF team proved once again highly valuable, thus confirming the significance of the Erasmus+ Traineeship programme in enabling students and entities alike to engage in a useful formative moment.





Extended Network

The EEF has a long history of welcoming as speakers to its discussions, in addition to its own members, senior officials and high-level institutional personalities from the European Commission.

MEPs are invited to all the energy discussions even if they belong to Committees not directly involved in energy. Key policymakers participate actively in our debates, sharing thoughts and exchanging with the other attendees.

The Permanent Representations and Missions to the EU, as well as other public authorities inside and outside the European Union are also invited to take part in energy debates relevant to their field of work.

Exchanging with a large and ever-expanding network is key to a better understanding of the needs of the European energy sector.

The Parliamentary term 2019-2024

BIOGAS REGULATION GRID BIOENERGY
THIRD COUNTRIES INTENSIVE ENERGY USERS
PHOTOVOLTAICS RENEWABLES
ENERGY GENERATION ECONOMIC ENERGY
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT HYDROGEN
MARKET DESIGN DISTRIBUTION OIL
INTERCONNECTORS GAS
RENEWABLE ENERGY NETWORK
HIGH VOLTAGE COAL SCIENCE
COGENERATION CONSUMERS
INNOVATION GREEN DEAL
ENERGY DECARBONISATION
DISTRICT HEATING WIND ENERGY
INDUSTRY
NUCLEAR TRANSPORT
DISTRIBUTION
NETWORK TRANSMISSION
HOUSEHOLDS
DISCUSSION RENEWABLE FUELS LOW-CARBON
HYDROPOWER FOSSIL FUELS ENERGY TRANSITION
COOPERATION LOW-CARBON R&D
E-FUELS SOLAR THERMAL
HEAT PUMPS RAW MATERIALS

The Parliamentary term 2019-2024

The new European Parliament

2019

As we marked the transition to the new EP term and welcomed recently elected MEPs, [Commissioner for climate action and energy Miguel Arias Cañete](#) was the guest of our July discussion and intervened on the last 5 years of policy. Newly elected MEPs got an in-depth explanation of the legislation developed by the last term in office, in order to be fully prepared for the term ahead.



2020

25 years of the European Energy Forum

In 2020, we celebrated the 25 years of our Forum, all safe and isolated in our houses. **European Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson** kindly sent us a video message reiterating the importance of the EEF in providing a space for important discussions on the road ahead.

Commissioner Simson also spoke at one of our virtual debates that year explaining how today's work on clean energy is a cornerstone for ensuring a green, efficient recovery from the Covid-19 crisis.



2021

Year of Fit-for-55

As the European Commission tabled its Fit for 55 package, **Maroš Šefčovič, European Commission Vice-President for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight** accepted our invitation to speak in an online discussion on the development of a sustainable and competitive EU battery sector.



2022

Year of the energy crisis

The year 2022 was a critical stage for the EU and its quest for energy independence and diversification. The need for a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral platform where to gather important information and exchange ideas on the strategies to improve decision-making in the energy field proved once again more than necessary.

The EEF resumed its in person discussions after the remote days caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We were pleased to welcome **Diederik Samsom, Head of Cabinet of EVP Timmermans** for an exchange of views on the state of play of the EU energy transition in light of the current energy crisis.



2023

Year of reaction and delivery

The year 2023 saw the consolidation of courageous but imperative decisions both at the institutional and at the economic levels. We had the pleasure to welcome [Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson](#) in person shortly after the publication of the Electricity Market Design Reform.



And in the Autumn, following the third tender of joint gas purchasing, **Executive Vice-President Maros Sefcovic** addressed our members in Strasbourg and engaged in a thorough discussion with the audience just shortly after his nomination as Executive Vice-President for the Green Deal.



Year of European Elections 2024

As we wrap up this activity report, 2024 is about to start. We look forward to welcoming a new Parliament, continue with re-elected MEPs and get to know the newly elected MEPs.

A page will be turned on a term filled with important files. And ready to begin the new story...

EEF Discussions in 2023

BIOGAS REGULATION GRID BIOENERGY
THIRD COUNTRIES INTENSIVE ENERGY USERS
PHOTOVOLTAICS RENEWABLES
ENERGY GENERATION THERMAL ENERGY
SUSTAINABLE FUELS HYDROGEN
MARKET DESIGN DISTRIBUTION OIL
INTERCONNECTORS GAS
RENEWABLE ENERGY NETWORK
HIGH VOLTAGE COAL SCIENCE
COGENERATION CONSUMERS
INNOVATION GREEN DEAL
ENERGY DECARBONISATION
DISTRICT HEATING WIND ENERGY
INDUSTRY
NUCLEAR TRANSPORT
DISTRIBUTION
NETWORK TRANSMISSION
HOUSEHOLDS
DISCUSSION RENEWABLE FUELS LOW-CARBON
HYDROPOWER FOSSIL FUELS ENERGY TRANSITION
COOPERATION LOW-CARBON R&D
E-FUELS SOLAR THERMAL
HEAT PUMPS RAW MATERIALS

EEF Discussions in 2023

Each event is carefully thought of, follows the discussions in the EP and provides a building block for shaping informed decisions and delivering the energy transition in an *orderly fashion*.

Energy Debates

Energy debates are the most traditional EEF discussion taking place for more than 25 years. During these debates, the essence of the EEF - a cross-party, cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platform for constructive discussion - materializes at its best.

Energy debates closely follow the EU legislative calendar, which ensures all discussions are timely and able to respond to information needs at appropriate timing.

High-level Roundtables

These smaller gatherings offer its Active and Associate Members the opportunity to sit around the same table and discuss key energy issues in depth.

Several roundtables were organised gathering leading MEPs Active Members of the EEF and Heads of office of our Associate Members around topics linked to the EU legislation.

The EEF Active and Associate Members meet to discuss energy-related topics together with MEPs outside the EEF Membership, representatives of the European Commission, as well as other key institutional representatives.

Briefing Sessions

In line with its mission of providing access to energy information, the EEF also organises briefing sessions to help our Active Member's advisors as well as, more generally, Political Groups' Advisers and Assistants enhance their knowledge on energy technologies and realities.

These sessions are the result of close cooperation between the EEF Team and Associate Members. The EEF Team draws the initial guidelines aimed at ensuring the information provided is comprehensive, factual and educative. The EEF Associate Members prepare informative lectures. A representative of the European Commission is also always invited to speak.

Visits: The European Energy Forum on the #RoadToNetZero

Visits of energy sites offer a unique opportunity to see the realities of the industry. These experiences offer a better understanding of energy, its related technologies, production processes and real-world applications. Engaging with industry experts can significantly enhance the comprehension on a wide variety of topics, as they help to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation.

EU-UK co-operation: paving the way to net-zero and energy security

Energy Debate in Brussels

31 January 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Welcome remarks

Will Macfarlane, UK Deputy Ambassador to the EU

Speakers

Asheya Patten, Commercial Director of the Nemolink Interconnector, National Grid

Pierre Tardieu, Chief Policy Officer, WindEurope

Sean Kelly MEP (EPP, Ireland), EEF Director

Tsvetelina Penkova MEP (S&D, Bulgaria), EEF Director



The EEF was invited by the UK mission to the EU to discuss how energy cooperation between the UK and EU is the path to achieve their common goals of net-zero emissions and energy security.

Will Macfarlane, UK Deputy Ambassador to the EU welcomed the EEF Active and Associate Members to the UK premises. In his introduction, Mr Macfarlane underlined how both the EU and the UK share the ambition to maintain and further strengthen their energy cooperation through shared a number of values that make them global partners.

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), President of the EEF underlined that with this work in unity, despite the differences, the UK and EU can succeed in common challenges - decarbonizing the energy system and safeguarding energy security .



Sean Kelly MEP (EPP, Ireland), Director of the EEF Vice-Chair of the EP Delegation to the EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (D-UK), insisted on the mutual interest that the UK and EU have in cooperating on energy issues: a strong coordination with like-minded partners is very much needed to achieve energy independence and the clean energy transition. And it should be built around the construction of energy infrastructure, long-term contracts, offshore wind projects in the North Sea (already started in November 2022 with the signing of a MoU) and hydrogen.

