

President von der Leyen

Cc: Executive Vice President Sefcovic, Executive Vice President Vestager, Executive Vice President Dombrovskis, Commissioner Breton, Commissioner Simson, Commissioner Hoekstra, MEPs of the ITRE Committee

Brussels, 5th July 2024

Subject: Open letter calling for electrolyser sourcing pre-qualification criteria in Hydrogen Bank T&C

Madam President,

The signatories of this letter warmly welcome the renewed ambition carried by the European Commission on electrolytic hydrogen development, with the confirmation of a 2nd Hydrogen Bank auction. This massive direct funding to de-risk the first waves of industrial-scale projects as well as the catalyst role of the auction-as-a-service for national support production schemes, will be crucial to the ramp-up of European hydrogen industry and the achievement of our Fit for 55 climate objectives.

It is now time to bring Hydrogen Bank into line with the Green Deal Industrial Plan objectives, and especially Net Zero Industry Act, by subsidizing preferably projects that involve EU-made electrolyzers.

We stand at a key moment for structuring a sustainable and integrated manufacturing value chain on hydrogen technologies within the EU. Across the Union, gigafactories strategically funded by the IPCEI are gradually being commissioned, making possible to meet all our domestic demand by 2030 with domestic manufacturing, that creates skilled and nonrelocatable employment. **We have all the assets to make of hydrogen a central lever for EU strategic autonomy.**

Now, these gigafactories must find initial markets for achieving economies of scale and building a sustainable competitiveness in the fierce global competition. Conversely, missing the boat today – by purchasing, for some of the first EU massive electrolysis projects, low-cost equipment from 3rd countries that do not comply with our social standards and lock out their economy in one way or another –, would result in a new critical and long-term dependency on hydrogen technologies.

Therefore, when it comes to the electrolyzers used for projects bidding at the Hydrogen Bank, we, national voices of the rising EU hydrogen industry, firmly call for setting a Resilience prequalification criteria as proposed by Hydrogen Europe¹,

¹ [Resilience criteria in European public funding instruments](#), Hydrogen Europe, May 2024

complemented by prequalification criteria on social aspects, cybersecurity, as well as safety and performance standards. These criteria are legitimate, and fall far short of what would be achieved by applying trade reciprocity with our partners.

While a new EU mandate begins, sadly marked by rising critics on the Green Deal, it is more than ever crucial to demonstrate that decarbonization and reindustrialization can go hand-in-hand to bring high social value within the EU. With NZIA, co-legislators have set the right objectives; it's time to make them operational with concrete tools, and Hydrogen Bank rules on electrolyzers origin offer us a first major opportunity for it. Let's seize it!

Signatories:

