

UPEI SPRING GENERAL MEETING IN LJUBLJANA HIGHLIGHTS THE PATH TOWARD EUROPE'S ENERGY AUTONOMY

UPEI, the voice of Europe's independent energy and mobility suppliers, gathered in Ljubljana, Slovenia, for its Spring General Meeting on April 9, 10, and 11, hosted by its Slovenian member, SNNK, under the representation of Tadej Granfol, Secretary General of SNNK. The event brought together UPEI members, industry experts, and institutional stakeholders to address the ongoing energy transition and the strategic imperative of moving toward Europe's energy autonomy.



The meeting provided a platform for open discussion on the challenges and opportunities of the current energy landscape, particularly as Europe continues to redefine its energy mix in response to geopolitical shifts, climate commitments, and supply concerns.

Accelerating the Energy Transition and Enhancing Resilience

Participants examined key developments in EU energy policy and reviewed the progress of UPEI's Energy Transition Roadmap. The dialogue focused on promoting **low-carbon fuels, renewables**, and **innovative technologies** such as biofuels, e-fuels, and hydrogen, alongside the role of independents in delivering these alternatives efficiently and affordably to end-users.

Discussions also addressed **Europe's ambition for energy autonomy**, emphasising the role that independent fuel suppliers can play in ensuring supply security while supporting climate goals.

Expert Contributions and Industry Dialogue

The meeting featured keynote presentations and insights from distinguished speakers, including:

- **“EU hydrogen market developments”**
 - **Vasilis Papandreou**, Policy Officer, Emerging Hydrogen Markets Gas, Hydrogen & Retail, EU Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER).
- **“Legislative innovations and progress of major projects in Slovenia”**
 - **Tadej Granfol**, Secretary General, SNNK.
- **“Comprehensive energy solutions in light of the transformation from fuel retailer to energy company”**.
 - **Evald Kranjčević**, Executive Director, field of energy production, energy solutions, and mobility, Petrol d.d.

These contributions offered valuable perspectives on the implementation of future renewable solutions and the evolving role of the energy sector in a decarbonised economy.

Roundtable Debate: Communicating in Times of Paradigm Shift

A key feature of the General Meeting was UPEI's roundtable session titled **“Communicating UPEI Messages in a Time of Paradigm Changes”**, which sparked dynamic exchanges on how to position and articulate the role of independent energy providers amid widespread change. Participants explored how to ensure effective advocacy, communication, and clarity in a shifting regulatory, environmental, and societal context.



Looking Ahead

UPEI President Johan Deleu remarked: “*The Ljubljana meeting reinforced our shared responsibility to shape Europe’s energy future. We are committed to providing practical, forward-looking solutions that help Europe meet its climate and autonomy objectives, while staying close to consumers and markets.*”

The General Meeting concluded with a strategic reaffirmation of UPEI’s priorities: to support a resilient and sustainable energy system, amplify the voice of independents, and continue building strong partnerships with policymakers and industry actors across Europe.

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UPEI represents nearly 2,000 European importers and wholesale/retail distributors of energy for the transport and heating sectors, supplying Europe’s customers independently of the major energy producers. They are the interface between producers and consumers, using their own infrastructure and flexibility to supply existing demand for conventional and renewable liquid fuels, as well as non-liquid alternatives as part of the energy transition. They cover more than a third of Europe’s current demand. The organisation brings together national associations and suppliers across Europe. Independent fuel suppliers bring competition to Europe’s energy market and are able to respond rapidly to changes affecting supply, contributing to security on a local, national and regional level. They have developed and maintain a comprehensive infrastructure for the sourcing, storage and distribution of transport and heating fuels, with a commitment to delivering a high-quality service to all consumers, including those in remote areas.