The presentations continued with an intervention by **Asheya Patten, Commercial Director of the Nemolink Interconnector, National Grid** who shared the views of previous speakers on cooperation. Despite the high energy prices, she explained how system operators have worked together in providing vital security of supply during the current energy crisis. She supported the initiatives in the North Sea, highlighting the existing opportunities in the area in terms of wind power - expected to reach 100 GW by 2050. In this regard, she presented some priorities to succeed: investments in infrastructure, coordination between the UK and EU, and a stable legal framework.

Pierre Tardieu, Chief Policy Officer, WindEurope focused on three primary requirements that the wind energy industry needs in order to achieve its 165 GW objective by 2030, starting from its 30GW today: EU-UK collaboration in the development of wind farms but also grid, through the North Sea Energy Cooperation, expansion in the supply chain and right investment signals from governments.



Tsvetelina Penkova MEP (S&D, Bulgaria), Director of the EEF and Vice-Chair of the EP Delegation to the EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (D-UK) pointed out the importance of the interdependence between the EU and UK. She stressed how collaboration in the energy sector remains key and has to be built around three main objectives: gas supply to guarantee affordable prices to the consumers, partnership in the safe use of nuclear energy and green energy, which is our future.

The panel's interventions were followed by a **Q&A session** during which the speakers exchanged views with MEPs and industry members in the audience on a number of topics: nuclear energy, flexibility of the energy system with a focus on the involvement of the gas sector, the need for investments in infrastructures and for a stable and clear regulatory environment, and technological neutrality.



Decarbonizing heat: the key to Europe's energy independence

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

14 February 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Aurélie Beauvais, Managing Director, Euroheat & Power

Wanda Buk, Vice-President, PGE

Hans Korteweg, Managing Director, COGEN Europe

Olivier Racle, Member of the Board, Euroheat & Power

Radan Kanev MEP (EPP, Bulgaria), Active Member



This EEF energy debate was an opportunity to discuss the potentials, needs and challenges that the heating sector faces in its pathway to decarbonization with a view to support Europe's energy independence.

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), President of the EEF opened the discussion by underlining the fundamental importance of the heating sector, and specifically of district heating systems, that cover a consistent share of heat supply in the EU, especially in Central, Eastern and Scandinavian countries.

Mr Buzek highlighted how dealing with this topic is relevant for ensuring a just energy transition, affordable energy bills for consumers and secure EU's independence from energy imports.



Aurélie Beauvais, Managing Director at Euroheat & Power explained that heating and cooling currently represent 50% of the energy demand in the EU and that roughly 60 million EU citizens are relying on the DHC infrastructure. The technology still largely relies on fossil fuels (mainly natural gas 42%) and decarbonization of this sector is key. To face this challenge, Ms. Beauvais emphasized the need for a multi-energy approach, which supports, in addition to the uptake of renewable electricity sources, other clean and sustainable non-electric sources. DHC systems are an inclusive energy technology that can rely on hydrogen, sustainable waste heat recovery, biomethane, or power to heat, thus allowing an energy transition suitable to the diversities of regions. Ms. Beauvais insisted that ambition and consistency in EU legislation are very much needed.





Hans Korteweg, Managing Director at COGEN Europe, shared information on the application of cogeneration in district heating but also as micro-cogenerations in buildings. He argued that combined heat and power (CHP) is a future-proof and efficient solution using fuel to provide simultaneously heat and electricity. CHP is agnostic, using different

energy sources such as gas but also biomass, renewable gas, hydrogen, waste heat, geothermal, solar thermal. This aspect is key in terms of scarcity of resources and prices. It is crucial to diversify the mix of solutions and to consider cogeneration and district heating as complementary to electrification in the energy transition, and not in competition.

Wanda Buk, Vice-President at PGE, underlined there is a need, in Poland, to invest on already available and viable technologies and sources such as natural gas, that in due time can be replaced by hydrogen. Decarbonisation cannot occur overnight: both companies and building owners must play a role in upgrading the heating chain.

While agreeing with the general requirement for “zero-emission buildings”, Ms Buk argued that the ambitious amendments to the EPBD adopted by the ITRE Committee in its report are not currently feasible. She insisted that one should not lose the potential of the existing infrastructure, protect the citizens from higher costs and also protect the industry.



Olivier Racle, Member of the Board at Euroheat & Power focused on France that intends to double the number of district energy systems in the near future. In particular, he highlighted how the heating crisis and volatility of gas prices have led to a shift in the paradigm of activity. He pointed out how the integration of multiple energy sources will be the answer to meet energy efficiency and renewable targets and illustrated his points by focusing on examples of French “eco-districts” which have progressively exploited increasing shares of renewable or carbon-neutral sources.



Radan Kanev MEP (EPP, Bulgaria), EEF Active Member, rapporteur on EPBD in ENVI said that in Bulgaria, even a partial decarbonisation can play a decisive role in reducing the country’s energy dependence because about 50% of national gas consumption is for central heating of three towns. However, Mr. Kanev also emphasised the difficulties in decarbonising such a huge centralised DHC system, especially due to the risk of price increases and thus low public support. He pointed the geothermal potential of his country.



The **Q&A session** offered the opportunity to exchange views on various aspects concerning the decarbonization of DHC and cogeneration including experiences from different countries in Europe : The need for a strong regulatory framework - discussing the EPBD, EED and RED legislations-, buildings renovations, diversification of energy sources and the potential role played by hydrogen.

An exchange of views with Commissioner Kadri Simson

High-Level Energy Debate in Brussels

20 March 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speaker

Kadri Simson, European Commissioner for Energy



Shortly after the publication of the electricity market reform, the EEF had the pleasure of welcoming **Commissioner Kadri Simson** for an insightful discussion on the proposal.

This timely debate was chaired by **EEF President, MEP Jerzy Buzek**, who welcomed all participants and underlined the importance of the topic in understanding how to respond to the crisis we are currently living.

Commissioner Kadri Simson opened the discussion by highlighting how the reform builds from the strengths of the existing electricity market framework which was, however, severely challenged by the outbreak of the energy crisis in Europe.

After the adoption of several emergency packages, the proposed legislation aims at defining long-term strategies and structural rules to tackle the one big problem of the existing framework: the importance given to short-term markets, highly characterized by volatility and having gas as the main source of flexibility.





In this regard, she underlined how the proposal represents a critical tool in achieving the EU industry's competitiveness and the transition to a green economy in the long run. Indeed, also considering the expected growth in electricity demand by 2030, it aims at designing a more stable and reliable power system.

Commissioner Simson outlined some of the key elements of the reform. First of all, she presented the central role of Power Purchase Agreements in making forward markets more liquid. Secondly, she illustrated the importance of accelerating renewable generation by means of investment and incentives for flexibility. In this respect, Member States will have to foster the use of Contracts for Difference, demand-side response and storage. Finally, she emphasized the need to strengthen consumers protection, by giving them the possibility to choose from a variety of contracts, and to have both the tools to better manage risks and a new model of energy sharing.

The reform was adopted together with the Net-Zero Industry Act and the Critical Raw Materials Act, two other cornerstone legislations to make the EU fit for the clean energy transition. Given the high dependence on third countries for both clean tech products and critical raw materials, the proposals also aim at improving the EU energy security by making supply chains more resilient.

Commissioner Simson's keynote speech was followed by a lively **Q&A session** with EEF Active and Associate Members in the audience.

The questions first addressed the potential outlook of the electricity market in 2050, the short-term impacts of the reform for consumers and businesses, and the overlap with the Clean Energy Package provisions.

The interventions then focused on the enhancement of flexibility solutions, the role of nuclear and coal in the energy mix, the importance of investments in the grid, the repercussions of the US Inflation Reduction Act on Europe and the relationship between the proposed Contracts for Difference and state aid rules.

