

**President Ursula von der Leyen**

European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023

**Delivering prosperity and competitiveness through decarbonisation**

Dear President of the European Commission,  
Liebe Frau von der Leyen,

Allow me to extend mine and Hydrogen Europe's fullhearted congratulations on your nomination to lead the European Commission for another term which will guide our continent to the milestone year 2030. The next five years will largely determine if the EU can deliver domestically as well as inspire and lead globally, in a rapidly changing world.

Increasing competitiveness of our continent while delivering on the climate neutrality by 2050 ambitions of the green and digital transition, and reducing strategic dependencies lies at the heart of the Strategic Agenda adopted by the European Council for the next mandate of the European institutions.

The heads of state and government structured their approach to delivering prosperity, needed to ensure social cohesion and unity of our European home around key pillars:

- Bolstering competitiveness, with the focus on increasing investments into key sectors by completing energy, financial and banking markets;
- Accelerating the energy transition, centred on investments in net-zero technologies, cross-border infrastructure and development of manufacturing capacities;
- Boosting Europe's research and innovation capacity in emerging and enabling technologies.

A bold long-term vision and swift short-term measures are needed to advance on a version of the Green Deal that simultaneously keeps us globally competitive, secures resilient supply of affordable clean energy, and accelerates climate action.

The European hydrogen ecosystem is well placed to contribute to reaching the objectives of the energy transition and those of the Pact for European Competitiveness to ensure sustainable, prosperous, competitive and resilient of European economies. Hydrogen can provide the necessary flexibility to our renewables and help decarbonise energy and industrial sectors that are still reliant on fossil fuels. For that to materialise in time for our 2030 reality check, Europe needs to move from the notional inclusion of hydrogen in the energy mix to an earnest development of the hydrogen economy.

The EU needs a compelling, comprehensive and focussed hydrogen implementation agenda with a budget, a timeline, and a map of institutional and industrial partners. Public investments should help European industrial actors derisk their investments in clean solutions and help them preserve their global competitiveness. We also need to build hydrogen partnerships that bring volumes and security of supply, and positively contribute to the EU's international development objectives and climate diplomacy.

In that respect, some institutional and policy adjustments would be needed over the next five years to ensure that environmental, climate, social, economic and geopolitical considerations are properly reflected in EU's legislation:

- Naming an experienced and competent Executive Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the clean industry with a strong political mandate to bring jobs, growth, and stability to Europe, and secure the manufacturing base of our clean technologies;
- Setting up a permanent platform for policy coordination between DGs responsible for delivering the sustainable and competitive transition to facilitate a more harmonized policymaking and avoid delayed, uncertain and patchy legislating;
- Embedding in the European financial structures a clear framework for EU net-zero industrial investments, independent of and complementary to the national state aid schemes, to help derisk business decisions;
- Expanding the budget and the scope of the European Hydrogen Bank to help bring down the prices of clean hydrogen produced in Europe, benefitting from European technologies;
- Streamlining regulatory framework for hydrogen production by reducing the administrative burden, and revisiting the time- and geography-related requirements which render making the final investment decisions virtually impossible;
- Securing the funding for further development of clean hydrogen technologies and their deployment by a dedicated hydrogen components in the Multiannual Financial Framework, the Horizon and the Innovation Fund;
- Developing the needed hydrogen infrastructure – a dedicated European backbone of pipelines, under the ENNOH; storage capacity to guarantee the flexibility of our renewables; refuelling network along the main corridors, in ports and at the airports to reduce the emissions in the transport sector; and connecting Europe with partner states in the neighbourhood;
- Putting hydrogen in the centre of European climate diplomacy, possibly led by a dedicated envoy, with memoranda of understanding with third countries, partnerships with the countries in our neighbourhood, and activities in international institutions and fora;
- Aligning the costs of CO2 emissions embedded in imported goods and products with domestic ones with an ETS revision and targeted expansion of CBAM sectors;
- Phasing out harmful subsidies for fossil fuels and redirecting those funds towards meaningful decarbonisation projects and clean, net-zero technologies.

Hydrogen Europe and our members are committed to the vision of a prosperous, climate neutral Europe, and remain your reliable partner in turning that vision into reality.

Sincerely,



Jorgo Chatzimarkakis  
CEO