



EU Gas DSO association, GD4S, meets EU Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson

Meeting requested following the Association's publication of White Paper on the role of gas distribution networks in the decarbonisation process

Brussels, 13 October 2021 – **Paolo Gallo**, Chairman of the EU Association Gas Distributors for Sustainability (GD4S) and CEO of Italgas, alongside a delegation from GD4S, met with EU Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson yesterday. Among the topics discussed were the strategic role of gas distribution networks including in the context of sector coupling, methane emissions, digitisation process and potential of renewable gases – such as biomethane, synthetic methane and green hydrogen – to enable the energy transition.

Also attending on behalf of GD4S, which represents the seven main gas distributors in Europe, were **Gabriel Sousa**, CEO of Galp Gás Natural Distribuição (Portugal) and **Catherine Leboul-Proust**, Director for Strategy of GRDF (France). The meeting was proposed by Commissioner Simson following the recent presentation of GD4S' White Paper 'Gas grids - a key enabler of decarbonisation', which outlines the actions taken by distribution system operators (DSOs) to support the decarbonisation and clearly affirms GD4S' commitment to deliver carbon neutrality by 2050.

The meeting provided a timely opportunity for the association to raise the following points:

- the decarbonisation of the gas sector requires a dedicated regulatory framework to accelerate the achievement of the climate agenda targets;
- evaluating key technologies for the energy transition requires a holistic approach, taking into account peak demands and security of supply;
- with regard to EU taxonomy compliance, financial support for renewable gas production would enable existing gas assets to deliver their full potential for the decarbonisation of the economy;
- gas distribution grids can play a key role in balancing future complex and decentralised renewable energy systems, based on renewables that could not be dispatched, unless they are transformed into renewable gases through Power to Gas technology.

"We firmly believe – affirmed Paolo Gallo as Chairman of GD4S – that renewables will lead the future of energy, but it is also clear that the digital gas networks will guarantee the necessary flexibility of the system as they are both carrier and storage tools: for natural gas today, biomethane tomorrow, and in the near future also e-gas and hydrogen thanks to the development of technologies that will make its production more sustainable. I am therefore delighted that Commissioner Simson requested this meeting to further explore the strategic role of gas infrastructure for the energy transition and to assess the urgency of giving substance to sector coupling, which can guarantee flexibility and security to the energy system. An evolution that requires a clear regulatory framework supporting the investments of European players for the upgrade and development of infrastructure and accelerating the decarbonisation process of our sector".

Commissioner Kadri Simson confirmed that the European Commission considers gas infrastructures to play a strategic role in the process of decarbonising the economy and in the creation of a new energy system based also on renewable gases such as biomethane, green hydrogen and synthetic gases.