Wholesale energy markets: the effects of the energy crisis in Europe

Online Briefing Session

23 March 2023

Moderator

Pascale Verheust, Director General of the EEF

Speakers

Ryszard Pawlik, Advisor to MEP Jerzy Buzek

Mark Copley, CEO, EFET

Arben Kllokoqi, Director for Electricity Market Design, EFET

Mark Simons, EFET Board Member

Dr. Jan Haizmann, Chair of the EFET Legal Committee

This EEF Online Briefing was organised as a follow-up of the one held in February 2022, to better understand the changes in EU wholesale markets and their responses to the energy crisis.

Ryszard Pawlik, Advisor to MEP Jerzy Buzek (EPP, Poland) opened the discussion by acknowledging EU's success in surviving one of its most difficult winters, also thanks to the gas regulation and the increased energy savings efforts. He also reminded that the hardest time may still be ahead of us, requiring further proactivity both on the part of Member States and of the European Parliament.

Mark Copley, CEO, EFET (European Federation of Energy Traders) presented European-wide markets, coordinated responses, trading and hedging as an answer to the energy crisis. In particular, he stressed how their combination can considerably help in achieving security of supply, decarbonization and consumer protection.

Arben Kllokoqi, Director for Electricity Market Design, EFET first outlined the main characteristics of wholesale energy markets. He discussed the different categories of risk (political, legal and regulatory risk, market-systemic risks, operational risk



and weather exposure) and the related existing mitigation measures in energy trading. He then analysed the two dimensions of markets: timeframes (forward and spot markets) and venues for trading activities (exchanges, over-the-counter and bilateral trading). Finally, he considered the market participants, suppliers and consumers, explaining that traders play a key role optimizing and balancing between their risks.

Mr Kllokoqi then focused on decarbonization and the importance of existing market-based instruments to achieve this objective, like the EU ETS or guarantees of origin. They

play a crucial role because a surge in the CO₂ can lead to an increase in the marginal cost of fossil-fuel power plants, too. Indeed, it is thanks to this mechanism that the switch to renewables is triggered, and such tools can be complementary to the proposed flexibility solutions of the electricity market design revision. Finally, our panellist highlighted how consumers' empowerment can only be effectively achieved with adequate information, infrastructure, incentives and support schemes.

Mark Simons, Board Member, EFET explained the evolution of gas prices (2021-2022), highlighting that in the TTF market they had increased before Ukraine's invasion, for two reasons: on the one hand, the very low temperatures of winter 2021 which led to a major increase in gas demand to fill storage during the summer; on the other hand, several cuts in Russian gas supplies already at that time. After the invasion, price spiked, and the situation worsened with the US Freeport LNG explosion and cuts in the Nord Stream production. Since summer 2022, the situation stabilized thanks to the increase in LNG imports to the EU (mainly from US and Qatar), demand reductions and a mild winter.

Our speaker emphasized that Europe's gas market was never designed to cope with the sudden loss of its largest supplier, but that it has proved to be very resilient. In this respect, the outlook of the market for 2023/2024 shows that the EU gas storage is almost already half of what is needed for this year, thanks to an improvement in its filling capabilities. Besides, Europe's gas consumption will likely be characterized by an increase of about 20% of LNG import capacity in 2023. For this reason, it is key to build sufficient regasification terminals in Germany, Italy and Greece.

Mr Simons also pointed out that there are still some uncertainties to be faced: an increase in the LNG imports in China (after the end of COVID-19 lockdowns); the possible complete cut of all Russian gas supplies flowing through Ukraine; problems in the French nuclear power fleet, which could lead to an increase in its gas demand; infrastructure failures and winter weather. Finally, he focused on the Market Correction Mechanism, a temporary measure introduced in the EU at the end of 2022. It can act as a price cap for gas in cases in which its price reaches €180/MWh. Considering the current gas prices, it will not be easily triggered, and it

would only apply to derivative contracts - leaving bilateral and physical contracts out of its scope.

Jan Haizmann, Chair of Legal Committee, EFET focused on the "force majeure" element of recent events, which makes them hard to be avoided or overcome and, when it comes to contracts, it leads to the impossibility of delivering or accepting the obligation on the part of the claiming party. In the specific case of the Russian gas disruption, Dr Haizmann explained that it caused a major insolvency risk for several European buyers (utilities and suppliers), which led to a nationalization of certain companies. Agreeing on standard solutions to respond to trade restrictions has not been easy because not all contracts are the same.

The **Q&A sessions** between the audience and our speakers addressed relevant aspects of energy trading in wholesale markets. They especially focused on adequacy issues in the electricity market, possible future uncertainties in the gas market due to a global economic rebound, the existing barriers to long-term contracting, and liquidity problems for European utilities during price spikes.



Electricity Market Design: a discussion with the industry

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

18 April 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Wanda Buk, Member of the Management Board, PKEE

Erkki Maillard, Vice-President EU Affairs and Diplomatic Adviser to CEO, EDF

Derk Swider, Vice-President Forensic and Analytics, E.ON

Mechthild Wörnsdörfer, Deputy Director-General, DG ENER, European Commission

Zdzisław Krasnodębski MEP (ECR, Poland), EEF Active Member

Maria da Graça Carvalho MEP (EPP, Portugal)

Following a first exchange with Commissioner Kadri Simson right after the publication of the Electricity Market Design reform, the EEF hosted a follow-up discussion with its Associate and Active Members to analyse some of the main provisions of the proposal.

Our EEF President, **Jerzy Buzek MEP** opened the debate underlining that the continuous dialogue and exchange among energy stakeholders and European institutions is essential in delivering a reform that is able to improve the current shortcomings of the market, while being feasible for European energy industries.



Erkki Maillard, Vice-President EU Affairs and Diplomatic Adviser to CEO, EDF praised the Commission's proposal for taking a technology-neutral approach, allowing all electricity producers to benefit from long-term signals, which he considered to be essential for investments in electricity generation, decarbonization and energy savings. He stressed that long-term signals are key in limiting the volatility to which consumers and producers are continuously exposed. For this reason, PPAs for all utilities are essential to foster liquidity in the market. Mr Maillard also emphasized the importance of maintaining voluntary CfDs and contractual innovation. Finally, he discussed consumers' protection and empowerment by pointing out some controversial aspects of the reform such as the rollout of smart-meters at home and fixed-price contracts that may undermine the liquidity of the market.

Derk Swider, Vice-President Forensic and Analytics, E.ON

highlighted the importance of having a fully liberalized energy market - a liquid market - through a doubled ambition in investments, to be ensured by a reliable and stable framework. He discussed how the inclusion of symmetrical CfDs in the proposal has the potential to make renewables investable for a broader range of companies and, therefore, beneficial to the liquidity of the market. However, he also stressed that such CfDs should be balanced to ensure utilities still need to hedge their positions. In his conclusion, Mr Swider emphasized the importance of securing adequate backup capacity and flexibility to the system and improving grid connections between countries through grid expansion and digitalization.

Wanda Buk, Member of the Management Board, PKEE

suggested that the reform should be narrow and targeted, rather than deep and comprehensive, as some important parts of the Clean Energy Package (2018-2019) have not yet been implemented by the Member States. She stressed the need to avoid extending the extraordinary measures of the energy crisis to prevent further costs to companies. Ms Buk also underlined the importance of leaving the short-term markets and marginal pricing untouched, while adjusting the design of CfDs to the current market reality, as investors need predictability and certainty. Besides, she highlighted the need to balance consumer protection and market, by investing part of the excessive profits from CfDs into renewables. She further emphasized that modernization, availability of investments and the simplification of permitting and administrative procedures are key for the development of transmission and distribution networks. Finally, Ms Buk underlined the importance of relying on existing flexibility technologies like coal, gas and nuclear to provide stable and dispatchable power to the system.



