

Editorial: Preface to the special issue on “The 21st World Hydrogen Energy Conference (WHEC 2016), 13–16 June 2016, Zaragoza, Spain”

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The world's hydrogen and fuel cell community came together in Zaragoza (Aragón), Spain, from the 13th to the 16th of June 2016, to take part in the World Hydrogen Energy Conference 2016 (WHEC 2016), to which this Special Issue is devoted. The event celebrated its 21st edition and took place at the Palacio de Congresos Expo Zaragoza. The Spanish Hydrogen Association (AeH2) was the organiser of the event, which also had the support of the Government of Aragón and the Foundation for the development of new hydrogen technologies in Aragón (FHa), and was held under the auspices of the International Association for Hydrogen Energy (IAHE).

The conference went over the past, present and future of the hydrogen energy sector worldwide, covering all aspects related to hydrogen energy, such as the progress in hydrogen production, storage, distribution and applications, the latest hydrogen technologies for mobility or hydrogen strategies developed by the leading regions of the sector from around the world, among other issues of interest.

WHEC 2016 was attended by more than 900 participants from 50 different countries from all over the world (see Fig. 1). It offered 4 plenary sessions and a total of 566 scientific and technological presentations (424 of them oral), distributed in 72 parallel sessions. A Trade Fair, a Test&Drive zone with Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles which provided more than 500 rides, several parallel events and multiple networking areas and activities were also part of the event.

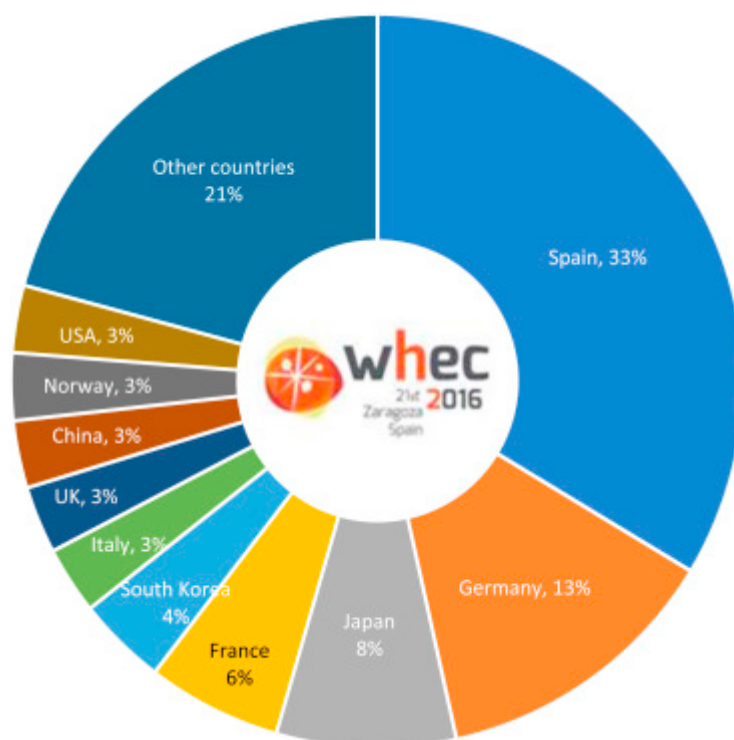


Fig. 1. Distribution of participants by country.

Respecting the configuration of this Special Issue, only abstracts suggested by their authors as oral presentations were included in the list of works susceptible to being published in extended format. All the abstracts received (originally more than 770 including both oral and poster) were evaluated by the members of the Scientific Committee, who graded them on a 0 to 10 scale. Only those with top rated qualifications were invited to submit an extended paper for its suitable inclusion in the *WHEC 2016 Special Issue* of the Journal. 153 abstracts were finally invited to send a manuscript following the regular peer review procedure of the Journal. The period for sending the extended manuscripts was open from June 17th (the day after closing of the Conference) to September 30th. An extended deadline was definitely set at October 14th. The number of manuscripts finally accepted after the blind review process was 61. It can be underlined that the final distribution by topics (see Fig. 2) and countries, constitutes a good reflection of what WHEC 2016 showed in Zaragoza from the scientific and technical standpoint.

