
Hydrogen Business For Climate CONNECT

Bourgogne-Franche-Comté speeds up the roll-out of hydrogen use

Belfort, 13 January 2021 – At the time of the two-day Hydrogen Business For Climate CONNECT event, the online version of the Hydrogen Business For Climate Forum, the main regional stakeholders shaping the hydrogen sector in Bourgogne-Franche-Comté are taking stock of 20 years of outstanding achievements and experimentation. They are also setting the course for the years to come with one clear ambition: as a pioneer from the very start, the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region intends to bolster its position as the French leader and to speed up the use of hydrogen, most notably with the roll-out of local ecosystems to make the hydrogen sector an economic driver and finalise its energy transition to become the first net-positive energy region in France.

One Forum, two days to scale up hydrogen

The hydrogen industry – and especially the green hydrogen sector – provides great hope for the region and a unique opportunity to bring new life to what is the leading industrial region in France. This is why regional stakeholders have been working hard to develop this sector for several years now. There is already real synergy between local authorities, researchers and local industry: the entire value chain is present and innovates across the region, day after day.

However, after 20 years of successful efforts and experimentation, there is still work to do to make the potential of hydrogen as a source of energy better known and accepted. **Communicating is key to improving the social acceptance of hydrogen and its widespread deployment, and is part of the region’s roadmap. This is what provided the impetus for the Hydrogen Business For Climate Forum.**

Over two days, professionals and members of the public will be able to view two round tables and a TV broadcast, interact via the B2B meetings, and take the first steps towards future cooperation, creating opportunities to boost the regional hydrogen ecosystem.

An in-person event will then be held on 29–30 September 2021 in Belfort, when the Hydrogen Business For Climate Forum will bring together more than 350 participants from France and Europe.

Hydrogen dynamics in Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, 20 years’ experience! A 20-year lead!

Twenty years ago, the first research on “Fuel cells and hydrogen tanks” began at the University of Technology of Belfort-Montbéliard. Since then, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté has been awarded “Hydrogen Territory” certification and is now home to a public research facility with European reach, some leading industrial firms, SMEs and start-ups that generate innovations and commercial solutions, a competitiveness cluster and other active clusters, and local authorities committed to hydrogen energy and mobility.

Over 20 years, a dozen trials have been run, such as Mobypost and Mobilhytest, and numerous projects are being rolled out (e.g. Hyaunais, DMSE, AuxR-H2, ISTHY and TTI). **Many new companies have been set up**, for example, Mahytec in 2008, Justy and H2Sys in 2017, and Rougeot Energie in 2019, while other companies have diversified (e.g. FAURECIA, GAUSSIN and SCHRADER Pacific) creating no fewer than 500 jobs across the region, tangible proof that the Region is already feeling the benefits of a sustainable hydrogen economy.

Press Release

Two levers applied by the region: building and training the H2 sector while rolling out use

Over a century, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté has emerged as the leading industrial region in France. Its advance in the hydrogen sector is an opportunity to bring new life to its industrial fabric. Rolling out hydrogen use across the region, especially in local hubs, is also a way for the region to make the transition to greener, low-carbon energy and ensure the transition results in significant job creation.

To this end, the region is investing to match its ambitions: since January 2016, no less than **€12 million** has been committed to produce a substantial leverage effect for private investment and local public investment. On top of that, **the region will mobilise almost €90 million over 2020-30 to support the emergence and growth of the hydrogen sector.** From 2021, these efforts will be further focused as part of the Region's stimulus plan, with an additional €10 million.

At the same time, the region is **identifying and mapping all the related training requirements** (e.g. vehicle maintenance or storage and distribution systems, while listing existing professions that are already under pressure) to build on existing programmes (CMI [Engineering Master's course] hydrogen energy training at the University of Technology of Belfort-Montbéliard, Rougeot Energie training, the introduction of small utility vehicles with their own hydrogen production station in five Mobicampus training colleges awarded the Campus d'Excellence label in 2020, etc.) and **offer a comprehensive range of courses, from specialist maintenance technician to energy engineer.** There is also focus on in-service training, as the region works with stakeholders and companies able to convert existing jobs for the switch to the hydrogen sector.

More active than ever and strong in the belief that the development of green hydrogen implies regional commitment, **Bourgogne-Franche-Comté will pursue its efforts to ensure the hydrogen sector rapidly becomes a strong economic driver, positioning the region as a national leader in the field and a net-positive energy region, one of the ambitions in the "Ici 2050" programme.**

About Hydrogen Business For Climate

The Hydrogen Business for Climate Forum is a transnational event organised by the Pôle Véhicule du Futur Competitiveness Cluster, with support from the French State, the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region, the City of Belfort and Grand Belfort, in partnership with the AER BFC (the Regional Economic Agency of Bourgogne-Franche-Comté), the ADN FC (the Economic Development Agency of Nord Franche-Comté), the CCI, the EEN (Enterprise Europe Network), FC Lab, the ADEME, France Hydrogène (formerly Afhyac) and Hydrogen Europe. Its mission is to bring about the hydrogen energy transition in France and Europe. Hydrogen Business For Climate is in line with international events such as the European Hydrogen Energy Conference.

To learn more, visit <https://hydrogenbusinessforclimate.com/>

Press Release