Mechthild Wörsdörfer, Deputy Director-General, DG ENER, European Commission

explained that the proposal was made in response to the current energy crisis, which has revealed the shortcomings of the current system: volatile and very high gas and electricity pricing. She pointed out that the reform aims to provide more stability and predictability to the markets, through long-term price signals in the form of PPAs and CfDs. She also agreed about the need for flexibility and storage in the EU and highlighted that the reform was accompanied by a Communication and a Recommendation on energy storage. Concerning market liquidity, she discussed the promotion of virtual hubs to allocate transmission rights transparently. She further highlighted the centrality of grids and the need to upscale their presence in the market, also for renewables. Finally, she examined the element of crisis contained in the reform, which allows Member States to intervene in price-setting in retail markets during a crisis, to ensure the availability of a minimum amount of electricity at an affordable price.

Zdzisław Krasnodębski MEP (ECR, Poland), Active Member of the EEF, Shadow Rapporteur on the Electricity Market Design reform

raised concerns about the complexity of the proposed reform, which comes at a time when not all the provisions of the Third and Fourth Energy Packages have been fully implemented. He underlined that the European Parliament has a duty to strike a balance between flexibility of the market, the roles and the security, and the future prospects of the sector.

Maria da Graça Carvalho MEP (EPP, Portugal) - Shadow Rapporteur on the Electricity Market Design reform

explained that in her view, the proposal of the Commission is a good balance between security of supply, market-oriented signals and putting the consumers at the centre. Although she is concerned about some of the provisions, she concluded that we need more Europe in our energy markets.

Our speakers' interventions were followed by a lively **Q&A session**, during which the audience had an opportunity to exchange with them on various topics like investment signals and investment needs, grid extension, flexibility through nuclear and coal sources, energy storage and consumer protection.

Methane emissions: safeguarding affordability, environment and security of supply

Energy Debate in Brussels

25 April 2023

Chair

Maria Spyrali MEP (EPP, Greece), EEF Director

Speakers

Francisco de la Flor, Board Member, GIE

Jean-Marie Gauthey, Head of European affairs at GRDF, member of GD4S

François-Régis Mouton, Regional Director Europe, IOGP Europe

Kitti Nyitrai, Head of Unit Decarbonization and Sustainability of Energy Sources, DG ENER, European Commission



The EEF Reception Debate was an opportunity to discuss the feasibility and the objectives of the proposal on methane (CH_4) emissions reduction in the energy sector, as well as the related environmental benefits of this highly technical dossier.



The Chair **Maria Spyrali MEP (EPP, Greece), Director of the EEF**, introduced the discussion underlining that a cross-sectoral approach is key to reducing methane emissions as well as providing a clear and realistic regulatory framework that ensures the highest standards of measurement, reporting and verification (MRV). The compromise reached in the shadows' meeting on articles 13, 14 and 22 of the Methane Regulation goes in the direction of securing the energy supply, avoiding additional costs for end-users and incentivising investments, even though the proposal could still be improved with regard to the leak detection methods.

Cristian-Silviu Buşoi MEP (EPP, Romania), ITRE Committee Chair and EEF Active Member took the floor and emphasised the great impact of the European Commission (EC) proposal on the industry, and especially where inactive gas wells need careful monitoring. According to Mr Buşoi, there is still the need to work on articles 14, 18 and 27 of the regulation, while remaining ambitious in tackling not only climate change but also preserving the competitiveness of European industries and enhancing jobs and security of supply.

François-Régis Mouton, Regional Director at IOGP Europe

expressed the support of IOGP for the EC proposal and pointed to the figures reporting methane emissions from IOGP, which constitute 0.26% of the emissions from the energy supply sector, that in turn represents about 13% of man-made CH₄ emissions. It is important that the regulation recognises continuous monitoring, as well as those operators that are meeting the performance standard, so as to reduce the frequency of Leak Detection and Repair (LDAR). The imposition of CH₄ emissions reduction requirements in inactive subsea wells is not physically feasible, while for onshore inactive wells pressure monitoring should be allowed. Permanently plugged and abandoned (P&A) wells should in addition be excluded from the regulation, since they are not supposed to leak at all, while the liability imposed on the molecule's importers for incomplete or inaccurate information can involve a supply security risk.

Francisco de la Flor, Board Member at GIE stressed that the draft text needs some improvements, especially Art. 3 (costs for regulated operators), which concerns mid-streamers. For regulated operators, it is the full cost that is relevant, and while most of the abatement was done several years ago, now the curve is at the asymptotical point. It is crucial to prevent unjustifiable costs to society, thus ensuring proportionality via a limit to abatement costs per tonne of CH₄, and prioritise measures based on their effectiveness. Once a minimum degree of performance - through segment-specific targets and robust MRV - is achieved, flexibility should be granted to operators. Other improvements include aligning with the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP) Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs), standardising equipment and prioritising efficient measures.

Jean-Marie Gauthey, Head of European affairs at GRDF and member of GD4S highlighted the complexity of increasing the frequency of the works on the distribution network, mainly because this also depends on third parties (authorities and local inhabitants). Although CH₄ leaks in the distribution grid can originate from third-party damage, third-party warning (anyone smelling gas) and fugitive leaks (detected via LDAR survey), the proposed regulation is mainly focused on the latter, which can be detected via surveys done carried out on foot or by car with high sensitivity sensors along the



pipe routes. Mr Gauthey claimed that data management is key to implementing efficient renovation and maintenance programmes, but that high frequency of LDAR will significantly impact the consumers' tariffs. Instead, it is important to focus on efficiency and optimisation, especially through preventive maintenance.

Before giving the floor to the European Commission, Chair **Maria Spyrali MEP** took the floor to highlight the importance of sticking to the 30% methane emissions reduction pledge by 2030, and the need to enhance emissions reduction in the energy sector, as it is the more feasible sector where to start from.

Kitti Nyitrai, Head of Unit Decarbonization and Sustainability of Energy Sources of DG ENER at the European Commission

argued that the approval of the text can bring the EU at the forefront of the global emissions reduction effort also in cooperation with the US, and that abating CH₄ emissions in the energy sector is more cost-efficient than starting from the agricultural sector, while in the waste sector the legislation already imposes strict reduction targets. MRV is crucial to have better data, not only because it was the starting point of the EC, but because dealing with methane also involves health and food supply issues.

The **Q&A session** enabled the participants to deepen the issue more particularly on gas odorization for safety reasons, methane emissions from LNG cargoes, awareness-raising efforts and translating voluntary standards into rules and ambitious abatement measures.

Renewable gas: a solution for regions on the road to net zero European know-how for a fast, resilient and affordable transition

Study Visit in Strasbourg

09 May 2023

This study visit was hosted by EEF Associate Members **COGEN Europe, European Biogas Association, GD4S** and **GRDF** and it was an opportunity to explore the wide-ranging solutions offered by renewable gas deployment.

At the **BDR Thermea R&D centre** in Mertzwiller, participants had the opportunity to learn about heat pumps, gas boilers and water units, and also about digital and control equipment allowing their integration into the smart grid. All products are tested within the R&D facility.

The presentations highlighted how innovation is a precondition for decarbonisation and, consequently, that technological neutrality is the key approach to achieve net-zero emissions. They provided a concrete example of hydrogen and hybrid heat pump deployment in residential areas across Europe.

The visit continued with the biomethane production facility of **Agriculteurs Biomethane Haguenau (ABH)**, created in 2016 develop an organic matter recovery unit in Northern Alsace and grouping 15 farmers who decided to collectively lead this project.



Régis Huss, President of ABH, and **Denis Naas, President of the Alsace Chamber of Agriculture**, gave an in-depth presentation of the methanisation process. Once the feedstock (solid and/or liquid) is collected and made ready for digestion, four stages, (hydrolysis, acidogenesis, acetogenesis, methanogenesis) are needed to obtain biogas. The resulting biogas needs to be purified before being injected into the gas grid.

In parallel to agriculture, agronomy is key in their project. They outlined the benefits that renewable energies bring to agriculture and the opportunities that the agricultural sector can provide to the energy autonomy of rural areas.

Throughout this EEF Study Visit, the key takeaway was that all technologies are needed and that cooperation between all stakeholders - gas producers, transmission and distribution operators, end-consumers, as well as R&D facilities - is essential.



