

AREA COOLNEWS

Issue 2026/03



European association of
refrigeration, air conditioning
and heat pump contractors

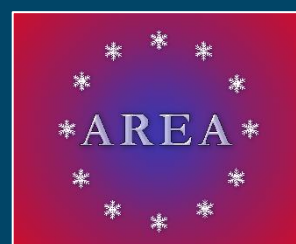


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AREA Affairs

AREA presence at Chillventa and Autumn Meetings in Nuremberg

This year's AREA Autumn Meetings will take place in Nuremberg, once again alongside the renowned Chillventa exhibition — a key event for the refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump sector.

The AREA meetings themselves will be held at the NH Collection Nuremberg City hotel on Friday 16 October, with a dinner the night before.

The full programme of these few days include:

At Chillventa:

- **Tuesday 13 > Thursday 15: AREA team presence at Booth in Hall 9, Stand 9.131**
- **Wednesday 14, 9:40 - 10:40: AREA Conference "The Future of RAC Training and Certification in the EU" Hall 8-512**
Bringing together six expert speakers from across the industry, the panel will discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead for vocational training, certification schemes and workforce development, helping to ensure a safe, competent and future-ready RAC workforce across Europe. The [full programme](#) is now available on AREA's website.
- **Wednesday 14, from 17:00: joint AREA-ASERCOM-EPEE-INWIC Cocktail reception**



AREA

ASERCOM
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN REFRIGERATION
COMPONENT MANUFACTURERS

EPEE

INWIC
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK
OF WOMEN IN COOLING

TOGETHER AT CHILLVENTA 2026
You are cordially invited

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Connect • Exchange • Celebrate

WEDNESDAY
14 OCTOBER 2026

STARTING AT
5:00 PM

The reception will open with brief introductory remarks by the organisers.

@ ASERCOM & EPEE BOOTH
HALL 9 | STAND 225/226
Exhibition Centre Nuremberg, Germany

CHILLVENTA

Meet the people shaping the future of cooling.

- **Thursday 15, 16:00 – 17:30:** AREA Board meeting at Chillventa
- **Thursday 15, from 19:30:** AREA members dinner at Tucher-Bräu am Opernhaus

At the NH Collection Nuremberg City hotel:

- **Friday 16, 08:30 - 10:00:** AREA Sustainable Innovation WG
- **Friday 16, 10:30 - 12:00:** AREA Refrigerants WG
- **Friday 16, 13:00 - 15:00:** AREA General Assembly

Do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat for more information regarding hotel bookings and meeting documents.

AREA Joint Statement on EPBD Transposition

In July, AREA joined organisations from across the buildings and energy ecosystem to call for effective and timely implementation of the revised EPBD, calling on the European Commission and Member States to work together to ensure that the EPBD is fully transposed and effectively implemented and that citizens, businesses, building owners, professionals and public authorities have the clarity and certainty they need to act.

Read the [full paper on AREA website](#).

AREA contribution to the ESCO classification review

In August, AREA contributed to the call for input on the next review of the ESCO, the EU-wide classifications and categorisation of skills, competences, and occupations.

In its feedback, the AREA Human Capital Working Group highlighted the need to recognise refrigeration, heat pumps, air conditioning technicians as a new occupation with its own independent NACE code. To lend weight to this request, AREA associates new related skills and knowledge and makes reference to EU legislation on fluorinated gases and mandatory certification, as this constitutes the best evidence that RACHP technicians and installers are standalone professions and should be considered as such. The additional suggested skills expand on a set of specific competencies (recovery, charging, evacuation, pressure testing, leak detection, flammable refrigerants, CO₂, NH₃), as these are precisely what distinguish the RACHP technician from other occupations within the HVAC group.

The ESCO classification review is expected to be finalised and published in 2027.

AREA Contributes to EuropeOn Cybersecurity Roundtable

AREA was invited to speak at the online roundtable "Cybersecurity-related services: a business opportunity and a systemic risk for the installation sector", organised by the electricians' association EuropeOn on 8 September. Represented by Dimitris Tairis (HUFGAS), it was an important opportunity for AREA to discuss the key topics of the digitalisation task force, namely the liabilities and opportunities that contractors experience in their integration of digital solutions. Tairis emphasised the need to raise awareness and invest in the training of installers, especially on the use of artificial intelligence for system optimisation. He also highlighted that, with the wave of new legislative requirements, it is fundamental that manufactures, contractors, customers and, when applicable, auditors, are duly informed of all responsibilities and risks.

The input collected during the roundtable will feed EuropeOn's upcoming report on energy security and resilience in the electrical contracting sector.

2027 Spring GA in Porto

AREA secretariat is pleased to confirm the dates of the 2027 AREA Spring meetings in Porto, kindly organised [by AIPOR](#).

