



Press Release

21 October 2021

European Parliament Resolution – ‘Phasing out of HFCs’ threatens EU Green Deal and international commitments

Today’s European Parliament motion on COP26, which calls for international action to reduce F-gas emissions, is warmly welcomed by EPEE - representing the Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heat Pump Industry in Europe.

We welcome the fact that the Parliament has recognised the importance of reducing F-gas emissions, but regret that it has called for their phase-out, rather than for a phase-down in Europe. This may seem a small quibble over language, but the difference is important. A phase-out would lead to a full ban on using HFCs, while a phase-down process is a flexible and market-orientated approach, recognizing that not all HFC applications are replaceable. The EU phase-down is being used successfully right now to reduce F-gas emissions in Europe.

The Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heat Pump sector’s technologies are key solutions for the European Green Deal as well as other societal needs such as health. These technologies contain fluids called refrigerants, of which hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are commonly used for reasons of safety and energy efficiency. HFCs are F-gases which, if they leak from the equipment into the atmosphere, cause global warming. Their consumption is therefore already strictly controlled and phased down - internationally through the Montreal Protocol, and at the EU level through the EU F-gas Regulation. The EU F-gas regulation has resulted in lower leakage rates, a growing circular economy of refrigerants and a transition to refrigerants with a lower global warming impact. By 2030, thanks to this effective Regulation, F-gas emissions will be cut by two-thirds compared to 2014 levels, proving the effectiveness of the phase-down mechanism.

As announced recently in its 2022 Work Programme, the European Commission will publish a proposal for a revision of the F-gas Regulation in Q2 2022, reviewing the uses of HFCs and the current phase-down schedule after a thorough impact assessment. EPEE is looking forward to the Commission to continue its support of the phase-down approach when it brings forward legislation next year. This is an effective and proven legal framework and ensures that F-gas legislation work in harmony with policies to grow renewable energy and promote energy efficient buildings.

Refrigeration, Air conditioning and Heat Pump technologies are essential for a sustainable food cold chain, for the decarbonisation of buildings, and for an effective, efficient and inclusive energy transition. Because of their wide variety of applications, in homes, businesses, health and transport sectors, our sector needs a large variety of refrigerant options, including non-HFCs as well as HFCs. Calling for a phase-out, instead of a phase-down, therefore endangers the emission savings from renewable heating and cooling, which are much bigger than any further savings from HFC emissions.

ABOUT EPEE:

EPEE represents the Refrigeration, Air-Conditioning and Heat Pump industry in Europe. Founded in the year 2000, EPEE’s membership is composed of over 50 member companies as well as national and international associations from three continents (Europe, North America, Asia). With manufacturing sites and research and development facilities across the EU, which innovate for the global market, EPEE member companies realize a turnover of over 30 billion Euros, employ more than 200,000 people in Europe and also create indirect employment through a vast network of small and medium-sized enterprises such as contractors who install, service and maintain equipment. Please see our website (<https://www.epeeglobal.org>) for further information.