

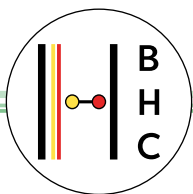


Memorandum for hydrogen

Recommendations for the 2024-2029 legislature



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Previous Belgian governments have shown great ambition when it comes to hydrogen, declaring the intention to become an “import hub for clean hydrogen for the rest of Europe” and to become “a European leader in clean hydrogen”. The new Belgian governments should re-confirm and further reinforce and implement this ambition it via the following six concrete action points:

- I. ADEQUATE SUPPORT MECHANISM: Ensure **sufficient and competitive support mechanisms (in line with our neighbouring countries)** to bridge the price gap between clean hydrogen and the currently produced hydrogen, so Belgium can maintain its large industrial base and attract/develop pioneering hydrogen production projects at the same time. We should advocate at EU level for a real level-playing field and ensure that EU funding programs, for example take the varying electricity costs among EU countries into consideration.
- II. OPEN ACCESS INFRASTRUCTURE: Develop a **fully-fledged open access hydrogen infrastructure** consisting of an internationally interconnected hydrogen transport backbone connecting the Belgian industrial clusters and industrial clusters in the neighbouring countries, a distribution network and import terminals for hydrogen and its derivatives.
- III. LIQUID MARKET: Set up a **liquid market for hydrogen and stimulate the use** of clean hydrogen by implementing an adequate and pragmatic certification of renewable and low-carbon hydrogen that is harmonised in Belgium (and at EU-level) and that can be traded on an exchange market/platform (e.g. stimulate the development of test pilots like HyBex, including exploring synergies with initiatives in neighbouring countries). Clarity on the devolution of powers on hydrogen between the regions and the federal level is essential for a workable market in Belgium.
- IV. MOBILITY: Establish a **level playing field** for hydrogen mobility (road, rail, barge and aviation) vis à vis neighbouring countries and vis à vis fossil alternatives and develop a comprehensive and standardised network of hydrogen refuelling stations for all modes of transport.
- V. RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT: Stimulate our excellent hydrogen research & development (R&D) with recurring hydrogen calls that **support coherent and focussed research programs, innovative large-scale pilots** along the entire value chain from production to use and support the development of more mature technologies towards full **commercial/industrial scale**.
- VI. TRAINING AND EDUCATION: Organize **training and education** on all aspects of hydrogen (including safety) so Belgium secures knowledge as its most important “raw material” that we export worldwide. Also the **broader Belgian society** must be informed via public outreach about the positive role of hydrogen in the future energy system, or we risk ending up with endless appeals and legal court cases against hydrogen production and infrastructure projects.

Overall, Belgium should develop a vision on energy system integration between electrons and molecules by giving a central place to hydrogen in the energy system (as was done at EU level).