

Conclusions of the 79th Permanent High Level Group

Location: Energy Community Secretariat, Vienna

Date: 18 March 2026

1. Opening and adoption of the Agenda

- 01.** The meeting was chaired by Mr. Getoar Mjeku for Kosovo* and Ms. Yolanda Garcia Mezquita for the European Commission.
- 02.** The Permanent High Level Group (PHLG) approved the amended agenda of the meeting.

2. *Acquis* in preparation

For adoption by the PHLG in 2026

- 03.** The Contracting Parties invited the European Commission to distribute the draft PHLG Decision adapting and adopting Commission Regulation (EU) 2024/264 of 17 January 2024 amending Regulation (EC) No 1099/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on energy statistics, as regards the implementation of updates for the annual, monthly and short-term monthly energy statistics in time for potential adoption at the 80th PHLG meeting.
- 04.** The Energy Community Secretariat (the Secretariat) presented the draft Procedural Act on guidelines defining the procedure in case of urgency under Article 18(3) of Procedural Act 2015/04/MC-EnC. The draft will be made available to the PHLG for adoption in 2026.
- 05.** The European Commission informed about the preparation of a PHLG Decision amending Regulation (EC) No 715/2009 on conditions for access to the natural gas transmission networks, as well as the amendments concerning Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/459 and Regulation (EU) 703/2015. Upon finalization of the draft, the European Commission will distribute it to the Contracting Parties in due time for its adoption by the PHLG in 2026.
- 06.** The European Commission presented the state of play concerning the adaptation and adoption of delegated and implementing acts under Directive (EU) 2018/2001. The PHLG invited the Commission, in cooperation with the Secretariat, to continue technical discussions with the Renewable Energy Coordination Group and to prepare draft proposals for adoption in 2026.



For adoption by the Ministerial Council in 2026 and beyond

- 07.** Based on the notes submitted by several Contracting Parties outlining their respective concerns regarding the adoption of the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, and the Water Framework Directive together with its Daughter Directives, the European Commission invited further discussions within the Task Force on Environment and stressed the importance of the Ministerial Council adopting these acts in 2026. The PHLG mandated the Secretariat to prepare a report on the issues raised by the Contracting Parties and present it at the next PHLG meeting in June. Contracting Parties invited the European Commission to take into account the comments provided by the Contracting Parties concerning the deadlines for transposition.
- 08.** The European Commission and the Secretariat informed the Contracting Parties on the ongoing work regarding the adaptation of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1366 establishing a network code on sector-specific rules for cybersecurity aspects of cross-border electricity flows.
- 09.** The European Commission informed about the ongoing work to explore the possibility of a proposal for a Ministerial Council Decision adapting and adopting Regulation (EU) 2026/261 concerning the phase-out of Russian natural gas imports and preparations for the phase-out of Russian oil imports, as well as improved monitoring of potential energy dependencies. The Contracting Parties invited the Secretariat to present the Impact analysis on gas prices in the Energy Community at the next PHLG meeting in June.
- 10.** The European Commission informed the Contracting Parties about the ongoing work regarding the adaptation of REMIT for the Energy Community. The Secretariat will share the report on the consultation process.
- 11.** The European Commission presented a list of Delegated Regulations under Framework Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2534 on energy labelling of household tumble dryers, repealing Regulation (EU) No 392/2012 and introducing rescaled energy labels; Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/1353 amending Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2534 by introducing reparability information and clarifying measurement, documentation, and verification procedures; Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2048 correcting delegated regulations on air conditioners, light sources, refrigerating appliances, and refrigerating appliances with a direct sales function; Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1669 establishing energy labelling requirements for smartphones and slate tablets; and Commission

Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2018 on energy labelling of refrigerating appliances with a direct sales function, as applicable following consolidated corrections and updates). The PHLG invited the Energy Efficiency Coordination Group to engage in a technical exchange on these acts. The Contracting Parties invited the European Commission to present draft proposals of adapted acts for possible adoption decision this year. The European Commission presented the state of play and next steps concerning the draft Ministerial Council Decision on the recognition of Guarantees of Origin issued by the Contracting Parties of the Energy Community in the EU in time for its adoption by the Ministerial Council in 2026. The Contracting Parties invited the European Commission to take into account concerns submitted by the Contracting Parties in the Renewable Coordination Group on the earlier version of the draft Decision.

3. Electricity Market Integration

12. The Secretariat updated the PHLG on the status of transposition and implementation of the Electricity Integration Package (EIP) in the Contracting Parties.
13. The Secretariat presented an overview of cross-border electricity trade in the first quarter of 2026, including the initial impact of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). The PHLG took note of the information provided and invited the Secretariat to continue providing updates at its future meetings.

4. Decarbonisation and governance

14. The Secretariat and the European Commission provided an update on progress regarding energy and climate targets, the preparation and implementation of National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), and developments related to carbon pricing. The Contracting Parties invited the Secretariat to share the Report on the assessment of NECPs. The Contracting Parties welcome the update provided by the Secretariat and the European Commission on energy and climate targets, as well as on the preparation and implementation of the NECPs. Underlining the need to inform the 2030-2040 NECP process on the basis of the European Commission's guidance, and to initiate the process needed for setting of energy and climate targets in coherence with the EU 2040 framework, as a necessary basis for the drafting and effective implementation of the 2030-2040 NECPs.
15. The urgency of finalising the transposition of the MRVA package and advancing the full implementation of the MRVA framework was emphasised as a key priority. The

importance of strengthening data credibility was underlined, as reliable and verifiable data constitute a precondition for the effective implementation of governance-related objectives and decarbonisation commitments, and to this end the available technical assistance and in-house expertise of the Secretariat should be fully utilised.

5. AOB

16. The Secretariat informed the PHLG about the outcome and next steps of the second PECI selection process.
17. The Secretariat informed the PHLG about the appointment of new members of the Budget Committee.
18. The Secretariat informed the PHLG about the dates and locations of the 2026 Informal Ministerial Council and of the 2026 Ministerial Council.

Comments of Ukraine:

In response to the letter dated March 18, 2026, regarding the Draft Conclusions of the 79th PHLG meeting, we kindly request that the proposals put forward by the Ukrainian side during the discussion of the draft Decision of the Ministerial Council on the recognition of Guarantees of Origin issued by the Contracting Parties of the Energy Community in the EU be duly reflected in the text.

We are grateful for the joint work already carried out to finalize the draft Decision on the recognition of Guarantees of Origin. The draft takes into account the proposals of the Contracting Parties to the Energy Community, in particular the proposal to extend the scope of the Electricity Decision to all energy carriers, including biomethane, as proposed by Ukraine.

At the same time, we would appreciate written confirmation that the Decision on the recognition of Guarantees of Origin includes biomethane, as well as the inclusion of relevant wording in the Conclusions explicitly confirming that the Decision covers biomethane.