

Hydrogen core network operators publish details for capacity reservations from 19 March 2026



19 March 2026

European network operators have announced the first user commitment processes for marketing hydrogen capacities for early 2026. At the same time, the hydrogen core network operators in Germany will start marketing corresponding capacities. With this information package, the hydrogen core network operators are providing the market with detailed information on the upcoming process.

To enhance certainty for the expanding hydrogen market, the development of the hydrogen core network and the import corridors, hydrogen core network operators will offer hydrogen capacity reservations for the first time from 19 March 2026. This will allow market participants to secure the entry and exit capacities required for commercial transactions, providing additional assurance for the development of hydrogen projects.

The detailed procedure for concluding a reservation contract and the amount of reservable capacity are outlined below.

Regulatory framework and current need for action

With the publication of the WaKandA (file BK7-24-01-015) and WasABi (file BK7-24-01-014), the BNetzA* has laid down the basic rules for marketing and trading capacities in the hydrogen market, which will apply from 1 January 2028. In the ongoing process of developing common contract standards for network access, these regulations are being further developed by the BDEW/VKU/GEODE negotiating delegation under a cooperation agreement on hydrogen. As part of the development of common contract standards, a uniform model contract for capacity reservations in the hydrogen core network was agreed and published on 6 January 2026 by the participating associations BDEW, VKU and GEODE. This model contract will be transferred to the first hydrogen cooperation agreement and will become the standard on 1 January 2028.

The possibilities for hydrogen core network operators to offer firm and freely allocable hydrogen capacity on a binding basis will gradually increase as the hydrogen core network develops. Clusters created after 2029, for which capacities cannot be reserved currently, will not be disadvantaged by this initial marketing launch. There will be sufficient capacities available, as per network development plan, for the later-completed sections of the hydrogen core network.

Reservation concept

By concluding a reservation agreement, a customer can reserve capacity for the future. The model reservation agreement stipulates that the reserved capacity will be held for the customer for a period of up to seven years, so that the customer can make the corresponding transport booking at the end of the reservation period (e.g. 03/2026 conclusion of contract, 02/2033 all necessary commissioning has been completed, 03/2033 transport booking and possibility of use). The reservation period ends after the network operator's booking offer, but not before commissioning by the customer and not before the technical commissioning of all capacity-relevant parts of the cluster in the planned expansion stage on 31 December 2029, in accordance with the present market information package.

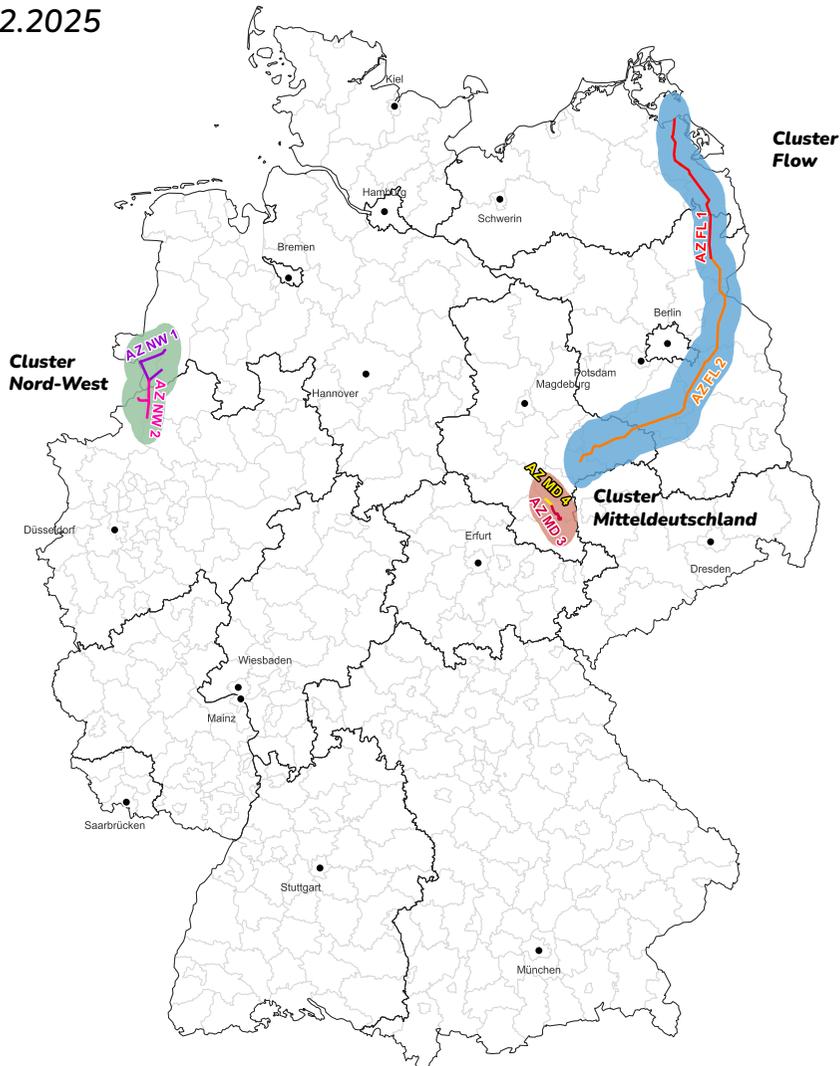
Reservations can initially be made on the basis of the core network infrastructure for the years 2026-2030 and the initial capacities available in the offer zones (both amount of capacity and connection options). The further development of the clusters and capacities for subsequent years will be modelled and published regularly by the hydrogen core network operators at a later date. Accordingly, capacity for parts of the network which will go into operation from 2030 onwards can be reserved from the date of the relevant market information. Within, but at the latest by the end of the reservation period (e.g. 02/2033), a booking can be made for up to 15 years (e.g. 01/2034 – 12/2048). During the reservation period, the customer pays a reservation fee, which is invoiced monthly and can be credited up to 100% towards later bookings, provided that at least one annual booking is made at the end of the reservation period in the amount of the reserved capacity and with delivery beginning within four years after the end of the reservation period. The reservation fee is determined individually by the respective hydrogen network operator.

