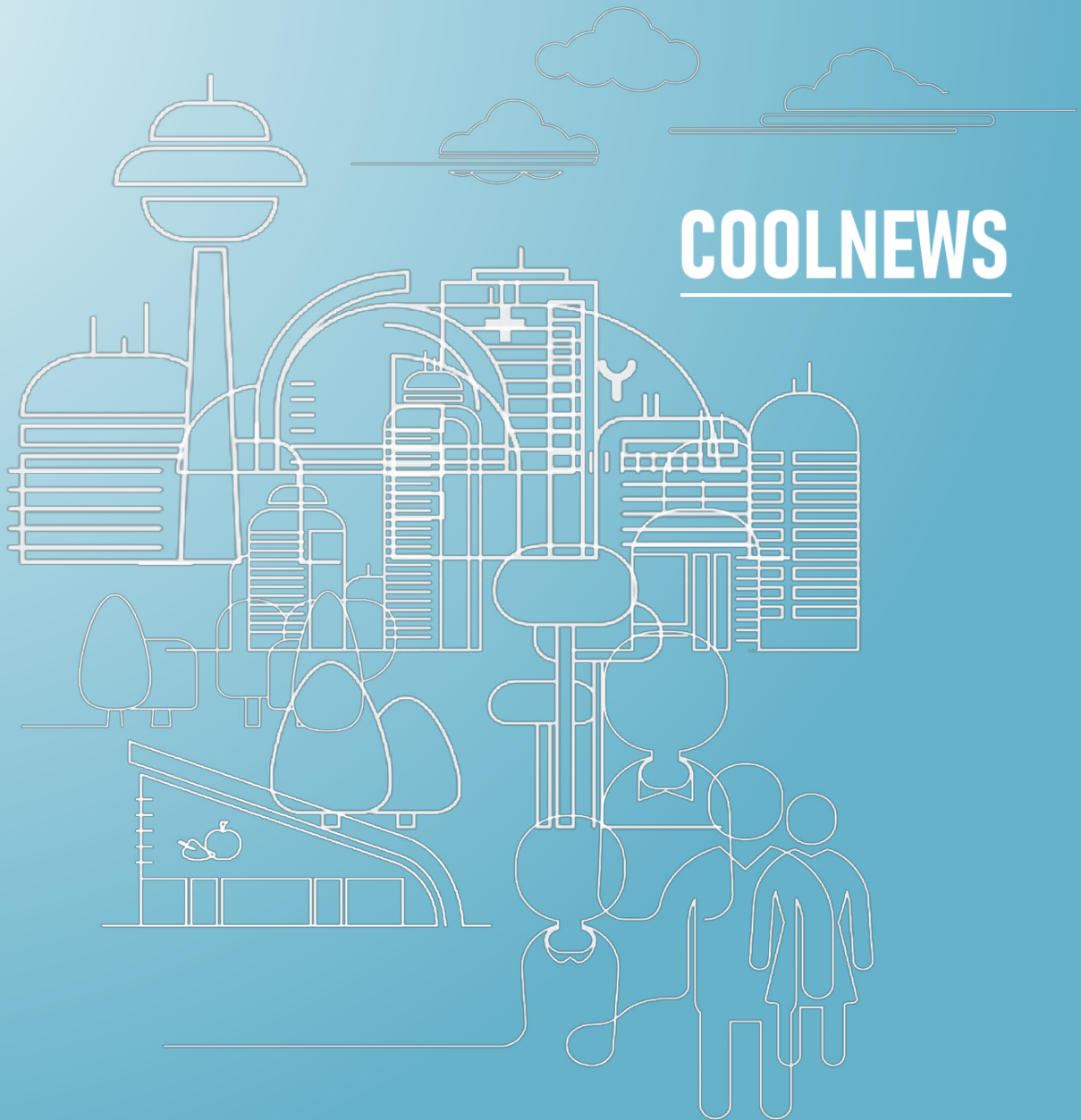




QUARTERLY PERIODICAL FOR THE EUROPEAN CONTRACTORS SOCIETY WORKING  
IN THE REFRIGERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING AND HEAT PUMP SECTOR  
**ISSUE 2025/03 – SEPTEMBER 2025**



