

## Hydrogen for Thuringia 2029: grid operators sign principle agreement to cooperate on H2 gas grid conversion

*The network operators GASCADE, Ferngas and TEN want to jointly drive forward the conversion of Thuringia's natural gas network to hydrogen. The aim is a sustainable energy supply based on H2 with a supra-regional connection.*

■ **Erfurt.** At a hydrogen conference, representatives of the network operators GASCADE (Kassel), Ferngas (Schwaig near Nuremberg) and TEN (Erfurt) signed an agreement in principle for the conversion of their gas pipeline infrastructure to hydrogen. All three network operators provide essential supply services in Thuringia with their gas network infrastructure.

The aim of the agreement is to determine how parts of the network infrastructure for the transportation and distribution of natural gas will be transformed to hydrogen. In addition to the pipeline conversion, some new network structures will also have to be established. The cooperation concerns the transmission system network level (GASCADE, Ferngas) and the distribution network level (Ferngas, TEN Thüringer Energienetze). Specifically, the project partners have agreed to work closely together on twelve gas network projects throughout Thuringia, which are planned to be implemented by 2029.

■ Grid interconnections or grid connections between the partners' gas network projects are planned. In addition, a start will be made on determining when the partners' existing pipelines will be converted from natural gas to hydrogen – among other things, the specific technical implementation of the measures required for this will be outlined.

The agreement also sends a clear signal to potential Thuringian hydrogen customers in industry and energy-intensive SMEs.

**Ulrich Benterbusch, Managing Director of GASCADE**, emphasizes the goal of the collaboration: "The infrastructural connection of Thuringia to the German hydrogen network is a decisive step towards making Thuringia even more sustainable. Decarbonization is a necessity and with the rapid development of the required hydrogen infrastructure, we are creating the security for industry to be able to plan with the location in the long term. That is why we are bringing hydrogen to Thuringia."

**Antje Dimitrovici, Managing Director of Ferngas GmbH**, also emphasizes that the transformation of the energy infrastructure requires a view from several perspectives and partnerships: "Hydrogen must come to Thuringia and be distributed throughout the region. With the cooperation agreed today, we are continuing our approach of working in partnership at the established network levels. Bilateral cooperation and ongoing pilot projects such as TH2ECO will thus be consistently developed and supplemented."

"For TEN Thüringer Energienetze, the planned switch from fossil natural gas to hydrogen can only succeed if we connect our regional network structure with higher-level and supra-regional hydrogen networks in a coordinated and planned manner," says **Ulf Unger, Managing Director of TEN Thüringer Energienetze**, explaining the necessity of the cooperation. "With our partners GASCADE and Ferngas, we complement each other across the distribution and transportation levels. This makes an efficient H2 infrastructure for the whole of Thuringia realistic and feasible." According to Schmidt, the national storage strategy would therefore have the important task of creating this reliable framework.

## ■ PRESS RELEASE

### **About GASCADE**

GASCADE Gastransport GmbH operates a gas pipeline network throughout Germany. The Kassel-based transmission system operator offers its customers modern and competitive transport services for natural gas and, in future, other gases in the heart of Europe via its own high-pressure pipeline network, which is around 3,700 kilometres long. GASCADE is pursuing the goal of converting its pipeline network to the transport of hydrogen and is therefore actively involved in a number of onshore and offshore hydrogen projects. More information on GASCADE can be found at [www.gascade.de](http://www.gascade.de)

### **About Ferngas Netzgesellschaft mbH (Ferngas)**

Ferngas GmbH's high-pressure gas network covers more than 3,000 kilometers in Thuringia and northern Bavaria. It transports natural gas and biogas. In future, other green gases and hydrogen in particular will also flow through it. This change is being actively driven forward. The H2 pilot project TH2ECO (Thuringian H2 Ecosystem) was initiated back in 2021. Many well-known companies with roots in Thuringia are involved in this project, including grid operators, energy and electricity providers and renewable energy specialists. You can find more information about the company at [www.ferngas.de](http://www.ferngas.de).

### **About TEN**

TEN Thüringer Energienetze is the largest distribution network operator in Thuringia. It provides all infrastructure services for the supply of electricity and natural gas as well as the connection of decentralized generation plants. The municipal company reliably supplies more than 1.1 million people and the economy of Thuringia as well as parts of Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt with energy via an electricity and natural gas grid that is around 40,000 kilometers long. Find out more at [www.thueringer-energienetze.com](http://www.thueringer-energienetze.com)

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