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German Government supports Fuel Cell Cogeneration

Unique new law to provide funding

The German Hydrogen Association (DWV) is very pleased that the federal government intends to include combined heat and power units based on fuel cells in the legal measures for the support of cogeneration. This is an unparalleled step which is likely to greatly facilitate the market introduction of these high tech devices for stationary applications.

The federal government decided on 4. July about the basic elements of a new Cogeneration Act. It is foreseen that cogeneration units based on fuel cells will be supported with an amount of 0,05 Euro/kWh as long as they have an output below 2 MW. Other small units are supported with half of this amount. The funds will be provided by a general rise of the power price. The aim is to have the draft approved by the two chambers of the federal parliament early enough to give it legal power with the beginning of next year.

Numerous countries support research and development in the fields of hydrogen and fuel cells, and the USA subsidize also the investment costs. A comparable support for operation, however, is unparalleled as far as we know. It will certainly facilitate the entry of the fuel cell in the stationary energy market as long as the costs are still above those for competing technologies due to the development efforts.

In the field of mobile applications as well there is a great amount of work to develop marketable drives based on hydrogen and fuel cells. European field experiments with buses are being prepared or running, respectively, and the serial car is foreseeable within this decade. It is up to the politicians here as well to prepare the suitable boundary conditions in time.

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[Top of page](#)



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