*BNetzA: Bundesnetzagentur (Federal Network Agency)

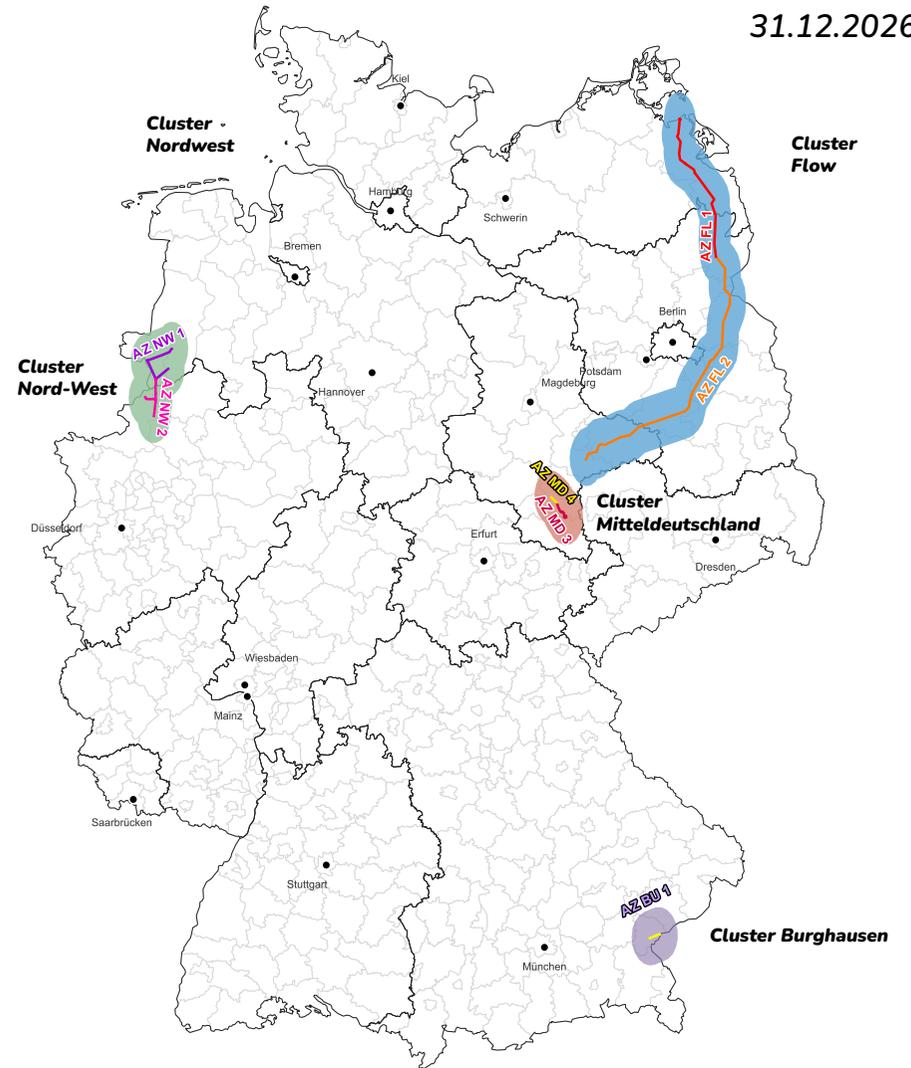
The development of clusters and offer zones until 2030

The development of clusters and offer zones over time is shown in the following graphs:

