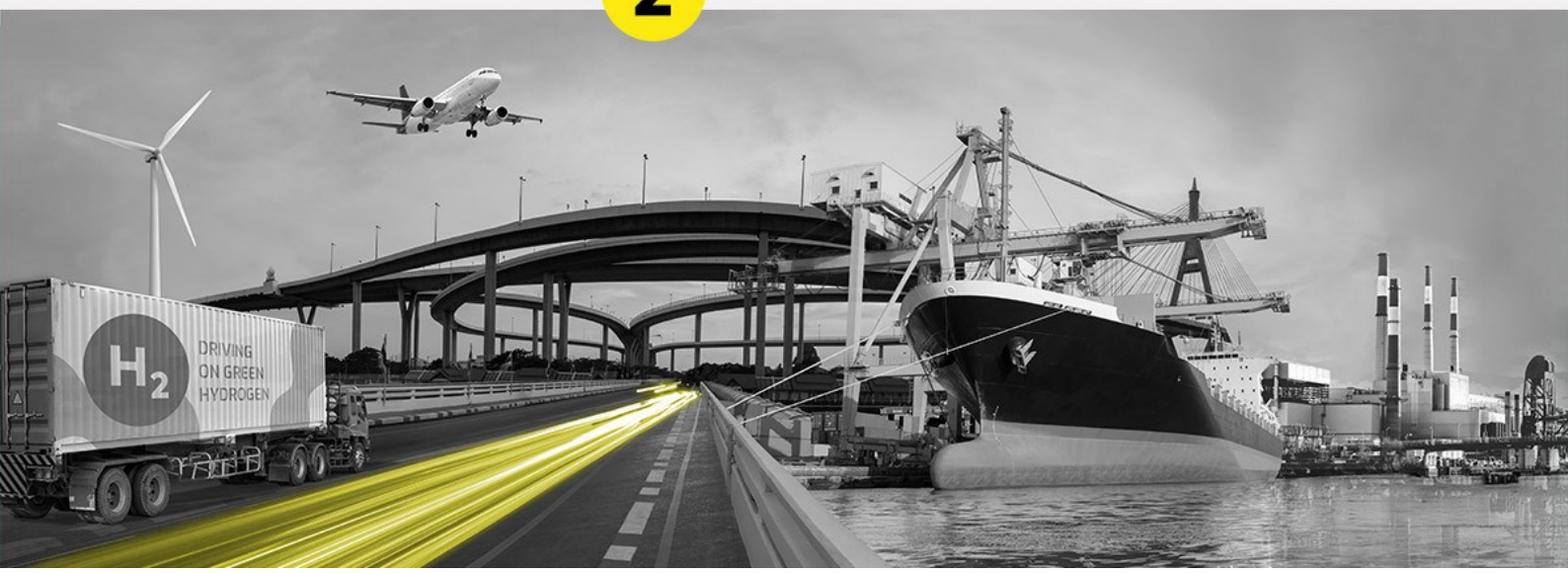


HY2MARKET · EUROPEAN HYDROGEN WEEK 2026

Policy Letter Session

Synthesis of participant input

Brussels · 27 October 2026, 14:30 · Hy2Market stand

Key messages from participants

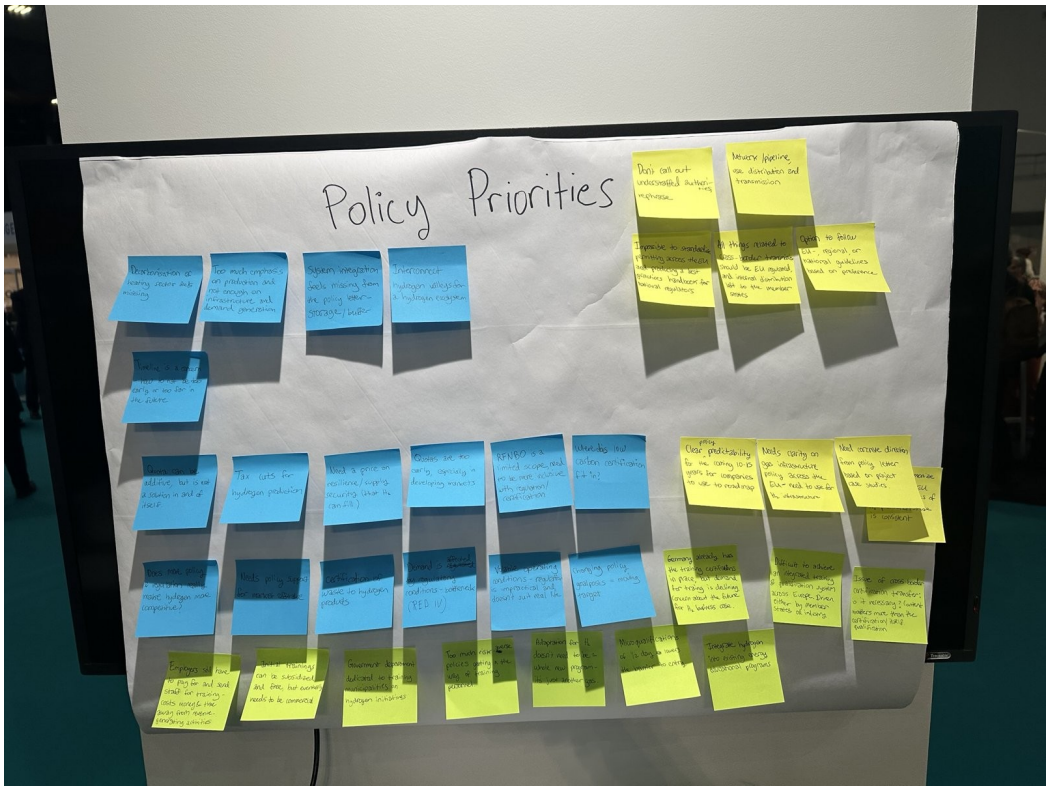
- **Move the whole value chain together.** Production, infrastructure and demand need a common investment approach, advancing in parallel.
- **Widen the scope.** Low-carbon hydrogen, other renewable and decarbonised gases, CCUS, heating and system integration belong in the letter.
- **Predictability comes first.** Companies need stable policy direction for the next 10–15 years to plan their roadmaps.
- **Distribution grids are part of the picture.** References to transmission should cover distribution as well, with DSOs included in the debate.
- **Skills follow market confidence.** Training demand rises when companies believe in scale-up; short, recognised micro-qualifications lower the barrier to entry.

About the session

On 27 October 2026, Hy2Market hosted a policy letter session at its stand during European Hydrogen Week in Brussels. Participants from industry, research organisations, universities and regional hydrogen clusters reviewed the draft Hy2Market policy letter, which sets out barriers and recommendations for the European Commission and Member States across three viewpoints:

policy and investment conditions; regulation, standards, permitting and certification; and skills and institutional capacity.

Input was gathered in two ways: a facilitated discussion working through each viewpoint in turn, and the Policy Priorities wall at the stand, where participants and visitors added their own notes. This report brings both together. Contributions are summarised by theme and are not attributed to individuals.



The Policy Priorities wall at the Hy2Market stand, European Hydrogen Week 2026.

Policy and investment conditions

Where the draft resonated

Participants confirmed the barriers set out in the draft and stressed how closely two of them are linked: regulatory uncertainty limits demand, and capital stays on the sidelines while investors cannot see how the market will work. Reliable, stable regulation was described as essential to both.

What participants added