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## AREA AFFAIRS

### AREA AUTUMN MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS

The Autumn AREA meetings will take place in our new building at Avenue des Arts 56, 1000 Brussels on **Friday 17 October**. The full programme will include:

#### 16 October:

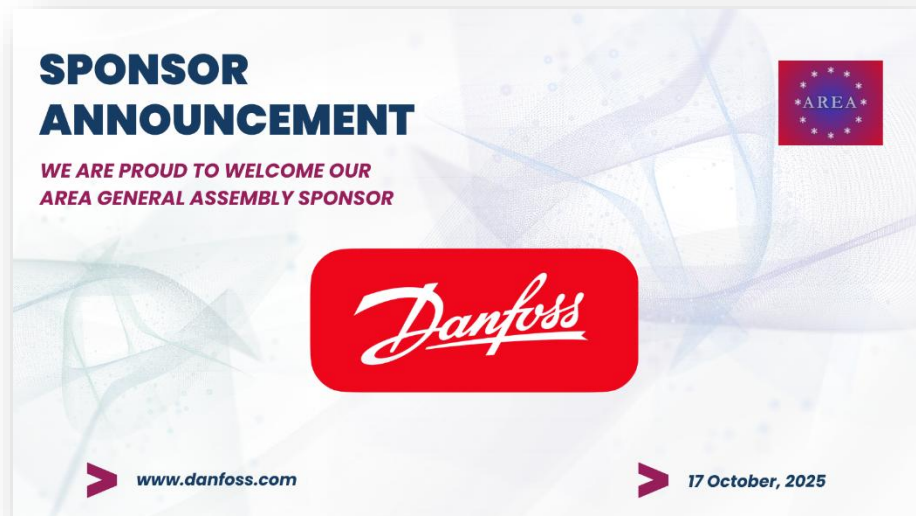
- 15h30 – 17h30: Board meeting (for Board members only!)
- 19h30: Members dinner at La Chaloupe d'Or on the Grand Place

#### 17 October:

- 8h30 – 9h45: Sustainable Innovation Working Group
- 9h45 – 11h00: Refrigerants Working Group
- 11h15 – 12h30: Human Capital Working Group
- 12:30 – 13h30: Lunch
- 13h30 – 15h30: General Assembly

For more information and registration link, please contact [info@area-eur.be](mailto:info@area-eur.be)

This year, we are delighted to welcome [Danfoss](#) as the official sponsor of our AREA Autumn meetings.



*\*The Legislation & Standard Working Group will take place online on 3 October, 11:00 – 12:30 CEST. For more information and connexion details, please contact [policy@area-eur.be](mailto:policy@area-eur.be)*

## AREA SPRING 2026 MEETINGS



Next year's AREA Spring meetings will take place on 21-22 May 2026, kindly hosted by CNI and AEFYT in Madrid. Make sure to already mark your calendars!

## AREA NEW LEGAL SEAT



This summer, AREA's office and legal seat moved to a new address in the heart of the EU quarter.

AREA Aisbl is now located **Avenue des Arts 56, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.**

Our other contact details such as phone numbers or VAT number remain unchanged.

**Make sure you update our address detail in your files!**

## LEGISLATION

### F-GAS REGULATION

#### Revision of the F-gas Regulation

In the context of the implementation of the new F-gas Regulation, the European Commission published the [Implementing Act](#) (IA) on minimum requirements for training attestations as regards certain mobile equipment containing F-gases or their alternatives. Thanks to our advocacy efforts, many of AREA's proposals have been incorporated into the final document.

As regards the IA on leak checks, whereas AREA advocated for a light review of this, Member States felt that it is not needed. Consequently, there is no support for a review of this text. It remains uncertain whether the Commission will ultimately propose to repeal it or not.