Flexibility solutions in the Electricity Market Design Reform

Energy Debate in Brussels

23 May 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Damian Cortinas, Member of the Board, ENTSO-E

Marta Navarrete Moreno, Iberdrola Liaison to EASE

Carl Richiers, Vice-President, EUGENE

Christof Lessenich, Head of Unit for Internal Energy Market, DG ENER, European Commission



This third EEF discussion on the Electricity Market Design reform was opened by **Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), President of the EEF** who emphasized the importance of flexibility options in the proposal. In his view, they will enhance the EU's stability and security of supply when electricity production is increasingly reliant on intermittent renewable energy sources.



Damian Cortinas, Member of the Board, ENTSO-E explained the meaning of flexibility from a system perspective. Flexibility serves as a means to address the challenges posed by the variability and complexity of the future power system, primarily due to weather-dependent renewable energy sources. However, he underlined that not all resources are suitable for fulfilling all flexibility needs. First and foremost, it is crucial to evaluate and classify them either in short-duration or long-duration flexibility. Additionally, Mr Cortinas highlighted the significance of adequately quantifying the needs and establishing an appropriate governance. In this respect, he suggested attributing the competences to the Member States and, at the European level, to ENTSO-E in cooperation with DSOs.

During his speech, **Carl Richers, Vice-President, EUGINE** discussed three key points. Firstly, he addressed the challenges for achieving a resilient and renewable power system in the future, emphasizing the need for flexibility and, in particular, for chemically stored energy. Secondly, he explained some of the main characteristics of engine power plants such as their swift ramp-up time, their capacity to fulfil both short-term and longer-term needs, their adaptability to operate in CHP mode and the possibility to combine them with heat pumps. Finally, he clarified misperceptions on engine power plants stressing their ability to run on various of fuels - ranging from diesel and natural gas to biogas, landfill gas, sewage gas, wood gas, biomethane and hydrogen. In conclusion, he suggested a technology-neutral approach in the reform, because all flexibility solutions should be considered.

Marta Navarrete Moreno, Iberdrola Liaison to EASE highlighted the importance of flexibility and storage in Europe's decarbonization process to ensure a resilient and dependable energy system. Recognizing the challenge of curtailment in Europe, Ms Navarrete underlined the need to prioritize the development of flexibility solutions, particularly energy storage. To achieve this, she emphasized the importance of regulatory certainty, both through the effective implementation of existing legislation and through a market reform that can restore confidence. In this respect, she praised the Commission's proposal for building upon the current framework rather than introducing drastic changes. In her concluding remarks, Ms Navarrete suggested the remuneration of the value of storage to the system, through capacity remuneration mechanisms and flexibility support schemes.



Christof Lessenich, Head of Unit for Internal Energy Market, DG ENER, European Commission acknowledged the ongoing need for implementing some of the provisions from the Clean Energy Package. However, he underlined that these provisions alone may not be sufficient to face the current energy landscape. This is why the European Commission decided to come up with the proposal. Mr Lessenich then focused on capacity mechanisms, underlining that they have to be designed in such a way that avoids only procuring fossil-based flexibility. He also highlighted the importance of flexibility needs assessments, which necessarily have to be based on Member State's specificities and their national capacities. In conclusion, Mr Lessenich urged caution in amending the proposal, to avoid excessive market interventions that may negatively impact investor certainty.

During this energy debate, the EEF also had the pleasure to have **Maria da Graça Carvalho MEP (EPP, Portugal), Shadow Rapporteur on the Electricity Market Design reform** joining the discussion. MEP Carvalho took the opportunity to explain the amendments that she presented right before this debate. Her initiatives are aimed at strengthening grid interconnections and investments, promoting the enlargement of energy sharing, removing barriers to PPAs, introducing guiding principles for CfDs and adopting a cautious approach to virtual hubs.

The discussion continued with a **Q&A session**, providing an opportunity for participants to ask questions and exchange with the speakers on various aspects of the reform. These included the potential introduction of a revenue cap, the role of ACER, peak shaving products, flexible generation and capacity mechanisms.

Beyond electricity: exploring the versatility of nuclear applications

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

13 June 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), President of the EEF

Speakers

Yves Desbazeille, Director General, nucleareurope

Danijel Levičar, COO, GenEnergija, Member of nucleareurope

Jan Milčák, Reactors Operation Director, Research Centre Rez (CEZ Group)

Jan Panek, Director for Nuclear Energy, Safety & ITER, DG ENER, European Commission

Jerzy Buzek MEP, President of the EEF opened the discussion by underpinning the potential of nuclear power in achieving EU's carbon neutrality in 2050. He underlined how nuclear energy could represent a significant asset if combined with renewable energy sources. He also emphasised the importance of nuclear research in various scientific areas such as medicine.

Yves Desbazeille, Director General, nucleareurope stressed that the power sector is the first one that should be fully decarbonized in Europe, but that this goal is hard to achieve, as EU electricity consumption will have to be multiplied by three. Mr Desbazeille reminded that nuclear is not only about electricity production, but has many other applications: medicine, space, food. Therefore, he considered that it is practically impossible to eliminate nuclear. He also highlighted the potential benefits in terms of GDP growth and jobs, which would grow to 1.3 million if the Nuclear Alliance target of deploying 150 GW of nuclear by 2050 was achieved. He concluded by emphasizing the need to have a technology neutral approach in the Net Zero Industry Act, to be fully able to support the energy transition and to adequately respond to the US Inflation Reduction Act.



Jan Milčák, Reactors Operation Director, Research Centre Rez (CEZ Group) explained the history of nuclear power and focused on nuclear research reactors, specifically. Out of the 36 research reactors in the EU, most of them are in operation, but some are in the extended shutdown phase or started to be decommissioned. Mr Milčák emphasized that these reactors mainly use the fission process to produce neutrons which can have different applications: material irradiation, isotopes production, basic research, reactors physics, geochronology, activation and analysis. Indeed, research reactors can be multi-purpose. With respect to facilities dedicated to isotopes production, he clarified that they do not only have technical purposes, but also medical ones. They are increasingly used in cancer screening, testing, diagnosis and treatment. Nevertheless, nuclear research faces considerable challenges in meeting safety requirements, and in financing and budgeting.

Danijel Levičar, COO, GenEnergija, Member of nucleareurope illustrated the Slovenian case: the smallest state in the world with a developed nuclear program and with two operating reactors - one for research and the other for power generation (jointly owned by Slovenia and Croatia). He specified that the country considers the complementarity between nuclear and renewable energy as the answer to climate neutrality and energy independence. This coexistence has enabled the Slovenian government to keep electricity prices for end-consumers quite low throughout the energy crisis, around 100 euro/MWh. He underlined that, by relying on nuclear energy, Slovenia has witnessed reliability of supply, reduction in CO₂ emissions, and good economic impacts. For these reasons,

Slovenia has had an increase in public support, including in the age group 18-24 that in the past was the most reluctant one.

Jan Panek, Director for Nuclear Energy, Safety & ITER, DGENER, European Commission explained that the European Commission is neutral with respect to nuclear power, leaving the full freedom of choice to the Member States. The Commission's role is only to ensure that the Member States comply with obligations under EU legislation, in particular with respect to safety, sustainability and environmental impacts. Member States could exploit the potential of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) in the decarbonisation of hard-to-abate sectors. In this respect, he underlined the importance of ensuring that the EU is well positioned to provide physical components and skills for such technologies and suggested the development of a common European approach for the exchange of information and know-how. As for nuclear research, Mr Panek emphasized that the European Commission fully supports it, as shown by the SAMIRA initiative launched in 2021, because it is important to have in Europe sources of isotopes available for safe and widely accessible medical treatment.

The **Q&A session** with the participants was an opportunity to hear all points of views and exchange on a wide variety of topics including the success of the Slovenian experience, technological neutrality in EU legislation, the obstacles in EU legislation and how to promote a more favourable environment for investments in nuclear, the length of nuclear plants construction processes, the dependency on Russian supplies of uranium and its availability in Europe, nuclear waste and the relationship between nuclear fission and fusion.



