**THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL: HYDROGEN IS A PRIORITY AREA FOR A CLEAN AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

The European Commission presented the European Green Deal on Wednesday (11 December), outlining the main policy initiatives for reaching net-zero global warming emissions by 2050. Hydrogen will be a key instrument for meeting the Green Deal objectives, as outlined in the paragraphs below.

**“Climate neutral”** Europe: this is the overarching objective of the European Green Deal. The EU aims to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. To this purpose, a plan for “smart sector integration”, bringing together the electricity, gas and heating sectors closer together “in one system”, will be presented in 2020.

**Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy** is another objective, which mentions hydrogen’s role. In particular, the transition to climate neutrality also requires smart infrastructure. Increased cross-border and regional cooperation will help achieve the benefits of the clean energy transition at affordable prices. The regulatory framework for energy infrastructure, including the TEN-E Regulation12, will need to be reviewed to ensure consistency with the climate neutrality objective. This framework should foster the deployment of innovative technologies and infrastructure, such as smart grids, hydrogen networks or carbon capture, storage and utilisation, energy storage, also enabling sector integration.

Furthermore, to mobilise industry **for a clean and circular economy**EU industry needs ‘climate and resource frontrunners’ that will develop the first commercial applications of breakthrough technologies in key industrial sectors by 2030. Priority areas include clean hydrogen, fuel cells and other alternative fuels, energy storage, and carbon capture, storage and utilisation.

Last, but not least, the full range of **instruments available under the Horizon Europe programme** will support the research and innovation efforts needed. Four ‘Green Deal Missions’ will help deliver large-scale changes in areas such as adaptation to climate change, oceans, cities and soil. These missions will bring together a wide range of stakeholders including regions and citizens. Partnerships with industry and Member States will support research and innovation on transport, including batteries, clean hydrogen, low-carbon steel making, circular bio-based sectors and the built environment.

Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, already highlighted the role of hydrogen in the green energy transition in the opening of the 2019 FCH JU Stakeholder Forum, on 21 November in Brussels. "I see a pivotal role for clean hydrogen…it is an area where Europe is still leading. Why not extend the lead on something that could be one of the most important solutions for clean energy?" .

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