- **One investment scheme for the whole value chain.** Production, infrastructure and demand share common ground and should move forward in parallel under a single approach, avoiding a patchwork of separate measures. Several notes found the letter weighted towards production, with too little on infrastructure and demand creation.
- **A wider scope.** Participants asked the letter to address low-carbon hydrogen, other renewable and decarbonised gases and CCUS, as well as renewable hydrogen. The RFNBO framework was described as limited in scope, with calls for more inclusive regulation and certification. Notes asked where low-carbon certification fits and how waste-to-hydrogen products will be certified.

- **System integration and links to other sectors.** Storage and buffering, interconnecting hydrogen valleys into a wider hydrogen ecosystem, and decarbonisation of the heating sector were named as gaps. District heating and other sectors needing green heat could be combined with heat from electrolysis.
- **Resilience and supply security.** Hydrogen was framed as part of Europe's resilience and energy independence. One proposal was to put a price on the supply security hydrogen can provide.
- **Competitiveness and cost.** Hydrogen competes against established energy sources. Participants called for better starting conditions: lighter planning and certification burdens, conditions that bring production costs down, and tax cuts for hydrogen production. One note asked whether more policy and regulation will in fact make hydrogen more competitive.
- **Quotas and offtake.** Quotas were seen as a useful market signal and a complement to other measures, without being a solution on their own. One note considered quotas premature, particularly in developing markets. Policy support for market offtake was named as a need.
- **Timing and stability.** Changing policy goalposts, volatile operating conditions and rules that do not fit day-to-day operations were raised as barriers, as was the timing of measures, which can arrive too early or too far in the future. Demand was linked directly to regulatory conditions under the Renewable Energy Directive.

Regulation, standards, permitting and certification

Where the draft resonated

Participants supported the drive for consistency across Europe. The physics of hydrogen, from production to use, is the same in every Member State, and detailed differences in national market rules should not hold back growth of the hydrogen market.

