Guidance for the MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey on Clean Energy Innovation Policy

Survey introduction

The MI-IEA-EC-OCD Survey on Clean Energy Innovation Policy is a collaborative effort between the International Energy Agency (IEA), Mission Innovation (MI), and the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in partnership with the European Commission (EC). All organisations regularly collect data on research and innovation policies related to net zero, and the purpose of this survey is to streamline data collection into a single, comprehensive questionnaire, thereby reducing the reporting burden on national authorities. The survey aims to gather accurate and valuable data on policy initiatives targeting the decarbonisation of the energy sector.

The information collected in the survey is relevant to all organisations. Accordingly, the information collected by MI will be collated into the MI Member Insights Report, an annual report that aims to provide a snapshot of government clean-energy STI policy initiatives. The IEA will use the collected data to enhance its Policies and Measures Database (PAMS), which provides access to information related to past, existing and planned government policies and measures for clean energy technologies. The OECD will use the data to feed the EC-OECD STIP Compass portal, which provides information on hundreds of STI policies that explicitly support the transition to net zero.

Survey structure

The survey's structure comprises four taxonomies characterising policy initiatives in different ways: (1) Their themes, corresponding to the different questions asked in the survey, (2) their direct beneficiaries, (3) their policy instruments and (4) the technologies they are targeting. Additionally, respondents provide free-text information describing the policy initiative, its objectives and background.

The survey also collects more detailed data on policy instruments that respondents should provide to the degree possible.

Questions and contact

In case of any questions, please consult the FAQ below. If you cannot find an answer there, please contact the survey helpdesk at survey@mission-innovation.net.

FAQ

1. Who should answer the survey in my country?

It is the responsibility of the 'Privileged users' in each country to decide on and coordinate the contributions of different respondents. 'Privileged users' should bear in mind that:

- Experience points to a strong positive correlation between the number and institutional diversity of people involved on the one hand, and the quality and density of the data on the other.
- The survey is developed in a way that makes it easy to decentralise the data collection. Accordingly, several respondents can work at the same time on the survey.

2. What distinguishes "privileged users" and regular contributors?

Privileged users contribute responses in the survey, but they also coordinate their country's survey response. They are responsible for ensuring the timely completion of the survey questionnaire. They are in close contact with the survey helpdesk requesting help when needed.

Privileged user accounts have a greater permission level:

- They can create as many user accounts as they wish, to distribute the effort of answering the survey.
- They can assign parts of the survey to specific respondents by going to "Manage users" → "Select a user" → and click on "Filtered".

Regular contributors support privileged users by reporting policy initiatives, for example, from their ministry or agency. Contributors can be assigned to specific parts of the survey most relevant to them. Contributors can also contact the [survey helpdesk] in case of doubt and/or to report any bug in the online survey tool.

3. Why is there already data from my country in the survey?

It is possible that your country's data has already been included in the survey because the questions in the current MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey have been pre-filled with existing data from the STIP Compass Net Zero Portal. This data has previously been collected through collaborative efforts between the EC-OECD, and the IEA, albeit through separate initiatives. The purpose of the MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey is to consolidate these efforts into a single, comprehensive questionnaire. This consolidation aims to reduce the reporting burden on national authorities.

4. What is the relationship between the MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey on Clean Energy Innovation Policy and the STIP Compass?

The MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey on Clean Energy Innovation Policy is an extension of the foundational work conducted through the STIP Compass. While the STIP Compass encompasses a broad spectrum of national science, technology, and innovation (STI) policies, the MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey narrows its focus to policies specifically aimed at achieving net-zero emissions and promoting clean energy innovation. This targeted survey allows for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of national and international efforts to advance clean energy technologies and meet environmental goals.

Although the MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey is a subset of the broader STIP Compass framework, it serves a distinct and critical purpose. By concentrating on clean energy innovation policies, it highlights the specific strategies, investments, and initiatives that countries are employing to transition to a sustainable, low-carbon future. As previously mentioned, the data collected will serve multiple purposes. For Mission Innovation, the data will be collated into the MI Member Insights Report. For the

IEA, the data will be used to enhance its Policies and Measures Database (PAMS). For the OECD, the data will be used to feed the STIP Compass Net Zero Portal. Additionally, for the next STIP survey, the new initiatives included within the MI-IEA-EC-OECD survey will be used to prefill the questions concerning net zero transitions.

