
 <p><b>UNECE</b></p>	<p><b>UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE</b></p> <p><b>ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ ООН</b></p> <p><b>NATIONS UNIES COMMISSION ÉCONOMIQUE POUR L'EUROPE</b></p>	
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## Reinventing the Gas Centre

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### Gas Centre Terms of Reference

#### A. Background

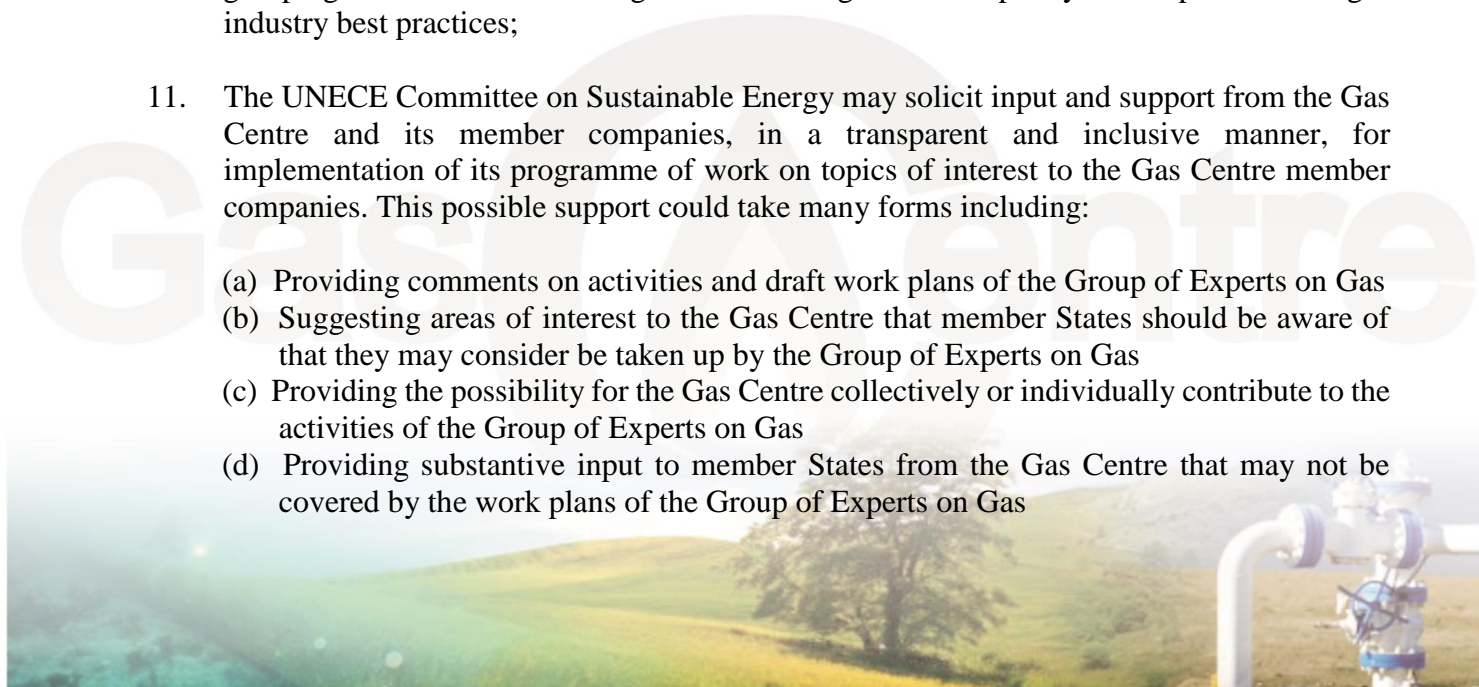
1. In 1994 the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the UNECE, which comprises 56 member countries in North America, Europe, the Caucasus, and central Asia, launched a technical cooperation programme to assist governments and gas companies in Central and Eastern Europe in their efforts to create more decentralized and market-based gas industries (the Gas Centre).
2. These tasks were achieved by the late 1990's, and since that time the Gas Centre has undertaken new tasks at the behest of its membership as gas markets have evolved and as new rules and regulations have emerged. During the course of 2013 the UNECE member States renewed the mandate of the Gas Centre, asking that it reinforce its role as a platform for engagement between governments and industry.
3. The UNECE Gas Centre provides members with an open, neutral and transparent platform for dialogue among its members for exchange of views and discussion of topical issues related to gas and for exchange with governments. The topics for the dialogue are decided by the membership based on members' needs in an evolving market and regulatory environment.
4. The energy activities of UNECE were reconfigured by member States in 2013 explicitly to help them attain the objectives of Sustainable Energy for All and the other energy-related sustainable development goals. Throughout the UN it is recognized that transforming the energy system to sustainable outcomes cannot be achieved without extensive public private engagement of the sort that the Gas Centre represents. Done right, the Gas Centre can serve as a model for industry/government engagement to establish the right framework conditions for industry to accelerate the transformation.
5. The UNECE has many activities underway on all sources of energy and maintains close relations with both the industries that develop, transform, and deliver them and relevant international organizations. The UNECE Gas Centre can therefore provide an avenue to engage the interests of the gas industry with the other professional groupings and

international organizations on broader, UN-level energy market policy and regulatory developments and best practices, standards, or other normative instruments.

