



## **HYDROGEN EUROPE RESEARCH FEEDBACK EU ENERGY POLICY - REVAMPING THE STRATEGIC ENERGY TECHNOLOGY PLAN**

**Fuel cells and hydrogen has become an increasingly relevant policy topic on the European stage.** The European Green Deal made hydrogen an essential element to reach climate neutrality by 2050. Following its adoption, a hydrogen strategy was developed in July 2020 to set a path for the rollout and upscaling of hydrogen and related technologies. Since 2020, several policy proposals have been instrumental in making this strategy a reality and some of them are still in the making. More recently, and tightly linked to the energy crisis, the REPowerEU Plan has considerably heightened the European ambitions for the roll out of hydrogen production.

All these developments show the relevance of hydrogen in the energy system and consequently the importance for Europe to stay at the forefront of research and innovation in this field. **Key fora are already well established on the European stage to promote cooperation among actors of the hydrogen and fuel cells ecosystem,** among them, the Clean Hydrogen Partnership, Clean Hydrogen Alliance or the Green Hydrogen ERA pilot initiative. **The Clean Hydrogen Partnership** in which Hydrogen Europe Research partners, **offers a structured cooperation where industry and research meet to trustfully elaborate funding priorities on research and innovation in the field of fuel cells and hydrogen.** Its achievements are concrete thanks to a dedicated budget allocated to the development of projects based on the priorities jointly elaborated by the three members: researchers, industry players and the European Commission.

Based on our experience in this partnership, we believe that the FCH community should also play an active role in the process at stake here. Therefore, **Hydrogen Europe Research welcomes the opportunity to provide its view on the European Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan.** The SET Plan is a pertinent initiative to coordinate research and innovation efforts among Member States, and to provide a discussion platform for alignment of research activities at national levels.

Currently the topic of hydrogen and fuel cells is covered in the SET Plan via a broader implementation Working Group (IWG) on Renewable fuels and bioenergy. The cross-sectoral nature of hydrogen explains this choice, however, we believe that, in line with the conclusion 4 of the SET Plan Interim Evaluation, **a dedicated IWG on hydrogen would increase the visibility of the hydrogen sector and allow a much broader acceptance and participation of Member States to align their national policies and efforts on hydrogen and fuel cells.**





In order to avoid duplications and foster synergies among the European hydrogen initiatives, several points should be of attention when developing this IWG:

- **Participants in this initiative should be representatives from relevant ministries (Research, Science, Education depending on the existing portfolio) and national funding agencies.** The involvement of ministries is essential to ensure linking with national policies. To this date, there is no equivalent initiative for hydrogen covering all European countries.
- **The IWG should engage with the Clean Hydrogen Partnership to promote synergies between the European and the national level.** The Clean Hydrogen Partnership would be involved in the IWG workshops to share information about the activities at European level. On the other hand, members of the IWG would liaise with the State Representative Group of the Clean Hydrogen Partnership to ensure a coordinated approach across the different fora.
- **The SRIA of the Green Hydrogen ERA pilot initiative published in March 2022 should be used as a reference document for these activities.** Further alignment with the SRIA of the Clean Hydrogen Partnership should also be ensured. The focus on low TRL activities (1 to 3) would be relevant to complement the activities of the Joint Undertaking.

We remain available to further discuss the best way to involve the hydrogen community in the SET-Plan process.

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Hydrogen Europe Research is an international, non-profit association composed of more than 120 Universities and Research & Technology Organisations (RTO) from 27 countries in Europe and beyond. Our members are active within the European hydrogen and fuel cell sector.

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