5. The survey asks countries to report their policy initiatives, but what exactly is a "policy initiative"?

The survey's questions ask respondents to provide information relevant to clean energy STI "policy initiatives". Drawing partly on an EU definition, an STI policy initiative is defined as a public action that i) aims to achieve one or several public policy goals in the policy area of science, technology and innovation, ii) is expected to modify or frame the behaviours of actors and stakeholders, being national, domestic or foreign, who are part of or influential on the national innovation system, and iii) is implemented with a minimum time horizon or on a continuous basis (i.e. not as a one-off "event"). STI policy initiatives targeting clean energy relates to STI initiatives that are specifically aimed at achieving net-zero emissions and promoting clean energy innovation.

The definition used in this database is therefore deliberately wide: a policy initiative can be a financial policy measure (e.g. a grant, a tax incentive, etc.); a programme (e.g. environmental technology programme led by an environment agency, a cross-border research programme, etc.); a law or regulation (an evaluation/impact assessment requirement applying to the STI area, etc.); an informal framework (e.g. an indicative rule or guideline on stakeholder consultation on research priorities) or an "institutional event" (e.g. creation during the last two years of a research agency; a high level STI council, etc.) targeting net-zero emissions and the promotion of clean energy innovation.

A policy initiative may target different direct beneficiaries and may utilise one or more different [5. What is a policy instrument?] in its implementation.

At all stages, respondents can refer to the Survey's prompts in order to access useful information on what are considered valid policy initiatives for each question. Prompts exist for each question as well as for many of the fields used in the Survey.

6. What should be the scope of a policy initiative?

A crucial issue in reporting in the survey tool relates to the scope of what a country considers to be "policy initiatives" in the energy sector. There is no unique solution or golden rule, and it is up to national authorities to decide how and what to report as policy initiatives in their respective STI systems. In doing so, respondents should consider the following trade-off:

Policy initiatives should not be too broad in scope, otherwise it will be difficult to provide sufficiently precise information on them (e.g. on their budgets, start dates, objectives, etc.). For instance, if there is a comprehensive clean energy STI law or plan that includes a wide range of policy measures or instruments across multiple energy-related areas (e.g. renewable energy technologies, energy storage solutions, energy efficiency improvements, smart grids, etc.), it would be considered too large in scope. However, it should still be categorised under the theme of "high-level strategies", which covers national clean energy STI plans or strategies. Each individual policy initiative within this larger law or plan should, thereafter, be separately reported under the relevant themes and questions to ensure clarity and specificity.

At the other extreme, dedicating a policy initiative to each clean energy technology research programme of a national funding agency would be too specific, since their objectives and modes of implementation would be largely similar, and only the theme in which they operate would be different. In this case, a good approach might be to "group" these clean energy technology research programmes into a unique initiative (named for instance "clean technology research programmes of the national funding agency"). Research programmes with clearly distinct objectives and/or modes of implementation (e.g. a programme with a stronger user-led approach, or an exploratory clean energy research programme, etc.), if any, could still be reported.

To illustrate with a hypothetical example, a funding agency may have a portfolio of 20 different grants. Of these, 12 may seek the promotion of R&D in green energy technologies and share similar beneficiaries, meaning they could be grouped together under the same initiative. Another subset of 7 grants could share the common objective of demonstrating energy technologies and could be grouped under a different policy initiative. Finally, it may be the case that one of the grants has a comparatively higher budget and aims particularly to encourage collaborative research for green transitions between business and academia. In this case, a separate policy initiative could capture this unique type of grant.

7. What is a policy instrument?

Among the fields used to characterise a policy initiative is one dedicated to the policy instruments the initiative uses in its implementation. The survey tool incorporates a list of policy instruments for respondents to choose from.

