



Press Release No. 3/02  
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## Rhineland Palatinate: Start for competence network on fuel cells and hydrogen

On 26. April 2002 a competence network "Future Technology Fuel Cell Rhineland Palatinate" was created in Mainz, the capital of the German state of Rhineland Palatinate. The network will be a forum for the parties active in the state in this field, and it is a continuation of the former efforts towards sustainable energy generation with low emissions.

The driving force for the initiative was the minister for environment, Mrs. Margit Conrad. The ministries for science and the ministry for economy and transport support her. The German Hydrogen Association has been an expert partner for the environment ministry for a long while. One of the explicit objectives of the initiative is to support the state economy which is dominated by medium sized companies. Another important topic is education as well as public presentation of fuel cells and hydrogen.

The bundling of competence aims at continuing or starting research projects which contribute to the introduction of hydrogen and fuel cells in the energy market. The transition to the hydrogen economy on the basis of renewable primary energies is part of the objectives.

For interested parties from the state who are interested in participation the contact person is Prof. Dr. Karl Keilen, environment ministry, Tel. (+49-6131) 16-5922.

The situation for such an initiative is favorable in Rhineland Palatinate because

- applied research and development are already being done in the universities and similar institutes,
- there are many medium sized companies which could act as suppliers for the new technologies, thus securing or creating jobs,
- the support for renewable energies is already a prime topic for the state, and
- BASF at Ludwigshafen is a hydrogen producer and consumer with a lot of experience.

Among the states of the Federal Republic of Germany comparable organizations for hydrogen energy and fuel cells existed up to now in Bavaria, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Hamburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, and Hesse (see our [press release No. 2/02 of 8. May](#)). All these states, even though they differ widely in economical terms, see the topic as an important future technology which will have its impact on economy, jobs, and the environment.

The German Hydrogen Association is highly pleased about this development and hopes that the proliferation of state initiatives will have an effect on the position of the federal government.

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