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Elia publishes election memorandum

Brussels – Belgium's grid operator Elia is publishing its election memorandum with an eye to the Belgian federal election in May 2019. In the memorandum, Elia underscores the need for a coordinated long-term energy policy and calls on policymakers to play an active role in achieving this outcome. Core priorities include further European market integration, infrastructure investments and the stimulation of new opportunities through digitisation and electrification, enabling consumers to play a central role. At the same time, Elia advocates the swift establishment and implementation of a capacity remuneration mechanism (CRM) to maintain security of supply after the scheduled phase-out of nuclear generation because current market signals are insufficient to attract fresh investments in replacement capacity.

In the memorandum, Elia outlines the context, challenges and key considerations for the coming legislative period. After all, the energy transition is generating unprecedented dynamism in the Belgian and European energy sector. The expansion of renewable energy and decentralised power generation, the emergence of new technologies and market players and increasing international cooperation are all creating immense social, economic and technological challenges.

There are three core elements that will help to make the energy transition successful. Firstly, the European integration of Belgium's electricity system needs to be speeded up. Secondly, Elia maintains that further investments in both onshore and offshore electricity infrastructure are essential. These first two elements will help to safeguard a guaranteed security of supply of energy in Belgium in the future while also ensuring that our energy is more sustainable and competitive. Thirdly, Elia also sees extensive opportunities through digitisation and increasing electrification to get consumers more actively involved in the energy transition. If all this is to be achieved, policymakers will have to play an active role, remove barriers and work together in a coordinated fashion to draw up Belgium's energy policy.

Chris Peeters, Chief Executive Officer of Elia, says:

The energy sector needs a coordinated, long-term policy. If we want our industry and families to have an affordable, sustainable and reliable future energy system, the next government will have to make some important choices. The foundations for this future were laid in 2018 in Belgium's Energy Vision 2050. Let us build on this and realise our ambitions during the next legislative period.

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Elia wants to support the energy transition and help to fulfil the Energy Vision by making a maximum effort to establish an electricity system that provides steady access to electricity at the best price in a European market. To this end, we must further develop and integrate European and Belgian renewable energy.

In the short term, Elia believes it is essential to devise a capacity remuneration mechanism to guarantee security of supply. The legal framework for this will need to be approved before the federal election in May. However, that system will have to be expanded and implemented during the next legislative period because fresh capacity and investments will be needed in any future scenario. Current and expected signals from the market will not be enough to attract such investment.

Finally, Elia calls for efforts to be made to devise an energy system in which consumers play a central role. The spread of digitisation and further electrification will enable consumers investing in technology such as solar panels, electric cars, heat pumps, etc. to participate in our future energy system by providing energy on a flexible basis to balance supply and demand. Elia is calling for the necessary steps to be taken so that this system can be further developed together with market players.



About Elia Group

ONE OF EUROPE'S TOP FIVE PLAYERS

The Elia Group is active in electricity transmission. We ensure that generation and consumption are balanced around the clock, supplying 30 million end users with electricity. With subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and north-east Germany (50Hertz), we operate 18,600 km of high-voltage connections. As such, our group is one of Europe's top 5. With a reliability level of 99.99%, we give society a robust power grid, which is important for socio-economic prosperity. We also aspire to be a catalyst for a successful energy transition towards a reliable, sustainable and affordable energy system.

WE MAKE THE ENERGY TRANSITION HAPPEN

By expanding international high-voltage connections and integrating ever-increasing amounts of renewable energy generation, the Elia Group promotes both the integration of the European energy market and the decarbonisation of our society. At the same time, the Elia Group is innovating its operational systems and developing market products so that new technologies and market parties can access our grid, thus making the energy transition happen.



IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIETY

As a key player in the energy system, the Elia Group is committed to working in the interest of society. We respond to the rapidly changing energy mix, i.e. the increase in renewable energy, and constantly adapt our transmission grid. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget, with a maximum focus on safety. When we carry out our projects, we manage stakeholders proactively by establishing two-way communication with all affected parties very early on in the development process. We also offer our expertise to our sector and relevant authorities to build the energy system of the future.

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

In addition to its activities as a transmission system operator, the Elia Group provides various consulting services to international customers through its subsidiary Elia Grid International (EGI). Elia is also part of the Nemo Link consortium that is building the first subsea electrical interconnector between Belgium and the UK.

The Group operates under the legal entity Elia System Operator, a listed company whose core shareholder is the municipal holding company Publi-T.

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