6. The role of natural gas in the global energy mix is growing both as a share of the total, but also as a vehicle for accelerating the reduction in the carbon intensity of the sector. Natural gas technology offers the flexibility that the future energy system will require, it can provide network support services cost-effectively, it has lower carbon intensity than other fossil fuels in both power and transportation, and it can complement the growing share of renewables in the energy mix. Natural gas is a vital ingredient in the energy system of the future. For all of these reasons, a facilitated engagement between the intergovernmental bodies, the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its Group of Experts on Gas, and the industry body, UNECE's Gas Centre, can contribute to policies, standards, and regulations being developed in a sound manner.
7. Globalization of the gas market and emerging challenges are imperatives for the Gas Centre to enlarge its scope of activities, methods of work and area of interests and to serve as a platform for transparent dialogue among major players of the gas industry and governments representatives. At the same time the Gas Centre will maintain its historic role for East-West dialogue.

## **B. Objectives**

8. Given the universal character of the United Nations Organisation on the one hand and the growing role of natural gas in the global energy mix, including globalization of the gas market on the other, the Gas Centre is the home in a UN context for the gas/energy companies from all continents representing all segments of the gas chain from production to consumption;
9. As an integral part of the UNECE, the Gas Centre facilitates access to governments through the Group of Experts on Gas to provide them with signals from the industry on important issues, which reinforces its role as a platform for dialogue between governments and companies as requested by member States;
10. The Gas Centre also cooperates in the interests of the gas industry with other professional groupings and international organizations on gas market policy developments and gas industry best practices;
11. The UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy may solicit input and support from the Gas Centre and its member companies, in a transparent and inclusive manner, for implementation of its programme of work on topics of interest to the Gas Centre member companies. This possible support could take many forms including:
  - (a) Providing comments on activities and draft work plans of the Group of Experts on Gas
  - (b) Suggesting areas of interest to the Gas Centre that member States should be aware of that they may consider be taken up by the Group of Experts on Gas
  - (c) Providing the possibility for the Gas Centre collectively or individually contribute to the activities of the Group of Experts on Gas
  - (d) Providing substantive input to member States from the Gas Centre that may not be covered by the work plans of the Group of Experts on Gas

