

No. 10 / Cologne, 18.05.2026

Koelnmesse embraces hydrogen with pioneering climate-friendly logistics project

## Koelnmesse embraces hydrogen with pioneering climate-friendly logistics project

- **First fleet of locally emission-free hydrogen-powered forklifts in operation on trade fair grounds**
- **On-site hydrogen refuelling station supplies green hydrogen produced with renewable electricity**
- **Trade fair operations offer ideal conditions for deploying innovative fuel-cell forklifts**
- **In future, surplus solar power may be converted into green hydrogen on site**

For the very first time, forklifts powered exclusively by green hydrogen are being deployed on the Koelnmesse trade fair grounds. Their fuel cell drive system operates without any local emissions. The hydrogen itself is produced from water using renewable energy, thus eliminating fossil fuels and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the fuel production process as well. Fast refuelling times and consistently high performance make this technology particularly well suited to trade fair operations. With this transition, Koelnmesse is assuming a pioneering role among exhibition venues.

“We are proud to take another important step towards sustainable and climate-friendly trade fair operations by deploying fuel cell technology and green hydrogen at our site,” says Gerald Böse, CEO of Koelnmesse. “Much of what secures the sustainable future of our industry happens behind the scenes - and it is precisely there that we are driving forward pioneering work and innovations that will enable us to make trade fairs more climate-friendly and resource-efficient in the long term.”

The global transport and logistics company DSV operates the vehicles at Germany’s third-largest exhibition centre. Together with Koelnmesse and JA-Gastechnology GmbH, a provider of hydrogen refuelling stations and infrastructure, a dedicated hydrogen refuelling station has been installed on site. The sustainably produced hydrogen is supplied by Tyczka.

By deploying hydrogen technology, DSV and Koelnmesse are making on-site logistics more sustainable. Hydrogen-powered vehicles enable locally emission-free operation, as fuel cells produce neither CO<sub>2</sub> nor soot or other pollutants during use, emitting only water vapour. At the same time, these vehicles offer clear advantages over battery-electric forklifts: thanks to short refuelling times, high operational availability and consistent performance, they prove highly effective even during intensive, continuous use in the set-up and dismantling phases of major trade fairs.

Your contact:

Dr. Jasmin Fischer

Tel.

+49 221 821-2494

e-mail

jasmin.fischer@

koelnmesse.de

Koelnmesse GmbH

Messeplatz 1

50679 Köln

P.O. Box 21 07 60

50532 Köln

Germany

Tel. +49 221 821-0

Fax +49 221 821-2574

www.koelnmesse.com

Executive Board:

Gerald Böse (President and Chief

Executive Officer)

Oliver Frese

Chairman of the Supervisory  
Board:

Mayor of the City of Cologne

Torsten Burmester

Headquarters and place of

jurisdiction:

Cologne

District Court Cologne, HRB 952

The approach is particularly sustainable due to the use of green hydrogen, which is produced not from natural gas but via electrolysis using renewable electricity. This eliminates CO<sub>2</sub> emissions during energy production and makes a direct contribution to the decarbonisation of logistics.

Page

2/3

“Together with Koelnmesse, we are actively advancing sustainable logistics solutions. As the official logistics service provider, we work closely with our customer to implement emission-reducing concepts in trade fair operations,” says Jörg Pries, Managing Director and Head of Cluster DACH at DSV Fairs & Events. “By commissioning the first ten hydrogen-powered forklifts and a dedicated hydrogen refuelling station, we are setting a milestone in Cologne: this is the first DSV exhibition site in Germany to operate a hydrogen-based forklift fleet alongside the corresponding refuelling infrastructure. For us, this marks an important step and a strong example of how new technologies can be sustainably integrated into trade fair operations.”

Looking ahead, Koelnmesse also plans to further integrate its own photovoltaic systems: surplus solar power could in future be converted into hydrogen directly on site using an electrolysis plant. This would create a sustainable energy cycle - from generation through to use as fuel on the exhibition grounds. The first key infrastructure for this has already been established with the new hydrogen refuelling station.

With this joint initiative, Koelnmesse and its partners underline their ambition to pioneer innovative, climate-friendly solutions for the exhibition and events industry.

**Photographs of the hydrogen-powered forklift fleet and the opening of the hydrogen refuelling station is available for download here:**

[Koelnmesse image database](#)

#### **About Koelnmesse:**

Koelnmesse employs around 1,200 people. As a city-based trade fair in the heart of Europe, it operates the third-largest trade fair grounds in Germany and, with almost 400,000 square metres of hall and outdoor space, ranks among the ten largest trade fair grounds in the world. Each year, Koelnmesse organises and manages around 80 trade fairs, guest events and corporate events in Cologne and in key markets all over the globe. Its portfolio reaches over 49,000 exhibiting companies from 129 countries and around 2.5 million visitors from around 200 nations. Until 2040, Koelnmesse is investing more than one billion euro in the development of the trade fair grounds with the most extensive investment programme in its history, enabling it to accommodate all future event formats. In 2024, Koelnmesse celebrated its 100th anniversary - a century of bringing people and markets together worldwide.

**Photo material for media representatives:**

[Image database | Koelnmesse](#)

**Follow our English social media channel:**  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/koelnmesse-gmbh>