31.12.2025



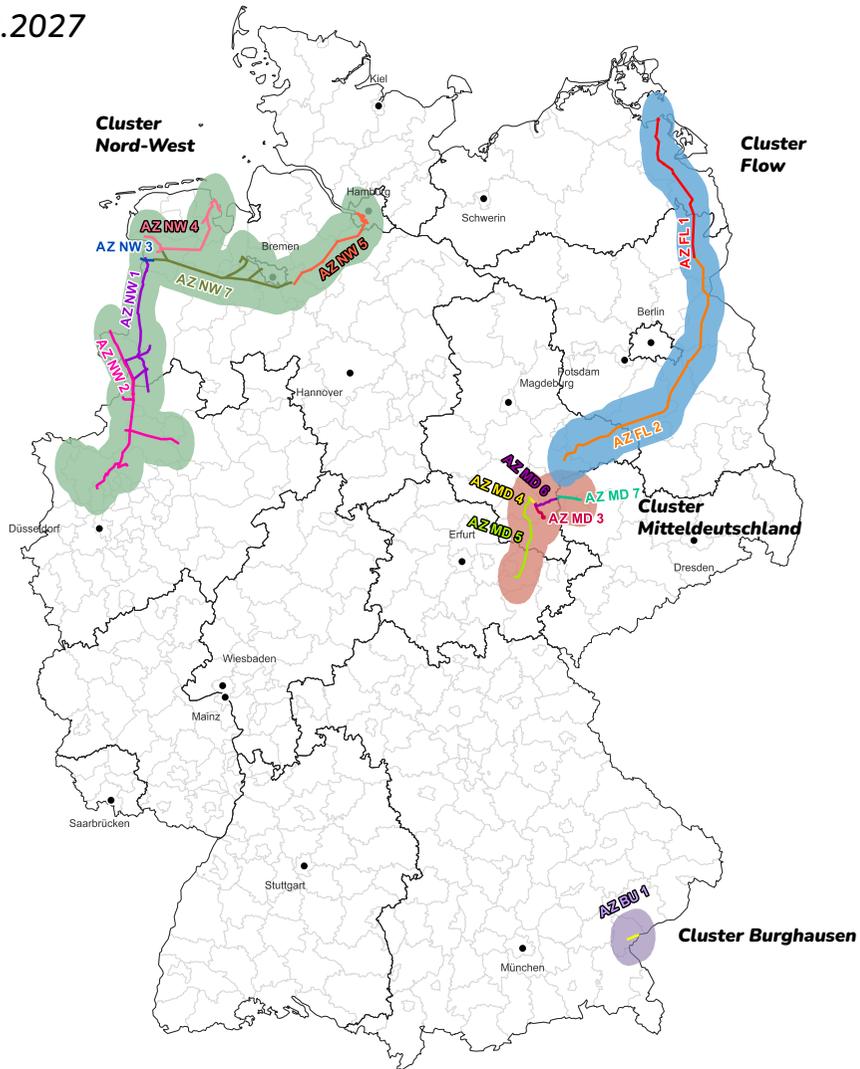
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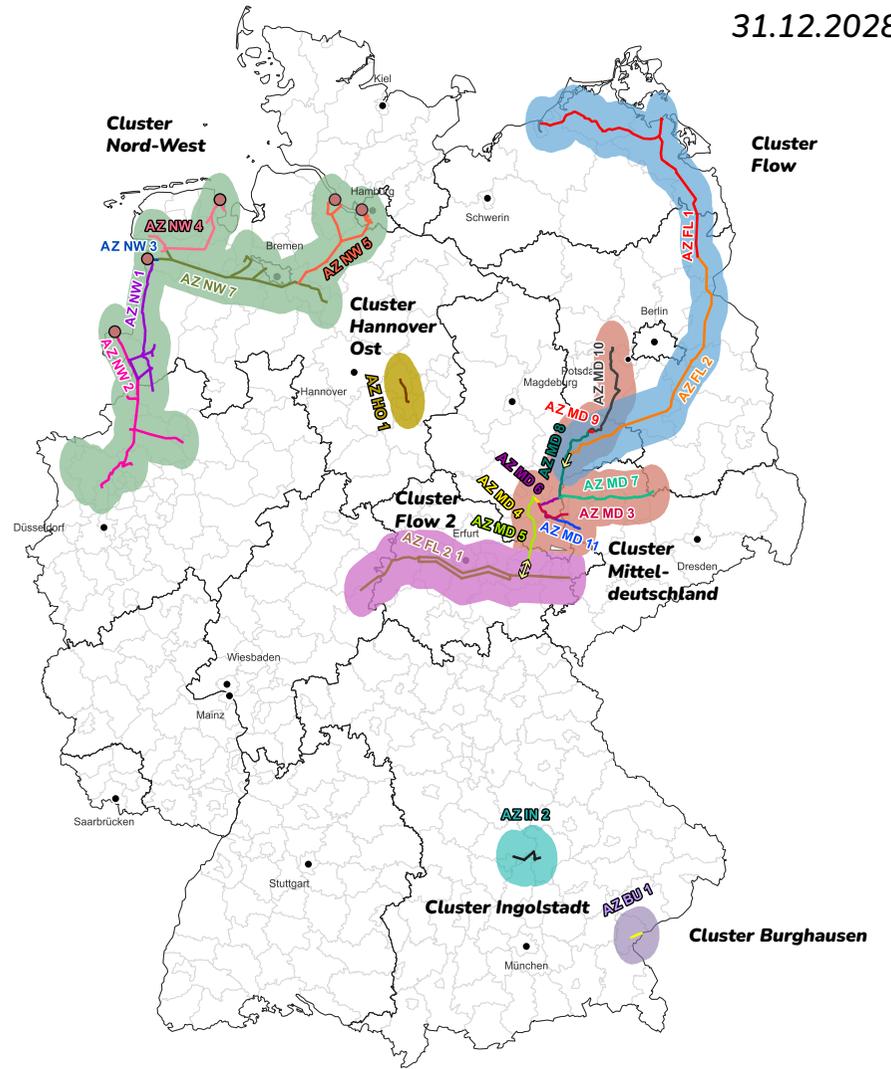
The development of clusters and offer zones until 2030