On clicking “Add a new instrument” in the policy initiative form, a mini form opens in a new window. Here, respondents are prompted to select one of the policy instruments from a scroll-down list. On selecting a policy instrument, further fields appear in the mini form, specific to the policy instrument selected, inviting the respondent to provide more details. These fields are, for the most part, multiple choice mandatory questions. Once all mandatory fields are completed, the mini form should be saved. The type of policy instrument selected is then added to the policy initiative.

Since many policy initiatives use a mix of policy instruments, respondents can add as many policy instruments as needed, repeating the steps just outlined above.

8. Initiatives and instruments best practices

To assign new policy initiatives to a question, respondents should click on “Add new initiative” in the answer field. This field includes a predictive search feature. If when typing the name of the policy initiative the predictive search recognises it, this means that it has already been entered into the system as an answer to another question, either by another respondent in your country or as part of the prefilling with data from the last edition. The respondent can then decide to link it to the question, simply by clicking on the green “Link” button. Alternatively, the respondent can decide to look at the initiative to see if its details remain accurate. In this case, the respondent should click the “Edit” button to check and update the fields as needed.

If, on the other hand, the name is not recognised, a new policy initiative will be created with a new form to fill out. Respondents will need to complete the fields in the form.

Finally, if it is known that a policy initiative already entered the database as an answer to one question should also be included as an answer to another, the survey tool’s “link” functionality can be used. This avoids having to enter the same information into the tool multiple times. As already described above, respondents should click on “Add new initiative” in the question’s answer field and start to type the policy initiative's name. When the predictive search feature recognises it, the name of the policy initiative will appear and can be selected. It can then be linked to the question by clicking on the green “Link” button. This can also be reversed in case of mistakes by clicking on the “Tools” button to the left of the policy initiative's title and selecting “unlink”.

9. When should I indicate a policy initiative is a “structural reform”?

The option “policy initiative is a structural reform” can be useful to report the creation or reform of public bodies, new laws, regulations, standards or any other policy initiative that is expected to be permanent. It is because of this permanent status that the “End date” field is disabled.

10. Why are there mandatory fields to complete for initiatives, and what happens if I do not complete them?

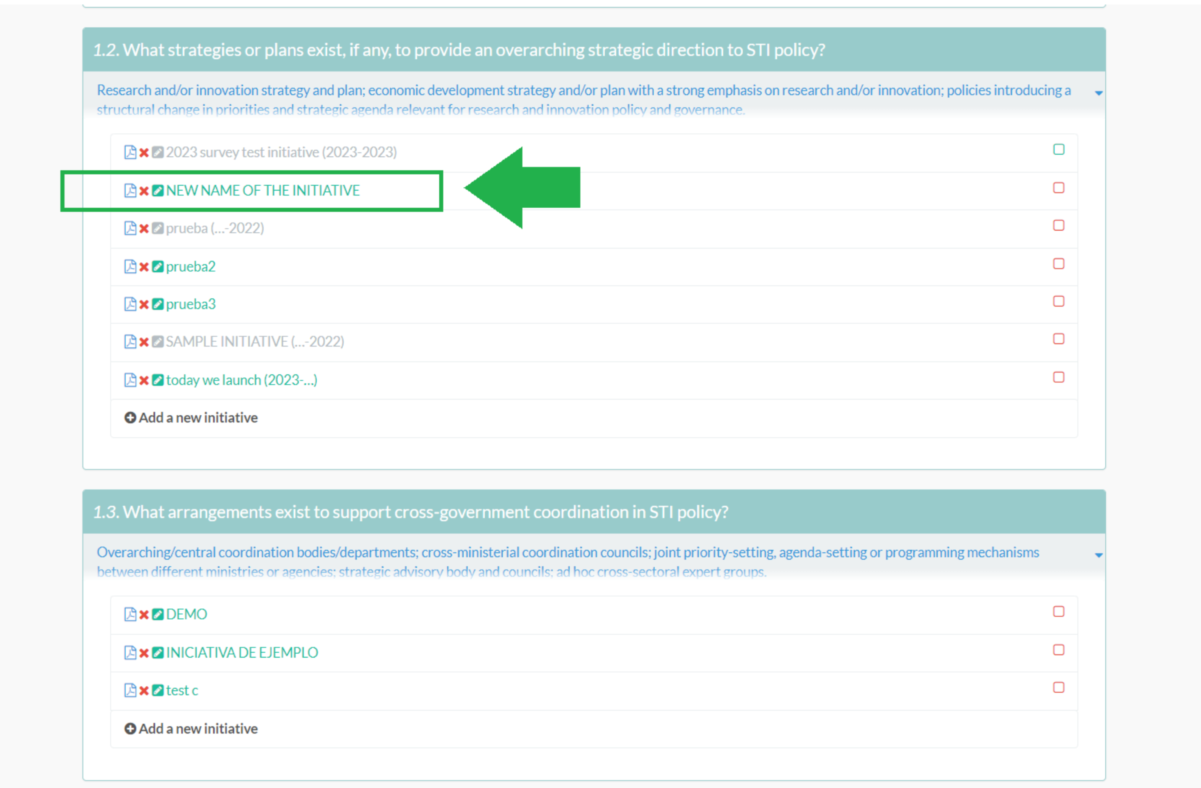
Some of the fields to be completed for each policy initiatives are marked with a red asterisk, indicating their completion is mandatory. This is because the information in these fields is highly important for monitoring clean energy innovation policies. However, policy initiatives where mandatory fields have not been completed can still be submitted as part of your country’s survey response.

