



GREEN GAS: THE CONTRIBUTION TO A LOW CARBON ENERGY SYSTEM

Brussels, 15 June 2016. In the context of the European Sustainable Energy Week 2016, the key stakeholder groups on gas – the 5 Brussels based organisations CEDEC, Eurogas, EBA, FCH JU & GEODE - came together to highlight the potential of renewable gases in decarbonising the energy system. Even though the role of renewables in the electricity sector is currently well understood, less is known about the potential of renewable gases. The session explored the potential role that renewable gases can play in the EU energy mix and how the existing gas grids can be used to accommodate them.

This event was unique in that it brought together the key stakeholder groups on this topic on a European basis for the first time: the biogas and biomethane producers, the hydrogen producers, the distribution gas grid operators and the gas suppliers.

Hydrogen has a great potential to exploit excess renewable electricity and convert it into gas, being the natural link between the electricity and gas sectors. Commenting on the hydrogen potential for consumers, the FCH JU Executive Director said “In the long term (2050) for the case of Germany, 14 to 20 million Tons of CO₂ emissions could be avoided by converting otherwise-lost renewable electricity into hydrogen in a commercially viable way.”

Biomethane can be used for many purposes across different sectors; in electricity generation, industry, heating and in transport. It can be transported using the existing gas grids and be stored for use in a flexible manner. Philipp LUKAS, Chairman at EBA outlined the domestic production potential from unavoidable food waste and agricultural residues all across Europe while calling for an internal European market for biomethane to trigger full deployment of green gas.

Tony Glover, Energy Networks Association, focused on how the gas distribution networks are preparing for green gas. He insisted that the gas distribution networks will play a crucial role in achieving EU's decarbonisation targets. The network operators are facilitating the transport of not only natural gas, but now increasingly also renewable gas. This shows how future-proof gas is in providing domestic heating and the consumer with its continued key benefits - comfort, convenience and cost. Facilitating further growth in green gas is a key objective of the Distribution System Operators (DSO).

Gert De Block, Secretary General at CEDEC, concluded: favouring green gas means using the flexibility of gas in its most sustainable way, contributing to the decarbonisation of the energy sector, benefiting the energy consumers and society as a whole. We look forward to a Renewable Energy Directive revision welcoming renewable gases into the grids.

CEDEC

CEDEC represents the interests of more than 1500 local and regional energy companies from ten European countries, serving 85 million electricity and gas customers and connections. These predominantly medium-sized local and regional energy companies have developed activities as electricity and heat generators, electricity and gas distribution system and metering operators, and energy (services) suppliers. The wide range of services provided by local utility companies is reliable, sustainable and close to the consumer. Through their high investments, they make a significant contribution to local and regional economic development.

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GEODE

GEODE is the voice of local energy distributors across Europe, representing the interests of 1200 private and public energy companies for both electricity and gas from 15 European countries, serving more than 100 million customers. These small and medium-sized companies are bringing intelligence to the grids and making thereby a major contribution to achieve Europe's climate and energy policy goals. GEODE promotes fair and competitive conditions for network operators giving them a strong voice to secure core values - namely providing a customer-focused service, with a high quality of supply and energy efficiency to homes, businesses and local communities. With 25 years' experience GEODE is recognised as a trusted partner by the European institutions.

www.geode-eu.org

FCH JU

Fuel Cells and Hydrogen technologies have great potential to decarbonise road transportation and diversify energy supplies. As they are ready for the market, a last push from public and private partners is necessary to facilitate their deployment.

It is on the Fuel Cells and Hydrogen joint Undertaking platform that this joint effort occurs in Europe. The FCH JU is a unique public-private partnership between the European Commission, Europe's FCH industry and research organisations, aiming at accelerating the market introduction of these technologies. It is also a funding agency, supporting R&D and Demonstration projects in transport and energy. So far, 185 projects have been selected for funding.

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EBA

Founded in February 2009, European Biogas Association (EBA) is the leading European association in the field of biogas and biomethane production covering the anaerobic digestion and gasification industries. Committed to the active promotion of sustainable biogas and biomethane production and use throughout Europe, EBA has created a broad network of established national organisations, scientific institutes and companies. In 2016, the association counted around 80 members from all over Europe and had established co-operation with biogas associations from outside Europe.

<http://www.european-biogas.eu>

Eurogas

Eurogas is the association representing the European gas wholesale, retail and distribution sectors. Founded in 1990, its members are 43 companies and associations from 24 countries.

<http://www.eurogas.org/>