

Transport ministers promote a wide public refuelling network for alternative fuels

At an informal meeting at Brdo pri Kranju attended by the European Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean, transport ministers discussed key aspects of the proposal for a regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, part of the "Fit for 55" legislative package. They called for clear objectives and the deployment of wide public network of recharging and refuelling infrastructure for alternative fuels in transport.

The European Green Deal's target of a 90% reduction in transport-related emissions by 2050 is extremely ambitious and will be challenging to achieve as transport demand will continue to grow in the coming decades. To achieve this goal, the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy sets out a roadmap to deliver smooth and reliable European transport for a sustainable and smart future and to ensure a flexible, competitive, safe, accessible and affordable transport system and a well-functioning Single European Transport Area.

While mobility has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the recovery from the crisis must be utilised to help the transport sector become greener, smarter and more resilient. The proposal for the new regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure sets out binding targets to ensure there is sufficient minimum infrastructure in place to support the higher use of alternative fuel vehicles that is required in all modes of transport as well as for the use of clean fuels.

The presiding Minister for Infrastructure, Jernej Vrtovec, stressed that a successful European transformation of mobility to alternative fuels required a wide public refuelling infrastructure network allowing easy and transparent use for all physical and commercial mobility users, who are aware of the importance of the transition to clean transport.

To support this ambitious transition, the new regulation on alternative fuels infrastructure should ensure the required deployment of

interoperable and user-friendly refuelling infrastructure for clean vehicles across the EU. At the same time, this approach should stimulate the growth of this market and open up new opportunities for the EU industry.

The transport ministers agreed on the need for sufficiently ambitious and coordinated infrastructure planning in the member states, well adapted to the increased 2030 climate ambition targets. According to Minister Vrtovec, it is necessary to enable all alternative fuel vehicle users to travel smoothly across the European Union by speeding up the deployment of refuelling infrastructure in the EU. "If we want to achieve wide acceptance of alternative fuel vehicles among users, we need refuelling and fuel supply infrastructure that is simple and transparent, providing full information and adequate payment options. In this way, we will also accelerate the growth of the market for low- and zero-emission vehicles and take an important step forward towards a 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union by 2030," said the infrastructure minister. He also pointed out that one of the key challenges is to advocate for a coordinated action between alternative fuel vehicle manufacturers, alternative fuel producers and refuelling infrastructure providers.