

Mrs Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

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Mrs. Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition
Mr. Stéphane Séjourné, Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy
Mr. Wopke Hoekstra, Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth
Mr. Dan Jørgensen, Commissioner for Energy and Housing

29 January 2025

SUBJECT: Call for the inclusion of hydrogen vehicles as a way of achieving the objectives of the upcoming Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the European Automotive Industry

Dear President von der Leyen and Commissioner Tzitzikostas,

We commend you on the announcement made by President Ursula von der Leyen launching the Strategic Dialogue with the European automotive industry, social partners and other key stakeholders, with the first meeting to be held on 30 January. This is a timely and needed conversation that must take place urgently.

Given the importance of the automotive industry for the European economy, its impact on employment, and the eroding competitiveness of the sector mentioned in the Draghi report, the undersigned companies urge the Commission to recognise the relevance of hydrogen mobility for the future of the automotive sector. We are convinced that hydrogen will play a crucial role in decarbonizing mobility, while improving the competitiveness of the sector and building a more resilient energy system in Europe.

Over the years, vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and infrastructure companies have made significant investments in Europe to gain a competitive advantage in hydrogen mobility. This has been done as a way to offer consumers a complementary solution to other zero emission vehicle (ZEV) alternatives, such as battery electric vehicles (BEV). However, misalignment between industry and policy makers, coupled with an overly strict regulatory framework has slowed down the hydrogen mobility market, putting the scale-up and the competitiveness of the industry strongly at risk. Therefore, the undersigned companies urge the Commission to include hydrogen mobility in the agenda for the Strategic Dialogue

In contrast to battery electric technology, which is a needed solution to achieve decarbonization but where Europe lags foreign competition, when it comes to hydrogen mobility, Europe still has a chance of staying ahead not only on technological expertise and industrial capacity, but also on the needed supply chain, all of which are already present in Europe today. This is exactly why the European Union, its member states, and industry have already invested billions of euros in the deployment of hydrogen vehicles and their related refueling infrastructure. This includes significant European funds directed to IPCEI (Important Projects of Common European Interest) projects, national funding schemes, and private investment.

We therefore request that hydrogen mobility be an integral part of the upcoming Strategic Dialogue.

Not only is hydrogen an answer to the decarbonization of heavy-duty vehicles, but also a needed complementary solution to battery electric vehicles when it comes to passenger cars and vans. It offers European consumers a wider range of options to address their particular decarbonization needs. We can reach more customers faster and address more business cases if hydrogen is an option. To allow all end users to switch to zero emission vehicles, hydrogen vehicles cannot be overlooked.

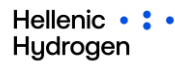
Pursuing multiple technological solutions to address the decarbonization of transport only increases the chances of European industry becoming more competitive. This element is rightly emphasized in the Draghi report, and is an approach widely followed in China today, with the difference that when it comes to **hydrogen mobility, Europe still holds a global competitive advantage**. Additionally, the needed technology, supply chain, and industrial capacity can all be based in Europe. This is true from a vehicle perspective and its components, as well as the hydrogen needed to fuel them and related infrastructure, all of which are recognized by current EU funding and regulations. The need to create resilient and competitive supply chains should not be forgotten in the political debate.

Discussing hydrogen mobility during the upcoming Strategic Dialogue also makes logical sense. If industry and governments are already investing heavily in this solution today, then it will be more efficient to talk about it now than leaving to discuss it later in isolation. Many of the ensuing debates like supply chains and enabling conditions for the success of decarbonized mobility apply to hydrogen mobility just as much as for battery electric vehicles, which will—and should—be at the forefront of the Dialogue. For example, a timely deployment of hydrogen refueling stations is just as needed as deploying charging infrastructure and developing both simultaneously will be more economical. The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) already recognizes that, but the Dialogue will be crucial to make sure this deployment is in line with what industry needs to keep its competitiveness.

Hydrogen mobility has the prospect of offering a positive alternative to most of the topics of the work programme you propose for the Dialogue, including “innovation and leadership in future technologies and capabilities,” “clean transition and decarbonisation,” “competitiveness and resilience,” and “trade relations and international ‘level playing field.’” Europe simply cannot afford to leave out hydrogen mobility from such a critical exercise.

That is why we will continue to contribute to the competitiveness of European industry and remain available to fully support the Strategic Dialogue in a constructive manner.

Sincerely,



Renault
Group



STÄUBLI



TOYOTA



V O L V O

