

Minutes of the Executive Board meeting

13th of September 2023

Start & end of the meeting: 09h30 – 12h00
Teams meeting only

Attendants: Liam Nolan (President), Alexander Schwanzer (Vice-President), Manuel Coxe (Secretary General), Thierry Chapuis, Daniel Czeto (replacing Rastislav Nukovic), Anne-Sophie Decaux, Abel Enriquez, Frank Graf, Sylwia Gladysz, Mattias Hanson, Stanislav Kazda, Dimitrios Kourkouraidis, Thea Larsen, Jose Miguel Tudela Olivares, Francisco José Sichar (replacing Naiara Ortiz de Mendibil), Signe Sonne, Pawel Stanczak, Ioannis Tsiblakis, Steven Vallender, Steven Van Caekenberghe, Lucia Vojtila, Uwe Wetzel and Kris de Wit.

Apologized: Alvaro Laranjo, Stefano Cagnoli, Arto Korpela, Ion Manescu, Diego Modolell, Agnieszka Ozga, and Jeroen Zanting.

Invited: Gert Müller-Syring.

1. Opening of the Session

The President welcomed the Members and opened the meeting.

1.1. Quorum and approval of the agenda

The quorum was reached as 16 Executive Board Members out of 21 were present or represented. The proposed agenda was approved without modification.

1.2. Welcome to new attendants

The President welcomed Abel Enriquez, Mathias Hanson, Steven Vallender and Lucia Vojtila for attending the Executive Board meeting for the first time.

1.3. Approval of the Minutes of 01/06/2023

The Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting of 01/06/2023 were approved without modification.

2. Implementation of the decisions from the last Executive Board meeting

The President informed the Members that the Executive Board had approved the statements of the financial accounts for 2022 and that they were submitted to the General Assembly of the Members on 1st June 2023 for approval. Likewise, the President informed that the Executive Board had approved the budget for 2024 including the exemption of the membership fees in 2024 for the two Members from Ukraine due to the war situation, and that both matters were submitted to the General Assembly of the Members. Subsequently, the General Assembly of the Members approved the financial accounts for 2022, the Audit Report performed by Deloitte, the membership fee and budget for 2024 as suggested by the Executive Board.

The President also informed the Members that the Executive Board had approved the dates (18 and 19 of June 2024) and the Atlantic Hotel in Hamburg as the venue, the ticket prices and sponsorship prices for EGATEC 2024 following the proposal of the hosting members DVGW, Gasunie and DGC.

Finally, the President let the Members know that the document “Mine Dust and Black Powder” and the position paper “Pan-European ‘boiler ban’ in 2029 – another way is possible and preferable” were approved by the Executive Board and subsequently published and disseminated.

3. Status of Membership

The President informed the Members of the Executive Board that Enagas had decided to terminate its membership at the end of the year 2023 (according to Article 3.4 of the Statutes and via an official Termination Letter) due to recent internal changes and reorientation of priorities and resources. The Members were also informed that Enagas would continue contributing to MARCOGAZ’s activities via the Spanish national gas association Sedigas.

The President informed the Executive Board Members that EDA Attikis was acquired by DEPA Infrastructure S.A., which decided to evaluate membership in all national, European, and international associations. Consequently, EDA Attikis will transit its MARCOGAZ Membership at the end of 2023 to DEPA Infrastructure S.A. that will become a new Member in MARCOGAZ in 2024. DEPA was still to address the formality of the transition.

Finally, the Members of the Executive Board were informed that MARCOGAZ Secretariat had met with NAFTOGAZ (Ukrtransgaz) – the gas underground storage company in Ukraine – and they had expressed interest to become a new Member. At that moment they were preparing the formal request for Corporate Membership.

4. Organisation of EGATEC 2024 & 2026

The Vice-President informed the Members of the Executive Board that the event venue approved by the MARCOGAZ Executive Board was confirmed and booked by DVGW Kongress at Atlantic Hotel Hamburg, Germany. The Executive Board Members were also informed that DVGW Kongress had drafted the Conference Agenda pending on revision by the Programme Committee. The Vice-President also presented the proposed schedules for the expected milestones both from the Programme Committee and the Paper Selection Committee. Finally, while the EGATEC 2024 Program Committee is complete and MARCOGAZ is represented by the Vice-President (Alexandre Schwanzer) and Secretary General (Manuel Coxe), the Co-Chair of SCGU&H2+ and Board Member (Frank Graf) is the only representative in the Paper Selection Committee with an open vacancy where any MARCOGAZ member can propose an additional representation.

5. Implementation of Annual Work Programme 2023

The Secretary General presented statistics of the Work Plan 2023, the ongoing work, the finalised tasks, pending data collection and tasks still pending of kick off.

