



QUARTERLY PERIODICAL FOR THE EUROPEAN CONTRACTORS SOCIETY WORKING
IN THE REFRIGERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING AND HEAT PUMP SECTOR
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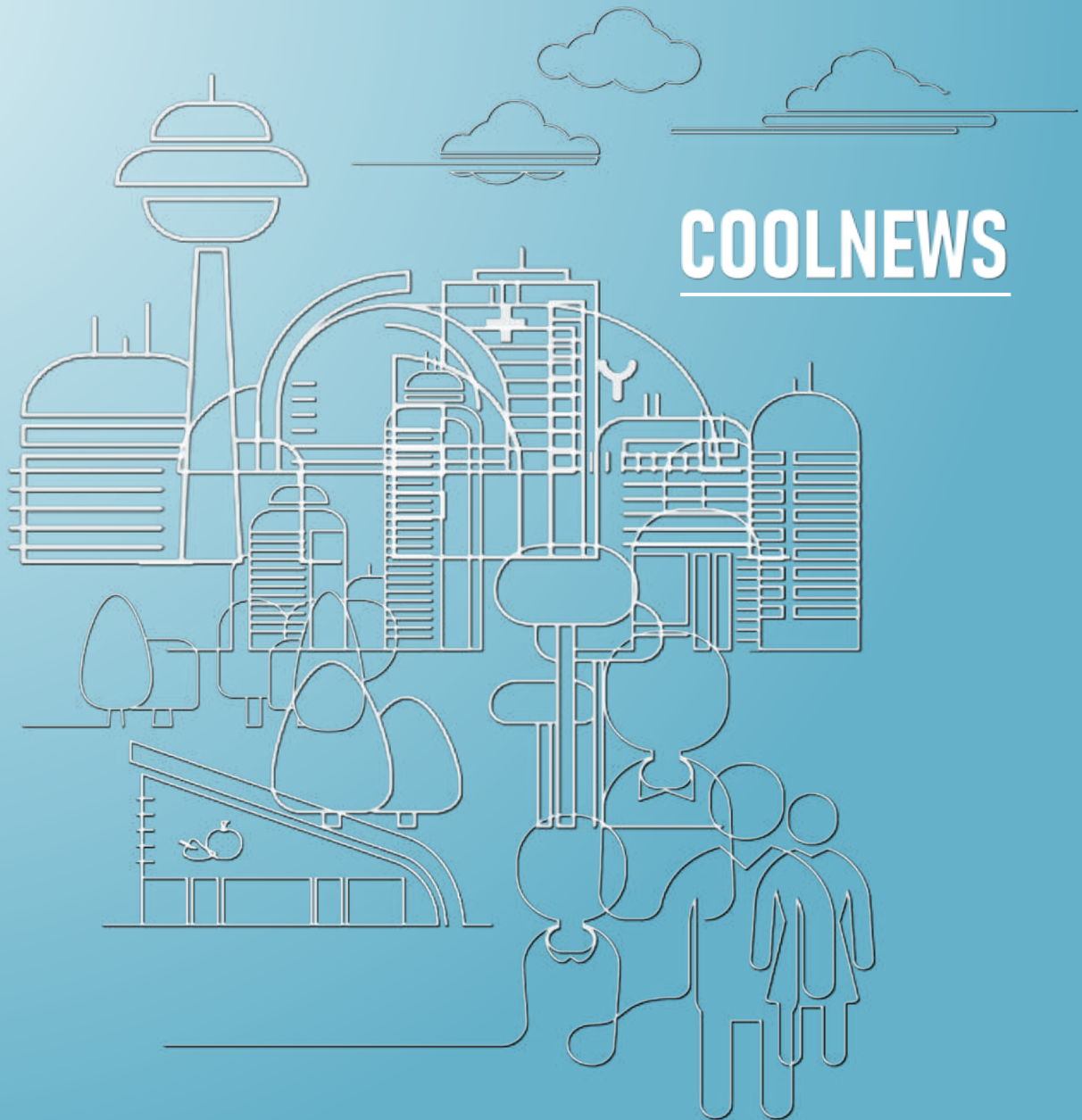


