



HyER Strategy – January 2016

Introduction

The aim of this document is to define the framework in which HyER will be working in the next few years. It will define the strategic orientations and goals of HyER.

This action plan will also give HyER the possibility to learn from the difficulties encountered by the network in the last few months and fully embrace new opportunities that will allow HyER to become an efficient and useful organisation for its members. HyER needs to be revitalised, and its core objectives need to be redefined in order to enable the network to structure itself, with the aim of developing a strong base on which to work on. Therefore, refocusing the activities of the network around the members should be a priority for HyER.

HyER's mission

HyER – Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Electro-mobility in European Regions, is a membership-based network acting on the behalf of its members to represent the interests of European regions and cities active in the field of hydrogen, fuel cell technologies and electro mobility. HyER's aim is to become the European point of reference for hydrogen and electro mobility in EU regions, cooperating with key decision-members at the EU level and assisting members effectively to develop their hydrogen and electro mobility activities.

In order to reach this objective, HyER is supporting the deployment and commercialisation of battery electric and fuel cell electric vehicles (BEV and FCEV) and fuel cell technologies. In order to allow for a deployment of those technologies, high levels of investments are required in developing an effective infrastructure across Europe. This represents a substantial challenge for cities and regions. HyER's aim is thus to assist its member by enabling the share of knowledge and capacity for decision-making.

With all its activities, HyER wishes to help the European Union to reach its emission reduction targets, as well as contribute to the development of a low carbon economy in Europe. A sustainable EU transport and energy system will also help provide a higher quality of life to all EU citizens. For all this, cooperation between European regions and cities is necessary, in order to share knowledge and know-how.

Opportunities offered by hydrogen, fuel cells and electro mobility:

Hydrogen, fuel cells and electro mobility (fuel cell electric cars and battery electric cars) offer a substantial number of opportunities to help European cities and regions which are facing a number of environment



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challenges. They can indeed help cities and regions to achieve their carbon reduction targets by helping to decarbonise sectors such as transport, industry and buildings. Hydrogen can have a very low carbon footprint if it is produced from a renewable energy source such as sun or wind power. The end uses of hydrogen and fuel cells are varied (fuelling vehicles, blending of hydrogen into natural gas, power to heat, combined heat and power etc.). Hydrogen can also be stored over a long period of time and can therefore also facilitate the integration of renewables into the energy system, by bridging the gap between the renewable energy generation and consumption periods. This in turn will also enhance the overall energy system flexibility. This represents a particular opportunity for cities and regions where there is a great potential for renewable energy generation but where this potential is currently under-exploited.

Likewise, electro mobility represents an effective and sustainable alternative to fossil fuels in the field of transport. In the area of mobility, electro mobility is a particularly interesting option to be explored for cities. While electric cars are more adapted to small vehicles and short distances in an urban concept, fuel cell offer a very interesting alternative to diesel and petrol for bigger vehicles running longer distances such as public transport buses or service vehicles. Hydrogen vehicles furthermore offer the same range and refuelling time than conventional fuel cars, but with potentially very low carbon emissions. Electro mobility, in addition to helping to decarbonise the road transport sector, does also greatly reduce noise emissions, thus adding to the comfort of life in a city.

Vision for HyER

HyER is currently facing a number of issues, including financial difficulties and a limited capacity for action. It should therefore redefine its priorities and adjust its activities in order to recover from this situation. HyER's activities have to concentrate on its original function, namely networking activities between the members, making use of the knowledge that already exists in the network and sharing experiences and information between the members.

In the last few years, HyER has been participating in a certain number of European projects and has been in charge of communication and dissemination activities. While dissemination of information remains a core objective of the network, it is recommended that HyER should only get involved in new projects when particularly relevant for the network; at least until it has the appropriate capacities to fully participate in new projects. However one of the main objectives of the network should be to act as a facilitator and help members to develop projects. HyER will look to develop this aspect of the network.

Another aim for HyER should be to become the link between the regions and the industry. Indeed, there is an existing gap between the regions which are willing to develop activities and the industry which is willing to implement its technologies. Our network can bridge this gap and become a contact point for the different actors. HyER will therefore seek to bring the different actors together and be that link between the industry and the regions. In order to achieve this HyER will also look to work in collaboration with the FCH-JU, which are in close contact with industrial partners in Europe.



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HyER will also aim to represent its member on the European level. The importance of cities and regions in shaping national and regional policies has to be underlined. Therefore, HyER should act as a coherent and single voice to defend its members' interest in Europe.

This should enable the network to build a strong base of members and position itself as a point of reference in Europe. Once HyER will have recovered from its difficulties, strategic priorities can then be adapted in the next strategy.

Summary of strategic objectives:

- 1) Keep members updated and circulate the right information
- 2) Bringing regions together: networking actions and events
- 3) Bridge the gap between regions and the industry: bringing the actors together
- 4) Representation of members on the European level
- 5) Going further – potential action for the future

Considering the restructuration difficulties HyER is still facing and also taking into account the work that has to be completed by the Secretariat in European projects, it is realistic to state that not all the strategic objectives will be reached in the coming year. While some of the detailed action points are relatively easy to put in place in the short term, others will need much more time to materialise. Some actions also require a long term working relationship with key actors on the European level. The actions detailed below should therefore be considered as objectives to reach on the mid-and long-term.

Detailed action plan:

The HyER Secretariat and Board will jointly produce a work plan every year to detail the network's planned actions. An annual report of activities will also be prepared by the Secretariat for the members and the Board every year.

1) *Create a member-focused organisation:*

Provide the relevant information to members at the right time, notably on:

- Policy developments at the EU level, laws and regulations
- EU funding opportunities and mechanisms
- Technical/scientific progress on hydrogen and electro mobility

HyER will also gather information and data about developments in the regions and make it available to all its members, via the website and through personalised exchanges with the Secretariat.