#### HFC PRICES

Öko-Recherche released the Q2/2025 excerpt of the HFC prices monitoring. The main findings are:

- Compared with Q2/2024, prices for the high GWP gases/mixtures went down (end user prices exempted): R410A -3%, R134a -3%. A price update with regard to R404A is not available in the current quarter.
- From one quarter to the next, when considering the whole supply chain (end user prices exempted), prices changed by -3% and -1% for R410A and R134a, respectively.
- Compared to 2014, prices of R134a are 3.1 (end user) to 9.6 (distributor) and R410A prices are 2.9 (end-user) to 11.0 (distributor) times higher. For comparison: on the world market, producer prices increased by a factor of 2.5 for R134a (evidence from Q2/2025) and 1.5 for R410A (evidence from Q4/2024).
- When it comes to alternatives, price levels along the supply chain changed as follows relative to Q1/2025 (end user prices exempted): a) hydrocarbons: R290 +0% and R744 +0%; b) low GWP alternatives: R448A +5%, R449A +5%, R32 +0%, R513A +0%.
- Compared to Q1/2025, the purchase price of reclaimed R404A did not change significantly on distributor or service company level. In Q1/2025, the purchase price of reclaimed R404A was at 140% the price level of virgin R404A material.
- The price of quota authorisations was indicated to range from 11 to 25 €/t CO<sub>2</sub>e (purchasing price). On average, purchasing prices for quota authorisations amounted to 16 €/t CO<sub>2</sub>e,

approximately. Compared to Q1/2025, the purchasing price of quota authorisations decreased by 6%. Taking a more long-term perspective, e.g. compared to Q2/2024, quota prices also decreased by 6%.

- In general, the EU refrigerant market appears to have been stable in terms of supply, with no indications of limited regional availability or shortage indicated by companies.

## HEATING & COOLING STRATEGY

On 28 August, the European Commission [launched](#) the public consultation on the long-awaited [Heating and Cooling Strategy](#), and adoption is scheduled for the first quarter of 2026. According to the preliminary descriptions currently available, the future communication will be aimed at supporting implementation of existing legislation while addressing persistent barriers in the heating and cooling sector by proposing measures at system level, both on the supply and the demand side. The feedback opportunity, open until 20 November, includes a call for evidence on the initial impact assessment and a questionnaire focusing on potential solutions to the above-mentioned issues, from policy and technical standpoints.

This initiative is of high relevance for AREA. For this reason, the Sustainable Innovation Working Group is considering contributing to the consultation. Feedback is currently being collected via this [survey](#), which accurately replicates the official Commission's questionnaire for consistent aggregated results.

## INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Over the summer, AREA further deepened its involvement in the Informal IEQ Gathering through participation in the ongoing project entitled "Member States template". This initiative of the Gathering comes as a follow-up reaction to the Commission's [guidelines](#) on the implementation of the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). The aim is to collect technical inputs from the participating associations on national legislation, guidelines, building codes, certification schemes, etc as far as indoor environmental quality is concerned. The information received from members will be used to review the Gathering's [technical document](#) complementing the Commission's guidance with further indications on better harmonisation and transposition of indoor environmental quality provisions (based on Article 13 of the EPBD).

AREA has already shared critical data on building codes and regulations as well as standards and certifications from the frameworks of several EU and non-EU members and it is poised to deliver more ahead of the upcoming next monthly meeting in the second week of October.

## PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS)

In late summer, the European Chemicals Agency - ECHA [published](#) the [latest version](#) (the 14th) of the [universal REACH restriction proposal on PFAS substances](#). On refrigeration, the proposed derogations, as agreed in the provisional conclusions of March 2025 for the sector “Applications of fluorinated gases”, remain unchanged. For the categories under transport, compared to June 2025, new derogations have been advanced for light duty electrical vehicles (5 year-derogation), plus a general 12-year derogation for all other vehicles.

