Transporting hydrogen between France and Germany

GRTgaz, terranets bw and badenovaNETZE launch a coordinated open season market consultation to create cross-border hydrogen infrastructure in the Upper Rhine

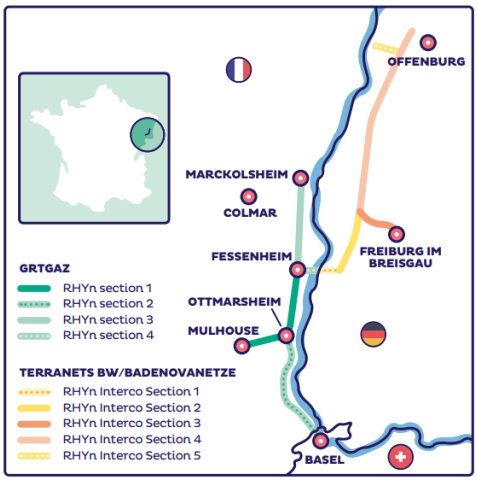
On Monday 18 September, GRTgaz, France's leading natural gas transmission system operator, joined its partners terranets bw and badenovaNETZE – operators of the transport and distribution networks in the state of Baden-Württemberg – to launch a call for expressions of interest to assess needs and confirm the economic interest in hydrogen transport infrastructure between France and Germany in the Upper Rhine region (RHYn / RHYn Interco). The network operators are proposing to convert existing natural gas pipelines so that they can transport hydrogen instead, as well as building new infrastructure. The aim is for this new infrastructure spanning more than 200 km between the Grand-Est and Bade-Wurtemberg to be brought into service by 2028.

Both these regions located between France and Germany are home to industries which have a high decarbonisation potential, including chemicals, glass production and steel manufacture. These are also industries which have high hydrogen consumption potential.

The call for expressions of interest will run until **17 November 2023**, and is aimed at all players across the Grand Est region (the RHYn project in France) and the southern Upper Rhine region (the RHYn Interco project in Germany) which are potentially concerned by hydrogen production or consumption and which have a need for hydrogen transport.

Infrastructure proposed in several distinct sections

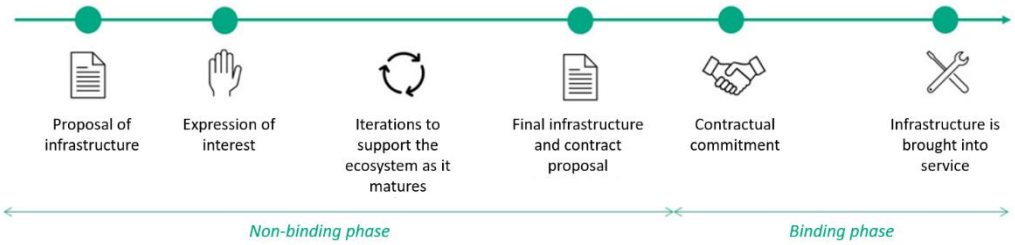
The infrastructure that the three operators are planning will be delivered in several sections.



Market players may express their interest in each of these sections independently. Based on the results, the network's priority sections will be examined.

Open season market consultation stages

This open season market consultation will be split into two phases: an initial “non-binding” phase to identify the type of infrastructure that needs to be developed, and then a “binding” investment phase for all interested stakeholders.



During the first consultation phase which gets underway today, interested companies are invited to fill in a questionnaire (available at badenovanetze.de/rhyn-interco-interesse and www.grtgaz.com/formulaire-ami-h2-rhyn), depending on their zone of interest. The transport infrastructure operators will look at the answers to each proposal, and if there is demonstrable interest, a feasibility study for building the network will be conducted.

For this study, an agreement will be entered into between the network operator and the project initiator. This will ensure that any information exchanged will be kept confidential and will set out the parties' mutual contractual and financial obligations.

This cross-border initiative is part of the European Hydrogen Backbone project – Europe's way of ensuring security of supply for hydrogen consumers, and making sure that a hydrogen network connecting 28 European countries is in place for 2040.

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About GRTgaz:
GRTgaz is Europe's second-largest gas carrier, with 32,618 km of pipes and 640 TWh of gas transported. The company has 3330 employees and generated nearly €2.1 billion in turnover in 2022. GRTgaz has a mission statement: “Together, we enable an energy future that is safe, affordable and climate neutral”. GRTgaz is an innovative company undergoing a major transformation to adapt its network to new ecological and digital challenges. It is committed to a 100% carbon-neutral French gas mix by 2050. It supports the hydrogen and renewable gas sectors (biomethane and gas from solid and liquid waste). GRTgaz carries out public service missions to guarantee the safety of gas transmission for its 879 clients (shippers, distributors, industrial companies, biomethane plants and producers). With its subsidiaries Elengy, the European leader in LNG terminal services, and GRTgaz Deutschland, operator of the MEGAL transmission network in Germany, GRTgaz plays a key role on the European gas infrastructure scene. The company exports its expertise internationally, in particular services developed by its research centre, RICE. Find us at https://www.grtgaz.com/, or on Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.

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About badenova:
Expand the energy supply so as to phase out reliance on fossil fuels – that's the primary task against a backdrop of climate change. With more than 1600 employees, badenova is a high-performance employer and is a fully municipal company based in Freiburg. The company's promise and its aim can be summed up as follows: "badenova is shaping the energy and thermal transition for and with the region so as to build a future worthy of being lived".
badenova and its subsidiary badenovaNETZE are actively involved in developing innovative hydrogen-related technologies. The aim is to bring hydrogen to southern Germany so as to connect the Baden-Württemberg state to national and European hydrogen infrastructure with the help of solid partners. Because hydrogen has a key role to play in helping badenova to achieve net zero.

About terranets bw:
terranets bw is an independent natural gas transmission operator. With its network of approximately 2750 km of high-pressure gas pipelines, terranets bw carries gas in a non-discriminatory fashion from Lower Saxony to Lake Constance. terranets bw also provides its clients with an array of gas transport infrastructure and telecommunications services. The company has nine sites in the Baden-Württemberg and Hesse states and employs around 300 people. Through its "H2 for BW" initiative, terranets bw is seeking to connect up the Baden-Württemberg state to German and European hydrogen infrastructure. terranets bw has set up the https://www.h2-fuer-bw.de/ website so as to share information transparently about its plans and its concrete conversion projects, and to determine future hydrogen needs. Working alongside producers and network operators, the company designs resilient itineraries to carry hydrogen from sources through to zones where there is demand for the gas across the Baden-Württemberg state.