

## ALBATTs Newsletter – Policy update

### I. BATTERIES

#### I. Mentions

ALBATTs is mentioned (pg.21) in the [Advanced technologies for industry Sectoral watch : technological trends in the automotive industry](#) - European Commission's report from July 2020 – where it says that the project “aims to identify and develop relevant skills arising from the new requirements of electric mobility”.

#### II. Policy measures

##### II.1 Action Plan for Essential Raw Materials

The European Commission presented the [Action Plan for Essential Raw Materials](#), the [2020 List of Essential Raw Materials](#) and a [prospective study on essential raw materials](#) for technologies and strategic sectors by 2030 and 2050. The action plan analyses current and future challenges and proposes measures to reduce Europe's dependence on third countries, diversifying supply from primary and secondary sources and improving resource efficiency and circularity, while promoting responsible sourcing across the world.

**The measures will foster the transition to a green and digital economy and, at the same time, strengthen Europe's resilience** and its open strategic autonomy in essential technologies necessary for this transition.

The list of essential raw materials has been updated to reflect the new economic importance and supply challenges based on its industrial application and includes 30 essential raw materials. **Lithium, essential for a transition to electromobility, was added to the list for the first time.**

##### II.2 Launch of the European Raw Materials Alliance

**On 29 September, Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and Commissioner Thierry Breton launched the European Raw Materials Alliance with the aim of connecting industrial actors, Member**

**States and civil society to strengthen the resilience and strategic autonomy of rare earths and magnets value chains in Europe.** The Alliance aims to identify investment barriers, opportunities and opportunities at all stages of the raw materials value chain, from mining to waste recovery, while at the same time addressing sustainability and social impacts.

Announced in the [industrial strategy](#), the Alliance is the first action of the [Action Plan on Critical Raw Materials](#). It will be managed by [KIC-EIT RawMaterials](#), an EU-funded organisation, and will be overseen by the Commission, in particular by the [European Raw Materials Innovation Partnership](#). The Alliance will be open to stakeholders who subscribe to the objectives set out in the [Alliance declaration](#): to make Europe economically more resilient by diversifying its supply chains, creating jobs, attracting investment, training young talent, and also contributing to the best framework for raw materials and the circular economy in the world.

### II.3 European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking

The Commission proposed a new Regulation for the [European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking](#) to maintain and advance Europe's leading role in supercomputing and quantum computing. It will support research and innovation activities for new supercomputing technologies, systems and products, as well as foster the necessary skills to use the infrastructure and form the basis for a world-class ecosystem in Europe. The proposal would enable an investment of €8 billion in the next generation of supercomputers – a substantially larger budget compared to the current one **and will aim to reduce the specific skills gap across the Union by engaging in awareness raising measures and assisting in the building of new knowledge and human capital.**

### III. Following the previous Newsletter

- ⇒ **Sustainable and smart mobility** – Waiting for Commission's adoption in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2020
- ⇒ [Commission proposal to establish the InvestEU programme](#) – BUDG is the responsible committee in the European Parliament. José Manuel Fernandes é o relator
- ⇒ [Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation](#) – ECON is the responsible committee in the European Parliament. No rapporteur yet.

#### IV. Looking Ahead

##### ⇒ **Revision of the Batteries Directive**

**The European Commission will put forward a proposal for a regulation on batteries, including energy storage systems and electric vehicle batteries, which is due to be published no later than November 2020.**

In this sense, **on 28 May 2020, the European Commission (EC) published its [Inception Impact Assessment \(IIA\)](#)** to modernise the EU's batteries legislation, in particular Directive 2006/66/EC of 6 September 2006. The initiative will establish new obligations upon manufacturers, importers, and distributors (including electrical equipment products incorporating batteries), as well as consumers, and will set up green technical standards on a wider range of products. For example, in the EU market, the Initiative will prioritise products that can be reused or recharged while aiming to phase out non-rechargeable batteries when an alternative exists.

Moreover, this will be a very green legislation and very important in terms of internal market, since it will be applicable in all member states. It will set rules in battery production and sustainability (carbon foot print; performance of batteries; content on certain elements of the batteries). There will also be rules in recycling, efficiency (creation of 2025 and 2030 targets) and also regarding batteries' second life and rules on extended producer responsibility.

