



## NATURAL GAS PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN ENERGY TRANSITION



**“WE ARE FACING AN ENERGY TRANSITION, MAYBE I SHOULD SAY A REVOLUTION” – SAYS JEAN-MARC LEROY, PRESIDENT OF GAS INFRASTRUCTURE EUROPE (GIE), THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR DISTRIBUTORS OF NATURAL GAS, A FUNCTION HE HOLDS SINCE NOVEMBER LAST YEAR.**

Leroy was named managing director of the Gas Chain Métier at ENGIE in January this year. He started his career in Electricité de France, joined Gaz de France in 1994 and held several key positions there. NGVA Europe asked him to shed light on the future of natural gas in general and for road transport in particular. *“We had an important agreement in Paris recently on reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, the world is being changed in depth” – says Leroy. “So where are we going after the Paris agreement? I think we will be going to more decentralised solutions in fighting climate change and natural gas is key in winning the battle. Why? Two reasons. One is changing power plants that are now being fuelled by coal, to natural gas. Worldwide that means a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 60 percent in power sector! For Europe this would mean even as much as 20% less CO<sub>2</sub> in the air.”*

*“Gas mobility is part of the solution also, not only because of the reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> that can be achieved, but also because of the improved air quality with natural gas as a fuel. Megacities can benefit vastly from the virtual lack of particulate matter in natural gas and of the much lower emissions of NOx. For shipping natural gas is the fuel of choice because it is free of sulphur.”*

*“The second reason natural gas is key is that the gas industry is very innovative. Natural gas can also be produced locally, through biogas and power to gas installations, where surplus electricity can produce synthetic natural gas. In France for instance, in 2050 we expect green gas to account for over 50% of the gas injected into the distribution network.”*

*“Biogas can give many solutions to the problems we face today in reducing CO<sub>2</sub>. It is also a good solution to recycle waste. As far as the use of crops and land-use to produce biogas is concerned: it is clear that we first need to feed to population. But we also have to provide them with energy. Gas will be part of the solution to provide everybody the energy they need, also in mobility.”*

*“Europe is not on the forefront of gas mobility, it is even rather late. Other continents have shifted to natural gas in transport much earlier. Europe as so far not succeeded in answering the chicken and egg question: do we start with an infrastructure for natural gas or with the vehicles? But things are changing. The EU Commission is supportive of natural gas, the DAFI (Directive for Alternative Fuel Infrastructures) has been approved establishing an infrastructure for natural gas as a fuel. There is the Blue Corridor Project subsidised by the EU to demonstrate that natural gas can be a viable alternative to diesel in trucks, all very important. The infrastructure to distribute natural gas across Europe already exists. Just the link to the filling stations necessary to drive your car need to be established. The DAFI will provide for that.”*

*“Europe is innovating, there are many interesting projects. It will find the way and natural gas will be key. It is available, cheap and abundant. There are new sources found every day all over the world. Important is also that natural gas can be stored. Also on the long term. This allows for example to face a cold winter. Liquefied Natural Gas therefore, or LNG, gives Europe flexibility, also on where natural gas can be obtained.”*

*“With regard to Europe’s wish to be self-sufficient in energy I can only question if self-sufficiency can be an objective in itself. The gas industry would like to put emphasis on competitiveness. That is most important, for example to safeguard the more than 300.000 jobs the gas industry offers in Europe today. The focus should be on the market, not on politics, and on diversification of the energy supply. Natural gas can play a major role there.”*

Source: NGVA Europe