The Secretary General presented the status of MARCOSTAT Calls and underlined that CALL#5 on EGAS-C report on Gas Installations Safety was launched in the beginning of September with deadline end of September and the questionnaire on “EU Taxonomy for sustainable activities” for WG Distribution members to pave DSOs involvement in the activity has the deadline set for mid-October.

The Members of the Executive Board were invited to strengthen participation in the WG Sector Integration, WG Gas Installations and WG LNG.

6. Presentations from Standing Committees

6.1. Standing Committee Sustainability (SCS)

The Chair gave an update on the status of the **WG HLS** and informed that no significant activities have taken place since the last Board meeting of 01 June 2023. However, the document *'Mine dust and black powder'* has been published as it has previously been approved. Two more documents are expected from the WG HLS on *'Health effects of hydrogen and natural gas'* and *'Optical and electronical radiation in the gas industry – phase 2'*. Finally, the Chair addressed that the benchmarking study on safety figures is ongoing with MARCOSTAT data Call #3.

The Chair presented the nine drafts of the Best Available Techniques documents on venting and flaring prepared by the **WG ME+** and requested their approval. The Chair informed that the document on the methane emissions regulation prepared by experts of the group of five associations (MARCOGAZ, GIE, Eurogas, GERG and ENTSG) was sent out to policy makers in August. Subsequently, the WG ME+ will focus on the IED revision, possibly in corporation with GIE and Eurogas, as the finalization of the revision is expected early 2024. A kick off meeting is expected in the very short term for the new project related to Scope3 emissions. Interested Executive Board Members are kindly invited to suggested members for this project. Finally, the Chair addressed that the WG ME+ will start looking into the new topic of hydrogen emissions with the aim of writing a white paper.

DECISION 2023/13: The Executive Board approved the nine documents on “Best Available Technologies (BATs)” and recommended its publication.

6.2. Standing Committee Gas Infrastructure (SCGI)

The last meeting of the **SGGI** was held on the 19th of April, after which the document *“Gas Transmission Pipeline Safety”* was published. The next meeting is scheduled for the 25th of September where the Madrid Forum will be discussed with the topic of *“phase out of natural gas and decommissioning of infrastructure”*.

Regarding **TF H2**, the Chair of the Task Force presented the outcome of the study on *“Cost Estimation of Hydrogen Admission into Existing Natural Gas Infrastructure and End Use”* and informed that the report is subject to SCGI approval. The final Report of the study will be shared with the Executive Board for final approval following the agreement in the SCGI meeting scheduled for 25 September 2023. Furthermore, the Chair of the SCGI presented the two high level documents previously submitted to the Executive Board, respectively entitled *“the Infographic 2023”* and *“the methodology description”*, and asked for approval their approval for publication.

The **WG LNG** has been re-activated by the newly appointed Chair *Andrzej Zero* and the WG LNG is expected to have a kick-off meeting in the short term. Possible focus areas have been identified, including a new topic on *“Adaptation of LNG terminals for Ammonia import”*.

DECISION 2023/14: The Executive Board approved the document “Overview of available test results and regulatory limits for hydrogen admission into existing natural gas infrastructure and end use. Infographic Version 2023” and recommended its publication.

DECISION 2023/15: The Executive Board approved the document “Methodology description for the cost estimation of hydrogen admission into existing natural gas infrastructure and end use”, and recommended its publication.

6.3. Standing Committee Gas Utilisation and New Gases (SCGU&H2+)

The co-Chairs referred that the **WG H2, bioCH4 & SNG** had kicked off, with the second meeting held on the 19th of July 2023. The goal of the WG is to analyze existing studies on new gases, define topics for detailed examination and elaborate relevant items with other experts of MARCOGAZ WGs. In the most recent meeting, presentations were given on the scenarios of new gases in France (GRDF) and the ship-based import options for hydrogen and derivatives (DVGW-EBI). Moreover, a general discussion was held on further activities such as the future of LNG terminals, gas quality aspects for hydrogen pipelines and country-specific activities related to new gases. The next meeting is scheduled for the 29th of September.

The co-Chairs informed the Executive Board that the **WG Gas Quality** is liaising closely with activities at CEN/TC234/WG11 and CEN/TC408 level. Regarding the topic “*Harmonization of gas quality*”, a publication from the CEN/TC234/WG11 is expected in the short term. Moreover, the WG is collecting the interest of members to provide data for a study related to LNG quality in Europe, but the WG will decide in the next meeting if there is enough interest to continue the study. Finally, the co-Chairs informed the Executive Board that the CEN/TS 17977 “*Gas infrastructure – Hydrogen used in rededicated as systems*” is approved and that publication is expected late October.

The **WG Energy Efficiency** published the position paper “*Pan-European ‘boiler ban’ in 2029: another way is possible and preferable*” on the revision of the Ecodesign for central heating appliances and water heaters as approved in the previous Executive Board meeting. Furthermore, the co-Chairs informed that the WG is closely following the developments regarding the EPBD recast and will monitor if MARCOGAZ involvement is required as the triologue has started.

