

Joint Call from European Regions for Enhanced Support to Hydrogen Valleys ecosystems

To the attention of:

National Governments of the EU Member States

As European regions at the forefront of the clean energy transition and essential to deliver the Clean Industrial Deal, **we urge all EU Member States to strengthen support for Hydrogen Valleys and firmly establish them as flagship industrial projects** in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and beyond. For national governments, Hydrogen Valleys are not abstract EU projects. They anchor industrial activity and skilled jobs, strengthen regional value chains and directly support national industrial and resilience objectives.

Hydrogen Valleys are integrated initiatives that bring together the entire hydrogen value chain within a specific region. They combine research and innovation with technology scale-up and deployment. **They enable the emergence of regional hydrogen economies that bridge supply with demand, innovation with industrial deployment and bring jobs and economic activity.**

Today, there are more than **90 Hydrogen Valleys worldwide, including more than 65 in Europe**. The Clean Hydrogen Partnership has supported 21 Hydrogen Valley with more than €250 million across 19 European countries since 2019, unlocking over €1.3 billion in total investments. These projects are complex in nature, engaging large consortia and facing long investment cycles, but they are already delivering tangible benefits to local economies.

With adequate resources, **Hydrogen Valleys can play an even greater role in securing Europe's competitiveness, growth and industrial resilience**. They can create the ideal conditions to attract and scale the manufacturing of clean technologies, whilst at the same time stimulating domestic supply chains and accelerating industrial activities. Through hydrogen valleys, SMEs and start-ups can test breakthrough innovations in real-world multi-sectoral environments, speeding up their scale-up and market readiness.

Supporting Hydrogen Valleys financially means directly investing in Europe's competitiveness, industrial resilience, and regional development.

The next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) should enable Hydrogen Valleys to serve as flagships projects for hydrogen market activation by providing adequate financial framework. To unlock their full potential, a clear and predictable pathway from research to industrial scale is needed. This requires **a structured coordination between the FP10 as successor to Horizon Europe and the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF)**, ensuring that successful innovation does not stall before reaching deployment.

We therefore urge EU Member States to:

- Ensure clear alignment between FP10 and the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) so that projects can move smoothly from research funding to industrial scale-up and deployment.
- Push for the creation of a clear and predictable co-funding mechanism between FP10 and ECF, allowing mature Hydrogen Valley projects to apply for scale-up support under simplified procedures.
- Make it easier for projects to secure other sources of funding at regional, national and EU level—for example by supporting hydrogen valleys that were recognised as such by the Clean Hydrogen Partnership but did not receive EU funding—using the new tools available in FP10 and the ECF, such as the FP10 Seal of Competitiveness and Article 5 of the ECF.

- Ensure that Hydrogen Valleys have simplified access to the full ECF financial toolbox, including grants, guarantees, equity and blended finance (both for CAPEX and OPEX) to scale up private investments.

We, the undersigned regions, are fully committed to developing Hydrogen Valleys, mobilising public and private actors, and co-investing in Europe's hydrogen future. We now call on the EU Member States to match this ambition by embedding Hydrogen ecosystems firmly in the Union's investment strategy and **to support the creation of a mechanism within the European Competitiveness Fund to scale up flagship projects like Hydrogen Valleys** across all Member States.

Signed by European regions and regional development authorities:

