



## WOMEN IN THE REFRIGERATION, AIR CONDITIONING, AND HEAT PUMP INDUSTRY IN THE EUROPEAN REGION

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The IIR is president of the International Network of Women in Cooling (INWIC) for the year 2025, a UNEP initiative.

The IIR is promoting diversity and inclusion within the refrigeration and cooling sector through initiatives such as the CARE (Careers in Refrigeration) Working Group. This group focuses not only on empowering women but also on attracting and developing young talent in the refrigeration industry.

CARE works to create pathways for both women and young people to build successful careers in refrigeration, ensuring they have the support and resources needed to develop and build their careers.

This paper is to highlight some of the challenges faced by women from a worldwide survey in Europe undertaken to better understand the background, motivation, challenges, and opportunities faced by women working in RACHP.

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**Special Session**



## EXPERIENCE ON GENDER ANALYSIS, DESIGN AND MAINSTREAMING IN THE RACHP SECTOR

Bettina Schreck  
International Expert – HEAT GmbH

The refrigeration and air conditioning and heat pump (RACHP) sector plays a critical role in sustainable development, yet women remain significantly underrepresented, with participation ranging from 8-30% globally. Despite increasing demand for skilled professionals, gender disparities persist due to structural, cultural, and economic barriers. This aims to highlight the need for gender mainstreaming in RACHP, exploring policy interventions, workforce inclusion strategies, and case studies from Botswana, Mexico, and Chile that demonstrate successful integration of gender considerations into national cooling strategies.

Key barriers limiting women's participation in RACHP include limited access to technical education and training, workplace segregation, unconscious biases, and a lack of gender-disaggregated data for informed policy-making. Social norms and household responsibilities often restrict women's career choices, while inadequate representation in leadership and decision-making roles further exacerbates inequalities. Additionally, gender-blind policies and insufficient awareness of gender-based vulnerabilities in cooling access hinder meaningful progress.

To address these challenges, the session will explore actionable solutions, such as increasing women's access to technical education and vocational training, promoting gender-responsive policies, and fostering economic empowerment through entrepreneurship. Strengthening data collection and gender analysis will be emphasized to inform targeted interventions. Private sector engagement, mentorship programs, and funding incentives for gender-sensitive projects will be discussed as key drivers for improving women's representation and participation in the RACHP sector.

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## THE STATE OF THE EU F-GAS REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION

Bente Tranholm Schwarz  
Deputy Head of Unit DG CLIMATE ACTION, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Arno Kaschl, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Climate Action

Since the entry into force of the F-gas Regulation, many have been busy getting ready for future.

This is also the case in the Commission. Detailed implementing rules have been prepared and adopted e.g., for the certification of technicians that also cover alternatives to F-gases, where relevant. Rules for training attestation for mobile equipment will be adopted during the Summer 2025. Furthermore, temporary derogations from the placing on the market prohibition were deemed to be justified and so far, the Commission has adopted four Derogation Decisions targeting specific equipment. Work is also ongoing to set up the process for requesting and receiving the price of €3 per tonnes of CO<sub>2e</sub> allocated, which will happen in the Autumn 2025. Important updates have been made of the F-gas Portal, the Reporting Tool and customs codes. Also, the link between the F-gas Portal and the Single Window for Customs Environment has been established, and Member States have started using it. At the same time, they have set up an Administrative Cooperation Group where they exchange information and best practice on enforcement.

In May 2025, the Commission proposed a new Regulation with a simplification of the F-gas Portal registration requirements for certain traders in products and equipment, since the current registration rules appear to result in a disproportionate burden compared to the benefits.

Finally, and the Commission is monitoring the impacts of the F-gas Regulation regarding potential impacts on the heat pump sector. The F-gas Regulation continue to be successful in promoting climate friendly solutions.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Coen van de Sande,  
President of AREA, the European association of refrigeration, air conditioning  
and heat pump (RACHP) contractors

Training and certification of technicians all over Europe becomes more and more important as we look at Regulation 2024/573 and more specific at the phase-out schedule with only 5,2% of HFC's left in 2030 and the various placing on the market prohibitions in annex IV. As a consequence of these measures the RACHP sector rapidly moves to the use of alternative refrigerants. Working with these alternative refrigerants introduces safety issues for our technicians and customers.

Fortunately the European Commission established Implementing Act 2024/2215 regarding the minimum requirements for certification of persons that work with alternative refrigerants and the conditions for mutual recognition of certificates amongst the EU Member States. The MS should have their certification schedules in place by September 25th 2025 and all our technicians should be certified according to these schedules by March 12th 2029.

