

**Question for written answer E-001730/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 144

Beatrice Timgren (ECR), Charlie Weimers (ECR), Dick Erixon (ECR)

Subject: Mismatch between ambitious targets and demand and investment needs for hydrogen

The EU's plan to invest billions of euro¹ in boosting renewable hydrogen fuel is being questioned by a recent European Court of Auditors report. The report highlights a mismatch between the ambitious targets set by the Commission and the actual demand and investment needs for hydrogen, suggesting that the strategy is politically driven rather than based on robust analysis.

In light of this, the following questions arise:

1. Reassessment and risk mitigation: According to the report, actual demand for hydrogen is expected to be significantly lower than the Commission's targets, necessitating a reassessment and adjustment of the hydrogen strategy to reflect realistic market demand projections. Considering the Court's warning about the EU's high-risk exposure, what steps are being taken to mitigate these risks and ensure a balanced approach?
2. Taxpayer protection: What measures are in place to protect taxpayers from potential financial losses if significant investments in hydrogen and projects like Northvolt do not yield the expected returns?²³
3. Climate benefit evaluation: How does the Commission evaluate the actual climate benefits of producing green steel and batteries (using imported raw materials) in Sweden compared to other potential green initiatives?⁴⁵

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¹ 'For the 2021-2027 period, total EU funding for hydrogen-related projects is currently estimated at EUR 18.8 billion, mostly funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility.' Special report 11/2024 on the EU's industrial policy on renewable hydrogen: https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/SR-2024-11/SR-2024-11_EN.pdf.

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_224.

³ <https://www.eib.org/en/projects/all/20220461>.

⁴ <https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2024-015-eib-and-nib-to-provide-eur371-million-with-investeu-backing-for-h2-green-steel-s-large-scale-production-of-steel-with-minimal-carbon-footprint>.

⁵ <https://www.eib.org/fr/projects/all/20200902>.