

 Brussels Airport, 20 June 2024

**Pilot project with mobile hydrogen refuelling station and hydrogen tractor at Brussels Airport**

**Brussels Airport and Stargate EU Green Deal project partners VIL and DHL are currently testing a hydrogen refuelling station and a hydrogen-powered Mulag at Brussels Airport. This hydrogen pilot for ground handling, a first for the airport, should give all the involved partners insights into the potential of hydrogen as an alternative fuel. Just like electric ground handling equipment, the use of hydrogen significantly reduces both emissions and noise impact of ground operations.**

Earlier this month, a mobile hydrogen refuelling station was installed on the tarmac at Brussels Airport by VIL, in collaboration with WaterstofNet, to test hydrogen as a fuel for ground handling operations. This pilot is part of the Stargate project, a project of Brussels Airport with a consortium of 21 partners, to develop innovative solutions for sustainable airports and aviation.

DHL is testing the first hydrogen prototype for ground handling operations, a Mulag towing tractor with an integrated hydrogen fuel cell system. The towing tractor for the transport and loading of cargo, is refuelled with hydrogen using the mobile station on site. The fueling and operations are conducted by trained and certified operators, as the project includes comprehensive training for users, logistics managers, mechanics, fire brigade, and health and safety personnel.

**Hydrogen and electricity as alternatives for ground handling**

The goal of this pilot is to evaluate the potential of hydrogen as an alternative fuel for ground handling equipment, next to electric ground handling equipment, and to gain insight into the necessary procedures to use this fuel at an airport. This test will serve as a model for other partner airports within the Stargate project, offering valuable insights into permit application processes, safety requirements, and operational experiences for all airport partners. The test will run for six weeks, until June 27th.

Just like electric ground handling equipment, hydrogen fuelled vehicles have no CO2-emissions and noise impact, which benefits both local residents and airport personnel. One of the benefits of hydrogen is that vehicles can be fuelled instantly, which can be interesting for certain operations and makes them less dependent on the electricity grid. This initiative is an important step towards the broader adoption of hydrogen technology in aviation, paving the way for a more sustainable future.

For more information on the Stargate program, please visit the [Stargate website](https://www.greendealstargate.eu/).

**This project has received subsidies within the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme of the European Union in the context of subsidy agreement GA101037053.

**About Brussels Airport**

Brussels Airport is one of the most important airports in Europe. In 2022 the airport welcomed almost 19 million passengers, compared to 26.4 million passengers in 2019. The airport also has an important cargo activity with 776,000 tonnes of cargo transported in 2022. Brussels Airport caters for the specific needs of business travellers and holidaymakers alike, on intra-European as well as long haul flights. In 2023, it connects Belgium directly with 200 destinations worldwide, offered by 70 airlines.
The airport also offers a leading cargo platform, specialised in the transport of pharmaceutical products, perishable goods, e-commerce, and live animals. Brussels Airport is the most important pharmaceutical hub in Europe with the largest surface of temperature-controlled warehouses.

Brussels Airport is project leader of [Stargate](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrusselsairport.us13.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D0360b648324a0183c1ca9d5fd%26id%3Dbfe7d91ba3%26e%3D340ef1abbd&data=05%7C01%7Cvalentine.trouilliez-spinette%40brusselsairport.be%7Cbdcba648cccc44f5b3ae08db51f163cd%7C1dbedab5849a4c839c4346581df437d8%7C0%7C0%7C638193869436155568%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=vnWQCIO6W4qHYoIQ4Rx6d%2BDBKxkS3YS8JnJ9z046YWo%3D&reserved=0), a programme within the EU Green Deal, and works together with a consortium of 21 partners to develop innovations and initiatives for an accelerated transition to a greener aviation by 2026, focused on three main areas: a further decarbonisation, improving the quality of the local environment and promoting a modal shift.
Brussels Airport is the second most important economic growth pool in Belgium, good for 24,000 direct and 40,000 indirect jobs and is operated by Brussels Airport Company. Its shareholders are the Belgian State (25%) and a consortium of private investors (75%). Follow Brussels Airport on [Twitter](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrusselsairport.us13.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D0360b648324a0183c1ca9d5fd%26id%3D5d97b74f63%26e%3D340ef1abbd&data=05%7C01%7Cvalentine.trouilliez-spinette%40brusselsairport.be%7Cbdcba648cccc44f5b3ae08db51f163cd%7C1dbedab5849a4c839c4346581df437d8%7C0%7C0%7C638193869436155568%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=DB8ijwa5rfeMsjYYKEpOPC4%2BGKPGiQemDMiJCd7UHog%3D&reserved=0), [Linkedin](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrusselsairport.us13.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D0360b648324a0183c1ca9d5fd%26id%3D7eaea664a0%26e%3D340ef1abbd&data=05%7C01%7Cvalentine.trouilliez-spinette%40brusselsairport.be%7Cbdcba648cccc44f5b3ae08db51f163cd%7C1dbedab5849a4c839c4346581df437d8%7C0%7C0%7C638193869436155568%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=WpjNtdhe0CN8x3eaH2YMjcrsIox12gWyHvrc5L1ypts%3D&reserved=0), [Instagram](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrusselsairport.us13.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D0360b648324a0183c1ca9d5fd%26id%3Df2a8a121a4%26e%3D340ef1abbd&data=05%7C01%7Cvalentine.trouilliez-spinette%40brusselsairport.be%7Cbdcba648cccc44f5b3ae08db51f163cd%7C1dbedab5849a4c839c4346581df437d8%7C0%7C0%7C638193869436155568%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=nMYWqx3AP7jBQ3%2Bu9v8kWxutsAru5Ol1Stz4jd%2B%2B6yM%3D&reserved=0) and [Facebook](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbrusselsairport.us13.list-manage.com%2Ftrack%2Fclick%3Fu%3D0360b648324a0183c1ca9d5fd%26id%3D698f8952ec%26e%3D340ef1abbd&data=05%7C01%7Cvalentine.trouilliez-spinette%40brusselsairport.be%7Cbdcba648cccc44f5b3ae08db51f163cd%7C1dbedab5849a4c839c4346581df437d8%7C0%7C0%7C638193869436155568%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=nrNw4YsWUqUYYPe4w2xpfnTFOu4wRcib8O%2BoPmSJnU4%3D&reserved=0).

About VIL

VIL is the innovation platform for logistics and has been recognized as a Logistics Spearhead Cluster since 2017. As a member organization, VIL brings together companies and organizations from various sectors, both shippers and logistics service providers, but also knowledge institutions, government agencies and companies from the IT, engineering, interim, construction and real estate world.

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**About DHL Express at Brussels Airport**

From its hub at Brussels Airport (the second largest in Europe after Leipzig), DHL Express sends short-life medicines, urgent machine spare parts and Belgian biotech products around the world in less than 24 hours. For many companies, the DHL Express service is their gateway to the rest of the world. 60 percent of the shipments that DHL processes and ships at and around the airport are export products from companies in Flanders, Wallonia and neighbouring countries.