The only way to comply with that tight schedule is cooperation of all parties involved with training and certification like education organisations, Certification Bodies, Authorities and last but not least associations. AREA is going to play a key role in connecting all stakeholders that are involved on both national and EU level.

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## THE EU F-GAS REGULATION: WHERE ARE WE TODAY AND WHERE WILL WE BE IN THE YEARS TO COME?

Russell Patten,

Director General European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE)

It's just over 15 months ago that the 3rd FGas Regulation entered into force on the 11th of March 2024. Where are we now and what's in store for the immediate, medium- and long-term future? And what other policies and legislation are/will impact the HFC transition?

Firstly, a recap of the key EU F-Gas policies impacting the RACHP sector, with a focus on the quota allocation, the bans and other key provisions.

Secondly, we will delve into some of the key current and upcoming which ensure the proper implementation of the EU F-gas regulation, not forgetting a small overview of the EU goals for a decarbonized economy by 2025.

Thirdly, we will touch upon EPEE's ongoing work on two key issues namely the illegal trade of refrigerants in the EU and the Reclamation, Recycling and Recovery activities of F-gases in the EU.

Fourthly, discussing the EU's refrigerants transition and their impact on the RACHP sector cannot be done in isolation of other EU policies, namely the PFAS Restriction and the Ecodesign directive, which in effect create double or even triple legislation and certainly a regulatory overlap which is creating confusion in the marketplace.

To conclude, in the context of possible reviews related to article 21's key provisions, we will present some of the key findings of EPEE's updated HFC Outlook Model which will provide an estimation of the current HFC/HFO market.

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12<sup>TH</sup> - 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2025 | POLITECNICO DI MILANO

## **SAFETY EXEMPTION IN THE FGAS REGULATION 2024/573: REGULATORY ANALYSIS, TECHNICAL APPLICATIONS AND RISK ANALYSIS METHODS**

Marco Masini,

President of the Association of European Refrigeration Component Manufacturers – ASERCOM

The new measures introduced by the F-gas Regulation (EU) 2024/573 are providing a strong push towards the adoption of very low-GWP refrigerants, which are intrinsically more hazardous than traditional “Freon” compounds.

The legislator has long been aware of this, and in response to concerns raised by the sector, has introduced several exemptions to manage these risks.

From the European level to specific examples in industry and Member States, the author will provide original insights into the potential application and limitations of the so-called “safety exemptions” across the procurement and implementation chain, highlighting associated responsibilities and liabilities.

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## NAVIGATING THE SUSTAINABILITY LANDSCAPE: LATEST POLICIES AND MARKET TRENDS IN REFRIGERATION

Francesco Mastrapasqua,  
President Costruttori Tecnologie per il Freddo – ASSOCOLD

The EU climate policies are setting ambitious targets that directly impact on products and technologies. Industrial innovation is called to combine the growing market demand for cooling with positive social and environmental impacts, in a mutually beneficial manner.

Sustainability is the long-term value, more and more pivotal in this age, and the refrigeration industry is committed and particularly advanced in the development of low carbon solutions.

While the F-Gas Regulation is gradually phasing down high GWP refrigerants, aligning the sector to the 2050 net zero emissions target, the market is progressively eliminating all barriers of concern and accelerating the deployment of sustainable technologies.

ASSOCOLD will shed a light on how the refrigeration market is implementing the latest EU environmental policies and what further changes we can expect in the coming years.

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## BEYOND SUCCESS: EVOLVING THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL FOR A COOL FUTURE

Clare Perry, Tom Nickson,  
Climate Campaigner at Environmental Investigation Agency – EIA UK

The Montreal Protocol has long been hailed as the world's most successful environmental treaty. However, as climate change accelerates and global emissions rise, it is imperative that the Protocol evolves to meet new challenges.

This paper explores key issues discussed at recent meetings of the Montreal Protocol, including the urgent need for action on hydrofluorocarbon-23 (HFC-23) emissions, lifecycle refrigerant management (LRM) and feedstock emissions. Additionally, it addresses the importance of sustainable financing mechanisms and the necessity of strengthening institutional frameworks to combat illegal production and trade.

The paper argues that immediate and ambitious action is required to enhance compliance, seize opportunities to promote sustainable cooling and accelerate the global HFC phase-down under the Kigali Amendment to align with the 1.5°C climate target.

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