TABLE OF CONTENTS

AREA AFFAIRS	2
AREA 2022 ANNUAL REPORT	2
AREA SPRING MEETINGS IN TALLINN	2
THE 20 TH EDITION OF CSG EUROPEAN CONFERENCES	3
LEGISLATION	5
F-GAS REGULATION	5
PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS)	7
ODS REGULATION	8
HEAT PUMPS - ACTION PLAN TO ACCELERATE ROLL-OUT ACROSS THE EU	9
ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE (EPBD)	9
RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE (RED II) AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE (EED)	9
NET-ZERO INDUSTRY ACT	10
LEGISLATIVE TRACKER	11
REFRIGERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING & HEAT PUMP NEWS	13
AREA-WRD WOMEN IN COOLING, VIDEO COMPETITION	13
LAUNCH OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS 2023	14
INWIC WEBSITE	14
2023 WORLD REFRIGERATION DAY	15

AREA AFFAIRS

AREA 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

On 12 May, AREA released its 2022 Annual Report, providing readers with a comprehensive overview of AREA's wide range of activities and achievements in 2022.

Read all about what we have been working on in 2022 and our key activities in our mission to support and promote a high standard of quality and safety in the refrigeration, heat pump and air conditioning industry [HERE](#)



AREA SPRING MEETINGS IN TALLINN



The General Assembly meeting, taking place on 26 May, gathered members in Tallinn, Estonia. Among the main decisions taken, the 2022 financial results were adopted.

We welcomed Mrs. Saranina and Mr. Kuznecovs who presented the Association of Refrigeration Equipment Engineers of Latvia (LSIA).

Mr. Buoni unveiled the name of the winner of the EU Women in Cooling Video Competition which was officially announced on 8 of June at the UNEP-IIR-AREA-CSG 20th European Conference.

THE 20TH EDITION OF CSG EUROPEAN CONFERENCES

The 20th edition of the renowned European Conference by United Nations UNEP Ozonaction, IIR, AREA and Centro Studi Galileo, which took place on 8 - 9 June 2023 at the Politecnico di Milano, ended with the cheers of the audience: the hundreds of attendees were able to appreciate over forty presentations by leading experts in the HVACR sector (heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration and heat pumps), during a one-of-a-kind event ([see photos](#)).

Under the auspices of the **Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security**, the European Conference was organised and delivered thanks to the joint efforts by some of the main stakeholders in the sector: in addition to **Centro Studi Galileo** and **United Nations – UNEP OzonAction**, the event is provided by the **IIF-IIR** (International Institute of Refrigeration, Paris), **AREA** (union of twenty-four European RAC Associations of contractors), **ATF** (Italian Association of Refrigeration Technicians) and **REI** (Renewable Energy Institute, Edinburgh).

The 2023 Conference was a success also in terms of numbers: 42 speeches, 220 participants in presence and 50 connected remotely, joining from 38 Countries and 4 continents.

During the event there was space for two extremely significant moments:

1. the first-ever award ceremony to the winner of the "**Women in Cooling Video Competition**", a new prize that was established by AREA in cooperation with CSG; the winner was Léana Khaled Payan, a young French technician of Axima Refrigeration, who was evaluated as the best among the 12 participants (3 from Spain, 2 from France and Turkey, the rest from Ireland, Poland, Italy, Norway and Slovakia). The winner was elected during the latest AREA General Assembly, held in Estonia at the end of May, by a jury that included both representatives of the association and **World Refrigeration Day**. All videos are available on AREA's YouTube channel and Facebook page and were recorded in the technician's native language (subtitled), to enhance inclusiveness and encourage more women into the sector.



2. the signing of the **Memorandum of Understanding between** the African Union of RAC Associations **U-3ARC and the IIF-IIR**, the International Institute of Refrigeration, which will open a new era of mutual collaboration. The signature was made respectively by the President and Director General of the two institutions, Madi Sakandé and Didier Coulomb.

The event also included a discussion with **Coen van de Sande**, President of AREA. The interview touched on several key points, including AREA's position on the new F-Gas Regulation.



In the frame of the 20th EUConfRAC, there was also space for celebrations: to celebrate the **anniversary of 40 years of history for CSG European Conferences**, the first ever held in 1982 and now reaching its 20th edition, on the evening of Thursday 8 June a celebratory cocktail was offered, along with a splendid commemorative cake.

The Conference concluded with the announcement of the next edition's dates, scheduled on **12–13 June 2025**. Put it in your calendar!