The program, that will be refined closer to the date, includes:

- **13 May:** Working Group sessions & Members Dinner
- **14 May:** Board meeting - General Assembly - lunch

Make sure you already mark your calendar.

Legislation

F-Gas Regulation

HFC prices

Öko-Recherche released the Q2/2026 excerpt of the HFC prices monitoring. The main findings are:

- Compared to Q2/2025, throughout the entire supply chain, prices for the high GWP gases/mixtures increased slightly (end user prices excluded): R134a and R410A increased by +1%, respectively. No price update is available for R404A.
- From one quarter to the next, when considering the whole supply chain (end user prices excluded), prices increased by +1% for R134a and +2% for R410A.
- Compared to 2014, prices of R134a are 4.3 (end user) to 9.6 (distributor) and R410A prices are 3.9 (end-user) to 11.3 (distributor) times higher. For comparison: on the world market, producer prices increased by a factor of 3 for R134a (evidence from Q2/2025) and 2.3 for R410A (evidence from Q1/2026).
- When it comes to alternatives, price levels along the supply chain changed as follows relative to Q1/2026 (end user prices omitted): R744 +0%, R290 +11%, R448A +4%, R449A -0%, R1234yf +1%, R1234ze -1%, R513A -0%, R452A -1%, and R32 +9%.
- Compared to Q1/2026, the purchase price of reclaimed R404A decreased by -9% on service company level and by -4% on distributor level. In Q2/2026, the purchase price of reclaimed R404A was at 96% of the price level of virgin gas on the level of distributors in Q1/2026 (last price information available).
- The price of quota authorizations indicated ranged from 14 to 18.5 €/t CO₂e (purchasing price). On average, purchasing prices for quota authorisations amounted to 17.19 €/t CO₂e, approximately. Compared to Q1/2026, the purchasing price of quota authorisations decreased by 2%. Taking a more long-term perspective, e.g. compared to Q2/2025, quota prices increased by 10%.
- In general, the EU refrigerant market appears to have been stable in terms of supply, with only isolated indications of availability issues reported by companies.

Commission unveils Omnibus proposal on energy efficient products

The European Commission opened for feedback its Omnibus package [proposal](#) to simplify the 2020 Energy Labelling Regulation through a stronger reliance on digital information tools and the EPREL database while maintaining consumers' right to access energy labels at the point of sale.

Notable changes concern installers. The Regulation proposal introduces a formal definition of "installer" and clarifies that installers who sell, hire or hire-purchase energy-labelled products as part of their commercial activities must comply with the same information obligations as dealers, including displaying energy labels in invitations to purchase and providing access to relevant EPREL information.

Contrary to earlier expectations discussed during the call-for-evidence phase, the Commission eventually did not include an extension to 2028 for energy-labelling regulations reviews subject to the previous Ecodesign Directive framework, which is set to expire at the end of 2026.

Alongside the proposal, the Commission adopted an implementation [report](#) assessing the experience gained with the 2017 energy labelling framework, including the operation of EPREL and enforcement activities.

Commission proposes new measures to support cross-border labour mobility

On 15 September, the European Commission adopted the [Fair Labour Mobility Package](#), which includes a [communication](#) and five legislative proposals aimed at simplifying cross-border employment and at strengthening enforcement of labour and social security rules.

One of the most impactful measures under the package is the [Skills Portability Act](#). The main goal of this proposal is to streamline the rules for the recognition of professional qualifications and skills for workers who moved to another EU country for the purpose of employment. More specifically, the proposal addresses and harmonises the procedures, standards, and models for digital qualification attestations. It also sets provisions to support Member States' cooperation on the exchange and verification of comparable information on qualifications and accreditation institutions and establishes the States-appointed "Qualifications Digitalisation Group" to this end.

Another important initiative contained in the package is the [Directive on the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nationals](#), which amends existing legislation to modernise the EU system for recognitions by introducing a fully digital process, reducing delays and administrative burdens, strengthening governance, and aligning rules for qualifications obtained both within and outside the EU. To do so, it promotes full digitalisation of recognition procedures through a common EU digital system and makes recognition faster and easier by establishing specific deadlines and setting limits to the documents that authorities can request, among other measures. In addition, Member States would have to notify regulated professions through a new Internal Market Information System.

All the five proposals will undergo the ordinary legislative procedure involving the European Parliament and the Council.

Electrification Action Plan published

Last 17 July, the European Commission published its communication [Electrification Action Plan](#).

As announced in the previous months, the Heating & Cooling Strategy has not been released as a standalone communication on the same date as the Electrification Action Plan, as originally planned. However, one of the key highlights of the text is the Commission's commitment to adopt a Cooling and Heating Action Plan as an action to lower input costs and to address the growing need for efficient cooling for both EU citizens and the economy. There is no indication of a publication timeline, although it seems to be expected by the end of 2026.

