



31 January 2019

The interconnection between Belgium and Great Britain is operational

- The Nemo Link is the first subsea interconnector between Belgium and Great Britain.
- The first transmission started at 00:00 a.m. from Belgium to Great Britain;
- The Nemo Link will help to establish an integrated European grid where surplus (renewable) energy is traded internationally;
- The interconnection will also offer more ways of guaranteeing security of supply;

Brussels - After a 10-year development and construction phase, today marks the start of the Nemo Link's commercial exploitation. The interconnection is a collaborative effort organised by the Belgian and British transmission system operators, Elia and National Grid, which set up a joint venture for this purpose, comprising a mixed Belgian-British team. The transmission cables are 140 km long (including a 130 km stretch in the North Sea) and connect converter stations in Richborough (GB) and Bruges (BE), each of which is integrated into its respective national grid. The Nemo Link's completion constitutes a crucial stage in the ongoing integration of the European power grid. Interconnectors are vital, among other things, for the large-scale integration of renewable energies, where excess generated power can be traded at favourable prices at the European level. Interconnections thus contribute not only to a sustainable energy system, but also to a reliable, affordable energy system.

Chris Peeters, Chief Executive Officer of Elia:

Today, 31 January 2019, marks the culmination of a huge project resulting from excellent collaboration between Elia and National Grid. In energy terms, the interconnector will offer a better future for consumers in both countries and facilitate the transition towards a sustainable and affordable electricity system. It will also give us more ways of guaranteeing security of supply. The commissioning of the Nemo Link, combined with that of the ALEGrO connection, scheduled for next year, will significantly boost our energy exchange capacity and position our infrastructure at the heart of Europe's future electricity system.

18,559 MWh exchanged on the first day in the direction of Great Britain

This Thursday, January 31, since 00h, energy exchanges have started. An average of 773 MW will be exchanged and a total amount of 18,559 MWh will be transported for the whole day via the Nemo Link cable. So the interconnection is now operational and playing a role in integrating the European power grid. Elia and National Grid are making their infrastructure available to the market operators who will be the main players involved in electricity trading between Belgium and Great Britain.

Media Contacts

Jean Fassiaux | +32 474 46 87 82 | jean.fassiaux@elia.be (FR)
Tom Demeyer | +32 (0)472 84 15 99 | tom.demeyer@elia.be (NL)
Marleen VanHecke | +32 486 49 01 09 | Marleen.vanhecke@elia.be (ENG)

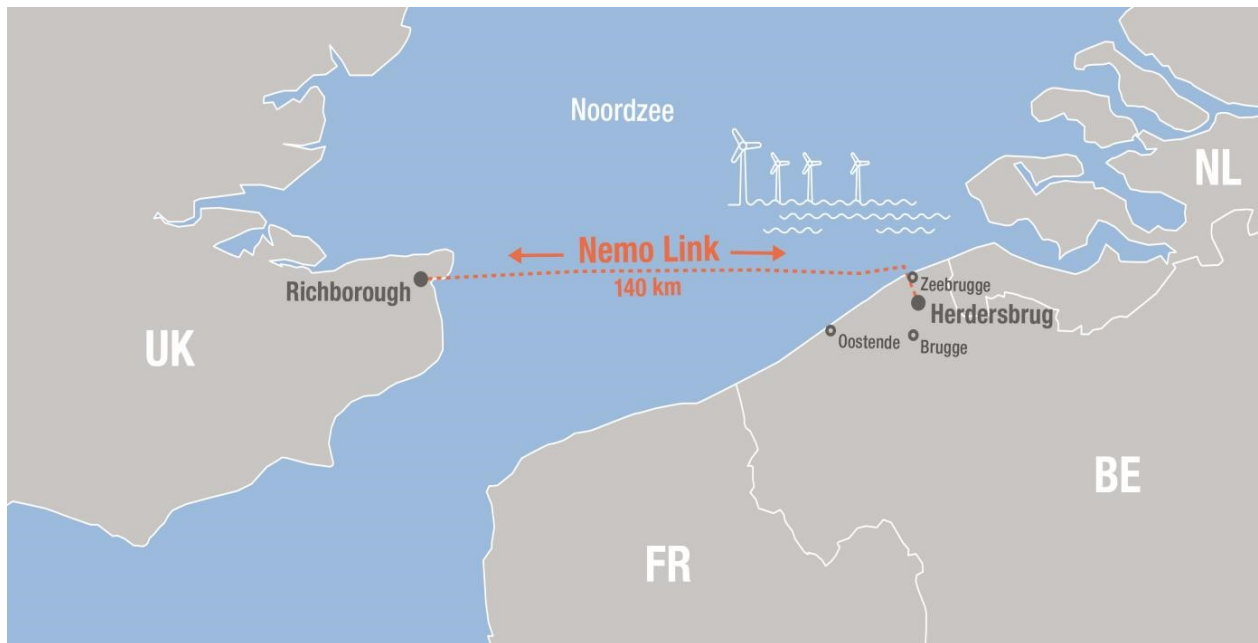


An additional 1,000 MW for security of supply

The development of interconnections is mainly planned to integrate renewable energies (going to find renewable energy where it is generated and then transmitting it to where can be consumed at the lowest price) and to foster the integration of the European market (price convergence between Belgium and the neighbouring countries). Of course, a new interconnection also creates additional possibilities for ensuring security of supply. The Nemo Link enables the trading of a forecast capacity of 1,000 MW of energy (equivalent to the capacity of a nuclear reactor).

A major technological first

This project is unprecedented for Elia. It constitutes the first direct electrical connection between Belgium and Great Britain. Moreover, this is Elia's first ever build of a subsea interconnection. And it also marks Elia's first ever use of high-voltage direct current (HVDC) technology, which offers the best option for connecting two non-synchronised power grids and enables better flow control, too. The cable used constitutes a technological achievement in itself. It is unique for the voltage level involved (400 kV) and the extraordinary material used to insulate it: cross-linked polyethylene (XLPE).



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.

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 Great Britain.

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

Headquarters

Elia System Operator
Boulevard de l'Empereur 20
B-1000 Brussels – Belgium

50Hertz GmbH
Heidestraße 2
D-10557 Berlin – Germany