This new regulation will entail 35% of the initiatives for the next 3 / 4 years.

##### ⇒ **Review of the Industrial Strategy**

In her State of the Union speech, the President of the European Commission announced that a Communication on updating the new industrial strategy for Europe will be launched;

##### ⇒ **European Commission's Sustainability Requirements for Batteries – Draft Act** upcoming

The ambition of this initiative is to lay down the conditions to ensure that a fully functioning and strong EU market for batteries can capture the opportunities arising from the expected growth of the market, promoting innovation and competitiveness, increasing environmental performance of economic actors and contributing to the wise management of resources.

## V. Skilling and Re-skilling

### V..1 Policy measures

⇒ **On the 30th of September, the European Commission published the [communication “on achieving the European Education Area by 2025”](#).**

The European Education Area is underpinned by six dimensions: quality, inclusion and gender equality, green and digital transitions, teachers, higher education, a stronger Europe in the world.

The Communication sets out the means and milestones to achieve the European Education Area by 2025, supported by Europe's Recovery Plan (NextGenerationEU) and the Erasmus+ Programme. In addition, it proposes a framework for cooperation with Member States and engagement with education stakeholders, including a reporting and analysis structure, with agreed education targets, to encourage and track reforms. **Efforts to establish the European Education Area will work in synergy with the European Skills Agenda, the renewed Vocational Education and Training policy and the European Research Area.**

The communication is very much focused on skills, on the importance of acquiring basic, digital and transversal skills in order to be better prepared for the green and digital transitions.

**It is, for example said on page 7:** *“Robust and inclusive lifelong learning strategies should allow those who have left early to re-enter education, and those who need it should be able to access higher education and VET programmes to acquire or update skills that the jobs of tomorrow require, also for older age”.*

**On page 59 it is mentioned that:** *“The proposed European Education Area targets and those on adult learning, VET and employability presented in the Skills Agenda and the proposal for the Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training complement and mutually reinforce each other, while covering the full spectrum of education and training. The Commission will regularly review progress toward these sets of targets and, where necessary, propose their extension and revision for 2030”.*

⇒ **On the 30th of September, the European Commission published the [Digital Education Action Plan](#)**

The Action Plan has two long-term strategic priorities: (i) fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem and (ii) enhancing digital competences for the digital

transformation. In order to strengthen the cooperation and exchange in digital education at EU level, the Commission will create a European Digital Education Hub, which will foster collaboration and synergies between policy areas relevant to digital education, create a network of national advisory services and strengthen the dialogue between stakeholders from the public and private sector.

Both initiatives will also feed into the third European Education Summit, which the Commission will host online on 10 December to bring Ministers and key stakeholders together to discuss how to make education and training fit for the digital era.

## V.2 Following the previous newsletter

- ⇒ [Communication “European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience”](#)- In the Parliament, EMPL is the responsible committee.
  
- ⇒ **Also with relevance for the sector is the Just Transition Fund, which will, according to the [Sustainable Europe Investment Plan European Green Deal Investment Plan support the reskilling of workers in view of equipping them with the necessary skills to take on new jobs](#)** – On Wednesday 16 September the European Parliament adopted the Report on the establishment of the Fair Transition Fund (JTF) with 417 votes in favour, 141 against and 138 abstentions. The European Parliament called for a substantial increase in the resources of the JTF under the EU's multiannual budget for 2021-2027 (€25 billion compared to 11 billion proposed by the Commission). This amount should be topped up by the 32 billion proposed under the EU's recovery programme. The first trilogue took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September.
  
- ⇒ [Communication: Shaping Europe’s digital future](#) - Improving education and skills is a key part of the overall vision for digital transformation in Europe. European companies need digitally savvy employees to iStock, sompong\_tom thrive in the global technology-driven marketplace. In turn, workers need digital competences to succeed

## V.2 Looking Ahead

- ⇒ **European Pact for Skills** – Planned the 10<sup>th</sup> November, under the German Presidency