



Press Release

[FOR PUBLICATION]

Newly founded European Alliance, “H2eart for Europe”, Commits to Accelerated European Decarbonization Efforts through Underground Hydrogen Storage with the Support of EVP Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič

Brussels, 23rd January 2024

The **H2eart for Europe** initiative, currently composed of eleven Storage System Operators (SSOs) from across Europe, announced a pioneering pledge to expedite the decarbonization of the European energy system in the presence of Executive Vice-President of the Commission, Maroš Šefčovič. This initiative commits to deploying underground hydrogen storage (UHS) technology, aiming to pave the way for a sustainable energy future in line with the EU's 2050 targets and intermediary milestones.

Commissioner Šefčovič welcomed the initiative, stating: “We must be aware of the fierce global competition in today’s current geopolitical context. We cannot be naïve with our green policies. Instead, we must benefit from the first mover advantage, and show model cooperation between us. Thanks to alliances like H2eart for Europe, we can really use the European political weight, and the innovativeness of our business leaders. Collaboration around underground hydrogen storage is key in decarbonising and securing the European future.”



Executive Vice-President of the Commission Maroš Šefčovič

Infrastructure for Cleaner Energy Goals

H2eart for Europe operates as a collective force with a shared vision. The focus is steadfast on delivering the required storage infrastructure to fulfill RePowerEU and other climate targets by 2030 and beyond.

Recognizing hydrogen's pivotal role in Europe's decarbonization and the importance of storage infrastructure, this effort aims to facilitate a stable supply and streamline the integration of renewables.

Urgent Development of Flexibility Solutions Needed

Addressing the pressing challenge of climate change, many EU member states are progressively increasing the utilization of intermittently produced renewable energy sources (RES). To maintain a steady energy supply, clean storage options capable of providing necessary flexibility are imperative. Hydrogen stands out as a crucial flexibility vector, particularly in the context of long-term energy storage required to bridge seasonal consumption differences.

Narrowing the Project Gap

At present, there exists a substantial gap of 36 TWh between identified flexibility needs and currently planned project pipeline for 2030. Bridging this gap necessitates investments ranging around between 18 and 36 billion euros. The acceleration of hydrogen storage projects planned to meet the projected demand by 2030 and 2050 is urgently needed.

Strategic Policy Measures for Decarbonised Energy Systems

The alliance commits to aiding EU members and regulatory bodies in formulating suitable policies which recognise Underground Hydrogen Storage (UHS) as a fundamental element for achieving a decarbonised energy ecosystem. Proposed policy measures may take the form of a dedicated EU Hydrogen Storage Strategy, aimed at giving hydrogen storage the necessary attention for an effective scale-up. This includes streamlined permitting processes, concrete hydrogen storage targets, and provisions for comprehensive, fact-based network planning, accounting for the potential repurposing of existing infrastructure.

H2eart for Europe's alliance members are confident in their capacity to spearhead the scale-up of UHS projects and attract investments essential for this pivotal sector's growth. They see themselves as the best-positioned entities to drive this substantial infrastructure development, and are committed to make a lasting change.



From left to right: Georg Dorfleitner (RAG Energy Storage GmbH), Dominique Mockly (TERECA), Martin Bartošovič (nafta), Michael Kohl (RWE Gas Storage West GmbH), Maroš Šefčovič (EVP Commission), Charlotte Roule (Storengy), Ákos Kriston (HGS), Susanne Schmidt (VNG Gasspeicher), Pieter van Artsen (Gasunie), Doug Waters (Uniper), Michael Schmöltzer (Uniper), Harald Grabner (OMV), Gaetano Mazzitelli (Snam).

About H2eart for Europe

H2eart for Europe is an EU-wide, CEO-led alliance committed to accelerating the decarbonisation of the European energy system at the lowest cost to society by scaling up the deployment of underground hydrogen storage (UHS). Launched in Brussels on 23rd of January 2024, the alliance aims to provide fact-based reports and analysis that can serve policymakers as guidance, and that utilise and build on the experience of our members, leading companies paving the future of hydrogen storage across Europe. We are committed to invest in scaling up UHS infrastructure to meet the flexibility demand in a decarbonised energy system.

The organisations listed below are the founding members of H2eart for Europe.



For media inquiries, please contact h2eart@guidehouse.com.