The development of clusters and offer zones over time is shown in the following graphs:

31.12.2027



31.12.2028



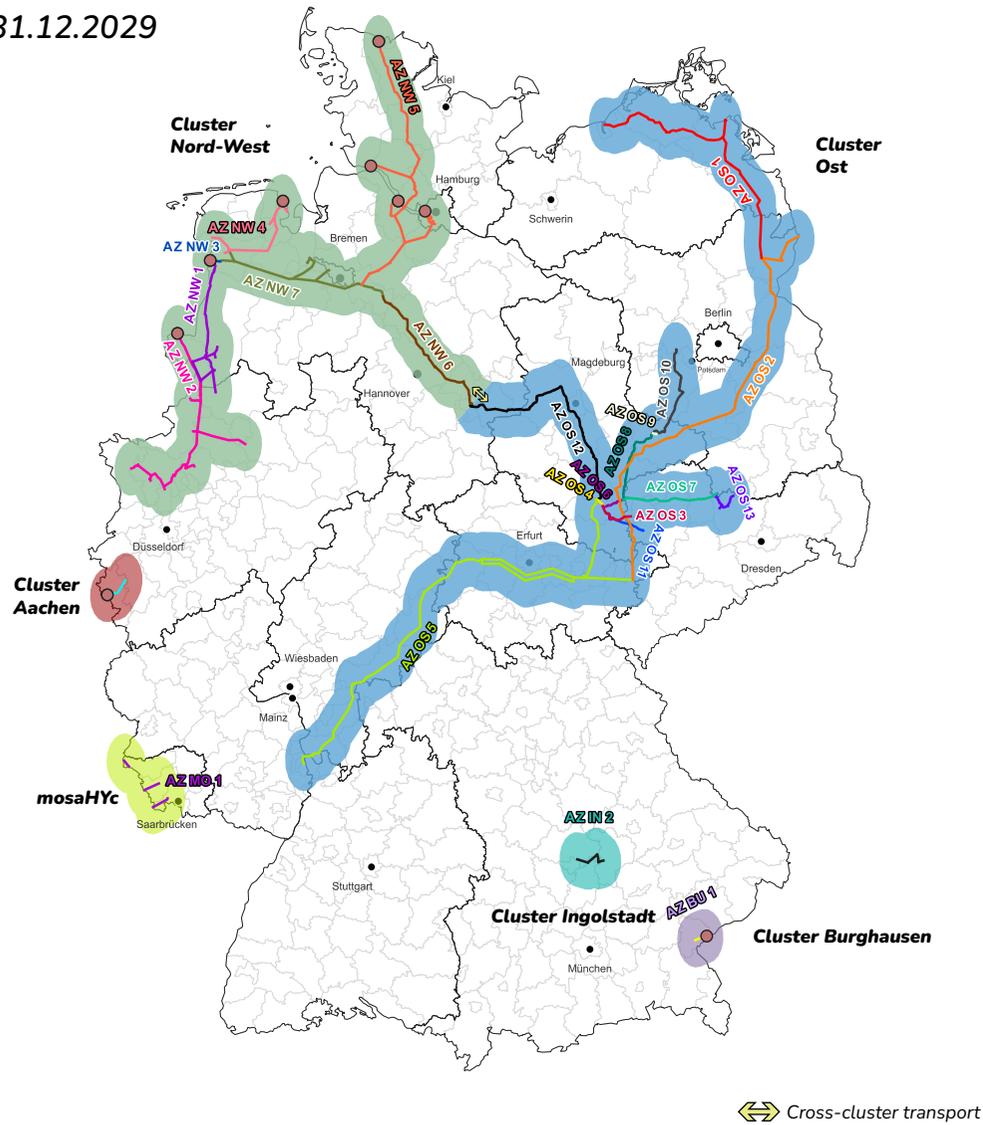
↔ ↔ Cross-cluster transport

● Interconnection points and H2 terminals

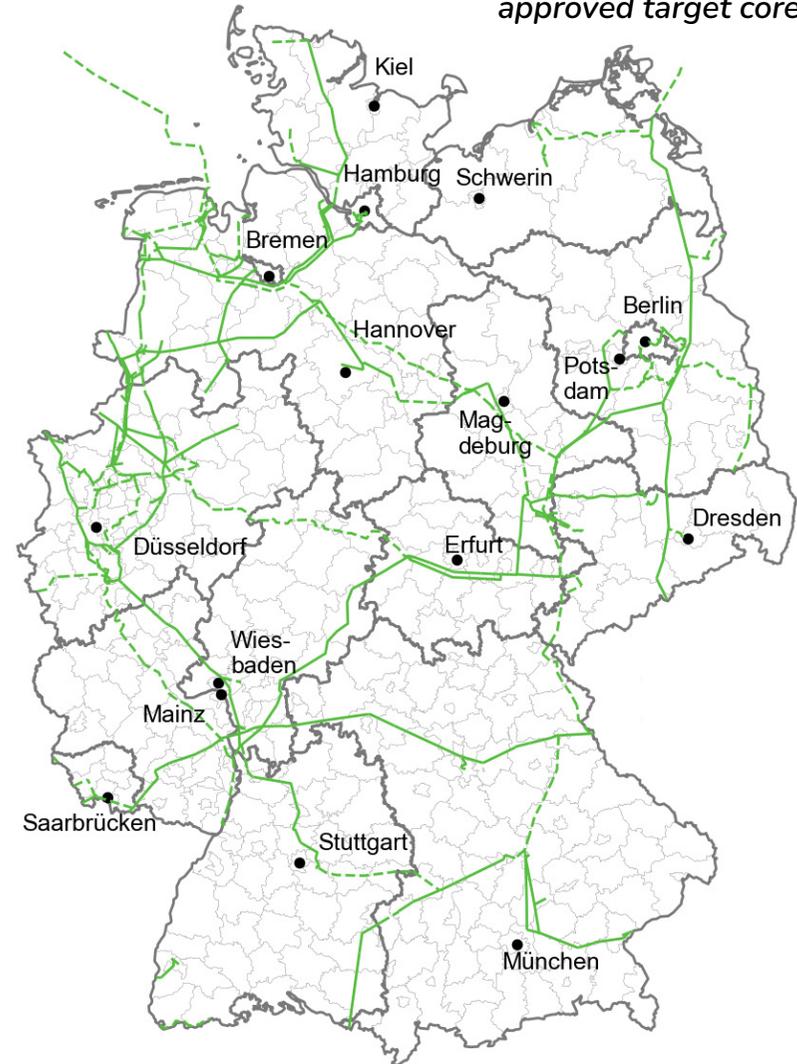
The development of clusters and offer zones until 2030

The development of clusters and offer zones over time is shown in the following graphs:

31.12.2029



approved target core network



The reservable capacities

The reservation concept foresees that customers can reserve firm and freely allocable hydrogen capacities (FWK) within clusters at points in an offer zone, within which capacities are offered on a competitive basis. The concept of offer zones was introduced in the market information published on 16 October: The sum of the marketable FWK at entry and exit points corresponds at least to the capacity offered in the offer zone. FWK offered within an offer zone are pre-checked and can be marketed at any entry or exit point within this offer zone without additional fluid mechanics testing at the transmission network level. In the distribution network, additional testing may be necessary with regard to further transport within this network. The concept of offer zones is intended to enable the highest possible, flexible and demand-oriented capacity offer within the clusters. This is necessary because many future entry and exit points and their requirements are not yet known. The offer zones can be adjusted over time to the market ramp-up as required.

In accordance with section 4(c) of the WaKandA ruling, hydrogen network operators are obliged to reserve 10% of available capacity (see table below) for short-term bookings at network points (excluding exit points to end consumers and entry points to production facilities). These are taken into account in the reservation request process.

The capacities of the offer zones were calculated based on design, minimum and maximum pressures. Grid connection customers must always design their systems for the design pressure of the respective pipelines. During the ramp-up phase, a lower feed-in pressure of at least 40 barg may initially be sufficient for feed-in points in individual clusters, subject to consultation with the responsible hydrogen core network operators. Network connection customers will be notified of subsequent pressure increases with an appropriate notice period of at least three years. A pressure of at least 18 barg has been determined for exit points. Notwithstanding the minimum discharge pressure, a discharge pressure lower than 18 barg may also be agreed for regional hydrogen networks. If a higher pressure is required, the customer should provide for a pressure increase. The details of the respective network point are to be agreed in the network connection contract with the responsible hydrogen core network operator.