The updated impact assessment on uses additionally clarifies the scope of the umbrella sectors “Sealing Applications” and “Machinery”, which are meant to be generic and cross-industry. They encompass sealing applications in consumer HVACR equipment as well as stationary and portable machinery that is not already within the scope of Transport. A brand-new sector identified as “Broader Industrial Uses” is narrowed down to hydraulic fluids, solvents, and catalysts and processing aids. These three sectors are currently proposed for 12-year derogations and will not be assessed individually, but as “horizontal” matters.

The latest updates also come with news on the [timeline](#) for the full ECHA process. The publication of the draft opinion by ECHA's socio-economic analysis committee is now pencilled for March 2026, while the submission of ECHA's final opinions to the Commission is expected in late 2026. The draft socio-economic opinion will be subject to a 60-day stakeholder consultation. The priority for AREA at this stage is to evaluate whether and how to have a say to ensure that at least the most critical products are not left behind.

## LEGISLATIVE TRACKER

Initiative	Legislative milestones	AREA Activities
<b>Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)</b>  <b>Status: Procedure completed</b>	<p>Commission proposal: <a href="#">15 December 2021</a></p> <p>European Parliament Position: <a href="#">15 February 2023</a></p> <p>EU Council General Approach: <a href="#">24 October 2022</a></p> <p>Provisional agreement from trilogues: <a href="#">7 December 2023</a></p> <p>European Parliament's adoption in Plenary of trilogue agreement: <a href="#">12 March 2024</a></p> <p>Council adoption: <a href="#">12 April 2024</a></p> <p>Publication in the OJEU: <a href="#">8 May 2024</a></p> <p>Publication of Commission's implementation guidelines: <a href="#">30 June 2025</a></p> <p><b>Next steps:</b> Transposition by Member States: by 29 May 2026</p>	<p>AREA Position on the Commission's Roadmap: <a href="#">08 April 2021</a></p> <p>AREA response to the Commission's Public Consultation: 18 June 2021</p> <p>AREA Statement on the EPBD revision proposal: <a href="#">16 December 2021</a></p> <p>AREA Position Paper: 30 March 2022</p> <p>Joint statement: <a href="#">18 March 2024</a></p>
<b>Heating &amp; Cooling Strategy</b>  <b>Status: ACTIVE</b>	<p>Commission's consultation: <a href="#">20 August - 10 November 2025</a></p> <p><b>Next steps:</b> Adoption by the Commission: Q1 2026</p>	
<b>F-gas Regulation</b>  <b>Status: ACTIVE</b>	<p>Commission proposal: <a href="#">5 April 2022</a></p> <p>European Parliament position: <a href="#">30 March 2023</a></p> <p>EU Council General Approach: <a href="#">5 April 2023</a></p> <p>Final agreement: <a href="#">5 October 2023</a></p> <p>EP adoption in Plenary of trilogue agreement: <a href="#">16 January 2024</a></p> <p>Council adoption of trilogue agreement: <a href="#">29 January 2024</a></p>	<p>AREA reply to the public consultation: <a href="#">24 December 2020</a></p> <p>Reaction to the Commission proposal: <a href="#">6 April 2022</a></p> <p>AREA Position Paper on the F-gas Regulation: <a href="#">24 August 2022</a></p> <p>AREA proposal for amendments: <a href="#">18 November 2022</a></p> <p>AREA reaction to the EP position: <a href="#">4 April 2023</a></p> <p>AREA reply to public consultation on IA on certification and training: <a href="#">10 June 2024</a></p>



	<p>Regulation published in the Official Journal of the EU: <a href="#">7 February 2024</a></p> <p>Implementing Act on certification and training mandated by article 10 published: <a href="#">6 September 2024</a></p> <p><b>Next steps:</b> Consultation on several Implementing Acts ongoing</p>	<p><i>Additional statements and joint letters are available on our <a href="#">website</a> or upon request.</i></p> <p>Numerous meetings with EU officials, MEPs, EP policy advisors, MSs representatives and stakeholders</p>
<p><b>EU Talent Pool</b></p> <p><b>Status: Ongoing</b></p>	<p>Commission proposal: <a href="#">15 November 2023</a></p> <p>Council General Approach: <a href="#">13 June 2024</a></p> <p>EP LIBE Committee position: <a href="#">19 March 2025</a></p> <p>Plenary adoption: <a href="#">3 April</a></p> <p>First trilogue: <a href="#">7 April</a></p> <p><b>Next steps:</b> Political agreement on trilogues: <a href="#">8-9 December</a></p>	