Circulation of information: The information will be disseminated to members in an active and innovative way. Several streams of information will be used:



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1. Increased use of social media (Twitter in particular): publications with links to articles on the website. The use of the social media tool will make the information more accessible to members and enable the network to provide short and concise information to the members.
2. The website: the website is a very important tool and its use has to be optimised. Its design will have to be reviewed and the information will have to be presented in clear sections to make it easily available. Items on the website could include:
 - Regularly updated newsfeed on what is happening in member regions as well as in the rest of Europe and the world.
 - Information about policy and funding developments.
 - Information about the progresses made in the different member regions (interactive map with links to the different projects etc.). The aim is to collect the members' best practices and to make them available to other members of the network.
3. Targeted mini-newsletters: As newsletters do not seem to be the most appropriate instrument for communicating information anymore, a new way of bringing the information directly to the members has to be identified. Members could for instance indicate their centres of interest (hydrogen, electric vehicles, funding, project development etc.) and only receive the information they are interested in (in the form of short emails for example).

Best practices: There is an incredible amount of expertise and knowledge among HyER's members. As a network, HyER has the potential to increase the reach of this knowledge by ensuring that it is appropriately disseminated to the members and by ensuring it is used in an optimal way. For this reason, one of HyER's priorities should be to collect the member's data and previous experiences and establish a comprehensive database for the network. The information then has to be disseminated to other members in the appropriate way, using the above mentioned communication tools. HyER, as a network, also has to ensure that the members have productive exchanges with each other on previous experience and knowledge; and to stimulate the exchange of information.

As a result of the work going on in the network, HyER will also produce suggestions and recommendations for local policy makers on a regular basis. This will facilitate fact-based decision making.

2) Bringing regions together: networking actions and events

On an everyday basis, HyER should be a point of contact for members and should be able to provide clear information to the members.

Events: In addition to its day-to day networking activities, HyER will regularly organise events, in Brussels and in other cities, in order to promote the cooperation between the members and enable them to come together. HyER will organise the following events, among others:

- Two events per year in Brussels where all the members will be able to network with each other but also meet key stakeholders at the European level who will have been identified by HyER.



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- Help members to organise study tours in their regions in order to share best practices, showcase the activities of the regions and allow members to see the concrete applications of fuel cells, hydrogen and electro mobility.
- If members express an interest in or would like to discuss a specific subject (funding opportunities, updates on technologies etc.), HyER will endeavour to organise webinars or info days in order to stimulate discussion and interaction in the network and provide effective information to the members.
- Provide active support to members who are willing to establish hotspots. For each hot spot there would be regular workshops, seminars etc. HyER will then help the hotspot leaders to disseminate the outcomes to all the members.
- Events organised by members: HyER will help the members by promoting the events organised in their regions and invite the other members of the network, via the website and newsletters for instance.

Project factory: as a network, HyER's role should be to act as a facilitator to help members develop and apply for European funding for hydrogen and electro mobility related projects. HyER will endeavour to prepare projects on different levels and this element should become an important aspect of the network's work. HyER should also be viewed by its members as an effective way to find partners for their projects. In this regard, HyER will organise regular project factory sessions (format to be defined) on project development in order to identify common project ideas and enable members to develop projects together and put forward strong applications with the help of HyER.

3) *Bridge the gap between industry and regions: bringing the actors together:*

- Bridge the gap between research and commercialisation: present the opportunities that exist for the industry in the regions, and vice-versa. In order to do this, HyER will work in close collaboration with the FCH JU and meet them on a monthly basis. A potential idea for HyER would be for its President to sit on the FCH JU Board or at least get a permanent invitation.
- Participate to regular events along with the FCH JU and the industry in order to bring the regions and the industry together.
- Develop channels of communication between members and the industry, in order to assist the industry to come to the regions.

4) *Liaison between the members and the EU institutions:*

- Collaborate with the FCH JU and the Commission (DG Move, Regio, Environment and Research in particular) in order to highlight the role hydrogen and electro mobility could play in Europe and also underline the members' needs in order to encourage a roll out of those technologies in European regions. Maintain a regular dialogue in order to ensure the interests of the regions are considered by the Commission and other stakeholders. Ensure that HyER is involved in relevant discussions around



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hydrogen and electro mobility on the European level. Ensure there is adequate policy and funding support for regions in Europe.

- Have an influence on the development of standards and regulations for hydrogen and electro mobility on the European level – have a proactive attitude. For instance, ensure that hydrogen will be included in the Alternative Fuels Directive and that electro mobility holds an important place.
- Preparation and submission of position papers and responses to consultations when necessary.
- Participate to high level hydrogen and electro mobility-related events and provide effective feedback to members. Identify relevant persons at the Commission and at the Parliament in Brussels and engage with them.

5) *Going further – potential actions for the future*

- Help with the establishment of centres of excellence in hydrogen and electro mobility in areas such as Flanders, San Remo, Aberdeen.
- Prepare market introduction plans and help members to prepare individual development plans. Develop a common roadmap for hydrogen and electro mobility in European region in order to build on the experience of members and help them meet their objectives.
- Collaborate with and established partnerships with relevant organisations and networks in Europe and in the rest of the world. Develop relationships with other associations promoting hydrogen and electro mobility in the world.
- Since its creation, HyER has looked to encourage the development of the required infrastructure as well as the deployment of low emission vehicles fleets (FCEV and BEV) in the regions. It has mainly been concentrating on transport. HyER could also start to look at other applications for hydrogen for instance (power to gas technologies etc.). Strong links exist between hydrogen and electro mobility: hydrogen, by increasing the production of electricity from renewable sources such as wind, can fasten the uptake of electro mobility.