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Contents

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Electrons vs molecules – part 2: an ever-closer union

When, in early July, the European Commission published its long-awaited Energy System Integration Strategy, it chose to publish simultaneously an accompanying Hydrogen Strategy. In wrapping up the two strategies into a single package, it signalled a growing recognition – among policy-makers, lobbyists and energy companies – that electrification of the energy system has its limits.

Increasingly, the “electrons versus molecules” debate is no longer seen as binary. If anything, this is making the arguments more complex than they were previously. This is because if everyone accepts that “we can’t electrify our way to victory” – in the words of James Watson, secretary general of the industry group Eurogas – the question then becomes one of proportions.

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