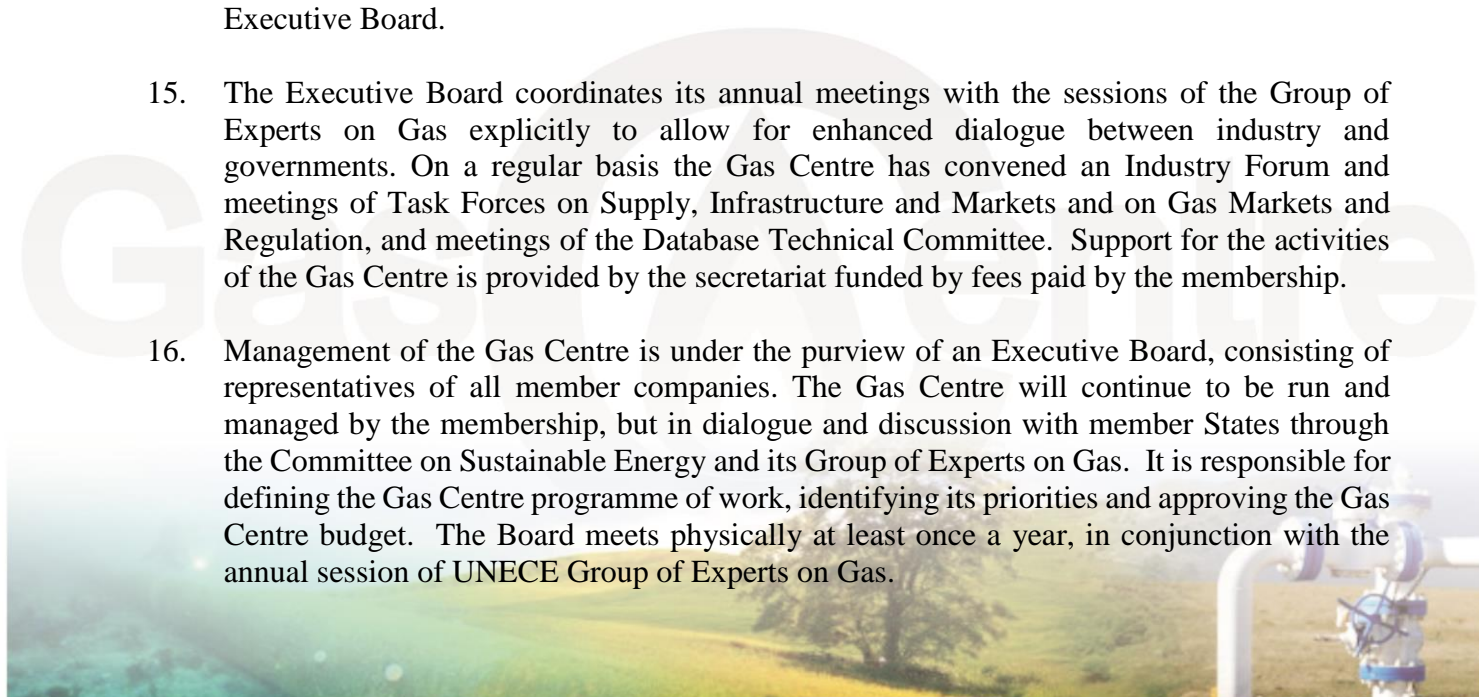


### C. Areas of Work

12. Given the increasing role of natural gas in the global energy mix, its environmental advantages as compared to other fossil fuels, and taking into account that it is available in an increasingly global gas market, the Gas Centre may undertake activities along the entire gas chain, including giving advice in the following areas:
- (a) New roles and challenges for the Gas Centre in a globalising gas market;
  - (b) Enhancing security of gas supply;
  - (c) Role of natural gas in the international (European) energy mix;
  - (d) Policy and legislation related to gas market operations;
  - (e) Standards for gas production, transport and use;
  - (f) Role of natural gas in shifting to a low-carbon economy;
  - (g) Reinforcing producer-consumer and producer-transporter dialogue;
  - (h) New gas supply/gas infrastructure projects;
  - (i) Moving towards a single European gas market;
  - (j) Gas market infrastructure development;
  - (k) Use of gas for transportation sector;
  - (l) Dynamics and evolution of the global market;
  - (m) Role of selected regions (Caspian, Middle East, etc.) in enhancing security of gas supply;
  - (n) Interrelationship between natural gas and environment, including gas leaks, etc.;
13. The UNECE member states may invite the Gas Centre, in a transparent and inclusive manner, to consider providing input to the activities of the Group of Experts on Gas that may be of interest to the Gas Centre. Such input could be provided in various forms, including: direct participation in joint projects and also by providing practical advice; promoting guidelines and best practices on selected gas industry activities; recommending activities to the Group of Experts on Gas that could be of interest to both governments and industry.

### D. Modalities of operation

14. Members of the Gas Centre are representatives of the gas industry, state-owned and private gas companies from the UNECE region and beyond. Its membership is open to companies representing other regions and other stakeholders in the gas industry, and it represents all segments of the gas chain from source to use. The Gas Centre's governing body is the Executive Board.
15. The Executive Board coordinates its annual meetings with the sessions of the Group of Experts on Gas explicitly to allow for enhanced dialogue between industry and governments. On a regular basis the Gas Centre has convened an Industry Forum and meetings of Task Forces on Supply, Infrastructure and Markets and on Gas Markets and Regulation, and meetings of the Database Technical Committee. Support for the activities of the Gas Centre is provided by the secretariat funded by fees paid by the membership.
16. Management of the Gas Centre is under the purview of an Executive Board, consisting of representatives of all member companies. The Gas Centre will continue to be run and managed by the membership, but in dialogue and discussion with member States through the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its Group of Experts on Gas. It is responsible for defining the Gas Centre programme of work, identifying its priorities and approving the Gas Centre budget. The Board meets physically at least once a year, in conjunction with the annual session of UNECE Group of Experts on Gas.



17. The Executive Board elects its Bureau to assist in the implementation of work during the year between the sessions of the Board. The Bureau elects its own Chair. The Chair of the Executive Board will, when possible and necessary, attend meetings of the Bureau of the Group of Experts on Gas to discuss and present the work of the Gas Centre.
18. The Director of the Sustainable Energy Division of the UNECE serves on the Executive Board and Bureau. A Manager of the Gas Centre is responsible for implementation of the decisions of the Executive Board and for conducting daily operations. The Centre has a small staff to support approved activities.
19. The Gas Centre develops its annual programme of work on topical gas industry and gas market issues that are of interest to its members and on which they engage with member States through the UNECE Group of Experts on Gas.
20. The programme of work includes annual meetings of the Executive Board, meetings of Task Forces (if approved by the Board) on topical issues as established by the Board; and meeting(s) of the Bureau of the Executive Board, as appropriate. In addition, member companies may consider other methods of work, such as funding additional research and organizing relevant conferences, fora, seminars, workshops and technical visits. In determining and developing their profile the Gas Centre solicits support and cooperation from the gas companies, international institutions and governments from the UNECE region and beyond.
21. The Gas Centre is financed from a dedicated trust fund to which interested companies and organisations provide direct cash contributions. The level of contribution is defined in negotiations between the interested company/organisation and the Gas Centre Manager (according to existing range of fees) and is stipulated in the Letter Agreement between the Company and UNECE which is signed by both parties.
22. The trust fund is managed according to rules of the United Nations and is subject to a customary 13 percent charge for programme support. Recruitment of personnel and procurement of supplies or equipment financed from the trust fund are subject to regulations, rules, policies and procedures of the United Nations Organization.