The proposal contains a large number of deliverables aimed at fostering the uptake of electric power across sectors. The flagship takeaway is the indication of a non-binding electrification target of 46% by 2040, that may be formally introduced in the Energy Union Package foreseen in Q4 2026. Among other actions, the communication envisages a set of targeted measures to electrify buildings, namely a market mechanism aimed at boosting sales of heat pumps and narrowing the upfront costs difference for heat pumps. The mechanism would also include incentives to invest in installers' training through vocational and educational training partnerships between companies and technical schools.

The indicative target specifically designed for the heat pump sector is to increase the installation rate of heat pumps to around 4 million per year in 2030 compared to 2025 of 2.4 million.

Legislative tracker

Initiative	Legislative milestones	AREA Activities
Heating & Cooling Strategy Status: ACTIVE	Commission's consultation: 20 August - 10 November 2025 <u>Next steps:</u> Adoption by the Commission: Q4 2026	AREA position paper: 20 November 2025
F-gas Regulation Status: ACTIVE	Commission proposal: 5 April 2022 European Parliament (EP) position: 30 March 2023 EU Council General Approach: 5 April 2023 Final agreement: 5 October 2023 EP adoption in Plenary of trilogue agreement: 16 January 2024 Council adoption of trilogue agreement: 29 January 2024 Regulation published in the Official Journal of the EU: 7 February 2024 Implementing Act on certification and training mandated by Article 10 published: 6 September 2024	AREA reply to the public consultation: 24 December 2020 Reaction to the Commission proposal: 6 April 2022 AREA Position Paper on the F-gas Regulation: 24 August 2022 AREA proposal for amendments: 18 November 2022 AREA reaction to the EP position: 4 April 2023 AREA reply to public consultation on IA on certification and training: 10 June 2024 <i>Additional statements and joint letters are available on our website or upon request.</i> Numerous meetings with EU officials, MEPs, EP policy advisors, MSs representatives and stakeholders.
Electrification Action Plan Status: ACTIVE	Commission's consultation: 28 August 2025 - 20 November 2025 Commission's adoption: 17 July 2026 <u>Next steps:</u> the Heating & Cooling Strategy to be published as a deliverable of the Electrification Action Plan	

Initiative	Legislative milestones	AREA Activities
EU Talent Pool Status: COMPLETED	Commission proposal: 15 November 2023 Council General Approach: 13 June 2024 EP LIBE Committee position: 19 March 2025 Plenary adoption: 3 April First trilogue: 7 April Second trilogue: 24 September Third trilogue: 17 October Final trilogue: 18 November Publication in the OJEU: 29 April 2026	
Energy Omnibus Status: ACTIVE	Call for evidence 20 August - 15 October 2026 Commission's consultation: 20 August - 15 October 2026	
Skills Portability Act Status: ACTIVE	Commission's adoption: 15 September 2026	
Directive on the recognition of qualifications of non-EU nationals Status: ACTIVE	Commission's adoption: 15 September 2026	

AREA Calendar

	Chillventa	13-15 October 2026	Nuremberg
	AREA Autumn Meetings	16 October 2026	Nuremberg
	AREA Spring Meeting	13-14 May 2027	Porto

CHILLVENTA

WE'RE PART OF IT!



Nuremberg,
13–15.10.2026

CONNECTING EXPERTS

www.area-eur.be

International Affairs

UNEP-AREA Training Manual: Refrigerants Servicing and Good Practices



The UNEP AREA Refrigerants Servicing and Best Practices Manual is a comprehensive training resource designed to support refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) technicians in the safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible use of refrigerants. Developed by UNEP OzonAction in collaboration AREA, the manual responds to the growing need for updated skills in handling low Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants, including those with higher flammability such as A2L and A3.

Targeted primarily at technicians and training institutes in developing countries, the manual provides practical and theoretical guidance to ensure proper refrigerant management, reduce environmental impacts, and improve system performance and safety.

The manual is structured as a flexible, modular training programme consisting of 10 individual modules that can be combined to create tailored courses, alongside eight pre assembled courses ranging from short sessions of five hours to comprehensive programs of up to 56 hours. Each module or course is delivered as a complete training package, including lecture notes, presentations, assessments, trainer requirements, equipment specifications, and certificate templates, enabling trainers to deliver high quality and consistent instruction. The content combines both theoretical knowledge and hands on practical training, covering essential areas such as refrigerant characteristics, environmental considerations, and safe handling practices for conventional and alternative refrigerants.

Through this integrated approach, the manual builds critical competencies for technicians, including the safe handling, storage and transport of refrigerants, leak detection and prevention, compliance with relevant policies and standards, and the selection of appropriate refrigerants for different applications. It also provides detailed guidance on managing the risks associated with more flammable, low GWP refrigerants, helping to prevent accidents, improve system efficiency, and minimise environmental harm. By strengthening technical capacity in the RAC sector, the manual supports safer operations and contributes to the global transition to climate friendly cooling solutions.

