PRESS RELEASE | May, 23 2025

Elia Transmission Belgium gains access to MARI, the European platform for exchanging tertiary balancing energy

BRUSSELS | On 21 May, Elia Transmission Belgium (ETB) successfully accessed MARI*, the European platform for the exchange of balancing energy from frequency restoration reserves via manual activation (mFRR). This platform enables European transmission system operators (TSOs) to exchange mFRR balancing energy. As with the PICASSO platform, which Elia joined in 2024, MARI provides access to the least costly balancing energy beyond Belgium's borders, within a wider area (depending on the interconnection capacities available). Elia's access to MARI helps to enhance socio-economic prosperity while giving market parties new opportunities to take part in the integrated European balancing energy market. Access to additional volumes of balancing energy also helps bolster grid security.**

A successful launch on 21 May

The European Electricity Balancing Regulation, specifically Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/2195, which establishes a guideline on electricity balancing, requires that European TSOs establish a common platform for the exchange of tertiary balancing energy (mFRR). The MARI project was launched by 29 European TSOs with the aim of implementing this platform and connecting various TSOs to it. 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 MARI project, along with Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Portugal, Slovakia, and Spain. The project marks a major step forward in international coordination for manual frequency restoration and the integration of European balancing energy markets. Elia Transmission Belgium's operational debut on the platform went well.

More options for frequency restoration in neighbouring countries

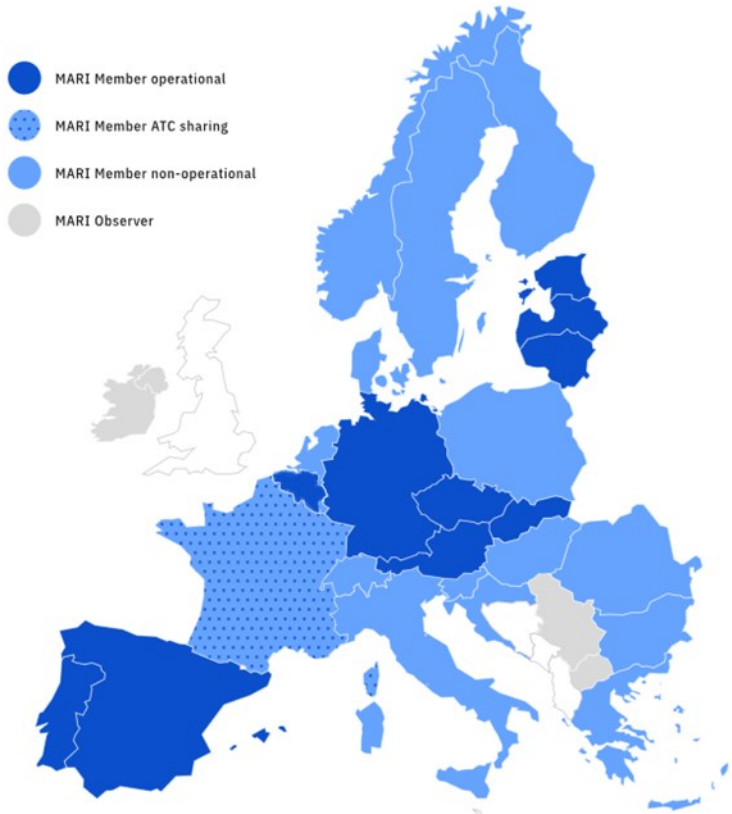
mFRR is a frequency control service used by TSOs to manually balance electricity supply and demand. The energy requested allows the secondary reserves (aFRR) to be desaturated and supplemented in the event of major imbalances. These mFRR reserves are also known as tertiary reserves. They have a slower response time than aFRR and a market time unit of 15 minutes. Having access to the MARI platform broadens the scope of the balancing process by enabling the activation of mFRR in neighbouring countries in order to resolve imbalances in the Belgian system, and vice versa. As such, MARI has the same goals as the PICASSO platform (which Elia joined in November 2024) - but for mFRR rather than aFRR.

** MARI: Manually Activated Reserves Initiative (MARI) is the European implementation project for the creation, future development, and operation of the European mFRR platform.*
*** mFRR: manual Frequency Restoration Reserve*

mFRR provides more grid stability during the transition to a greater share of renewable energy

The main objective of mFRR is to restore system frequency to its nominal value of 50 Hz. Frequency deviations can cause malfunctions or damage to electrical equipment, thus jeopardising grid reliability. The automatic Frequency Restoration Reserve (aFRR) intervenes in the event of minor deviations, while mFRR makes it possible to handle significant imbalances between electricity generation and consumption by manually activating flexibility or using the automatic secondary reserve. mFRR has a key role to play given the growing integration of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, which are by nature intermittent and can induce major fluctuations in electricity generation, and, consequently, cause greater frequency deviations. Finally, by using balancing reserves efficiently, system operators can reduce the costs associated with managing imbalances and optimise the use of available resources.

> *"We are proud to be able to access the MARI platform. This is a second key accomplishment, following our access to the PICASSO platform. These achievements make it possible to improve system security, enhance the integration of European balancing markets, and cut the costs linked to imbalance management."*
>
> **James Matthys-Donnadieu, Elia Chief Customers, Markets & System Officer**



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 19,741 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, which is important for socioeconomic 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 NextGrid Holding.

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