F-GAS REGULATION

Revision of the F-Gas Regulation

On 30 March, Members of the European Parliament adopted their [position on the revision of the Fgas Regulation](#) with 426 votes in favour, 109 against and 52 abstentions. They agreed on:

- A steeper phase-down of HFCs on the EU market from 2039 onwards, with a full HFC production and consumption phase-out by 2050 (Annex VII).
- Strengthening the requirements that govern the placing on the EU single market of products containing F-gases (Annex IV).
- Extending the current F-Gas training and certification scheme to alternative refrigerants which is a key advocacy win for AREA.
- Enabling customs authorities to seize and confiscate F-gases imported or exported in violation of the rules, in line with the upcoming environmental crime directive.

As of 2024, only 23.6% of the amount of F-gases used in 2015 will be allowed on the market. From 2027, this will go down to 11%, before steadily approaching zero by 2050 on a sloped trajectory. The biggest cuts will be made from 2024 onwards.

AREA's statement on the adoption on the European Parliament's position is available on our [website](#).

On 5 April, Member States agreed on a [mandate](#) for the Presidency to start negotiations with the European Parliament on the Fgas Regulation:

- The Council proposed to lower the HFCs quota allocation price from €3 to €2.
- The Council agreed to postpone a number of bans compared to the Commission's proposal, mainly for heat pumps, in order to put the proposal more in line with the targets set under REPowerEU. The agreement also clarifies on what grounds possible exemptions can be given for safety reasons.
- The Council proposed to split the ban of certain split heat pumps into an earlier ban for air-to-water systems, for which alternatives are more widely available, and a later ban for air-to-air systems, where it's more difficult to use alternatives. To balance this, more quotas for placing on the market of HFCs are introduced.
- The Council agreed to postpone the reduction of the use of HFCs in metered dose inhalers, or MDIs, to guarantee the safety of patients, and increase the number of quotas.
- In addition, the Council added a safety clause to enable the Commission to react, through delegated acts, to release a limited number of additional quotas if the proposed bans were to endanger the attainment of the heat pumps deployment target required under REPowerEU.
- Existing F-gas certificates and training attestations shall remain valid. By three years following the entry into force of this Regulation, Member States shall ensure that certified natural persons are required to participate to refreshment training courses or complete an evaluation process referred to in paragraph 3, at least every seven years. Member States shall ensure that natural persons who already hold a certificate or training attestation shall participate in refreshment

course referred to in paragraph 3 or complete such evaluation process for the first time no later than five years following the entry into force of this Regulation.

- The Council made the provisions on penalties less prescriptive in order for them to better fit different national systems.

Together with 9 leading European associations and global partners, AREA responded to the EU Council's mandate. The joint statement is available [here](#).

Following the adoption of both the European Parliament and EU Council's positions on the F-gas Regulation revision, the triologue phase (negotiations between the co-legislators) has started. Two meetings took place on 25 April and 13 June and a last one will be organised on 19 July to reach an agreement before the summer break.

During the negotiations, the EU Institutions use the "[4-Column document](#)" which includes the Commission's proposal, EP's position and EU Council's mandate.

In addition to our joint effort with other industry association, AREA also shared a letter focusing on certification and training in May.

HFC prices

Öko-Recherche released the Q1/2023 excerpt of the HFC prices monitoring. The main findings are:

- For the high GWP gases/mixtures R410A, R404A, and R134a considerable increases have been observed throughout the supply chain (average prices up by 75%, 67%, and 48%, respectively, when compared with price levels reported for Q1/2022). This is especially the case for R404A.
- Price developments on the EU market for R134a and R410A are contrasting the developments on the world market, where price levels have stood constant for R134a and gone down for R410A.
- On the distributor level, prices of alternatives such as HFC/HFO blend solutions increased from previous quarter (R448A, and R449A up by 17% and 11%, respectively).
- In general, the EU refrigerant market appears to be quite stable in terms of supply. Limited regional availability was indicated for none of the refrigerants.
- Prices of quota authorisations are reported to have changed little, with some tentative indications for increasing average prices (range of 14.8 to 16 €/t CO₂e, with an average of ca. 15.5 €/t CO₂e).
- Compared to 2014, prices of R134a are 2.3-6.1, R404A prices are 2.6-13.5 and R410A prices are 2.1-6.9 times higher depending on the supply chain level.

PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS)

As a reminder, the competent authorities of five countries (Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark) submitted to ECHA a REACH restriction dossier for PFAS, arguing that the persistence of PFAS poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and humans. It was [published](#) in February.

There are two options on how to restrict the use and placing on the market of PFAS:

- Full ban with no derogations and a transition period of 18 months after the Regulation enters into force.
- Ban with use-specific and time-limited derogations that would carry an 18-month transition period and a 5 or 12-year derogation period, depending on the application.