11. What does it mean to “approve” an initiative, and who can do this?

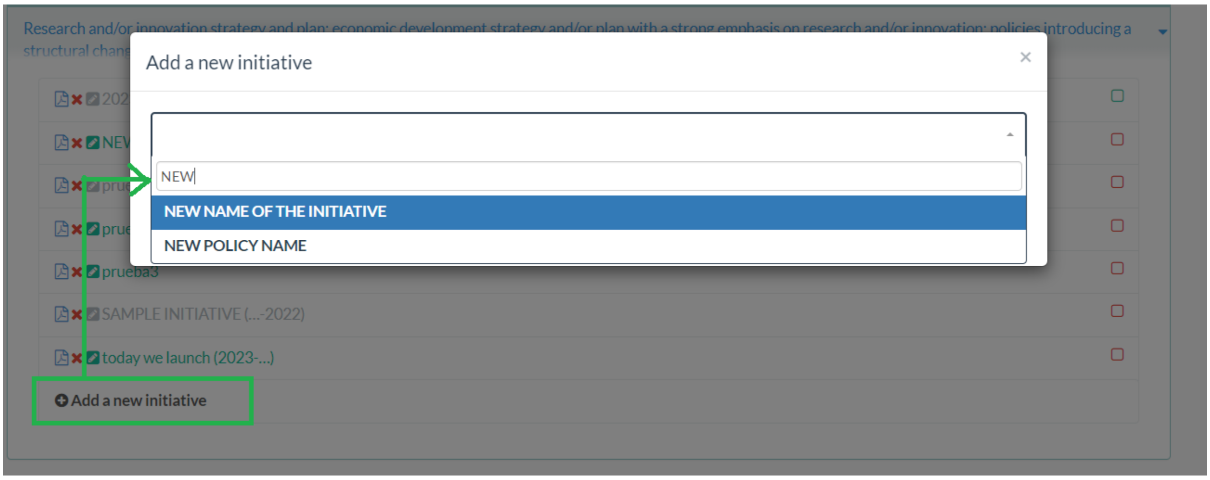
When for a specific initiative, all mandatory fields have been completed, privileged users can mark these initiatives as “approved”. Approved initiatives are locked for editing by regular contributors. Privileged users, however, can still edit approved initiatives. This functionality was designed to facilitate the coordination of survey responses where different respondents provide information and a privileged user conducts quality checks at the end. Approving initiatives at the end of organising the survey responses is not mandatory, but optional.

12. How to link an initiative to several questions?

Scenario: “NEW NAME OF THE INITIATIVE” is under 1.2 and we would like to add it to 1.3 as well.

