

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Open Site Day: Elia opens doors of Nemo Link conversion station in Bruges

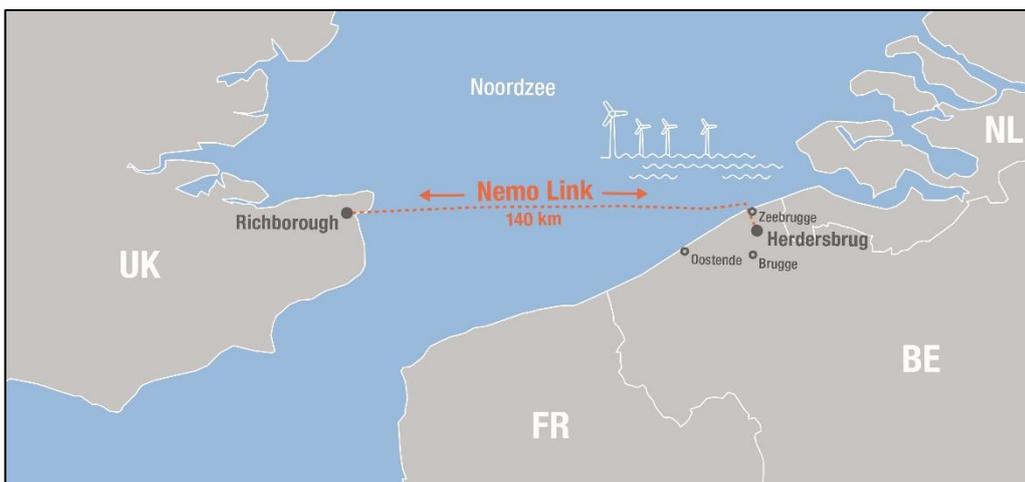
- **Complex is part of the first electrical interconnector between Belgium and Great Britain**
- **First high-voltage substation in Belgium with direct current (HVDC) technology**
- **A unique opportunity to visit a high-tech electrical installation**

On Sunday, 6 May 2018, the Belgian system operator Elia will once again participate in Open Site Day, an initiative of the Belgian Construction Confederation, when special building sites are opened to the public. Elia will be offering one-time access to the Nemo Link conversion station in Bruges, due to be operational in early 2019. The complex is part of the Nemo Link project, the first electric interconnector between Belgium and Great Britain.

### A Belgian first

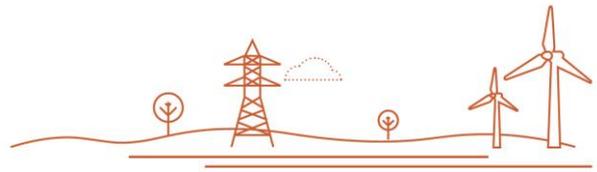
The Nemo Link project is a collaboration between the Belgian and British system operators, Elia and National Grid. The interconnector will be a first for Belgium in several respects, being the first electrical connection to Great Britain, the first submarine cable for Elia in Belgium and the first HVDC electricity project.

The project is emblematic of the huge changes under way in the electricity sector. The need for additional interconnectors is a consequence of European climate objectives and the emergence of renewable power generation that depends on weather conditions, making it a variable source of supply. If a steady balance between supply and demand is to be achieved, it is important for European countries to exchange surplus energy. This will also ensure a robust power supply and more favourable electricity prices.



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## What is a conversion station?

The conversion station in Bruges is where the cables from the submarine cable link to Great Britain arrive. Here, the subsea cable's direct current (HVDC) is converted to alternating current (HVAC) for transmission through the Belgian grid.

### Tim Schyvens, Chief Engineer Nemo Link

*The conversion station works like your laptop's adapter, which converts the AC of a wall socket into DC to charge the battery. Here, the conversion takes place on a large scale. The technology used to convert from AC to DC is unique, certainly on this scale. But it will allow enable us to work very flexibly, enabling us to respond perfectly to the volatility of today's energy market.*

### Investment programme worth €2.3 billion

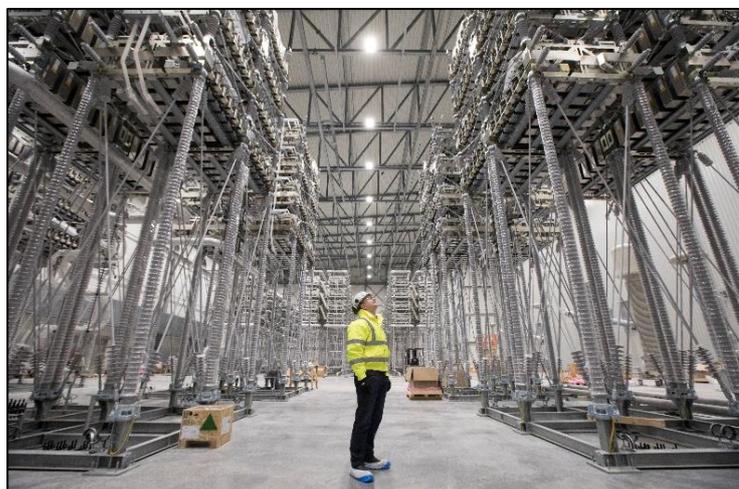
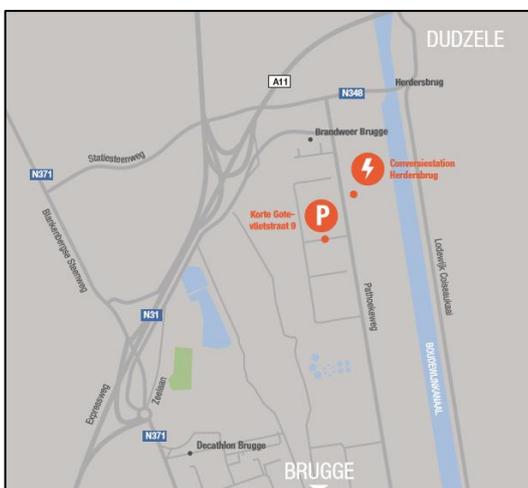
The changes brought about by the energy transition are not without consequences. The drive towards a low-carbon economy necessitates closer European cooperation, changes in how the energy system is operated, and a new configuration of the power grid. Over the next five years, Elia will invest €2.3 billion in new and upgraded HV infrastructure in Belgium. In addition to upgrading the Belgium's domestic grid infrastructure, interconnections will also be consolidated. For example, an electrical connection with Germany (ALEGrO project) will be ready by 2020, and existing connections with the Netherlands and France will be enhanced.

### Chris Peeters, CEO van Elia

Given the scope of the construction work involved and the importance of the energy transition for each of us, Elia believes it is important that our projects have widespread social support. Good information is key to securing such backing. Hence our decision to once again participate in Open Site Day. We also hope that our involvement will ease tensions between generally accepted climate ambitions and the practical consequences of efforts to attain them.

### Practical information

Open Site Day will take place **from 10:00 to 17:00 on Sunday, 6 May**. Visitors to the conversion station have no need to register, but should wear sturdy shoes. After all, they will be visiting a building site. How to get there ? Follow the signs to the free parking facilities at **Korte Gotevlietstraat 9, 8000 Bruges**. We will provide a shuttle service to the conversion station.



## 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 at all times, 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 99.999%, 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.

#### Headquarters

**Elia System Operator**  
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B-1000 Brussels – Belgium

**50Hertz GmbH**  
Heidestraße 2  
D-10557 Berlin – Germany



### 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.

[www.elia.be/www.eliagroup.eu](http://www.elia.be/www.eliagroup.eu)