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has launched a public consultation and invites interested parties to send in scientific and technical information on the manufacture, placing on the market and use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) by 25 September 2023. ECHA has a particular interest in information relevant to the risks, socio-economic aspects and alternative substances. See more information [here](#).

The video recording, presentations and Q&A document from ECHA online info session held on 5 April explaining the proposed REACH restriction on PFAS are available [here](#).

Next steps:

- 2024: SEAC and RAC final opinions;
- 2025: European Commission adoption and entry into force;
- 2026-27: PFAS restriction becomes applicable.

Members of the Refrigerants Working Group discussed this issue twice on 5 April and 25 May. It was decided to develop a general position stating that AREA members support the objective of reducing PFAS emissions into the environment. However, more time is needed for training and certification on alternatives refrigerants to ensure a safe transition. To accompany this document, AREA will share numbers on the need for training and certification on alternatives based on the results of a survey among members. In addition to this position paper, AREA might also reply to the questionnaire of the ECHA consultation based on the members' input.

ODS REGULATION

On 30 March, Members of the European Parliament adopted their [report on the revision of the regulation addressing ozone-depleting substances \(ODS\)](#) with 553 votes in favour, 10 against and 20 abstentions. In its position, the European Parliament:

- Supports the Commission proposal which confirms that the production, sale, use, imports and exports of ODS are not allowed.
- Tightens the control of exempted ODS uses (the production of other chemicals, in laboratories and for fire protection in special applications such as military equipment and airplanes). MEPs request that the Commission should propose measures to further cap or phase out such uses when alternatives become available.
- Introduces a rolling review mechanism (by 1 January 2025 and every 2.5 years thereafter) requiring the Commission to assess the availability of alternatives for ODS used as feedstock and propose measures to further cap or phase out such uses where alternatives exist.
- Extends the rules related to leakages and registration in the licensing system to all ODS covered by the EU legislation (including to those not covered by the Montreal Protocol, listed in [Annex II](#))
- Strengthens the powers of customs and market surveillance authorities in preventing illegal trade of ODS and aligns the new rules with those on the protection of the environment through criminal law.

On 5 April, Member States agreed on a [mandate](#) for the Presidency to start negotiations with the European Parliament on the ODS Regulations:

- The Council agreed to reduce administrative burden by adapting the provisions on essential laboratory and analytical uses while maintaining the registration requirement to avoid an increase in fraudulent practice.
- The Council added clarifications like a time limit in the case of imports or exports of recovered, recycled or reclaimed halon for critical uses.
- The Council also included certain uses of halons essential to national security among the critical uses of halons.
- The Council made the provisions on penalties less prescriptive in order for them to better fit different national systems.

An initial trilogue (negotiations between the co-legislators) took place on 25 April, followed by a second on 15 June, yielding a partial agreement on the core elements of the Regulation. The remaining parts comprised parallel provisions that remained to be agreed upon during an upcoming trilogue on the F-gas Regulation, which is set to take place on 19 July.

HEAT PUMPS - ACTION PLAN TO ACCELERATE ROLL-OUT ACROSS THE EU

The European Commission has launched a new initiative, named [“Heat pumps – action plan to accelerate roll-out across the EU”](#), which will take the form of a strategic communication, drawing up specific measures for their faster rollout.

Most importantly for AREA, the action plan will consider establishing a partnership of legislators and stakeholders to scale up manufacturing and quicker roll out of heat pumps, and will establish a dedicated heat-pump skills partnership.

AREA’s participation in these two pillars of the action plan is of high importance. The AREA secretariat and several members already held a meeting with the responsible policy officers of the European Commission to discuss our activities, views and suggestions to overcome the bottlenecks in the area of the necessary skills, training and qualifications for the safe, efficient and quick rollout of heat pumps.

The European Commission also launched a public consultation with a deadline of 30 August, to which AREA will respond.

ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE (EPBD)

With having the officially adopted [position](#) of the European Parliament on 14 March 2023 and the [general approach](#) of the Council of the EU on 21 October 2022 on the EPBD revision proposal, the two co-legislative bodies entered into trialogue negotiations. The first trialogue took place on 6 June and more meetings will be held in the coming months.

The AREA secretariat will keep monitoring the negotiation’s developments.

RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE (RED II) AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE (EED)

The trialogue negotiations on the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) recast between the European Parliament and EU Council were finalised with a [final agreement](#) on 16 June, which sets a target of 42.5% share of renewable energy in final energy consumption by 2030.