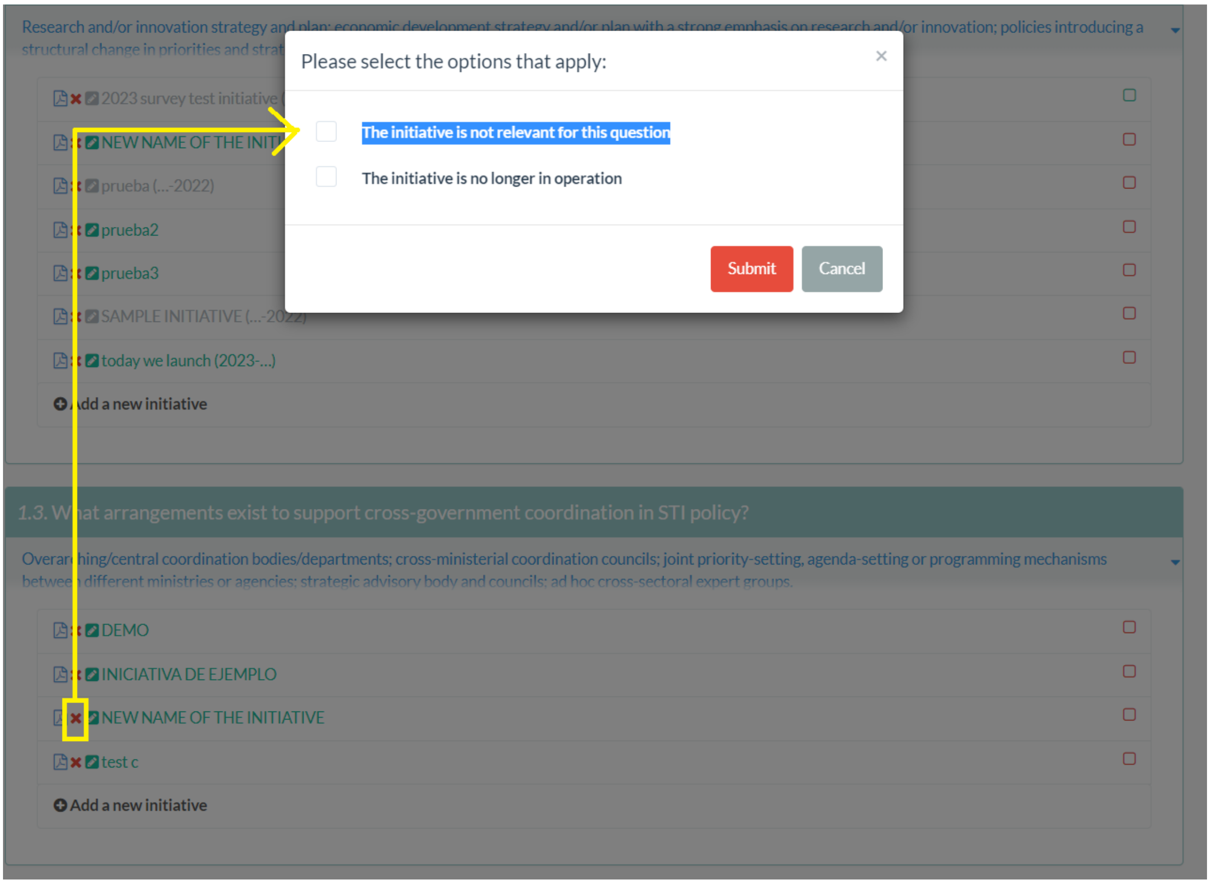


In 1.3, click “Add a new initiative” and start typing the name of the initiative “NEW NAME OF THE INITIATIVE”.



Then simply click “Link”. You are done!

Should you wish to unlink it, simple click the red colour cross signage and tick the box “The initiative is not relevant for this question”. Then, click “Submit”.



13. Personal Data Protection Notice for MI-IEA-EC-OECD Survey on Clean Energy Innovation Policy

MI, the IEA, and the EC-OECD prioritise the protection of personal data in accordance with their respective Personal Data Protection Rules. For further details on data protection, please contact the survey helpdesk at survey@mission-innovation.net.