

**DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF
THE CLEAN HYDROGEN JOINT UNDERTAKING
on the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2023 including the corresponding
expenditure and on its assessment**

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE CLEAN HYDROGEN JU:

Having regard to:

- COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2021/2085 of 19 November 2021 establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe and repealing Regulations (EC) No 219/2007, (EU) No 557/2014, (EU) No 558/2014, (EU) No 559/2014, (EU) No 560/2014, (EU) No 561/2014 and (EU) No 642/2014¹ (“the Regulation”), and in particular Articles 17(2)(p), 20(7)(g), 26(1) and 26(2) thereof;
- The Financial Rules of the Clean Hydrogen JU, adopted on 17 December 2021 through Governing Board decision reference CleanHydrogen-GB-2021-03 (hereafter referred to as “the Financial Rules”) ², in particular Article 23 thereof;

Whereas:

- (1) Article 17(2)(p) of the Council Regulation provides that the Governing Board shall approve the consolidated annual activity report, including the corresponding expenditure;
- (2) Article 20(7)(g) of the Council Regulation provides that the States Representatives Group shall provide an opinion on the consolidated annual activity report;
- (3) Article 26(1) of the Council Regulation provides that the Executive Director shall “provide the Governing Board with a consolidated annual activity report on the performance of his or her duties in accordance with the financial rules of the joint undertaking...”;
- (4) Article 26 (2) of the Council Regulation provides the information that the consolidated annual activity report shall include;
- (5) Articles 23(1) and Article 23 (2) of the JU Financial Rules provides that the authorizing officer shall report annually to the Governing Board on the performance of his or her duties in the

¹ OJ L 427, 30.11.2021, p. 17–119

² FCH-GB-2019-16

<https://www.fch.europa.eu/sites/default/files/GB%20decision%20and%20Financial%20Rules.pdf>



form of a consolidated annual activity report [...] (which) shall be submitted to the Governing Board for assessment;

- (6) Article 23 (3) of the JU Financial Rules further specifies that “No later than 1 July each year the Governing Board shall send the consolidated annual activity report together with its assessment of it to the Court of Auditors, the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council.”;
- (7) the States Representatives provided a positive opinion on the Annual Activity Report for 2023 during its meeting of the 29 May 2024;
- (8) A working group appointed by the JU Governing Board has analysed the Clean Hydrogen JU Annual Activity Report 2023;

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING DECISION:

Article 1

The Governing Board of the Clean Hydrogen JU adopts its assessment of the Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2023 as attached in Annex 1 to this Decision, and approves the Clean Hydrogen JU Annual Activity Report for 2023 as attached in annex 2 to this Decision.

Article 2

The Clean Hydrogen JU Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2023 including its assessment shall be made publicly available on the website of the Clean Hydrogen JU.

Article 3

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its adoption.

Brussels, 27 June 2024

On behalf of the Governing Board

Chair of the Governing Board of the Clean Hydrogen JU

Annexes: 1. Assessment of the Clean Hydrogen Joint Undertaking Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for 2023 by the JU Governing Board
2. Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for 2023 of the Clean Hydrogen JU

ANNEX 1

Assessment of the Clean Hydrogen Joint Undertaking consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for 2023 by the Clean Hydrogen JU Governing Board

1 INTRODUCTION

Hydrogen-related technologies are critical for the achievement of the EU's climate and energy goals. The Clean Hydrogen JU, in its Annual Activity Report for 2023, demonstrated this by:

- The high budget execution rate, demonstrating the high level of implementation of the budget into concrete projects,
- The organisation of the second call for proposals under Horizon Europe on Hydrogen in 2023 for an amount of EUR 200 million, and the subsequent signature of 29 grants, leading to a total of 82 Horizon Europe projects signed in the first two years of existence of the Clean Hydrogen JU,
- The organisation of the third edition of the European Hydrogen Week and other impacting communication activities.

