

A EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR LOW-EMISSION MOBILITY

Europe's Independent Fuel Suppliers welcome the EU Strategy's comprehensive approach, believing that success will depend on solutions that must be "evidence based" and contribute to Member States' growth and competitiveness.

The European Commission has today launched its Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility as a means of stemming the contribution that transport makes towards Europe's greenhouse gas and pollutant emissions. UPEI, the voice of Europe's independent fuel suppliers, welcomes the strategy's call for a wide range of actions at all levels and, in particular, the reference to the need for an "evidence-based" approach – an essential benchmark to ensure that the measures to be adopted stand the test of time.

By targeting the diversification of energy sources and the efficiency of vehicles and transport systems as a whole, the strategy is comprehensive in approach. However, given the scale of the challenge ahead, UPEI considers that more analysis is needed with regards to the affordability of the solutions proposed, as well as their contribution to sustainability and competitiveness. All these aspects are essential if we are to avoid repeating mistakes of the past.

UPEI welcomes the fact that the strategy recognises the role that all fuels can play in the transition towards low-emission mobility, alongside the phasing in of electro-mobility. UPEI calls however, for equal evaluation of all the alternatives proposed, compared to fossil fuels, on a life-cycle basis to ensure that truly future proof solutions are promoted that can contribute to individual Member States' economic growth and competitiveness, and collectively to that of the EU as a whole. In this respect, the advantages and disadvantages of the different alternatives proposed are not yet quantified. There is an urgent need for such transparency in the interest of the public as well as in order to facilitate investment decisions.

The independent fuel supply sector represents a comprehensive, Europe-wide asset, financed by the consumer, contributing to Europe's security of supply and bringing competition to the market. Independent fuel suppliers are not involved in energy production but assure a complex and dependable infrastructure, providing reliable storage (including emergency stocks) and distribution networks that guarantee the high quality of a range of products (fuel, gas and renewables) which can be delivered down to the smallest quantities, reflecting a highly service oriented approach.

When the EU strategy calls on "suppliers of fossil fuels to embrace new opportunities related to low-emission alternative energy for transport" it implies that this is not already the case. Independent fuel suppliers were the first to bring biofuels to the market in response to EU policy at the time. Today, they are continuing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions



with the integration of advanced biofuels as well as diversification to other energy sources. However, certain conditions are needed in order to be successful. Each of the transport sectors served by independents today - road (both passenger and freight vehicles), maritime and aviation - will require diverse solutions, with differing impact on existing infrastructure and distribution networks.

In light of the strategy published today, UPEI calls on the Commission to roll out its Action Plan with the principles of regulatory stability, coherence and feasibility at its core. UPEI looks to policymakers to ensure that the principle of a level playing field is maintained in the treatment of different technologies and energies in order to avoid distortion of competition, harming independent fuel suppliers who are meeting the *mixed* fuel demand (fossil fuels *and* alternatives) of Europe's businesses and consumers today, which is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Contact: Yvonne Stausbøll, Secretary General | +32 2 7402020 | info@upei.org

UPEI represents European importers and wholesale/retail distributors of refined petroleum products and their alternatives, supplying Europe's customers, independently of the major petroleum producers.

Independent suppliers, covering more than a third of Europe's demand, play a crucial role in an evolving market by bringing competition which is vital to the economy. Their independence enables them to respond rapidly to changes in terms of market structure, products and services, contributing to security of supply on a local, regional and national level.

UPEI was created in 1962 with the aim of ensuring a level playing field for the supply of energy on the European market and safeguarding a competitive approach. The organisation brings together national associations and suppliers across Europe.

Today, **UPEI** also acts as an informed and responsible partner to Europe's decision-makers on the risks and opportunities involved in the transition to a genuine European Energy Union.