Mandate for Implementation Working Group on Hydrogen

Adopted by the Steering Group on

16 April 2026

The IWG Hydrogen is established by the SET Plan Steering Group (SG) to support the implementation of the SET Plan in this technology area. The scope of the working group is renewable and low-carbon hydrogen. It covers the entire hydrogen value chain from hydrogen production, storage, transport, to end uses in mobility, industry and stationary energy applications, including cross-cutting issues in line with SET Plan Task Force recommendations. All technology readiness levels are within the scope. The IWG assumes a long-term research perspective until 2050 and supports the stepwise implementation of R&I activities with sensible interim stages for 2030 and 2040.

The IWG does not consider the development of upstream technologies, such as nuclear reactors and biomass conversion processes, nor downstream technologies, such as CCS or catalytic reactors and processes for producing derivatives such as renewable fuels of non-biological origin (RFNBOs). However, coupling hydrogen technology bricks with these upstream and downstream processes is part of the IWG's activities due to the potential for optimization within an integrated energy system (e.g., when comparing the costs, efficiency or sustainability of different hydrogen production routes in relation to a specific hydrogen use case in the near or distant future). In terms of synergies related with the development of upstream and downstream technologies, we will coordinate our efforts with other SET Plan IWGs.

The IWG's objective is to strengthen the cooperation and coordination of research and innovation (R&I) among SET Plan countries, while maximising the synergies and funding of their transnational, national, and regional R&I programmes. Through collaborative R&I on renewable and low-carbon hydrogen, the working group aims at supporting the SET Plan countries' energy and climate objectives, contributing to energy independence and technology sovereignty. It works under the supervision of the SG to whom it reports regularly. To carry out its tasks, the IWG will benefit from the expertise, support and tools provided by the Commission (e.g., Joint Secretariats (CSAs), the SET Plan information system - SETIS, the Clean Energy Technology Observatory project, the Competitiveness Progress Report, workshops, events etc.).

The IWG oversees the development of a 'Common Implementation and Investment Plan' (CIIP). The CIIP consists of a 1) Thematic Vision (TV), a 2) Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), and 3) Implementation and Investment Commitments (IIC). The old Implementation Plans and SRIAs may act as a source of inspiration and content for this exercise. In this context, the IWG shall:

1. Develop a **Thematic Vision for the technology area of hydrogen**, establishing ambitious and achievable short-term (up to 2030), medium-term (up to 2040), and long-term (up to 2050) goals on the development, manufacturing and market uptake of this technology in Europe.

The IWG will develop this Vision in close collaboration with industry and research stakeholders (e.g. CHJU, ETIP Bioenergy, EERA, and Hydrogen Europe/Hydrogen Europe Research) by 15 May 2026. It shall be based on solid evidence and foresight, and outline short-, medium- and long-term goals. The goals may include corresponding targets where relevant, such as but not limited to: technological performance, maturity and progress to commercialisation; manufacturing capacity in Europe; intellectual property metrics; and emissions reductions.

The resulting Thematic Vision will be submitted to the SG for discussion and endorsement. The SG can identify if additional evidence or analysis is required.

2. Oversee the stakeholder community's development of a European **Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)** which aims to achieve the vision.

The IWG will entrust the development or update of a SRIA to industry and research stakeholders, represented by the Clean Hydrogen Partnership and leading European hydrogen associations (Hydrogen Europe, Hydrogen Europe Research), by 15 October 2026[1] in close collaboration with the SET Plan community (Implementation Working Groups, EERA, Task Forces). The SRIA shall identify the specific R&I priorities and activities, corresponding KPIs and the level of funding needed in Europe to achieve the Thematic Vision's goals. Where appropriate, the SRIA should also include recommendations on enabling framework conditions for manufacturing and market uptake (e.g., regulatory, fiscal, standardization) that should accompany and help realize the Thematic Vision's goals. This process may benefit from the input of the CETPartnership, Driving Urban Transitions Partnership, etc.

The resulting SRIA shall be well-aligned with the Thematic Vision[2] and submitted to the SG for discussion and endorsement. The SG can identify if additional evidence or analysis is required.

3. Identify and collect **Implementation and Investment Commitments (IICs)** based on national and EU priorities.

The IWG will organise and steer the discussion among all relevant actors (EC, MS, industry, research organisations, academia) on how to best implement the endorsed SRIA by 31 March 2027. It will aim to build the broadest possible consensus on a common implementation approach (e.g., priorities, timing, resources) and will facilitate agreement on the allocation of efforts between public and private actors and identify their respective investment R&I commitments.

Monitoring and reporting on the progress of the **Common Implementation and Investment Plans (CIIP).**

The CIIP shall include a description of indicators for monitoring progress and identifying bottlenecks. This exercise will be based on the guidance devised by the Commission to ensure a level of comparability across the working groups. The IWG will then annually assess the progress made in the implementation of the CIIP by the different actors via the harmonised annual SETIS exercise. The Steering Group and the European Commission can identify potential gaps, lagging areas, and new/emerging issues in order to suggest a revision of the CIIP.

[1] In some rare cases, IWGs might not have corresponding ETIPs. In these specific situations, the IWG can involve other stakeholder organisations involved in the SET Plan (i.e., partnerships, industrial association, dedicated technical sub-group of the IWG) to act as an ETIP, until a formal ETIP is set up and endorsed by the Steering Group or another structure is formally tasked to act as such by the Steering Group.

[2] And with previously agreed documents (ERA pilot SRIA, first Implementation Plan of the IWG H2).