

Director-General  
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European Commission  
B - 1049 Brussels (Belgium)

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Page 1 of 3

Dear Director-General, *dear Henrik*

I would like to express once again my sincere thanks for your contribution to the virtual expert conference on *Turning the page: The next chapter for electric road transport in Europe* on 3 September 2020, which contributed significantly to the success of the exchange between high-level EU transport policy makers, consumer representatives, industry, charging point and hydrogen fuel station operators.

Below you will find the most important results as I see them. I hope you can use this information with regard to the revision of Directive 2014/94/EU on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFID) and the mobility strategy that has been announced.

In principle, all parties agreed on the main points: The **electrification of road transport opens up unprecedented opportunities for the European economy to recover from the COVID-19 crisis**. In the course of the pandemic, the essential importance of the transport sector for ensuring the supply of citizens has become apparent. Against the backdrop of the Green Deal, the conditions must now be established to electrify road transport to the greatest extent possible. The revision of the Directive on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure will play a key role in this.

It was also agreed that the **increased deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure** must be **accompanied by** the vehicle ramp-up, as both activities are mutually reinforcing. The **insufficient availability of electric vehicles** has repeatedly been identified as a major challenge. Because of this, the existing infrastructure is not profitable, and this could have a negative impact on the deployment of the necessary infrastructure.

In order to further establish **hydrogen** as a fuel of the future, it must become mandatory for Member States to set targets for setting up refuelling infrastructure. There was no dissent about this. This approach also fits seamlessly into the various national hydrogen strategies

and also into the European Hydrogen Strategy. During the discussion, a call was made for the future use of hydrogen in transport to be linked to **targeted EU funding**. In doing so, both vehicle fleets and the intelligent combination of generation, transport and refuelling infrastructure should be taken into account.

There was consensus on the need to **focus more on the customer friendliness** of the infrastructure in future in all plans. To achieve this, **payment options** must be simplified and be **as uniform as possible**. Customers must be sure that they can pay for their charging or refuelling operations at any time and anywhere in Europe. The rapidly changing payment habits and options make binding provisions to offer a single payment option challenging.

In a survey among the participants, there were large majorities for each of the following statements:

- Without the objectives of the national strategic frameworks, there would be less infrastructure in the Member States.
- In the field of road transport, the focus should be on zero-emission technologies.
- The amended AFID should include charging at individual charge points on the basis of debit and credit cards.
- With the AFID, common standards for fuel cell powered vehicles in the HGV and passenger transport sectors should be introduced.

All participants agreed that **coordination at European level** and a common approach were of paramount importance. In the internal market, the same rules must apply to charging and refuelling in order to prevent fragmentation.

Europe must **defend** its very **good competitive position** in alternative fuels and drivetrains. Because of its position as global rule-maker, decisions in the leading markets will have a global impact.

Director-General, the debate has shown that, if we

1. pursue the vehicle and infrastructure ramp-ups in parallel,
2. combine our objectives with intelligent funding,
3. substantiate authorisations and processes,
4. focus on the customer and
5. define the regulatory framework together as Europeans,

we can show the world that Europe can maintain its pioneering role in climate change mitigation with regard to road transport, strengthen its industries and increase the prosperity of its citizens.

Page 3 of 3

Let us seize this opportunity and, together with the ambitious revision of the AFID, join forces to contribute towards taking the next steps towards user-friendly electric road transport.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Klaus Bonhoff