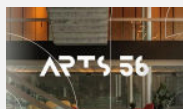
## REFRIGERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING & HEAT PUMP NEWS

### 2025-2026 CALENDAR



**Eurovent Summit**

24-26 September 2025    Prague



**AREA Autumn meetings**

16-17 October 2025    Brussels



**European Heat Pump Summit**

28-29 October 2025    Nuremberg



**Mostra Convegno Expocomfort**

24-27 March 2026    Milano



**AREA Spring meetings**

21-22 May 2026    Madrid

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### AREA AT THE AFRICAN NETWORK MEETING IN DAKAR

AREA was present at the United Nations African Network Meeting held in Dakar, Senegal, in September 2025. The meeting brought together National Ozone Units from 54 African Countries, UN agencies, and regional stakeholders to discuss the implementation of the Montreal Protocol and Kigali Amendment, with a strong focus on technician training, certification, and the transition to alternative technologies.

AREA highlighted how Europe's experience can support developing countries in upskilling their RACHP technicians, sharing practical approaches to training, certification, and safe handling of new refrigerants. The European model on F-gas regulation, quota systems, and enforcement tools was presented as a valuable reference to guide the global transition.

The discussions confirmed that while African countries are motivated, they require strong support in building technician competence standards, developing enforcement mechanisms, and strengthening MRV (monitoring, reporting, verification) systems, logbooks (digital, electronic or paper) and centralised database.

Through bilateral exchanges with UNEP, UNIDO, and national stakeholders, AREA underlined the importance of North–South cooperation and explored future opportunities

AREA reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that the refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump sector can move forward together – with no one left behind.



## AREA AT EUROVENT SUMMIT 2025 IN PRAGUE

AREA was present at the Eurovent Summit 2025 in Prague, with strong representation from Vice President, Stepan Stojanov, and Treasurer, Thanos Biris.

During the Summit, AREA actively engaged with stakeholders across the HVACR value chain and distributed its latest publications, including the AREA Vision 2030 and the AREA Guide on the F-gas Regulation. These documents provide practical insights to support contractors and technicians in navigating the ongoing transition to sustainable technologies.

The presence of AREA leadership underlined the association's commitment to strengthening collaboration with European and international partners, ensuring that the voice of contractors remains central to the industry's future.



## SIDE EVENT AT THE 47TH OEWG IN BANGKOK - INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR RACHP: ADVANCING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND PREVENTING EMISSIONS.

Held during the 47th Meeting of the OEWG in Bangkok, this side event brought together key experts and institutional stakeholders to discuss the critical role of training and certification in ensuring sustainability and performance in the Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heat Pump (RACHP) sector.

The event addressed existing international training models, the value of certification in skills recognition, and how technician training supports energy efficiency throughout the system lifecycle—from installation to maintenance and end-of-life management.



*Marco Buoni, AREA Board Member (International Affairs)*

Speakers included:

- Marco Buoni - Opening remarks and welcome speech
- Stephen Andersen – Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development (IGSD) – “USA technicians Certification”
- Marco Buoni – Air Conditioning and Refrigeration European Association of Contractors (AREA) and Associazione Tecnici del Freddo (ATF) – “European Experience in Certification of RAC Technicians”
- Marco Duran – International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR) – “Training and Certification – International Perspective”
- Baolong Wang – Chinese Association of Refrigeration (CAR) and IIR – “Technician’s training and certification in Refrigeration and AC sectors in China”
- Youssef Hammami – NOU Tunisia – “Certification Scheme, Case study: Tunisia”

The session closed with a Q&A discussion and networking coffee break, underlining the importance of coordinated international efforts to scale up technician skills in support of low-emission, high-efficiency cooling technologies.



## PROJECTS

### CERTIFICATION OF RAC TECHNICIANS AT THE SOUTH ASIA NETWORK MEETING: HIGHLIGHTS EUROPEAN BEST PRACTICES



The Plenary Session of the South Asia Network Meeting

**The Network Meeting of South Asia National Ozone Officers, organised by UNEP OzonAction's Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP), dedicated a key session to policies and industry practices in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector. On the final day of the event, the focus turned to the certification of RAC technicians, an issue recognised as crucial for ensuring energy efficiency, safety, and environmental protection in line with the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment.**

The session was led by Marco Buoni, international delegate for AREA, who presented the European model for technician certification. Marco outlined the long-standing experience of the EU with F-gas certification, covering personal certification, certification for companies and training centres, and the importance of technician registries. He underlined how these measures, in place since 2006, have contributed to reducing leaks, improving servicing practices, and enabling the safe introduction of low-GWP alternatives such as hydrocarbons, CO<sub>2</sub>, and ammonia. His presentation also highlighted the EU's recent updates under the F-gas Regulation 2024/573, which now makes training and certification mandatory not only for fluorinated refrigerants but also for natural alternatives.

Following the technical presentation, Marco moderated a roundtable discussion with national ozone officers from Sri Lanka and Bhutan, who shared their country experiences in advancing Good Servicing Practices (GSP) and certification programmes. The exchange of views underlined both the progress already achieved and the challenges still faced by South Asian countries, including the need to raise

awareness among technicians, simplify administrative processes, and secure resources for training centres and equipment. This session confirmed the central role of training and certification in building a skilled RAC workforce, capable of managing the transition to sustainable technologies and supporting compliance with international obligations. Through the exchange of best practices and international cooperation, participants reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening technician certification schemes as a cornerstone of the region's strategy to phase down high-GWP refrigerants and enhance climate resilience.

## **REAL ALTERNATIVES: A PROVEN MODEL FOR NATIONAL CERTIFICATION SCHEMES ON LOW-GWP REFRIGERANTS**

**As EU Member States are in the critical phase of implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2215, the Real Alternatives Consortium urges national governments and ministries to adopt the Real Alternatives certification scheme as a reference framework for the qualification and upskilling of personnel handling alternative refrigerants.**

The Real Alternatives programme is a pan-European training and certification initiative focused on low-GWP refrigerants, including HFOs, hydrocarbons, CO<sub>2</sub>, and ammonia. Developed in cooperation with over 25 European and international institutions, the programme provides harmonised training materials, risk-based safety guidelines, and a certification pathway that is fully aligned with the requirements set forth in the new F-gas Regulation. With more than 3,100 certificates already issued across 23 countries, Real Alternatives represents a mature, field-tested model for national implementation. It enables EU Member States to meet the new requirements for certification of personnel under Article 10 and Annex I of the Regulation.

Key benefits for National Authorities include alignment with Regulation 2024/2215, including certification A1/A2 for hydrocarbons and certification B for CO<sub>2</sub>, materials already translated into over 20 languages and adopted in diverse regulatory environments, and organisation of Train-the-Trainer events to ensure consistency and scalability across Europe. Real Alternatives is already being used by numerous institutional bodies to draft or support national decrees. It equips technicians with vital knowledge and tools, from safe handling practices to standardised procedures, helping accelerate the safe transition away from high-GWP fluorinated gases.

Following the successful Train-the-Trainer event at IKKE in Duisburg, Germany, a new session in October 2025 is now being organised at PROZON's new training centre in Grabce Józefpolskie, Poland, further expanding the reach and impact of this key European initiative.

Contact & Resources: [info@realalternatives.eu](mailto:info@realalternatives.eu). For more information, visit [www.realalternatives.eu](http://www.realalternatives.eu)



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

AREA Aisbl, Avenue des Arts 56, 1000 Brussels (Belgium)

Tel: + 32 2 206 68 66 | Email: [info@area-eur.be](mailto:info@area-eur.be) | [www.area-eur.be](http://www.area-eur.be)