The following tables show the amount of reservable capacity in the offer zones and the maximum nomination option for cross-cluster transports over time:

Overview capacities 2026 – 2030

Cluster	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030		
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	
Cluster Nord-West	(in MWh/h)											
	AZ NW 1 GetH2 Nord	Nowega OGE	256	300	330	300	330	300	300	300	300	300
	AZ NW 2 GetH2 Süd	Thyssengas H2 OGE Nowega	300	400	300	450	300	450	300	450	300	450
	AZ NW 3 Oude	Gasunie Deutschland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1380	1550
	AZ NW 4 Friesland	GTG Nord OGE	-	-	-	-	1300	1500	1300	1500	1300	1500
	AZ NW 5 Hamburg / Brunsbüttel / Ellund	Gasunie Deutschland Hamburger Energienetze Brunsbüttel Gasnetz GmbH (ab 1.4.26)	-	-	-	-	800	400	800	400	800	400
	AZ NW 6 Hallendorf / Salzgirter	Gasunie Deutschland Nowega	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	280	800
	AZ NW 7 Bremen / Huntorf	Gasunie Deutschland GTG Nord	-	-	-	-	400	400	400	400	400	400
Total		556	700	630	750	3130	3050	3130	3050	4790	5400	

Cluster	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030		
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	
Cluster Hannover Ost	(in MWh/h)											
	AZ HO 1*	Gasunie Deutschland							280	800	Cluster Hannover East will be transferred to AZ NW 6 in 2030	
	Total								280	800		

* AZ HO 1 will be transferred to AZ NW 6 in 2030, enabled by the connection to Cluster Nord-West

Cluster	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030		
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	
Cluster Mitteldeutschland	(in MWh/h)											
	AZ MD 3 (Kulkwitz)-Leuna Süd-Milzau	ONTRAS	160	438	160	438	160	438	160	438		
	AZ MD 4 Milzau-Bad Lauchstädt	ONTRAS	137	177	137	177	137	177	137	177		
	AZ MD 5* Bad Lauchstädt-Zöllnitz	Femgas	-	-	-	-	396	253	396	253		
	AZ MD 6 Milzau-Großkugel	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	177	142	177	142		
	AZ MD 7 Großkugel-Plaußig-(Mühlberg)	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	177	177	177	177		
	AZ MD 8 Großkugel-Apollensdorf	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	177	177		
	AZ MD 9 Apollensdorf-Piesteritz	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	355	177		
	AZ MD 10 Apollensdorf-Ketzin	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	177	177		
	AZ MD 11 Leuna-Bohlen	ONTRAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	177	177		
	Total		297	615	297	615	1047	1187	1933	1895		

Cluster Mitteldeutschland will be transferred to Cluster Ost in 2030

Cluster	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030		
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	
Cluster Flow	(in MWh/h)											
	AZ FL 1 Lubmin-Schönermark	GASCADE LBGT	2006	195	2006	195	2006	195	2006	195		
	AZ FL 2 Schönermark-Bobbau	GASCADE	1200	174	1200	174	1200	174	1200	174		
Total		2006	369	3206	369	3206	369	3206	369			

Cluster Flow will be transferred to Cluster Ost in 20230

Cluster	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030		
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	
Cluster Flow 2	(in MWh/h)											
	AZ FL 21 Reckrod-Rückersdorf	GASCADE							792	506	Cluster Flow 2 will be transferred to Cluster Ost in 2030	
	Total								792	506		

Cluster Flow 2 will be available in 2029

Overview capacities 2026 – 2030

	Network Operator	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030	
		Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit	Entry	Exit
Cluster Ost											
(in MWh/h)											
AZ OS 1 Rostock-Schönermark	GASCADE LBTG									2006	195
AZ OS 2 Greifenhagen-Rückersdorf	GASCADE									1200	174
AZ OS 3 Kulwitz-Mitzau	ONTRAS									160	438
AZ OS 4 Milzau-Bad Lauchstädt	ONTRAS									137	177
AZ OS 5* Rückersdorf-Bad Lauchstädt-Ludwigsh.	GASCADE Ferngas									1188	759
AZ OS 6 Milzau-Großkugel	ONTRAS									177	142
AZ OS 7 Großkugel-Mühlberg	ONTRAS									177	177
AZ OS 8 Großkugel-Apollensdorf	ONTRAS									177	177
AZ OS 9 Apollensdorf-Piesteritz	ONTRAS									355	177
AZ OS 10 Apollensdorf-Ketzin	ONTRAS									177	177
AZ OS 11 Leuna-Böhlen	ONTRAS									177	177
AZ OS 12 Hallendorf-Bad Lauchstädt (inkl. CÜP)	ONTRAS									291	280
AZ OS 13 Mühlberg-Riesa-Gröditz	SachsenNetze									144	152
Total										6367	3202
<i>* results in 2030 from the merger of AZ MD 5 (2029, Mitteldeutschland) and AZ FL 21 (2029, Flow 2)</i>											
Cluster Burglause											
(in MWh/h)											
AZ BU 1 HyPipeBavaria one	bayernets			1280	630	1280	630	1280	630	1280	630
Total				1280	630	1280	630	1280	630	1280	630
Cluster Ingolstadt											
(in MWh/h)											
AZ IN 1 HyPipeBavaria two	bayernets					1533	486	1533	486	1533	486
Total						1533	486	1533	486	1533	486
Cluster MosaHYc											
(in MWh/h)											
AZ MO 1 mosaHYc	Creos								1117	1117	1117
Total									1117	1117	1117
Total											
(in MWh/h)											
Total of all reservable capacities of all clusters		2859	1684	5413	2364	10196	5722	12991	8053	15087	10835
CÜT											
Max. nomination option CÜT											
(in MWh/h)											
Hallendorf (Cluster Nord-West)	Gasunie Deutschland										280
Hallendorf (Cluster Ost)	ONTRAS										291
Bobbau (Cluster Flow)	GASCADE										280
Bobbau (Cluster Mitteldeutschland)	ONTRAS							2405			
Zöllnitz (Cluster Mitteldeutschland)	Ferngas							1128	506		
Zöllnitz (Cluster Flow 2)	GASCADE							506	1128		

