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REVIEW OF THE COMMUNICATION ON IMPORTANT PROJECTS OF COMMON EUROPEAN INTEREST - Consultation

Agoria, the Belgian Federation for the Technology Industry has been actively involved in the Belgian participation in IPCEIs (e.g on Batteries and on Hydrogen) through information sessions for Belgian companies, the setup of national cooperation platforms to gather all relevant stakeholders, the coaching of individual companies willing to make use of the IPCEI instrument. We also played a role in requesting the support of the regional and federal governments of Belgium to these projects.

We responded in December 2020 to the EC roadmap consultation on the revision of the Communication on IPCEI and we addressed the distortion issue among member states, the possible funding synergies, the involvement of SMEs and the need for transparency & a better governance.

We welcome the draft Communication on IPCEI and most of the proposals being made by the Commission.

However, we believe that the cumulation of IPCEIs with other EU funding should not only be allowed - as stated in new Para. 36. ("State aid to promote the execution of IPCEIs may be cumulated with EU funding or other State aid, provided that the total amount of public funding granted in relation to the same eligible costs does not exceed the most favourable funding rate laid down in the applicable rules of EU law.") - but that this cumulation should be one of the "Eligibility criteria".

Such an approach would :

- Reduce discrepancies between Member states in the support of the companies which are causing distortion issues within the single market;
- Automatically align IPCEIs with EU priorities that are already defined and financially supported;
- Allow to dedicate more public support (EU & national budgets) through complementary tools to key industrial projects.

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