The portfolio of projects is composed of research and demonstration activities aimed to develop and deploy products and technologies covering the full spectrum of the hydrogen value chain, from production and storage to distribution and end use in energy and transport. The projects range from long-term innovative research through development and large-scale demonstration projects.

Budget execution reached 96% of commitment appropriations and 85% of payment appropriations, recording the best performance in the JU's history.

2 ANALYSIS

The Clean Hydrogen Joint Undertaking's Consolidated Annual Activity Report for 2023 (Authorising Officer's report) was sent to the JU Governing Board on 17 May 2024 and will be submitted for approval by the Governing Board before the end of June 2024. The Governing Board is of the opinion that the Clean Hydrogen JU's CAAR for 2023 adequately covers the main activities of the JU in 2023, identifies the risks associated with the JU operations, duly reports on the use made of the JU resources provided, and indicates the efficiency and effectiveness of the Clean Hydrogen JU's internal control system.

The Governing Board recognizes the continuous progress made by the Clean Hydrogen JU and the results achieved in year 2023 and positively notes in particular the following elements:

2.1 Governance

The Governing Board congratulates the Clean Hydrogen JU for its efforts in the organisation of the governance and advisory bodies in compliance with the provisions of the founding regulation, which have resulted in the identified bodies being effectively acting.

2.2 Operations

The Governing Board is pleased to note the high level of contributions, significantly achieving the set targets, from Members other than the Union for both H2020 and Horizon Europe programmes, or their constituent or affiliated entities, in the form of in-kind contributions to projects and through additional activities.



The Governing Board takes note of the good budget execution level, 96% for commitment appropriations and 85% for payment appropriations.

The Governing Board congratulates the Clean Hydrogen JU for the launch of the call for proposals for a total value of EUR 195 million in the beginning of the year and the signature of the 29 grants before the end of the year, which results from an intense preparatory work. This paves the way for a new decade of reinforced investment in research and innovation on hydrogen, with already 48% of the total operational budget committed.

2.3 Communication

The Governing Board congratulates the JU and its partners for the organisation, for the second year, of the European Hydrogen Week as an integrated event, with exhibition and conferences together showcasing products and solutions, addressing political messages and vision, and presenting research projects and achievements.

The Governing Board takes notes of the efforts of the JU in the areas of public awareness and social media monitoring and publications, and encourages the JU to further develop these activities.

2.4 Risk management

The Governing Board is satisfied with the risk management actions, takes note of the major risks identified and encourages the JU and stakeholders to implement the identified mitigation measures.

2.5 Human resources

The Governing Board congratulates the JU for its effort on recruitment and on professional and personal development, and encourages the JU to fill the staff establishment plan as soon as possible.

2.6 Internal control system

The Governing Board is pleased that the implementation by Clean Hydrogen JU of the Internal Control Framework and related principles has had a positive impact and has supported the JU in its efforts to achieve its objectives.

The Governing Board trusts that the necessary controls and monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure that all errors detected are timely and effectively corrected.

3 CONCLUSION

The declaration of the Executive Director and the Clean Hydrogen JU's CAAR for 2023 give a fair assessment of operational and financial management needed for achieving the objectives. Based on the information provided, the JU key objectives set up for 2023 have been met in compliance with the principles of legality and regularity of operations.

The Governing Board notes that the management of the Clean Hydrogen JU has reasonable assurance that, overall, suitable controls are in place and working as intended, risks are being properly monitored and mitigated. Therefore, the Executive Director, in her capacity as Authorising Officer, has signed the Declaration of assurance without any reservation.

The Governing Board thanks Ms. Mirela Atanasiu, Executive Director *ad interim* of the JU since May 2023, for her continuous effort to deliver the JU's work programmes and address the JU's challenges on a daily basis.



ANNEX 2

Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) for 2023 of the Clean Hydrogen JU

This annex is constituted as a separate document due to its size.