In the future, hydrogen core network operators will publish at least once a year the capacities and cluster developments for the years after 2030, taking into account the network development plan. Available capacities and capacities that have already been reserved or booked will be published and updated at specified intervals in line with section 9 of WaKandA.

The capacity reservation process

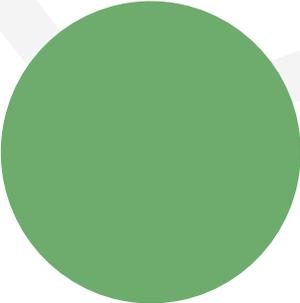
Reservation requests can be submitted to the operator of the nearest hydrogen core network pipeline from 1 p.m. on 19 March 2026. Contracts that have already been concluded (existing contracts) remain valid and are not affected by this reservation process.

In order to enable an efficient and non-discriminatory enquiry process, the hydrogen core network operators have developed a standardised form for reserving capacity. The link to the form is provided on the respective websites of the hydrogen core network operators. In addition to general information about the applicant, the form also requests information for initial registration with the hydrogen core network operator or the hydrogen market area manager, as well as specific information about the capacity to be reserved for a necessary capacity check. It should be noted that registration should be initiated in good time with regard to the necessary sanction checks. The time stamp of receipt of the completed form is the basis for the check and possible allocation of capacity in chronological order (first come, first served – FCFS).

The request is usually processed within 10 working days in a cross-network operator check. Once the check has been completed successfully, the applicant receives a binding offer to reserve the capacity, which must be accepted within 7 working days. If the requested capacity is only partially available, the applicant receives a pro-rata reservation offer. If the requested capacity exceeds the available capacity in individual offer zones, the hydrogen core network operators will carry out a case-by-case assessment. If the reservation of the capacities requested by the applicant depends on other capacity requests that have already been made, for example to synchronise entry and exit, the applicant can refer to the corresponding requests in the form in order to receive any reservation offers at the same time. Corresponding requests marked accordingly by the applicant will be given the timestamp of the first request, provided that all requests are received within one hour; otherwise, the timestamps of the individual requests remain unaffected. A reservation contract specific to each of the entry and exit points as well as for cross-cluster transport (CCT) must be concluded for this point.

Reservation of cross-cluster transport

Firm hydrogen capacities enable free allocation within the Germany-wide hydrogen market area without specifying a transport route. The core hydrogen network in Germany will initially consist of individual clusters. During the hydrogen ramp-up phase, the hydrogen market area may also comprise several unconnected networks or sub-networks of one or more hydrogen network operators (clusters). Insofar as a Germany-wide interconnected hydrogen network is a prerequisite for the effective application of the provisions in this document, the respective provisions shall apply accordingly to clusters for the duration of the hydrogen ramp-up. Accordingly, the free allocation of entry and exit capacities is limited to one cluster at a time. These clusters will merge during the hydrogen ramp-up. Wherever there are connections between two clusters that are not free of flow bottlenecks, meaning that a merger of the clusters is not yet possible, a transition between the clusters will be enabled on the basis of the CÜT concept developed by the associations BDEW, VKU and GEODE. Usage is handled in accordance with section 3 lit. a) sublit cc) WaKandA by means of cross-cluster nominations at the VHP. As soon as the connections between two clusters are free of flow bottlenecks, the clusters are merged, enabling free allocation within the two merged clusters.