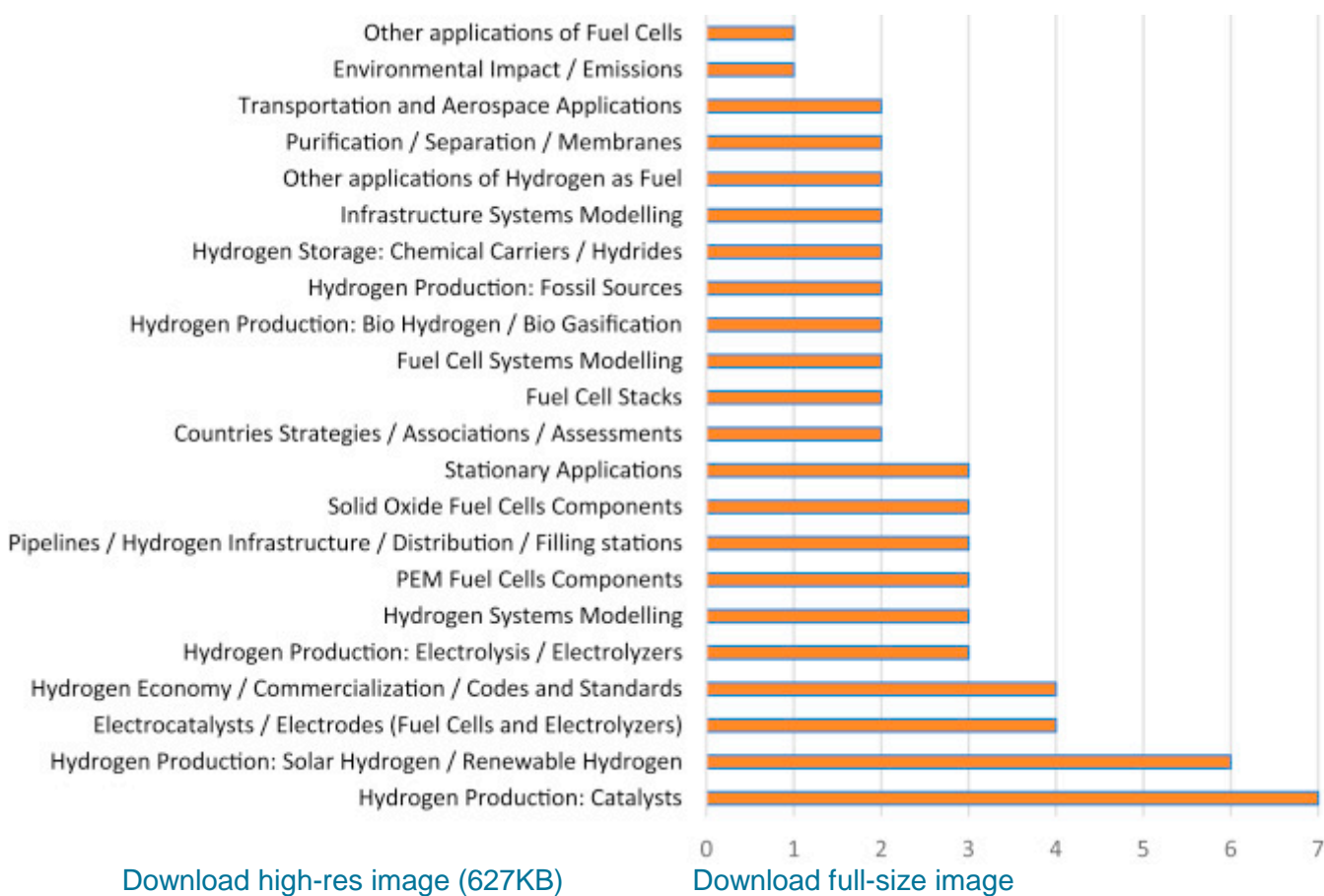


Fig. 2. Distribution of accepted works by topic.

Finally, the *Spanish Hydrogen Association (AeH2)* and the *Guest Editors Board* of this issue would like to express our gratitude to the members of the *Scientific Committee* and the *Reviewers Board*, who played an active and altruistic role in the creation of this *Special Issue*. Last but not least, to all those people who contributed to making *WHEC 2016* possible.