Declaration from AT, DK, ES, LU, PT on the adoption of the 'Manifesto for the development of a European "Hydrogen Technologies and Systems" value chain'

Energy efficiency and direct electrification based on renewables are the key priorities to achieve the EU commitments on energy and climate objectives for 2030 and 2050. In this regard, we acknowledge and emphasize that increasing flexibility and interoperability between energy systems is necessary, in line with the principles established in the EU Energy System Integration Strategy adopted by the European Commission, to contribute to the achievement of the Paris Agreement and of the Green Deal.

Consequently, hydrogen from renewable sources has the potential to optimise the systemic interplay between different energy carriers and complement direct electrification where this is not feasible or cost-effective. In particular, renewable hydrogen can be useful as an industrial feedstock to replace fossil-based hydrogen, as a climate-neutral energy carrier in high-temperature industrial processes and in mobility modes such as shipping, aviation, long-haul heavy-duty transport or non-electrified railways lines.

We also believe that research, development and innovation activities should be accelerated across the whole hydrogen value chain, in particular to decrease the cost of hydrogen from renewable sources and make it a viable alternative to fossil fuels and that cross-border cooperation on that matter in paramount.

In order to strengthen this cooperation, an Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) on hydrogen is crucial to facilitate channeling the necessary public funds to achieve technology maturity for renewable hydrogen production and create a genuine EU value chain.

The existing framework for an IPCEI allows aids to first industrial deployment of an R&D project in order to fill the funding gap to overcome such market failures and boost the realisation of projects that otherwise would not have taken off. In addition to this, projects within an IPCEI must respect the principle of the phasing out of environmental harmful subsidies. Therefore, an IPCEI on hydrogen must only be eligible when produced from renewable sources, where a clear market gap is identified, first industrial deployment at large-scale is necessary and the 'do not harm' principle is ensured.

For these reasons, we hereby subscribe to the 'Manifesto for the development of a European "Hydrogen Technologies and Systems" value chain' as signatory members with the understanding that this initiative should exclusively refer to hydrogen from renewable energy sources since we consider this technology as the only long-term sustainable solution to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. We will also work to pursue this view on renewable hydrogen in the coming legislative changes, e.g. the Renewable Energy Directive and the coming revision of the gas package.

We also recognise that cross-border partnerships between Member States based on 'Joint Projects', as defined in article 9 of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), broaden the support mechanisms for renewable hydrogen, as mentioned in IPCEI Communication, and can contribute to scaling up renewable hydrogen production projects, setting up the grounds for an effective European renewable hydrogen market.

Leonore Gewessler
Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology
the Republic of Austria

Dan Jørgensen
Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities
the Kingdom of Denmark

Claude Turmes
Minister for Energy and Minister for Spatial Planning
the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

João Pedro Matos Fernandes
Minister of Environment and Climate Action
the Portuguese Republic

Teresa Ribera Rodríguez
Fourth Vice-President and Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge
the Kingdom of Spain