For projects that require CÜT in addition to reservations in the respective clusters for their implementation, the hydrogen core network operators create the technical and capacity options for providing a reservation for CÜT as well. This is done by concluding a CÜT reservation contract with Trading Hub Europe, the hydrogen market area manager, which will be published shortly by the associations BDEW, VKU and GEODE. The prerequisite for a CÜT reservation contract is the submission of a reservation or booking for the corresponding amount in the source and target clusters. If a reservation or booking is only available in the source or target cluster, a supply contract can alternatively serve as proof for the other cluster. If these requirements are met and sufficient transport capacities are available between the clusters, a CÜT reservation contract can be concluded. CÜT reservation contracts are generally awarded in the order in which requests are received (FCFS) and without any additional reservation fee. In the event of a bottleneck, allocation is based on willingness to pay, which is also requested in a CÜT reservation request. A bottleneck occurs when, within one hour of the reservation request process (request time slot), the number of requests received for reservations to use the CÜT exceeds the available capacity in the relevant request zones. Once the deadlines for the acceptance or rejection of all reservation offers by the requesters have expired in relation to the respective request time slot and the final information on the scope of the concluded reservation contracts is available, a clearing price

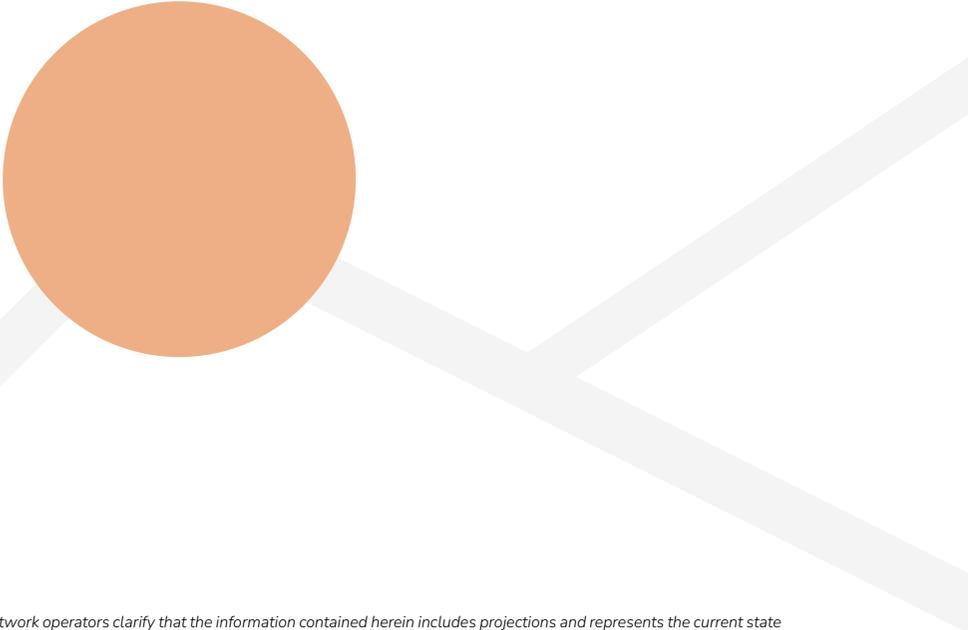
can be determined, which is calculated by multiplying the reserved usage option by the allocation mark-up to be paid by the customer. The allocation mark-up is payable in full from the point of use in accordance with the provisions of the CÜT reservation contract.

The initially planned start of use of the respective CÜT is shown on the cluster maps. The initially planned end of use of the respective CÜT is also shown in part on the cluster maps. Furthermore, the core network provides for a merger by 31 December 2032, subject to a postponement in accordance with section 28q (8) sentence 6 EnWG until 31 December 2037. Based on the current status, it can therefore be assumed that use will end by 31 December 2037 at the latest.

Once the technical commissioning of the first connections between clusters has been completed, enabling nominations to be submitted within the cluster exchange model for each cluster transition, the CÜT reservation agreement will end. Customers must then submit the relevant nominations for the desired period in order to secure the transport options from the reservation between the clusters. The hydrogen market area manager will inform customers well in advance of the start of the cluster transition. From this point on, transport options will be allocated based on the CÜT concept.

Marketing launch on 19 March 2026

From 13:00 on 19 March 2026, capacity reservation requests can be submitted to the hydrogen core network operators by completing the request form. This marks the official start of marketing.



The hydrogen core network operators clarify that the information contained herein includes projections and represents the current state of planning. The hydrogen core network operators do not guarantee future developments, as forecasts carry inherent uncertainties. Specifically, completion and commissioning dates are based on past experiences with natural gas network expansion. In addition, the regulatory framework for hydrogen transport in Germany has not yet been finalised and translated into processes. Therefore, concepts, processes, dates, and figures cannot be guaranteed, and the offer may be subject to change. Examples of this include competition between maximising capacity supply, defining flexibility zones (in accordance with WasABi), applicable reservation quotas (in accordance with WaKandA) and existing contracts. Furthermore, the hydrogen core network operators reserve the right to offer contractual terms that deviate from the model contract for capacity reservations. Liability claims against the hydrogen core network operators for damages caused directly or indirectly by the use of the information provided are excluded.