This postponement on the political agreement with the European Parliament in mid-May was due to a block led by France and supported by other pro-nuclear Member States, who demanded additional guarantees on the production of low-carbon hydrogen derived from nuclear energy. The European Commission issued a [written declaration](#), recognising the role of nuclear energy in achieving Europe's decarbonisation objectives, in order for the 27 Member States to reach agreement on the Directive. Furthermore, the Council included an additional recital (22a) to the compromise text to correspond to

the declaration. This did not re-open the negotiations with the Parliament and will not affect the articles of interest to AREA. On 28 June, the EP ITRE Committee in the lead of the file approved the provisional agreement of inter-institutional negotiations.

As next steps, the text will receive its approval during the European Parliament' plenary meeting on 11 September 2023, which will be sent to the Council of the EU will have to put their final stamp as well.

When it comes to the recast proposal on the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), on 29 March, the Parliament and Council made a compromise agreement setting new energy saving targets in both primary and final energy consumption in the EU (at least 11.7% at EU level by 2030), ensuring annual energy savings of 1.5% on average by 2030 and that at least 3% of public buildings are renovated each year into nearly-zero energy buildings or zero-emission buildings. The agreement also establishes new requirements for efficient district heating systems.

The agreement has been approved by COREPER and the EP ITRE Committee. It will be formally adopted by the Parliament on 10 July before it can be published in the EU's Official Journal and enter into force.

NET ZERO INDUSTRY ACT

As a reminder, AREA issued a welcoming [reaction](#) the [Net Zero Industry Act](#) proposal, which sets heat pumps as a strategic technology and the enhancing of skills is one of the main pillars on which the regulation is based on. The Commission's proposal also includes the creation of Net-Zero Industry Academies and a Net-Zero Europe Platform. Furthermore, the text foresees obligations on Member States to identify whether the training and qualification programmes respond to the market demands and to develop common sets of minimum knowledge skills and competencies.

The work on the file in the European Parliament and Council of the EU is ongoing, with the first unofficial positions from the co-legislators already becoming available. In a nutshell, the leading EP ITRE Committee foresees mainly strengthening and expansion of the relevant for AREA articles on skills. On the other hand, the EU Member States signal that they are not happy with the obligations that are being put on them by the text and push for a more voluntary and prescriptive nature of the proposed measures.

In terms of the main upcoming milestones, the ITRE Committee will vote on its position on 12 October 2023, while the other EP Committees for opinion are expected to produce their positions in the end of July and September.

LEGISLATIVE TRACKER

Initiative	Legislative milestones	AREA Activities
<p>Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)</p> <p>Status: monitoring</p>	<p>Commission proposal 15 December 2021</p> <p>European Parliament Position 15 February 2023</p> <p>Council of the EU Position 24 October 2022</p> <p>Triilogue negotiations ongoing</p> <p>Next steps: Compromise agreement - TBC</p>	<p>AREA Position on the Commission's Roadmap 08 April 2021</p> <p>AREA response to the Commission's Public Consultation 18 June 2021</p> <p>AREA Statement on the EPBD revision proposal 16 December 2021</p> <p>AREA Position Paper 30 March 2022</p>
<p>Renewable Energy Sources Directive (RES)</p> <p>Status: monitoring</p>	<p>Commission proposal 14 July 2021</p> <p>European Parliament Position 14 September 2022</p> <p>Council of the EU Position 27 June 2022</p> <p>Provisional agreement 30 March 2023</p> <p>Next steps: EP Plenary vote – 11 September 2023</p>	<p>AREA Position Paper 03 November 2011</p>
<p>Energy Efficiency Directive (EED)</p> <p>Status: monitoring</p>	<p>Commission proposal 14 July 2021</p> <p>European Parliament Position 14 September 2022</p> <p>Council of the EU Position 27 June 2022</p> <p>Next steps: EP Plenary vote – 10 July 2023</p>	<p>NA</p>

