

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002905/25
to the Commission
Ilhan Kyuchyuk (Renew)
(16 July 2025)

Subject: European support for Bulgaria's accelerated energy transition to alternative fuels

In view of the European Union's goals of achieving climate neutrality and pursuing energy independence from third countries, the accelerated transition to alternative fuels is of key importance for Bulgaria. Imports of petroleum products continue to account for a significant share of the country's energy balance, making it vulnerable both economically and strategically. At the same time, national capacity for investment in sustainable energy solutions remains limited, particularly in the context of the socioeconomic challenges associated with the transformation of the energy sector.

In the light of this,

1. what specific mechanisms and instruments does the European Commission envisage to assist Bulgaria in accelerating its transition to alternative fuels?
2. Are there any targeted programs within REPowerEU, the Just Transition Fund, or other initiatives through which our country can receive financial, regulatory or technical support to reduce dependence on imported petroleum products and increase energy sustainability?

Submitted: 16.7.2025

Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(24 September 2025)

From the EU budget for the period 2021-2027 (EUR 2.018 trillion ⁽¹⁾), at least 30% must be spent on fighting climate change, including by supporting the energy transition. In 2022 the Commission mobilised around EUR 300 billion to fund the REPowerEU action plan.

Bulgaria benefits from EUR 6.17 billion from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, of which EUR 3 billion contribute to supporting the green transition, mostly supporting energy efficiency, renewable energy and electricity storage ⁽²⁾. Further EUR 1.8 billion from the Bulgarian cohesion policy funding are supporting the energy transition. The proposal to modernise cohesion policy in the context of the mid-term review will provide an opportunity to Bulgaria to further invest in accelerating its energy transition ⁽³⁾.

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility (AFIF) is a funding instrument to support the rollout of alternative fuels infrastructure ⁽⁴⁾. In addition, funding for energy infrastructure, energy efficiency, clean energy (including alternative fuels) is available also under other EU funding instruments ⁽⁵⁾. The Technical Support Instrument supports Member States design and implement reforms, and for 2026 a key focus area is the implementation of country-specific recommendations, which, for Bulgaria, specifically recommend reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Energy will be well covered also in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ In current prices, including the NextGenerationEU component.

⁽²⁾ Relevant measures support energy efficiency (renovation of at least 2.15 million square meter in residential buildings and at least 524 non-residential buildings leading to savings of 30% in primary energy demand), solar systems for domestic hot water supply and photovoltaic systems of up to 10 kilowatt-peak for at least 1500 households, grid-scale electricity storage facilities with 3000 megawatt-hour of usable energy capacity. Additional support is provided for sustainable transport, with a focus on electric mobility.

⁽³⁾ It includes a new specific objective on energy transition, covering energy interconnectors, related supportive infrastructure and protection of critical energy infrastructure. A political agreement was reached between the co-legislators on 15 July 2025 on this proposal.

⁽⁴⁾ Managed under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for Transport, it has proven efficient, predictable, and aligned with the objectives set in the new Regulation for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1804/oj>) regarding publicly accessible electric recharging pools and hydrogen refuelling stations across the EU's main transport corridors and hubs, as well as the objectives set in the ReFuelEU aviation (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023R2405&qid=1699634788830>) and the FuelEU maritime (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023R1805>) Regulations.

⁽⁵⁾ E.g. CEF-Energy, the Modernisation Fund, the Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe, InvestEU.

⁽⁶⁾ E.g., in its proposal for the next MFF, adopted on 16 July 2025, the Commission increased by five times the funding for CEF-Energy (to EUR 30 billion). A new European Competitiveness Fund, worth EUR 451 billion, will support investments in strategic technologies, including EUR 67.4 billion earmarked for the clean transition and industrial decarbonisation, being very relevant also for alternative fuels.

There are also other initiatives meant to support Member States reduce their dependence on imported fossil fuels and increase energy sustainability, such as the Affordable Energy Action Plan ⁽⁷⁾, the REPowerEU roadmap ⁽⁸⁾, and the legislative proposal aimed to gradually phase out the import of Russian gas and oil by the end of 2027 ⁽⁹⁾.

⁽⁷⁾ Adopted by the Commission on 26 February 2025, including a set of concrete short-term and structural measures aimed to ensure access to affordable energy, to enhance competitiveness, affordability, security and sustainability for citizens and businesses, in the context of the Clean Industrial Deal.

⁽⁸⁾ Adopted by the Commission on 6 May 2025, including nine main actions aimed to ensure a coordinated, secure and gradual phase out of Russian gas, oil and nuclear energy imports, supporting the Member States efforts.

⁽⁹⁾ Adopted by the Commission on 17 June 2025, which, in addition to targeting gas imports, mandates that Member States draft diversification plans to phase out Russian oil imports, aiming for information and coordination concerning the complete cessation of oil supplies by the end of 2027, as envisaged by the Versailles Declaration.