

EERA High-Level Policy Conference 2024

AGENDA

“Driving EU Competitiveness through Low-Carbon Energy Research & Innovation”

Date: 16 October 2024

Time: 9:30 – 13:30 CEST, followed by a networking lunch

Format: In-person with live broadcast

Location: Sparks, Brussels

1. Concept overview

The EU is grappling with challenges to maintain its international competitiveness, stemming from various factors, including structural issues such as high energy prices, dependencies on the supply of critical minerals and components, shortage of skilled labour, struggles to fully embrace digitalisation across sectors, insufficient benefit from market integration, and the need to radically scale up investment. Furthermore, in response to the current tectonic reshuffling of the world order, the EU is shifting its geopolitical stance from being 'open to the world' to one of 'strategic autonomy', with deep systemic implications for the Union's policy directions. This shift has a significant impact on international commerce and economic relations, requiring a re-evaluation of the EU's approach to trade, industrial, and research and innovation (R&I) policies and strategies amidst geopolitical tensions and global economic uncertainty.

In this context, the EU policy and legislative framework which has prevailed from an energy and climate perspective is the European Green Deal. Adapted over the years to respond to various crises, including COVID-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it has nevertheless continued to demonstrate resilience – a characteristic likely to persist into the new EU institutional term. With the European Parliament now settled and the proposal for the new College of Commissioners announced, this cornerstone initiative is indeed set to remain relevant, albeit with a change in focus, now more decisively geared towards industrial priorities and a stronger commitment to implementation.

Building further, a crucial aspect of **the success of the Green Deal lies in effectively executing the Clean Energy Transition (CET), a process entailing a comprehensive transformation of the energy system to realise a fair, environmentally sustainable, competitive, and climate-neutral society by 2050.** In this context, we firmly believe that energy R&I is crucial for advancing all the aforementioned CET aspects simultaneously. Although this dimension has rarely been considered a key element in boosting competitiveness until recently, it has now attracted increasing attention from the EU political sphere. This shift is reflected in landmark policy documents such as **Letta's report on the future of the Single Market, President von der Leyen's political guidelines,** and, most recently, **Draghi's report on the future of European competitiveness**—an acknowledgement that the EERA community welcomes and is eager to build upon.



Against this backdrop, and amidst fierce international competition, rising protectionism, and geopolitical tensions, EERA has therefore chosen to focus its flagship conference of this year on energy R&I as a fundamental driver of competitiveness as Europe radically transforms its energy system and a pillar to support the Union's strategic autonomy. In conjunction, the conference will be animated **by insights drawn from a corresponding technology and policy-oriented report on the topic, gathering actionable recommendations** stemming from the work of the broadest and most comprehensive energy research community in Europe.

Bringing together renowned **keynote speakers and facilitating insightful and thought-provoking discussions between academics, policymakers, industry representatives and professionals from the low-carbon energy field**, EERA's policy conference is set to provide a prime opportunity for furthering the dialogue surrounding the increasingly prominent capacity of energy research and innovation to support Europe's most strategic goals.

2. Agenda overview

Time	Title
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome coffee and registration

Time	Title	Speakers
9:30 – 9:40	Welcoming remarks	Henk-Jan Vink President, EERA Confirmed
09:40 – 10:00	Opening speech	Janez Potočnik Former European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Confirmed
10:00 – 10:20	Highlights EERA flagship report <i>Driving EU Competitiveness through Low-Carbon Energy Research & Innovation</i>	Adel El Gammal Secretary General, EERA
10:20 – 10:35	Keynote speech 1 – Introduction to panel 1: Securing long-term competitiveness: enabling conditions and the role of low-carbon R&I in setting the course	Rosalinde van der Vlies Director, Clean Planet, DG RTD Confirmed
10:35 – 11:45	Panel 1: Securing long-term competitiveness: enabling conditions and the role of low-carbon R&I in setting the course	<p><u>Policymaker</u> César Dro Policy officer, Common Policy Centre, DG RTD, European Commission Confirmed</p> <p><u>International organisation</u> Norela Constantinescu Deputy Director Innovation and Technology Center, IRENA Confirmed</p> <p><u>Research</u> Martin Porter Executive Chair, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) Confirmed</p> <p><u>Industry</u> Angels Orduña Executive Director, A.SPIRE</p>



		<p>Confirmed</p> <p><u>EERA community</u> Nils Røkke Vice-president, EERA Confirmed</p>
11:45 – 12:00 Coffee break		
12:00 – 12:15	Keynote speech 2 – Introduction to panel 2: Low-carbon R&I meets the industrial ecosystem: addressing bottlenecks, sharing success stories, and paving the way forward	<p>Jules Besnainou Founder and Executive Director, Cleantech for Europe Invited</p>
12:15 – 13:25	<p>Panel 2: Low-carbon R&I meets the industrial ecosystem: addressing bottlenecks, sharing success stories, and paving the way forward</p>	<p><u>Industry</u> Fabrice Stassin Manager EU Government Affairs, Umicore Confirmed</p> <p><u>Policymaker/European Commission</u> Daniel Cios Policy Officer, Energy Intensive Industries and Raw Materials, DG GROW, European Commission Confirmed</p> <p><u>EERA community</u> Leen Govaerts Vice-president, EERA Replacement pending</p>
13:25 – 13:30	Concluding remarks	<p>Henk-Jan Vink President, EERA Confirmed</p>
13:30 – 14:30 Networking lunch		