Electricity Market Design reform: consumer and producer perspectives

Dinner Debate in Brussels

27 June 2023

Chair

Radan Kanev MEP (EPP, Bulgaria), EEF Active Member

Speakers

Nicola Rega, Executive Director Climate Change and Energy, Cefic

Giles Dickson, CEO, WindEurope

Walburga Hemetsberger, CEO, SolarPower Europe

Nicolás González Casares MEP (S&D, Spain)

Radan Kanev MEP, Active Member of the EEF welcomed participants to this follow-up energy debate on the Electricity Market Design reform, underlining the importance of discussing the role of Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). In his introduction, Mr Kanev already posed some questions to the speakers concerning their relevance in the market, their potential, obstacles and challenges.

Nicola Rega, Executive Director Climate Change and Energy, Cefic presented the view of the European chemical industry, the largest electricity consumer in Europe, quite active in the PPA market. Mr Rega illustrated that PPAs are relevant because they reduce both the price and volume risks. He focused on two main obstacles to their uptake: on the one hand, matching a flat electricity demand from his sector with variable renewable supply; on the other, finding the right contract profile. He also pointed out that the situation is even more complicated for SMEs, which do not consume the same amounts of electricity as large companies. To improve the situation, Mr Rega suggested to facilitate the access to aggregation services and to foster guarantees of origin also to help the industry remain competitive.





Nicolás González Casares MEP (S&D, Spain) - ITRE Rapporteur on EMD reform presented an overview of the ongoing ITRE shadow meetings, which are aiming at increasing the ambition of the Commission's proposal. With respect to PPAs and CfDs, he underlined the need to reinforce these mechanisms and to make them more transparent, as well as more accessible to all industries. Mr Casares explained that the possibility to standardise PPAs should be foreseen in the legislation, although not mandatory. He also discussed some other relevant aspects of the reform including emergency measures, capacity mechanisms and energy sharing.

The debate continued during the **Q&A session** where our speakers engaged in an exchange with EEF Members providing the perspective of ferrous and non-ferrous metal industries and of DSOs. It was also an opportunity to discuss about the need for skilled labour force, about the scaling up renewables to make electricity cheaper for consumers, and about CfDs.

Giles Dickson, CEO, WindEurope explained that to increase the share of wind energy from the current 17% to 43% in 2030, the wind industry will face consistent bottlenecks: problems with grid interconnections; a lack of supply chains in Europe which could be eased with the inclusion of non-price criteria in auctions; the absence of the correct investment signals. According to Mr Dickson, more PPAs are being signed both by large consumers from the private and public sectors and by small consumers through aggregation. Besides, they can cover either the whole output of a wind farm or just part of it. However, he pointed out that the lack of stability in the market represents a significant obstacle to their uptake. To improve the situation, Mr Dickson suggested that PPAs and CfDs are placed on an equal footing. He also proposed to remove all barriers to guarantees of origin. He concluded by asking not to extend the revenue cap.

Walburga Hemetsberger, CEO, SolarPower Europe provided an overview of solar power development in Europe, which reached 40 GW in 2022 and is expected to represent 60 GW in 2023 and 1 TW by 2030. In achieving this objective, Ms Hemetsberger considers that PPAs can play a major role, as they do not put any burden on the public sector, but they foster private investments in renewables. She underlined that, in those countries where auctions do not exist, like Bulgaria, PPAs have the potential of drawing up renewables to consumers. As there is a multitude of business models, she also mentioned the relevance of corporate sourcing, and how energy sharing could involve large corporates as well. Finally, MS Hemetsberger mentioned three aspects that could make the PPA market thrive: preserving the business environment without being too prescriptive; ensuring that also smaller companies are given the opportunity to sign PPAs by de-risking contracts; opening opportunities in the market.



Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage: part of the EU toolbox to achieve climate neutrality?

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

11 July 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Emmanuel Brutin, Public Affairs Director, CEMBUREAU

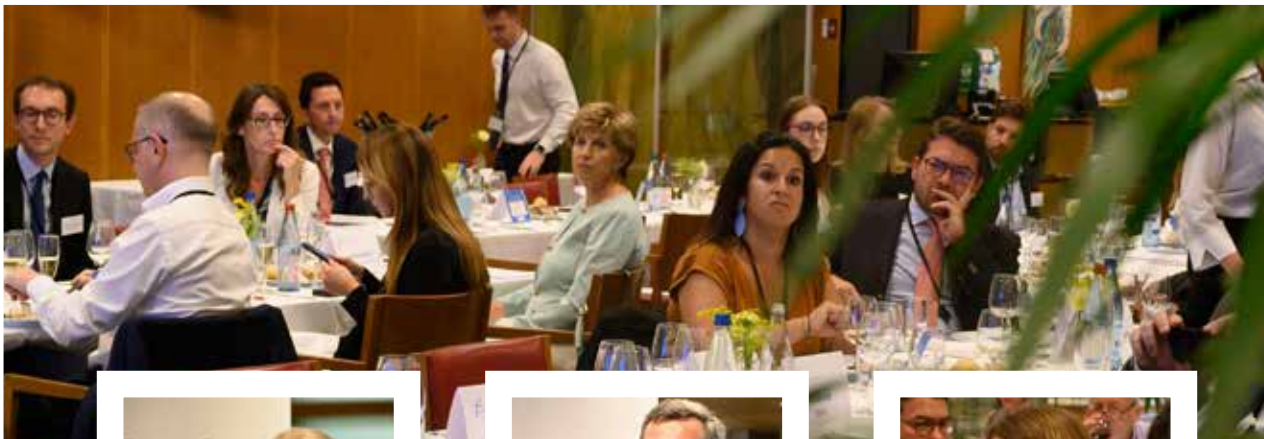
Antoine Hoxha, Director General, Fertilizers Europe

David Nevicato, Business Development and Partnership Director, CCS, TotalEnergies

Jerzy Buzek MEP, EEF President welcomed the participants to this EEF energy debate by emphasizing the need for available solutions, including CCUS, to attain EU's climate neutrality objective by 2050. He underlined the pivotal role of these technologies, especially in addressing the challenges faced by hard-to-abate sectors.



Emmanuel Brutin, Public Affairs Director, CEMBUREAU explained that the cement industry is adopting a holistic approach to decarbonise the sector, by phasing out fossil fuels, having more circular processes and reducing the share of clinker in cement. Recognising the existence of some inevitable CO₂ process emissions, Mr Brutin underlined the crucial role of CCS for his industry to comply with EU environmental targets. To enhance the technology, he stressed the need for favourable investment conditions in CO₂ storage capacity and transport, for streamlined and harmonized permitting procedures for the entire value chain and for funding. Mr Brutin insisted that the cement industry is investing in carbon capture technologies and invited EU decision-makers to provide a clear legal framework for CCS and CCU.



Antoine Hoxha, Director General, Fertilizers Europe illustrated the importance of ammonia for the fertilizers industry, essential to secure EU's domestic food production. Mr Hoxha emphasized the necessity and the capacity of his sector to effectively capture the CO₂ emitted during the production process. But he explained that, out of the 20 million tonnes captured, only 8 million tonnes are actually used, mainly for sparkling beverages. Regrettably, the remaining 12 million are released back into the atmosphere, due to a lack of transport infrastructure and legal framework. Mr Hoxha thanked the European commission for putting back CCS on the table and called for EU's openness to all available solutions.

David Névicato, Business Development and Partnership Director, CCS, TotalEnergies provided the technology supplier perspective to the discussion, explaining that CCS is one of the solutions for the decarbonisation of industries. He underlined

that the technology is a proven one, as CO₂ is being stored since the 1970s and that it must be approached as a whole value chain, a prerequisite to make CCS effective and successful. Mr Névicato welcomed the Commission's open recognition of the important role of CCS in meeting climate objectives and also analysed the missing elements for a quick deployment of CCS: risk mitigation for the investors, facilitation of transport and shipping of CO₂, reduction of technical costs, and business support for the decarbonisation of industries.

The **Q&A session** focused on a wide variety of aspects concerning CCUS, including the practical feasibility of the legislative framework, the improvement of CO₂ transportation, cooperation with neighbouring countries on CO₂ storage, the lifecycle of CCS projects, the ratio CCS-CCU, the environmental impact of CO₂ storage on soils and the cost effectiveness of ammonia.