Initiative	Legislative milestones	AREA Activities
<p>Heat pumps – action plan to accelerate roll-out across the EU (Commission Communication) Status: ACTIVE</p>	<p>Call for evidence 28 April 2023</p> <p>Public Consultation 07 June – 30 August 2023</p> <p>Next steps: Commission Adoption – Q4 2024</p>	<p>Meeting with DG ENER 02 June 2023</p> <p>Response to the public consultation <i>Pending</i></p>
<p>Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA) Status: monitoring</p>	<p>Commission proposal 16 March 2023</p> <p>European Parliament and Council positions Ongoing</p>	<p>AREA reaction to the Net Zero Industry Act proposal 20 March 2023</p>
<p>F-Gas Regulation Status: ACTIVE</p>	<p>Commission proposal 5 April 2022</p> <p>European Parliament position 30 March 2023</p> <p>EU Council position 5 April 2023</p> <p>Trilogues negotiations ongoing</p> <p>Next steps: Trilogue meeting on 19 July 2023</p>	<p>AREA reply to the public consultation: 24 December 2020</p> <p>Reaction to the Commission proposal: 6 April 2022</p> <p>AREA Position Paper on the F-gas Regulation: 24 August 2022</p> <p>AREA proposal for amendments: 18 November 2022</p> <p>AREA reaction to the EP position: 4 April 2023</p> <p><i>Additional statements and joint letters are available on our website or upon request.</i></p> <p>Numerous meetings with EU officials, MEPs, EP policy advisors, MSs representatives and stakeholders</p>
<p>ODS Regulation Status: monitoring</p>	<p>Commission proposal 5 April 2022</p> <p>European Parliament position 30 March 2023</p> <p>EU Council position 5 April 2023</p> <p>Trilogues negotiations ongoing</p> <p>Next steps: Trilogue meeting on 19 July 2023</p>	<p>NA</p>

REFRIGERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING & HEAT PUMP NEWS

AREA-WRD WOMEN IN COOLING, VIDEO COMPETITION

On 26 May, the AREA General Assembly in Estonia nominated the winner of the first edition of our "AREA-WRD women in cooling, video competition". The evaluation committee was composed of:

- our Board of Directors
- our members of our Task Force Skills and Working Group Human Capital
- our representatives in INWIC
- the WRD secretariat

Evaluation criteria were focused on:

- The use of the necessary devices and tools
- The use of security means
- The correct explanation of the task to be performed

The name of the winner was released on the 8 June during the conference #20EUconfRAC: Léana Khaled Payan, young French technician of Axima Refrigeration, who was evaluated as the best among the 12 participants. Congratulations to her!

All 12 participating videos can be found [on Youtube](#).



AREA WELCOMES THE LAUNCH OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS 2023

We gladly welcome the launch of the #EuropeanYearOfSkills! To achieve decarbonisation goals & the deployment of clean, low carbon heating & cooling technologies, a skilled workforce is essential. Read our full statement [👉](#)



INWIC WEBSITE

11 May marked the launch of the International Network for Women in Cooling (INWIC) [website](#).

The website will act as a hub for the organisation and its members with the primary purpose of providing a networking platform for women working in cooling, which broadly covers the heat pumps, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR).

We kindly invite AREA members and partners to share their activities and initiatives on Women in Cooling with AREA Secretariat. It will be published on the “[Women in Cooling](#)” dedicated page on the AREA website.



2023 WORLD REFRIGERATION DAY



On Monday 26 June, AREA and its members celebrated World Refrigeration Day 2023.

Titled “Next Generation Cooling: The Future is in our hands”, the WRD 23 campaign focused on the future of cooling technology, the industry, the people working within it, and those that benefit from cooling. Building upon last year’s theme ‘Cooling Matters’, this year’s campaign looked forward with the aim of raising awareness of how the modern cooling industry is adapting and evolving to meet the challenges and opportunities the sector faces providing the increasing demand for low carbon cooling and heating solutions in a warming climate.

More information on the activities hosted by our members at this occasion can be found on [AREA website](#).

EUROPEAN HEAT PUMP SUMMIT

POWERED BY CHILLVENTA

CONGRESS + EXPO
NUREMBERG, 24–25.10.2023

Industrial | Commercial | Residential
Heating & Cooling | Components & Equipment

hp-summit.de

NÜRNBERG MESSE

On 24-25 October 2023, heat pump experts from all over the world will come together for the European Heat Pump Summit in Nuremberg. The professional congress brings together renowned speakers and international decision-makers from industry, trade, and science. As a platform for targeted dialog, discourse and exchange of experience, the European Heat Pump Summit focuses on various aspects of the promising topic of heat pumps – from market developments, research and development, and application to the creation of components and products. Additionally, exhibitors have the opportunity to present their companies and products at the accompanying foyer exhibition.



THIS NEWSLETTER IS RESERVED TO AREA MEMBERS. FOR ANY ENQUIRY, PLEASE CONTACT :
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