

15th Energy Community Gas Forum

Virtual Forum – WebEx connection
30 September – 1 October 2020

Conclusions

1. The Forum took stock of a notable progress in the implementation of the gas acquis in the previous year, mainly, but not only, driven by the accelerated reforms in Ukraine's gas market. While the other Contracting Parties increased their compliance record with the gas acquis, many shortcomings remain unsolved. The Contracting Parties are invited to work closely together with the Energy Community Secretariat to make their gas markets fit for the transition to more decarbonized economies.
2. In particular, remaining obstacles such as lack of unbundling by the operators in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia should be removed immediately, and full TPA to be ensured. Moreover, Ukraine should ensure the continued fulfilment with the certification conditions.
3. Gas will play its role during the transition to a carbon neutral Europe in 2050, while decarbonized gases will play increasing role replacing natural gas as part of an integrated energy system. Together with the market reforms, compliance with State aid rules and pricing-in externalities will be essential to identify correct investments and avoid stranded assets.
4. The Forum welcomed a progress in implementation of gas network codes in several Contracting Parties and invited transmission system operators and national regulatory authorities to accelerate the process of their actual implementation, with a view to increasing liquidity, competitiveness and transparency of gas markets. The Member States are encouraged to engage more actively in implementing the missing network codes on relevant interconnection points with the Energy Community. The Forum welcomes the support by ACER and the Energy Community Secretariat to the TSO of Slovakia and Ukraine related to optimizing the use of their interconnectors in line with the network codes.
5. The Forum invites Contracting Parties to proactively pursue establishment of liquid hubs in their respective market zones and foster further regional market integration to reap the benefits of more ample and affordable gas.
6. The Forum encouraged the legislators of the Contracting Parties to without further delay adjust national legislation to transpose the REMIT Regulation or empower national regulatory authorities to transpose the Regulation by means of a regulatory act. National regulatory authorities also have to be equipped with the necessary powers and competences for implementation of the REMIT Regulation. The Forum invited national regulators to duly inform market participants of their obligations under the REMIT Regulation, once transposed.
7. The Forum appreciate the efforts of the Contracting Parties in starting the work on new gases with low or zero carbon which can be injected to the network and increased efforts to combat the methane leakage, and to join relevant European programs, even if on a voluntary basis. An early and enabling regulation for hydrogen including blending rules is important in this respect

8. The Forum also took note of the Hydrogen study launched by the Secretariat and invited the Contracting Parties to take an active participation to deliver the most optimal results.
9. The Forum took note of the PECl and PMI process carried out in 2020 and the draft PECl and PMI lists to be adopted by the Ministerial Council this year.