Critical Raw Materials: how can the EU achieve a reliable, resilient and secure supply?

High-Level Roundtable in Brussels

05 September 2023

Chair

Franc Bogovič MEP (EPP, Slovenia), EEF Director

Moderator

Pascale Verheust, EEF Director General



The High-Level Roundtable of 2023 on the Critical Raw Materials Act was chaired by **Franc Bogovič MEP, Board Member of the EEF**, REGI Rapporteur for Opinion on the proposal.

Mr Bogovič reminded us that critical raw materials are linked to many sectors such as energy transition, but also space, defence, electro-mobility, to name only a few. He emphasized that the Act must ensure EU's access to a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials given the high demand and the unstable geopolitical environment, which will continue to impact their long-term supply.

He underlined various relevant aspects of the legislation such as the importance of the monitoring mechanism for supply chains and the good cooperation framework with third countries, to improve coordination, collaboration and information exchange. He also focused on the need for easier access to financing and smoother permitting procedures.

MEP Bogovič stressed the importance of local and regional communities' involvement in all stages of the critical raw materials projects. He explained that acceptance and consensus at local level are key factors to be successful. In this light, the EU should also try to limit the negative environmental and social impacts of access to raw materials.

Many Associate Members of the EEF were present, representing many diverse sides of the industry. They had the opportunity to exchange, listen and share their different point of view on the topic.

The debate covered a broad range of issues related to the proposal, including the urgency of the file, permitting and financing aspects, new additions to the critical raw materials list, the importance of regulatory coherence, the involvement of regions in the management of projects as well as EU recycling targets and capacity.



Renewable fuels: how can the EU be fit for its carbon-free future?

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

12 September 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Giulia Cancian, Secretary General, EBA

Pauliina Uronen, Fellow R&D and Innovation, Neste

Andrea Martelli, Head of Biofuels Supply & Trading, Eni Sustainable Mobility



Jerzy Buzek MEP, EEF President opened the discussion by emphasizing the pivotal role of renewable fuels in achieving EU climate neutrality goal by 2050. He particularly stressed their importance in hard-to-electrify sectors, such as maritime, aviation and heavy-duty transport, underlining that this new phase of development is a valuable asset in advancing EU's climate action.

Giulia Cancian, Secretary General, EBA highlighted that biogas and biomethane are green energy vectors that can deliver on circular economy, waste management and on the wellbeing of rural communities. She explained that the feedstock used in their production is already sustainable and it includes agricultural residues, sequential crops, industrial wastewaters and other resources that do not compete with the food industry. Ms Cancian pointed out that EU's biomethane production has the potential to reach 41 bcm by 2030, surpassing the 35bcm target established in the REPowerEU Plan. This is due to favourable regulatory conditions, robust sustainability criteria and well-established renewables targets. However, she also mentioned some obstacles, including the CO₂ standards for cars and vans and those for HDVs, but also the Annex IX to the RED. She recommended a clear definition of "CO₂ neutral fuels" inclusive of all renewable fuels compliant with the RED, along with the implementation of a carbon correction factor, to internalise GHG emission savings.



Pauliina Uronen, Fellow R&D and Innovation, Neste discussed her company's commitment to transform conventional refineries into biorefineries. She presented their current range of products, which includes renewable biodiesel, sustainable aviation fuels, renewable polymers and components for renewable plastics, all derived from a feedstock comprised of 95% waste and residues. They have been carrying out studies to phase out crude oil by the mid-2030s, if the regulatory framework is in place. Ms Uronen stressed the importance of aligning the HDVs Regulation with the definition of biofuels outlined in the RED. This is essential for policy coherence to facilitate investment by companies. She concluded by emphasizing the need to consider and rely on all available solutions to mitigate and stop the climate crisis.



Andrea Martelli, Head of Biofuels Supply & Trading, Eni Sustainable Mobility presented Eni's efforts in Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) production, primarily sourced from waste and residues, following the phasing out of palm oil which ended in 2022. He also introduced Eni's investments in the African continent, with a focus on a vertical integration approach in crops not competing with the food chain. Mr Martelli underlined the importance of establishing a clear and consistent policy framework in Europe to continue supporting investments and maintaining technological neutrality. In the context of the new HDVs legislation, he underlined the need to evaluate the entire carbon footprint of the vehicles throughout their lifecycle. He suggested the implementation of a carbon correction factor, aligning it with existing EU legislation based on a well-to-wheel approach, such as the RED and the EU ETS.

During the **Q&A session** with participants, various topics concerning renewable fuels were discussed. These included the sustainability of the feedstock, the potential prioritisation of hard-to-decarbonise sectors like aviation and maritime, the associated risks connected of drop-in fuels, the use of biomass in the energy sector, the potential need for revising the Energy Union Governance act, and the role played by transport and storage.

Net Zero Industry Act: how to scale up EU's clean technologies capacity?

Dinner Debate in Brussels

18 September 2023

Chair

Tsvetelina Penkova MEP (S&D, Bulgaria), EEF Director

Speakers

Valentina Mauri, Director EU Governmental Affairs, Chemours

François-Régis Mouton, Regional Director Europe, IOGP Europe

Vincent Berrutto, Head of Unit, Digitalisation, Competitiveness, Research and Innovation, DG ENER

Jacek Truszczyński, Deputy Head of Green and Circular Economy Unit, DG GROW

In the framework of the European Green Industrial Plan, the European Energy Forum held an energy debate on the Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA) chaired by **Tsvetelina Penkova MEP, EEF Director** and S&D shadow rapporteur on the file. Ms Penkova opened the discussion by focusing on EU's goal of strategic autonomy, which has to be built around domestic expertise, skilled labour force and competitive advantage, while preserving good cooperation with external partners.

Valentina Mauri, Director EU Governmental Affairs, Chemours explained how the chemical sector is highly involved in the green transition, from energy, to transportation, to industrial machinery. More specifically, she highlighted that advanced materials and advanced chemicals are paramount for the generation of clean energy, as they are part of the membranes, of binder materials, as well as of coating for wind turbines and insulation for solar panels. Ms Mauri's concern is that despite their essentiality, advanced chemicals are neither included in the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), nor in the NZIA. Therefore, she emphasised how securing the aforementioned materials is essential to avoid dependencies on third countries. She concluded that it is crucial for the EU to adopt a whole value chain approach to succeed.





François-Régis Mouton, Regional Director Europe, IOGP Europe presented a number of CCS projects undertaken both in the EU and in Europe more in general, stressing that the 50 million tonnes CO₂ injection capacity target included in the NZIA proposal is not ambitious enough. In order to develop the entire value chain, Mr Mouton underlined that CCS projects are not only about storage, but it is key to also consider the capture and transportation phases. In this respect, he suggested targeted support for each segment of the value chain, mostly relying on different types of long-term contracts to de-risk the actors involved in the whole process. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of relying on external partners in the rest of Europe, which could provide a significant contribution in increasing EU's CCS ambitions.

Vincent Berrutto, Head of Unit, Digitalisation, Competitiveness, Research and Innovation, DG ENER explained how the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have challenged the EU energy system like never before, leading to an acceleration in the clean energy transition, also reflected in the REPowerEU Plan. The fast deployment of clean energy technologies must be accompanied by a more robust competitiveness of EU industries in the sector. Being the EU a net importer of net-zero technologies, the purpose of the NZIA proposal is to provide predictability, certainty and long-term signals to the market, to incentivize investments in the entire EU net-zero technologies manufacturing value chain.

As several DGs are directly working on this topic, we had the pleasure to also welcome **Jacek Truszczyński, Deputy Head of Green and Circular Economy Unit, DG GROW** who complemented his intervention. Mr Truszczyński discussed the potential enlargement of the scope of the legislation, which needs to be balanced with the availability of resources in public budgets to support the new projects. He also highlighted how the European Commission proposed a highway for the selection of strategic projects while working to grant an easier access to financing. He pointed out that negotiations are still ongoing on how to create the best conditions to scale up EU's manufacturing of clean technologies vis-à-vis third countries' competition.

