PRESS RELEASE

18 January 2019

Elia releases its figures on Belgium's 2018 energy mix

- **2018 characterised by a major drop in nuclear generation**
- **Imports account for 22% of 2018's energy mix**
- **Renewable energy generation grew by 18% in comparison with 2017.**

BRUSSELS – Every year, Elia, Belgium's electricity transmission system operator, collects the available information on the country's energy mix based on the units connected to its grid. These figures highlight the main trends in 2018, a year marked by significant levels of unavailability among nuclear generation facilities. This unavailability had repercussions on the other elements of our energy mix, namely electricity generation via gas-fired power plants and imports. Renewable energy generation continued to grow, and many records were broken this year.

KEY EVENTS IN 2018

Substantial unavailability of nuclear facilities in the last quarter

2018 was marked by significant levels of unavailability among various nuclear generation units. This unavailability was particularly high during the latter months of the year, from late September to late December. This is why nuclear energy only accounts for 34% of Belgium's 2018 energy mix in contrast to 50% in 2017, for instance. Between mid-October and mid-November 2018, only Doel 3 was operational, out of Belgium's seven existing nuclear reactors. This is unheard of in Belgium in winter. As a result, in October nuclear generation hit a record low, accounting for only 15% of the energy mix for this month.

Record generation at gas-fired power plants in November

Throughout the year, gas-fired power plants were achieving almost identical generation levels to those of 2017 (27%). However, these power plants saw unprecedented generation peaks, such as the record reached in November, when 43% of electricity generated came from gas-fired power plants. We can see a strong correlation between gas-fired power plants and nuclear power. Gas-fired power plants often serve as buffers filling gaps in nuclear generation.

Renewables gain ground and also break numerous records

Renewable energy generation (solely offshore/onshore wind and solar power here) grew by 18% in absolute terms in comparison with 2017. It is interesting to note that the winning combination of high solar generation in summer and higher wind generation in winter means that the levels of energy generated by these two sources per month remain relatively stable throughout the year. At 3 p.m. on 28 July, wind and solar power covered 46% of Belgium's total load, the first time the country had ever seen such levels. The months of May (517 GWh), June (464 GWh) and July 2018 (555 GWh) saw the highest monthly solar generation levels ever recorded in Belgium. Onshore and offshore wind power also broke generation records in January (403 GWh) and December (452 GWh) respectively.

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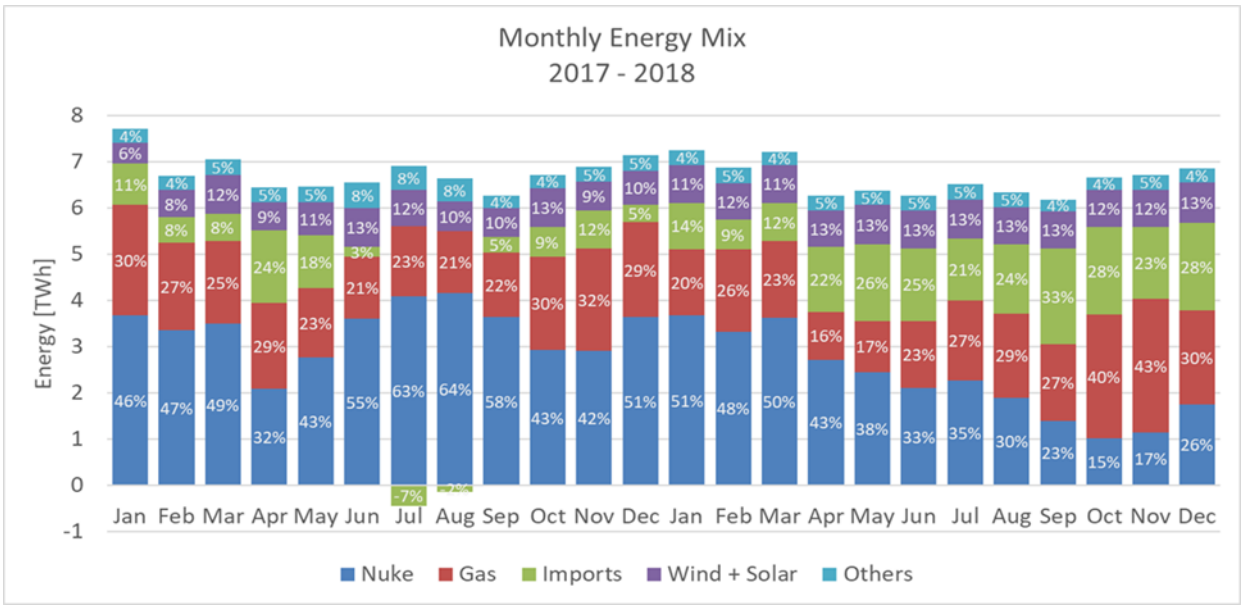
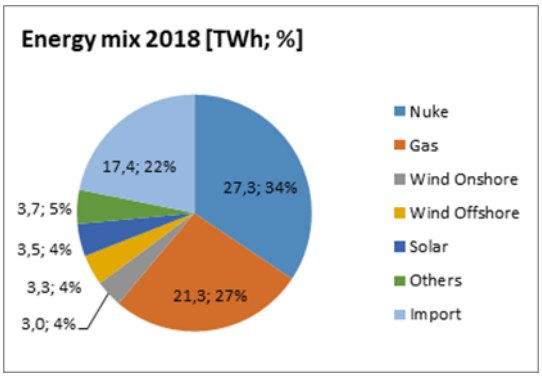
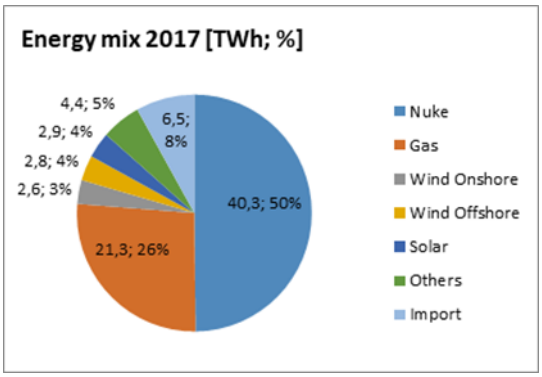
Imports on the rise

2018 was marked by substantial imports of electricity from our neighbouring countries. Imports accounted for 22% of the energy mix in 2018 compared to just 8% in 2017. However, 2015 still holds the record here (20.8 TWh). The high level of imports is predominantly due to both the substantial levels of unavailability among nuclear generation facilities and a market logic that favours imports when electricity from neighbouring countries is cheaper than that generated in Belgium, as illustrated by the record levels of hourly electricity imports reached in September (4,850 MW) and December (5,234 MW).







About the 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-west 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. The Elia Group is also 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.

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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