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*Newsletter and website of the UfM Gas Platform: concrete outcomes of cooperation and tools for communication on natural gas in the Med. region*

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## **Message from the UfM Gas Platform Secretariat**

Another step in the energy cooperation between the EU and South and East Mediterranean countries was reached in Rome, on 1 December 2016, at the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Meeting on Energy, when the two-year work programmes of the three UfM Energy Platforms were endorsed.

For the last few years, EU Energy Ministers, Ministers of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, the European Commission, the UfM and the regional stakeholders stressed on the importance of enhanced regional energy cooperation for ensuring secure, affordable and sustainable energy for the region and beyond.

Since 2015, the UfM Gas Platform, the UfM Regional Electricity Market Platform (UfM REM Platform) and the UfM Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Platform (UfM REEE Platform) were established with the aim to tackle these most significant energy challenges by reinforcing cooperation in the region.

Initiated in Malta in July 2014, confirmed in Rome in November 2014 and launched in June 2015, in Brussels, the objective of the UfM Platform on Gas is to enhance the cooperation in the Euro-Med region between all stakeholders of the gas chain, in a bottom-up approach to improve gas security by identifying barriers and opportunities.

The newsletter and the website of the UfM Gas Platform are concrete outcomes of the will to step up regional cooperation and tools for communication on natural gas in particular. They aim at communicating on the Platform activities and outputs to the stakeholders of the Platform as well as to the broader public. They are designed to act as an interface between the Secretariat and stakeholders on the one hand, and as a mirror to disseminate the Platform activities and related news on the other hand.

## **About the UfM Energy Platforms**

On 11 July 2014, in Malta, at the High Level Euro-Mediterranean Conference on “The role of gas developments in the Mediterranean region”, and on 19 November 2014, in Rome, at the High Level Conference on “Building a Euro-Mediterranean energy bridge: the strategic importance of Euro-Med gas and electricity networks in the context of energy security”, EU Energy Ministers, Ministers of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries, and the European Commission confirmed the importance of regional energy cooperation for ensuring secure, affordable and sustainable energy

for the region and beyond. They also agreed that further strengthening regional cooperation in the Mediterranean on natural gas is required in order to achieve the above-mentioned purpose/intention and decided to establish a Platform on Gas.

The UfM Senior Officials Meeting of 31 March 2015 in Brussels agreed to frame Energy cooperation at large of all the 43 UfM Members on the basis of this Platform on Gas, as well as on two other platforms (on regional electricity market and on renewable energy and energy efficiency).

On 6 May 2015, in Rabat, EU Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete and the Moroccan Minister for Energy, Mr. Abdelkader Amara, unveiled the three new Euro-Mediterranean platforms on gas, regional electricity market, and renewable energy and energy efficiency in the presence of the UfM co-presidency, the Secretary General of the UfM Secretariat (UfMs) and the Presidents of the OME, the Association of Mediterranean Energy Regulators (MEDREG), the Association of the Mediterranean Transmission System Operators (MED-TSO) and MEDGRID project.

On 11 June 2015, in Brussels, the UfM Gas Platform was officially launched and draft final Terms of Reference of the Platform were presented along with a background report.

The UfM Regional Electricity Market Platform (UfM REM Platform) and the UfM Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Platform (UfM REEE Platform) were officially launched on 12 October 2015 and 14 November 2016 respectively.

On 1 December 2016, in Rome, at the UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy, the two-year work programmes of the three UfM Energy Platforms were endorsed. Ministers in charge of energy called for a coherent regional and inclusive approach across the three platforms.

The OME is acting as Secretariat of the Gas Platform and the UfMs is acting as Secretariat of the REM and REEE Platforms.

### **Objectives of the UfM Gas Platform**

The Gas Platform aims at establishing a structured regional dialogue allowing the gradual development of a Euro-Mediterranean gas market to promote security, transparency and predictability of both demand and supply in a manner that correctly and fairly should balance the interests of producing and consuming countries and should provide the basis of the long-term secure development of the abundant resources in the region.

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*UfM Platform on Gas officially  
launched in June 2015*

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*Establishing a structured  
regional dialogue*

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## Programme of Work of the UfM Gas Platform

The proposed two-years Work Programme was elaborated thanks to active contribution and suggestions from, and dialogue with the Platform members. The Programme sets out the Platform's priorities and possible resulting activities, deliverables and interim milestones.

The Work Program is twofold: thematic studies with deliverables, and events (meetings) on cross-cutting or specific issues.

Thematic studies are broken down in three subject topics: gas supply and demand, Infrastructure, and cross-cutting issues.

Activities have started. (More information soon on UfM Gas Platform website @ [www.ufmgasplatform.org](http://www.ufmgasplatform.org)).

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*Implementation of the Gas Platform work programme has started*

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## Organisation of the UfM Gas Platform

The Platform is the governing body. Decisions of the Platform will be taken by UfM Members States by consensus. The Platform will be responsible for approving its work plan.

The Platform's activities will be coordinated by a Steering Committee composed of the UfM co-presidency, the Secretariats of the three platforms and the animators of the Working Groups.

The "Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie" (OME) runs the Platform's secretariat in close coordination with the UfM co-presidency. It reports to the Platform Steering Committee and governing body and is responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the Platform activities.

If appropriate, the Platform may be supported by one or more working groups on specific relevant themes. Each working group will appoint an animator. The working groups will work in close cooperation with the Platform Secretariat, under coordination of the Steering Committee.

The Platform will meet at least once a year. (More on UfM Gas Platform website).

## Forthcoming events

**Informal High Level Meeting on Energy Efficiency in the Mediterranean**, La Valetta, Malta, 18-19 May 2017, under the auspices of the EU Maltese Presidency together with the Co-Presidencies of the UfM. A session dedicated to the state of play of the three UfM Energy Platforms is foreseen on 19 May in the morning.



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The UfM Gas Platform is a concrete outcome of the will of the UfM members and major stakeholders to strengthen dialogue and cooperation between the EU and South and East Mediterranean countries.

More information available soon at: [ufmgasplatform.org](http://ufmgasplatform.org)



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