AREA and UNEP OzonAction at OEWG48

On 15 July, AREA was proud to co-organise, together with UNEP OzonAction, a high-level side event during the 48th Open-ended Working Group (OEWG48) of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, taking place in Bangkok, Thailand, on 15 July 2026.



AREA contributed to key discussions on training, certification and low-GWP refrigerants during OEWG48 in Bangkok, which brought together representatives of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol.

At the **AREA–UNEP side event**, attended by more than 100 participants, AREA presented a new joint publication on good practices and skills development in refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pumps. The discussions highlighted the need for internationally recognised competencies and certification systems to ensure that climate policies are translated into safe and sustainable practices.

Representing AREA, Marco Buoni also participated in side events organised by **NRDC** and **CCAC** (*Preparing the Servicing Sector for HFC Alternatives to Support Kigali Implementation*), and by **Danfoss Climate Solutions** (*Flammable Refrigerants are What Keep Us Awake*). These sessions addressed workforce readiness and the safe use of flammable refrigerants, including system design, ATEX requirements and F-gas regulation.

AREA also presented **IMPACT-F** – Integrated Mitigation Platform for Assessing Climate Targets for F-Gases – a Horizon Europe project developing a global modelling platform to assess how different F-gas policies could affect emissions, energy demand and decarbonisation.

Real Alternatives Train-the-Trainers 2026

The Real Alternatives Train-the-Trainers (TOT) 2026 programme will take place from 16 to 20 November 2026 at Aeres Tech in Ede, the Netherlands. The advanced course is designed for trainers working in the refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump sectors.

Organised by Real Alternatives in collaboration with Aeres Tech and ATF, the programme continues the consortium's commitment to supporting its partners in strengthening the technical and pedagogical skills of trainers responsible for educating Europe's RACHP technicians on low-GWP refrigerants. As the transition to alternative refrigerants accelerates, the need for highly qualified trainers is becoming increasingly important—not only to provide technical expertise but also to effectively promote safe working practices and ensure compliance with the latest European legislation.

The five-day programme includes two days dedicated to flammable refrigerants, two days on carbon dioxide (CO₂), and one day on ammonia (NH₃). The training will focus primarily on harmonising teaching methodologies among trainers while promoting a common approach to best practices for the safe handling of alternative refrigerants.

This edition of the TOT is particularly significant as it will host the **first joint training event with the SKILLSAFE EU project**, the European initiative dedicated to developing the skills required for the safe installation of R290 heat pumps. The joint training represents the next step in the collaboration between the two projects, which also includes the integration of the SKILLSAFE EU training module into the Real Alternatives e-learning platform.

On the morning of 16 November, the Real Alternatives Stakeholder Meeting will also take place, providing an important opportunity for consortium partners to exchange experiences, discuss ongoing activities and explore future collaboration.

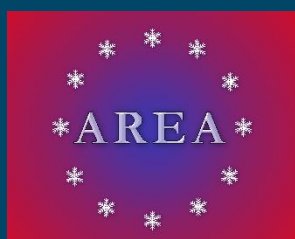
Registration is open until 18 September 2026.

For further information, please contact info@realalternatives.eu.



The poster for the Real Alternatives Train-the-Trainers 2026 programme features the following information:

- Logos:** real alternatives europe, Aeres Tech, and ATF ASSOCIAZIONE TECNICI DEL FREDDO.
- Organised by:** Aeres Tech and ATF.
- Event Title:** REAL ALTERNATIVES TRAIN-THE-TRAINERS
- Tagline:** Building expertise for a sustainable cooling future
- Dates:** 16-20 November 2026
- Location:** Aeres Tech, Ede, the Netherlands
- Training Programme:**
 - Flammable Refrigerants Training: 16-17/11/2026
 - Carbon Dioxide Training: 18-19/11/2026
 - Ammonia Training: 20/11/2026
- Key Features:**
 - FOR TRAINERS:** Empower your teaching skills and expand your expertise
 - LOW GWP FOCUS:** Safe. Efficient. Sustainable.
 - PRACTICAL & UP-TO DATE:** High-quality training based on the latest standards and practices
 - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK:** Share knowledge and build connections
- Additional Events:**
 - Real Alternatives Stakeholder Meeting: 16/11/2026
 - Welcome Dinner on Sunday: 15/11/2026
- Registration:** REGISTER BY 18 SEPTEMBER 2026
- Logos:** SKILLSAFE EU, real alternatives europe, and European Union flag.
- Contact:** www.realalternatives.eu, info@realalternatives.eu



THIS NEWSLETTER IS RESERVED TO AREA MEMBERS.

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