

Advancing on Hydrogen

Voice-over 1:

Francisco Muñoz Tierno is eighty-nine years old. A few months ago, he retired from his farm to live in the calm and quiet of a care home in Soria, a Spanish provincial capital to the northeast of Madrid. It's there that he became one of the first test drivers of a futuristic personal vehicle: a wheelchair powered by a hydrogen fuel cell.

Voice-over 2:

This wheelchair will be extremely useful for elderly and disabled people like me. It can travel a distance of many kilometres. That's quite impressive!

Voice-over 1:

These ready-to-use prototypes are developed in the framework of a European project, HYCHAIN MINI-TRANS, which aims to demonstrate the viability of pressurised hydrogen as an alternative fuel for city transportation. Currently tested in real-life situations, such innovative devices are largely based on electric vehicles that already exist.

Voice-over 3:

It's a hydrogen energy system based on a fuel cell aboard the wheelchair, and consisting of two energy sources, the fuel cell and the battery array, that provide power for the wheelchair's engine.

Voice-over 1:

It only takes a few minutes to replace an empty hydrogen canister with a full one to drive dozens of kilometres, whereas a full recharge of an electric vehicle takes several hours.

Voice-over 3:

There are three major benefits: longer range, better than with conventional electrical wheelchairs; shorter recharging time: usually it takes up to eight hours to recharge an electrical wheelchair and only five minutes for a hydrogen one; and lighter weight that simplifies transportation.

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