The co-Chairs informed the Members that the last **WG Gas Installations** (WG GI) meeting took place on 15th of March and the following will be on the 5th of October. The WG GI is collecting data for the EGAS-C study and addressing maintenance of appliances, blending of natural gas with H2 and H2 issues and actively monitoring the CLASP reports on cooking appliances.

The 1st meeting of the **WG Sector Integration** was held on the 21st of April with only Chair and 3 participants (Belgium, Spain, Ireland). The chair of the WG and the MARCOGAZ Secretariat have brainstormed possible ways to increase the participation level. As a way forward, a new study area is identified entitled “*Obstacles and opportunities to the deployment of sector integration within the European energy system*”. The co-Chairs of the SCGU&H2+ invited the Executive Board Members to propose new experts for the WGSi. Furthermore, the co-Chairs informed about the previously identified topics by the WG such as geological H2 storage at different scales, study the role of pipelines compared to electricity cables in transporting energy from offshore wind plants, analyze sector coupling of natural gas and electricity through H2, understanding the interplay between energy efficiency measures and sector coupling to mitigate costs.

Finally, the co-Chairs informed about the activities of the **SCGU&H2+**. The last meeting took place on the 24th of May 2023 and the next meeting is planned for the 9th of October 2023. Although the main takeaways were presented in the previous meeting, the co-Chairs addressed the approved and recently published position paper “*Response to the public consultation of the European Commission on the action plan on accelerated roll-out of heat pumps across the EU*”. Finally, the co-Chairs underlined the ongoing liaison of SCGU&H2+ with CEN SFG-U, TC238 and TC109 and informed the Executive Board about the next scheduled meetings.

7. Administration and Secretariat

7.1. Human Resources

The Secretary General updated the Members of the Executive Board about outboarding and onboarding of personnel in the Secretariat, as well as about the fact that there would be an upcoming recruitment of technical profile.

7.2. Status of budget for 2023

The Secretary General reported on the state of budget of 2023 as of 31/08/2023 as depicted in the table below:

	Approved Budget (15/12/2022)	Received / Paid (as of 31/08/2023)	Expected (01/09 to 31/12/2023)	TOTAL Projection
INCOME	€ 594 (000)	€ 616 (000)	€ 18 (000)	€ 634 (000)
EXPENSES	€ - 668 (000)	€ - 444 (000)	€ - 214 (000)	€ - 658 (000)
TOTAL PROFIT/LOSS	€ - 74 (000)	€ 172 (000)	€ - 196 (000)	€ - 24 (000)

AMOUNT AVAILABLE AT BANK (€ 1 618 000):
€ 117 (000) AT CURRENT ACCOUNTS
€ 101 (000) AT FLEXIBLE DEPOSIT
€ 1 400 (000) AT FIXED TERM DEPOSIT (3M & 11M)

8. Communications & Liaisons

8.1. Communications

The Secretary General informed the Members of the Executive Board that the next Tech Forum on ‘*Cost of Hydrogen Admission into Existing Gas Infrastructure and End-use*’, based on the document elaborated by TF H2, is aimed to take place during the European Hydrogen Week on 20-24 November 2023. The Secretary General also informed that the Annual Report 2022-2023 is being prepared and it is aimed to be published by February 2024. The Secretary General reported to the Executive Board Members that activities related to the 55th Anniversary of MARCOGAZ will continue until December 2023. Finally, the Members were informed that MARCOGAZ will continue partnering and participating in relevant energy-related events on the second half of 2023.

8.2. Liaisons

The Secretary General informed the Members of the Executive Board that MARCOGAZ will participate in the Stakeholder Council of EURAMET and strengthen its work conducted in the WG Metering. The Members were also informed that the WG Gas Metering is being represented in two technical working groups of WELMEC and that MARCOGAZ will be participating as well in the upcoming annual meeting of GIIGNL in November.

Finally, the Secretary General notified the Executive Board Members that MARCOGAZ plans to participate in the following upcoming European Commission Forums on end use, hydrogen and CCUS.

9. Dates of the next meetings

The following dates summarize MARCOGAZ’s next meetings:

- **23/12/2023:** Executive Board Meeting – Zurich, Switzerland.
Welcome dinner the night before (12 Dec. 2023).
- **13/03/2023:** Executive Board Meeting – Dublin, Ireland.
Welcome dinner the night before (12 Mar. 2023).
- **17/06/2024:** Executive Board Meeting in Hamburg
- **17/06/2024:** General Assembly in Hamburg.

Welcome dinner (jointly with EGATEC 2024)

- [18-19/06/2024](#): EGATEC 2024 in Hamburg

10. Any other business

Nothing relevant to report.