



8th High-Level Meeting of the European Battery Alliance: Main takeaways by Chair Maroš Šefčovič and the Council Presidency

Executive Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič chaired the 8th High-Level Meeting of the European Battery Alliance in Brussels on 24 May 2024, in presence of Commissioner Thierry Breton and in cooperation with the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, represented by Jo Brouns, Minister for Economy, Innovation, Work, Social Economy and Agriculture.

The ministerial discussion gathered the 27 Member States and Norway, along with Thomas Östros, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank, and Mark Bowman, Vice-President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Exchanges took stock of the 2018 Battery Action plan of the European Commission, and on the way forward for the European battery ecosystem. They were nurtured by a discussion paper provided by the European Battery Alliance, based on feedback from the industry.

The discussion put forward that overall, the goals of the 2018 Battery action plan have been reached, thanks to the commitment of all relevant stakeholders and to the efforts of the European Battery Alliance in structuring the European battery ecosystem. This has helped reaching 30 gigafactory projects, with a total manufacturing capacity of 167 GWh installed in 2023. The Commission has taken important regulatory steps by adopting the most advanced Battery regulation in the world, as well as the Net Zero Industry Act to boost our green technologies, and the Critical Raw Materials Act to support our industry's competitiveness and resilience. Along with Member States, the Commission has channelled funding to support the development of the battery sector, notably through two IPCEIs raising EUR 6 billion and leveraging up to almost EUR 14 billion. The European Battery Alliance, supported by the European Commission, has set up the Battery Academy and trained 67 000 people to battery-related skills.

However, new challenges have appeared in the past eight years, that the European battery industry must tackle in order to succeed in scaling up. International competition has become fiercer, with third countries like the United States or China setting up support schemes that impact the EU's competitiveness and attractiveness for new investments. The price of raw materials necessary for the manufacturing of batteries has increased and become more volatile. Energy prices are also now higher in the EU than in other areas.

In this context, the European Commission and the Member States have stressed the importance of urgent actions to ensure that the EU's battery ecosystem can scale up and remain a global frontrunner in innovation, sustainability and competitiveness. Based on the stock-taking of the 2018

Battery Action plan and on the proposals made by the European Battery Alliance, the participants stressed in particular the need of further actions to:

- Ensure fair competition with third countries, while remaining open to free trade, and strengthen partnerships that enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the battery industry along the value chain;
- Use the existing regulatory framework to ensure that sustainability is an asset for the competitiveness of the EU battery industry;
- Use the necessary instruments, both on the offer and demand sides, to support the scale-up of the battery industry in Europe;
- Support research and skills that can boost the resilience and innovativeness of the battery ecosystem.