

European Battery Ecosystem: how innovation improves competitiveness and resilience in Europe

On June 7, a hybrid meeting held in Brussels and online served as Batteries Europe's second Plenary Session. The event was attended by over 200 stakeholders, including over 200 online visitors and about 90 attendees in person. The goal of the hybrid meeting was to bring together experts from the battery industry and discuss the value of cooperative energy within Batteries Europe and the battery sector. This collaborative energy was seen to be a key factor in the successful creation and deployment of sustainable energy solutions in Europe. The platform was also intended to encourage experts to exchange information, share best practices, and explore new opportunities.

Stefano Saguatti, Advisory Steering Board Member of Batteries Europe (MANZ), and Philippe Froissard, Head of Unit at the European Commission, which is a principal executive body of the European Union, welcomed attendees to the General Assembly and pointed out the necessity for Batteries Europe and other initiatives within the EU "Battery Community" to "provide clear guidelines in terms of R&I thematic areas and prioritisation through the Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda (SRIA)."

With the goal of accelerating the development of a globally competitive European battery industry and, in doing so, enacting the Implementation Plan of SET plan Action 7, Batteries Europe, the European Technology & Innovation Platform on Batteries, offers the community a forum to lead Research and Innovation actions, across the entire battery value chain. Batteries Europe also aims to increase the complementarities and synergies between EU initiatives and projects both inside and outside the EU battery ecosystem. There was further insight provided by representatives of the European Commission, including Matilda Axelson (DG GROW), Caspar Klos (DG GROW) and Cesar Santos (DG ENV), on how to build a competitive, resilient European economy, including the European Critical Raw Material Act, the Net Zero Industry Act, and the Battery Regulation. These Acts and Regulations are designed to ensure that Europe has a secure and competitive supply of raw materials, that industry is taking steps towards reducing emissions and energy efficiency, and that batteries are placed in the market in compliance with environmental and safety standards.

Cristiana Leandro, Horizon Europe National Delegate (Portuguese National Innovation Agency) and Luis Santos, Adv. Researcher (Spanish BatteryPlat) presented their respective national perspective on the needs that research can feed. This presentation provided an overview of the Portuguese battery sector, emphasising how energy storage for renewable integration, cost reduction, and environmental sustainability are the main challenges and needs in the national context. Portugal is aiming to increase its renewable energy capacity and reduce its reliance on fossil fuels in order to meet its climate targets, while also reducing costs and improving environmental sustainability. In many ways, "BATTERY PLAT" presented by Luis Santos is similar. BATTERY PLAT in Spain has gathered organisations that support the development of energy storage technologies.

During the first-panel discussion moderated by Edel Sheridan, senior research scientist (SINTEF), which included Ilaria Pucher, Head of R&D (Green Energy Storage), Ivana Hasa,



Assistant Professor (WMG, University of Warwick), Kurt Vandeputte, Sr Vice President (Umicore), and Michele De Gennaro, Senior Scientist (AIT), the panellists shared their perspectives on how cooperation and collaboration at various levels of the value chain can help to create a more sustainable battery industry.

The second panel focused on how to address the Re-skilling and up-skilling: how to provide answers to industry needs. A panel of experts, led by Silvia Bodoardo, Professor (Battery2030+), discussed the aim and objectives of the Task Force Education managed by Batteries Europe and Batteries Europe Partnership Association (BEPA), including Oana Penu, Director (InnoEnergy Skills Institute), Jakub Stolfa, President (Automotive Skills Alliance), Anders Norberg, Project Coordinator (ALBATTIS) and Julia Altenhofer, Director EU Public Policy (Northvolt). The panellists emphasised the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration and education within the Batteries Europe network, asking a very crucial question “How can we engage and attract people in this field?” By starting early to include people in educational programmes, emphasising the importance of battery technologies for the future.

The last presentation was by Monika Curto Fuentes, Scientific Consultant (VDI VDE-IT) on Europe’s battery innovation system in international comparison. Monika emphasised the importance of Europe's battery innovation system when contrasting it to other continents. She accomplished this by outlining the necessity of international oversight in Europe as well as the proper steps Batteries Europe should take. An important point raised was the necessity of providing objective, impartial information on battery innovation in order to establish a common knowledge base for discussion. Public disclosure of information is also crucial. The session ended with the results of Batteries Europe, as well as the Workplan.

The Batteries Europe is coordinated by BEST (Batteries Europe Secretariat) project, led by InnoEnergy with the participation of VDI-VDE-IT, EASE, EERA, CLERENS, SINTEF (Industry and Energy), INSTM, CIC energiGUNE, ENEA and Zabala Innovation. The project would last 3 years under the Horizon 2020 Programme for Research and Innovation, ending in April 2025.

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