

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE



## Europe should recognize green gas among the solutions to avoid future gas price increase

- ***Today, the EU is 90% dependent on imported fossil gas and has no significant support to ensure fast deployment of renewable gases***
- ***Security of gas supply should be based on growing shares of green gas and affordable prices for consumers***

*Brussels, 11 October 2021* – The EU is fully immersed in an energy transition to reduce GHG emissions and increase the use of clean energy sources, which includes phasing out coal and aging nuclear plants. The share of renewable electricity is raising. However, according to the European Commission, we are still 90% dependent on imported fossil gas. There isn't enough gas to fuel our homes and industries in the post-pandemic recovery and refill stocks before the winter. The EU should seize this opportunity to push for the deployment of higher shares of already available renewable gas produced within EU borders, such as biomethane.

According to Bloomberg News, European gas prices surged by almost 500% in the past year. This sharp raise is due to an increase of global gas demand and unsecure supply from third countries. The current situation may undermine efforts by governments to hit ambitious green goals if they are obliged to turn to coal in order to face demand shortages in their countries: gas emits about half as much carbon dioxide as coal when burned. At the same time, it is resulting in ever higher energy bills for citizens and industries across the continent, already economically hit by the COVID pandemic. We need to make sure that the energy transition will leave no consumers behind.

The European Commission is preparing an official communication to help member states palliate the crisis and protect consumers. The measures and proposals that the EU Executive will soon layout to address the energy crunch should push for targeted support for renewable gas production, demand and infrastructure to boost reliance on clean and locally produced energy sources. The EU has already committed to reduce GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030. Denmark, for instance, is close to reach 25% of biomethane injected into the natural gas grid and an additional 5% consumed directly. Heading for higher levels as new production starts! . The Commission has urged governments to coordinate their national measures to lower energy prices avoiding contradictions with EU climate goals. However, the energy mix across the bloc varies significantly, with some Member States enjoying advanced renewable systems while others still highly dependent on fossil fuels, the majority of which come from non-EU exporters.

Within the mix of renewable gases, biomethane is scalable already today and its role in the short and long run should be better assessed in the framework of the European Green Deal. Studies from IEA, Gas for Climate, Eurogas, Cerre or CE Delft evaluating the potential of biomethane, believe that this renewable gas could cover 30-40% of the gas demand in Europe by 2050. Currently, the sector is producing 18 bcm of energy, which is mostly allocated to electricity production although the sustainable biomethane production from biogas is growing within Europe. By the end of this decade, the localized production of biomethane is expected to double and eventually reach 120 bcm by 2050, EU's deadline to reach climate-neutrality.

The environmental performance of sustainable biomethane is also promising, as it can reduce GHG emissions below zero levels. Besides, as it is produced from organic residues, it helps reduce industrial and municipal waste. Additionally, biomethane supports the development of the agroecology by using sustainable farming feedstocks and promoting the use of digestate, a by-product of biomethane production, as biofertilizer, contributing thereby to a circular bio-economy.

*“We need EU-wide action to ensure all consumers can afford their energy bills while increasing the share of renewable gas in our grids. This will lower our dependency on imported gas and strengthen environmental and local development.”* Harmen Dekker, Director of the EBA.

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#### **About the EBA**

The European Biogas Association is the voice of renewable gas in Europe since 2009. EBA advocates the recognition of biomethane and other renewable gases as sustainable, on demand and flexible energy sources that provide multiple knock-on socio-economic and environmental benefits. Supported by its members, EBA is committed to work with European institutions, industry, agricultural partners, NGOs and academia to develop policies which can enable the large-scale deployment of renewable gases and organic fertilisers throughout Europe, supported by transparent, well-established sustainability certification bodies to ensure that sustainability remains at the core of the industry. The association counts today on a well-established network of over 190 national organisations, scientific institutes, and companies from Europe and beyond.