

Conclusions of the 14th Energy Community Gas Forum

24-25 September 2019, Ljubljana

Day 1

1. The Forum was opened by the host Slovenian National Energy Regulatory Authority and the chair, the European Commission.
2. The Forum noted the report on the implementation of the gas acquis by the Energy Community Secretariat. The Forum raised concerns that although the majority of the Contracting Parties made some implementation progress in comparison to the last year, the positive effects are offset by, inter alia, lack of unbundling.
3. The Forum called upon all Parties to finalise the efforts to make the Energy Community more efficient through amendments to the Energy Community Treaty. Participants acknowledged that particular attention will be paid to increased sustainability of the energy sectors of the Contracting Parties in the close future.
4. The Forum discussed the opportunities that the global LNG glut may bring to European and Energy Community gas markets, both directly via supply from LNG or indirectly via price reduction.
5. The Forum called for swift adoption of the Clean Energy Package in the Energy Community to keep pace with EU developments. In this context, the Forum also took note of the update of the discussions in the EU on the possible review of the gas legislation to better align the legislation with decarbonisation goals and opening potentials for innovative use of gas in a sustainable manner.
6. The development of exchange traded gas and its potential in Central and South East Europe was noted by the Forum. Ukraine is considered as a market with high potential for gas trading but adjustments to the regulatory framework must be provided.

Day 2

7. The Forum welcomed the efforts of transmission system operators and regulatory authorities towards transposition of the gas networks code in the Energy Community Contracting Parties and urged those Contracting Parties where related progress has not been made yet to ensure transposition and implementation without further delay. In this context, the Forum also called upon the ministries to prepare necessary legislative adjustments where needed. The Forum called Energy Community Contracting Parties and neighbouring EU Member States to strengthen the cooperation to achieve application of the network codes on the interconnection points and to conclude interconnection agreements.
8. The Forum supported the adoption of the last remaining gas network code on balancing by the Permanent High Level Group in December 2019.
9. The Forum invited project promoters of the PECEI and PMI projects supply data to the Secretariat based on Regulation 347/2013. The Forum invited competent authorities to start fulfilling their tasks as defined in the Regulation or, in case such authorities do not exist yet, to be set up without delay.
10. The Forum welcomed the ECRB analysis on topics of mutual interest of transmission and distribution system operators.

11. The Forum welcomed the work of the Energy Community DSO-g Coordination Platform and invited the Platform to present the guidelines on measurement in natural gas distribution network and the report on DSO unbundling to the next Forum.
12. The debate on the new routes and/or supplies that would reach Europe via the Energy Community Contracting Parties outlines differences of the regulatory regimes of new interconnectors. TAP is expected to bring Azeri gas end next year. As regards the Turkish stream extensions to Serbia via Bulgaria, the Secretariat's concerns related to the impact on competition were not implemented, what would have brought the project in line with European standards and rules.
13. The Forum expressed concerns about the still unsolved future of gas transit via Ukraine to Contracting Parties and European Union Member States. The Forum noted a particular vulnerability of Moldova in case of the halt of transit and urged all Parties to speed up securing any SoS arrangements with Moldova.
14. Participants took positive note of the accelerated actions Ukraine has undertaken to establish a fully independent and functional TSO, confirmed by certification, as a precondition for the sustainability of transit of natural gas through Ukraine in the post-2019 period. The Forum urged Ukraine and the Energy Community Secretariat to mobilise their utmost efforts to reach that goal in time.