Among the numerous topics tackled by the NZIA, this debate presented the views of the chemical and oil and gas sectors. The **Q&A session** was an opportunity for actors in other sectors covered by the NZIA to share their opinions. The wide variety of comments and questions included enlarging the scope of CCS projects to non-EU countries such as Norway and Ukraine, taking into account renewable fuels' decarbonisation potential in the transport sector, considering all fossil fuels when it comes to CCS, the availability of EU financing, the outlook of the upcoming Wind Energy Package and public procurement.

A discussion with EVP Šefčovič: Joint gas purchasing in the context of the European Green Deal

High-Level Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

17 October 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speaker

Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice-President European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight

Jerzy Buzek MEP, EEF President opened this energy debate underlining the key role of the European Green Deal in moving forward with the EU decarbonisation and climate neutrality objectives by 2050. Mr Buzek also praised the design and effectiveness of the EU Energy Platform, which has helped the EU reduce its gas imports from Russia. He emphasized how it has supported the EU in enhancing security of supply and affordable energy prices since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine.



Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice-President European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight stressed how EU institutions worked effectively and in close cooperation to adopt prompt emergency measures to face the energy supply and price crisis. He recognised that they helped to stabilise the situation and highlighted that it is also necessary to remain vigilant and take all necessary precautions given the highly volatile geopolitical landscape. Mr Šefčovič explained that strategic industrial policies are necessary to face external competition and swiftly decarbonise our energy system. For this reason, the focus needs to be on the acceleration of renewables, more investments in the energy sector and in low carbon fuels, the development of energy storage and on energy efficiency measures.



In line with the above, Mr Šefčovič underlined that it is necessary to conclude a number of dossiers before the end of this legislative term, including the Electricity Market Design reform, the Hydrogen and Decarbonised Gas Package, the Net Zero Industry Act and Critical Raw Materials Act so as to be able to start delivering the results as soon as possible.

In the context of 2030 targets, EVP Šefčovič clarified the importance of considering not only the need to accelerate on power generation, but also, and especially, to pay attention to infrastructure development.

Focusing on the joint purchase of gas under the EU energy platform, he recalled that it has been designed to respond to the energy price crisis. It proved that the European economic weight with an aggregate demand has considerably helped to get better prices and services on the gas market. Based on figures, he concluded that the Platform delivers very good results and contributes to market transparency, suppliers' diversification and security of supply.



Given the effectiveness of the Platform, he emphasized how this mechanism should go beyond gas and be extended to hydrogen and critical raw materials. He discussed the need to exponentially increase the installed capacity of renewable hydrogen in the EU, which is currently very low, by stimulating investments and the internal market in general, also through the European Hydrogen Bank. On the side of critical raw materials, he underlined the need to act united.

Mr Šefčovič concluded by stressing that by using the economic and political weight of Europe as a whole, it is possible to get to a situation with favourable and enabling conditions to carry out the green and digital transitions.

The Executive Vice-President's keynote speech was followed by **Q&A session** with the audience which touched upon a wide variety of topics including the creation of an internal hydrogen market, the development of European infrastructure and grids, security of supply challenges and the outlook of the joint gas purchasing for next year. And more broadly on EU's strategic autonomy and the evolution of a common energy policy, technology neutrality, the Energy Taxation Directive, the extension of the EU energy platform in the future and the role of gas as a transition fuel.

The role of SMRs in EU's strategic autonomy and decarbonisation: A value chain approach

Dinner Debate in Strasbourg

21 November 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland), EEF President

Speakers

Anne Sophie Schmitt, Coordination and External Relations Lead, NUWARD, EDF

Hidde Baars, Director Government Affairs Netherlands & EU, Urenco.

Zuzana Petrovičová, Head of Unit, Nuclear energy, nuclear waste and decommissioning, DG ENER, European Commission.

Franč Bogovič MEP (EPP, Slovenia), EEF Director, ITRE
Rapporteur - INI Report on SMRs

In his introductory remarks, **Jerzy Buzek MEP, EEF President** explained the role that Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) could play in reaching EU's decarbonisation and strategic autonomy goals by contributing, among others, to the decarbonisation of sectors such as district heating, steel or chemical industries.



Hidde Baars, Director Government Affairs Netherlands & EU, Urenco presented the fuel producer perspective. Both the climate crisis and the energy security issues have led to an increasing interest in large-scale reactors as well as SMRs and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs). Many SMRs are designed on proven technology and on commercially available fuel. Mr Baars explained that, in the upcoming years, fourth generation reactors and research reactors will require advanced nuclear fuels, including Low Enriched Uranium+ (LEU+), enriched at 10%, and Higher Assay Low Enriched Uranium (HALEU), which has an enrichment level between 5 and 20%. Currently, Russia is the only commercial supplier of these two types of fuel. For this reason, he stressed that the evolution of the European nuclear fuel cycle is key to EU's energy independence and to strengthen its global leverage.

Anne-Sophie Schmitt, Coordination and External Relations Lead, NUWARD, EDF reflected the power generator perspective by presenting the NUWARD SMR technology which targets the replacement of fossil-based plants, grids with limited capacity, and industrial sites requiring electricity or heat. She explained that NUWARD SMRs are composed of two reactors of 170 MW each that employ standard fuel with an enrichment of less than 5%. Ms Schmitt underlined that the Intellectual Property belongs to European players only, and that the support of national and European institutions is key to safeguard and strengthen it. Since there are still technical, regulatory and fuel limits to be overcome, she explained that technology-neutral policy tools are needed, alongside cooperation among EU Member States in order for it be able to play a significant role in terms of climate goals and energy independence.



Zuzana Petrovičová, Head of Unit, Nuclear energy, nuclear waste and decommissioning, DG ENER, European Commission highlighted the role that nuclear energy plays in EU's pathway to decarbonisation and that, therefore, the SMR technology needs to be explored. In this respect, the European Commission published a vision paper for SMRs deployment in the EU by 2030. In line with this document, five work streams have been identified: market uses of SMRs, standardisation of licensing, financing, supply chain development also at the local level, and research, also looking at newer generations of SMRs. Ms Petrovičová further explained that the European Commission is willing to support the existing technology, while also working on fourth generation reactors. She concluded that the newly created SMRs Industrial Alliance aims at having European SMRs by 2040.

Franc Bogovič (EPP, Slovenia), EEF Director, ITRE Rapporteur - INI Report on SMRs considered that the European Green Deal, the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy crisis have all led to the current momentum and support for nuclear energy. Mr Bogovič pointed out that the reduced dimensions and modularity of SMRs can target district heating, heat in industries, and grid integration of renewable sources. He stressed that the INI Report on SMRs has tried to be as comprehensive as possible. He concluded by underlining that the compromise text reached in the ITRE Committee sends a clear message from the European Parliament in supporting SMRs and nuclear energy more broadly.

During the **Q&A session** participants discussed different aspects related to SMRs, including public procurement, the safety standards for SMRs, the European Commission's future steps to support the deployment of this technology in the European Union, the role of nuclear in the 2040 climate targets, as well as the need for strategic autonomy in the nuclear fuel cycle.

Christmas Reception

Reception in Brussels

5 December 2023

Chair

Jerzy Buzek, President of the EEF

We thank our Members for attending our Christmas reception and making this end of the year gathering a success!



Thank you!

All the energy discussions organised throughout this year would not have been possible without the contribution and cooperation of our EEF Active and Associate Members.

Thank you all for your trust and continued support!

The EEF Team



www.europeanenergyforum.eu

Linkedin : European Energy Forum

X : EEf_EnergyForum

Working office : Square Eugène Plasky 92-94, bte 14 - 1030 Brussels - Belgium

Siège social : 20, Place des Halles - 67000 Strasbourg - France

T +32 (0)2 227 04 60

Transparency Register : 45953576620-17

EEF Activity Report 2023 ©European Energy Forum

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged

Layout : Mazy graphic Design - www.mazygraphic.be



www.europeanenergyforum.eu