What participants added

- **Wording on public authorities.** Participants asked for the reference to "understaffed authorities" to be rephrased, with the focus placed on capacity and expertise.
- **Predictability.** The draft does not name predictability directly. Companies need clear policy direction for the coming 10–15 years to build their roadmaps.
- **Transmission and distribution.** Wherever the letter refers to networks, pipelines or transmission, it should cover distribution grids as well. Distribution is starting to become cross-border, and distribution system operators need to be part of the whole debate.
- **Gas-infrastructure policy.** Participants called for clarity on gas-infrastructure policy across Europe, including its use for hydrogen infrastructure.
- **How far to harmonise permitting.** Views differed. Some participants called for permitting to be EU-wide. Others considered full standardisation across the EU unrealistic and proposed a best-practice handbook for national regulators, with the option to follow EU, regional or national guidelines. One suggestion was to regulate everything related to cross-border transmission at EU level and leave internal distribution to Member States. These views fit the optional EU reference pathway already proposed in the draft.
- **Concrete direction.** Participants asked for examples and structure: a clear direction drawn from project case studies. A national initiative such as Germany's Portal Green was raised as a possible model at European level.

Skills and institutional capacity

Where the draft resonated

The draft's emphasis on practical, stackable micro-credentials, regional training capacity and support for permitting and inspection bodies matched participants' experience.

What participants added

- **Training demand follows market confidence.** In Germany the qualifications and training courses are already in place, yet demand for them is declining. When companies doubt that hydrogen will scale up, they do not send staff to training. Participants saw the business case as the root of the problem.
- **The cost to employers.** Training costs employers money and takes staff away from revenue-generating work. Initial courses can be subsidised and free of charge, but in time training needs to stand on a commercial footing.
- **Short, modular formats.** Micro-qualifications, including half-day formats, lower the barrier to entry and are well accepted. Modules can be added over the years, keeping learning going at a steady pace.
- **Recognition.** Micro-credentials exist but are not yet part of formal qualification systems. Participants asked what support the Commission can offer Member States so that hydrogen qualifications are recognised across Europe and services can move freely. Others noted that an integrated European training and qualification system is hard to achieve, whether led by Member States or industry, and questioned whether cross-border transfer of certificates is needed at all, since course content matters most.
- **Build on existing programmes.** Adapting to hydrogen does not require an entirely new programme, as hydrogen is "just another gas". Participants recommended integrating hydrogen into existing energy education. Universities in Groningen and Nijmegen are already working on practical hydrogen topics across the value chain, and participants want to see more of this, with education moving from research into real projects.
- **Support for local authorities.** Municipalities can feel uncertain and fear the risks of poor implementation. National governments should advise and train them, for example through a government department dedicated to training municipalities on hydrogen initiatives. Overly risk-averse policies were also seen as getting in the way of training personnel.

How this input feeds into the final letter

The Hy2Market consortium will review the revisions below as it finalises the policy letter.

What participants raised	Proposed revision to the letter
Invest across the whole value chain	Strengthen the portfolio-based recommendation into one value-chain-wide investment approach, with more weight on infrastructure and demand creation.
Broader scope of gases and certification	Address low-carbon hydrogen, other renewable and decarbonised gases and CCUS, and clarify how low-carbon and waste-derived hydrogen are certified alongside RFNBOs.

What participants raised	Proposed revision to the letter
System integration	Add storage and buffering, links to the heating sector and district heating, and interconnection of hydrogen valleys into a wider ecosystem.
Resilience and supply security	Set out hydrogen's contribution to Europe's energy resilience and how that value can be recognised.
Policy predictability	Name long-term predictability (10–15 years) as a barrier and a recommendation in its own right.
Transmission and distribution	Refer to transmission and distribution grids throughout, reinforce the role of DSOs, and call for clarity on gas-infrastructure policy, including its use for hydrogen.
Authority capacity wording	Replace "understaffed authorities" with wording on capacity and specialist expertise in permitting and inspection bodies.
Degree of permitting harmonisation	Present the EU reference pathway and best-practice guidance as options, with flexibility to follow EU, regional or national routes; cross-border transmission handled at EU level.
Concrete direction	Illustrate recommendations with Hy2Market project case studies.
Training demand and cost	Link skills to market confidence, and address employer costs and the transition from subsidised to commercial training.
Building on existing programmes	Integrate hydrogen modules into existing energy curricula and give short micro-qualifications a route to formal recognition.
Local authorities	Add advisory and training support for municipalities working on hydrogen initiatives.

Next steps and contact

Hy2Market thanks everyone who joined the session and added to the Policy Priorities wall. Your input will be taken into the revised policy letter, which will be shared with participants once finalised.

Further comments are welcome. Please contact Daniëlle Jacobson, New Energy Coalition, at **d.jacobson@newenergycoalition.org**.

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