

“GGI has set itself an ambitious objective: transporting gas that is carbon-neutral by 2050”

Interview with **René Bautz**, CEO of Gaznat and currently chairing Green Gas Initiative (GGI)

Mr Bautz, the Green Gas Initiative was founded as an answer to meet the challenges of the required transition towards a greener future for EU citizens. Can you explain to our readers the objectives of this initiative?

Bautz: The members of the Green Gas Initiative (GGI) have signed a joint declaration and committed themselves to the main objective of contributing to a CO₂-neutral gas supply by 2050. This common goal can be realised together by working on a number of subjects.

The GGI members consider the combination of using biomethane, power to gas solutions or alternative fuels (NG and biogas) for road and maritime transport, as the most promising solutions for curbing climate change.

Who are the members?

Bautz: GGI consists of seven independent gas infrastructure companies: Energinet.dk (Denmark), Fluxys Belgium, Gasunie (the Netherlands), Gaznat (Switzerland), GRTgaz (France), ONTRAS (Germany) and Swedegas (Sweden). As infrastructure operators, the companies share their long-term strategic goals with Europe’s green vision for 2050.

Which developments are of particular importance for the success of the mission?

Bautz: The cross-border cooperation seeks to achieve benefits for all parties involved through knowledge exchange and targeted communication on both national and European levels. Each company has its particular expertise. Working together within the GGI, the members learn from each other and spur each other to develop broader know-how.

What could be achieved in recent years by GGI?

Bautz: A first brochure was elaborated, in order to present the objectives of GGI, as well as the current working groups: Biomethane, Power to Gas, and Transport. This brochure is completed by an inventory of the countries in which these companies are active, and different recommendations are formulated for each of the three above-mentioned domains. This brochure is available on GGI’s internal website: www.greengasinitiative.eu

During GGI’s last meeting in June 2017 (in the framework the GIE Conference in Prag), the member companies’ CEOs gave their approval to the publishing of a detailed report on biomethane, which is also available on GGI’s website.

How is the collaboration organized between the members?

Bautz: First of all, member companies have a rotating presidency of GGI – Gaznat assumes this role until the end of October 2017.

As previously mentioned, three groups work on the respective domains of Biomethane, Power to Gas, and Transport. Their activities are monitored by a coordination group, which is led by the same company chairing GGI during that year. The different working groups meet 2 to 4 times a year, while CEOs of the member companies meet once or twice a year.

What do you think are the main challenges for the gas infrastructure operators to meet their targets?

Bautz: GGI has set itself an ambitious objective: transporting gas that is carbon-neutral by 2050.

To reach this objective, each member company must work with the following targets:

- Exchanging « best practices » between companies who can help raising the amount of carbon-neutral gas in networks.
- Contributing to sustain the development of new innovative technologies, such as Power to Gas, a whole new biomethane production system based on renewable energy.
- Encouraging a favourable environment for the development of carbon-neutral gas.

The fact that biomethane injection and production has risen by 50% over the last 3 years in the networks of GGI countries confirms that GGI’s undertakings are beginning to materialize.

Mr Bautz, thank you very much for the interview.

