

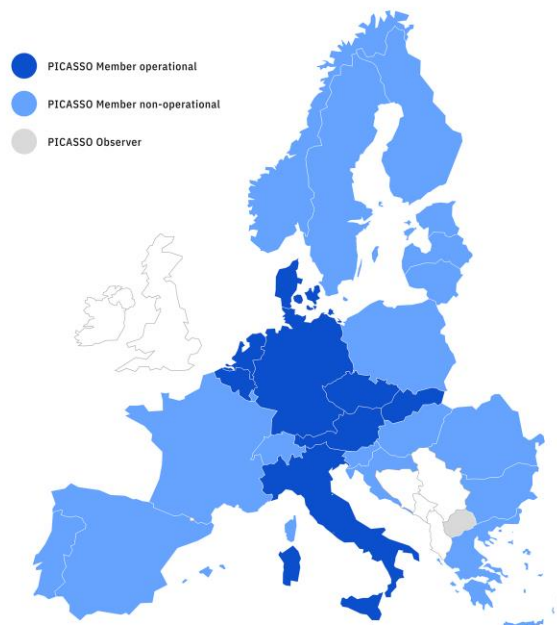


Elia Transmission Belgium successfully accesses PICASSO, the European platform for exchanging secondary balancing energy

BRUSSELS | On 26 November, Elia Transmission Belgium (ETB) successfully accessed PICASSO*, the European platform for the exchange of balancing energy from automatic frequency restoration reserves (aFRR**). This platform not only enables European transmission system operators to exchange aFRR balancing energy, but also provides access to the least costly aFRR balancing energy over a wider area (depending on the available interconnection capacities). Elia's access to PICASSO helps to increase social welfare while giving market parties new opportunities to take part in an integrated European balancing energy market. Access to additional volumes of balancing energy also helps to bolster system security. Initial results show a successful launch with significant volumes of balancing energy exchanges via the platform, regularly resulting in a reduction of imbalance prices.

The PICASSO project

The European Electricity Balancing Regulation requires that European TSOs establish a common platform for the exchange of secondary balancing energy, also known as aFRR. The PICASSO project was launched by 26 European TSOs with a view to implementing this platform. Elia, which is responsible for balancing electricity flows on the Belgian transmission system, supervised the overhaul of balancing methods used on the Belgian electricity system in order to incorporate the changes needed in connection with this project. Belgium is now an operational member of the PICASSO project, along with Italy, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The project is a major step forward in international coordination for automatic frequency restoration and for the integration of European balancing energy markets.



* PICASSO: Platform for the International Coordination of Automated Frequency Restoration and Stable System Operation

** aFRR: automatic Frequency Restoration Reserve

A successful launch and initial positive results

Elia Transmission Belgium's operational debut on the platform went very well. Elia officially connected on 26 November in quarter-hour 11:15-11:30. During the first 24 hours, 49% of Elia's aFRR balancing energy needs were met via the PICASSO platform (including implicit compensation), demonstrating its full relevance. For several quarter-hours during this first 24-hour period, Elia observed that aFRR exchanges via the platform resulted in significantly lower imbalance prices (for example, the quarter-hour 14:15-14:30 on 26 November). Of course, it will take several months before any truly representative trends become apparent and appropriate conclusions can be drawn.

More options for frequency restoration

aFRR is a frequency control service used by TSOs to balance electricity supply and demand automatically and in real time. These reserves, also known as secondary reserves, restore the frequency to 50 Hz. They have a fast response time and remain active for the entire duration required. Accessing the PICASSO platform broadens the scope of the balancing process by enabling the activation of aFRR in neighbouring countries in order to resolve imbalances in the Belgian system and vice versa.

aFRR plays a critical role in ensuring the security and stability of modern electricity grids, particularly during the transition towards the deployment of a greater share of renewable energy sources

aFRR delivers many benefits. Its main objective is to manage the stability of system frequency by maintaining it within a very narrow range around its nominal value of 50 Hz. Deviations can cause malfunctions in or damage to electrical equipment, thus jeopardising grid reliability. aFRR enables a rapid and automatic response to imbalances between electricity generation and consumption. This secondary reserve mechanism is also especially important given the growing integration of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, which are by nature intermittent and can induce fluctuations in electricity generation. Finally, by using balancing reserves efficiently, system operators can reduce the costs associated with managing imbalances and optimise the use of available resources.

“Access to the European aFRR platform marks a major step forward for us and we are delighted to join. Our participation in this platform not only allows us to improve system security, but also to play a crucial role in integrating European balancing markets while ensuring they are more competitive and efficient.”

Frederic Dunon, Chief Executive Officer Elia

About Elia Group

One of Europe's top five TSOs

Elia Group is a key player in electricity transmission. We ensure that production and consumption are balanced around the clock, supplying 30 million end users with electricity. Through our subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and the north and east of Germany (50Hertz), we operate 19,460.5 km of high-voltage connections, meaning that we are one of Europe's top 5 transmission system operators. With a reliability level of 99.99%, we provide society with a robust power grid that is important for socio-economic prosperity. We also aspire to be a catalyst for a successful energy transition, helping to establish a reliable, sustainable and affordable energy system.

We are making the energy transition happen

By expanding international high-voltage connections and incorporating ever-increasing amounts of renewable energy into our grid, we are promoting both the integration of the European energy market and the decarbonisation of society. We also continuously optimise our operational systems and develop new market products so that new technologies and market parties can access our grid, thus further facilitating the energy transition.

In the interest of society

As a key player in the energy system, Elia Group is committed to working in the interest of society. We are responding to the rapid increase in renewable energy by constantly adapting our transmission grid. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget, with a maximum focus on safety. In carrying out our projects, we manage stakeholders proactively by establishing two-way communication channels between all relevant parties very early on in the development process. We also offer our expertise to different players across the sector in order to build the energy system of the future.

International focus

In addition to its activities as a transmission system operator, Elia Group provides consulting services to international customers through its subsidiary Elia Grid International. In recent years, the Group has launched new non-regulated activities such as re.alto – the first European marketplace for the exchange of energy data via standardised energy APIs – and WindGrid, a subsidiary which will continue to expand the Group's overseas activities, contributing to the development of offshore electricity grids in Europe and beyond.

The legal entity Elia Group is a listed company whose core shareholder is the municipal holding company Publi-T.

eliagroup.eu

For more information, please contact:

Corporate Communication

Jean Fassiaux (FR) | M +32 (0)474 46 87 82 | jean.fassiaux@elia.be

Elia Transmission Belgium SA

Boulevard de l'Empereur 20 | Keizerslaan 20 | 1000 Brussels | Belgium