

## Seminar und Alumni Networking Event



## Energy for Europe – Green Hydrogen and the role of Higher Education and Research

The event, organised together with the German Embassy Brussels, focused on how research and higher education should contribute to the energy transition by means of research, development, and implementation of **green hydrogen**.

Europe Day on 9 May 2023 also marked the official launch of the European Year of Competences ([Link](#)), with which the European Commission aims to give new impetus to lifelong learning and promote the acquisition of competences in light of the green and digital transformation. After the welcome speech by Florence Lamand, Head of the Cultural Department of the German Embassy Brussels, Michael Hörig, Head of the DAAD Brussels Office, moderated a panel discussion - followed by a presentation of the new DAAD scholarship programme in the field of green hydrogen and a keynote speech by Tom Hautekiet, Chief Commercial Officer of the Port of Antwerp-Bruges.

### Podium discussion – The role of Higher Education and Research

Participants of the panel discussion were Prof. Mehtap Özaslan (Technical University of Braunschweig, Germany), Prof. Michael Sterner (Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg, Germany), Alexander Meincke (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research; BMBF) from Berlin and Dr. Michael Kreuz (Hydrogen Europe Research) from Brussels.

The expert group advocates a **targeted, coherent approach** characterised by interdisciplinary and international cooperation involving different countries, policy makers, industry, higher education and research institutions and technology companies.

**Capacity building as well as education and qualification** are key prerequisites for the growth of green hydrogen. Targeted and practice-relevant education and training is seen as indispensable at all stages of learning – from school, vocational education, higher education to reskilling and upskilling. It is according to the experts also important to provide information and to raise awareness of existing study and further education options, including at an early stage. In higher education, practical application and the option of industrial internships play a major role in the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, and competences.

At the Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg, close integration and practice is a regular and integral part of higher education, as it is the case at the Research Centre for Energy Networks and Energy Storage. The Technische Universität (TU) Braunschweig also focuses on practical relevance in its university programmes and regularly integrates students and doctoral candidates in the current flagship project Hydrogen Terminal Braunschweig with TU involvement, as well as in the establishment of a joint German-Japanese laboratory for green hydrogen.

Mobility and on-site cooperation also contribute significantly to building trust between project partners, which facilitates and accelerates cooperation, especially in the context of international collaborations. For the development of the next generation of technologies, continued investment in research is also key. Unbureaucratic access to funding for projects in the field of green hydrogen is equally seen as crucial for enabling quick responses, for example in the case of geopolitical challenges.

### **Keynote Speech: Green Hydrogen for Europe – A collective effort**

Tom Hautekiet presented the role of the international port in consolidating Belgium's position as a pioneer region for clean hydrogen and as a link between industry, research and education. He explained the characteristics and added value of the ports of Antwerp and Bruges, which merged into a single port a year ago, and described the need for a rapid energy transition for the port being one of the major emission hubs in Europe. For a fast transformation, the willingness to make decisions is just as decisive as the willingness to invest in industry and politics, which Tom Hautekiet presents in form of a concrete catalogue of measures the port will implement to achieve its goals set for 2030.

## Presentation of DAAD ERA scholarship programme for green hydrogen

Dr. Holger Finken, Head of Research Fellowship Programmes at DAAD, presented the new programme "**ERA Future Scholarships - Green Hydrogen**". By means of a targeted qualification and networking offer ([link](#)), the programme contributes to overcoming the identified challenges. With the BMBF-funded programme, DAAD supports the implementation of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda adopted in 2022 as part of the "**European Green Hydrogen Agenda Process**", a pilot initiative of the European Research Area (ERA).

The programme provides a **scholarship to young scientists and lecturers** at universities and research institutions in **Germany and the ERA**. In addition, it is designed to **foster network building and to train** students, young scientists, experts and DAAD alumni from Germany and the extended ERA, as well as to **advance research** at all stages of the green hydrogen value chain.