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Two years of outstanding operational performance for Nemo Link, the UK-Belgium interconnector

- Nemo Link commissioned two years ago as the first link for exchanging electricity between the UK and Belgium.
- The 140-km submarine high voltage direct current (HVDC) interconnector has maintained world class availability for an asset of its kind at 97.5% and facilitated the exchange of 12 TWh.
- The interconnector offers greater opportunities for balancing grids and limiting price spikes.

Nemo Link, the first electricity interconnector between the United Kingdom and Belgium, has performed very well during its first two years in operation. The submarine cable was available over 97.5% of the time during its first two years in service, making it one of the most efficient installations of its type in the world. Some 12 TWh of electricity was exchanged between the two countries, mainly from Belgium to the UK. Nemo Link provides more opportunities for balancing grids.

Nemo Link

The Nemo Link cable – which connects Bruges, Belgium to Richborough, UK – is the result of a joint venture between National Grid Interconnector Holdings Limited, a subsidiary company of the UK's National Grid Plc, and the Belgian Elia group. Upon commissioning on 31 January 2019, electricity was able to travel in both directions, ensuring greater exchange options and flexibility for the Belgian and UK electricity markets. With its 1000 MW capacity, Nemo Link enhances security of supply and enables exchanges of surplus (renewable) energy between the two countries.

Outstanding operational performance

During its first two years in operation the submarine cable was available 97.5% of the time. If we look at the two years in more detail, we see that Nemo Link's operational performance has improved since it came online. Availability was 96% in its first year of operation, rising to 99.17% in the second year. This makes Nemo Link one of the most reliable HVDC interconnectors in the world. A total of 12 TWh was transferred between the two countries. Electricity mainly flowed to the United Kingdom (85% to the United Kingdom, 15% to Belgium during the last year).

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Elia Transmission Belgium SA/NV

Explicit auctions since 31 December

With GB's exit from the EU internal energy market, implicit day ahead auctions have been replaced by explicit auctions meaning that at the day ahead stage, capacity and energy are sold separately rather than at the same time in the Single Day-Ahead Market Coupling mechanism. On 31 December 2020, Nemo Link successfully conducted its first day-ahead explicit auction, ensuring that electricity can continue to flow between the UK and Belgium without any disruption under the new trading agreement. Nemo Link is proposing to update its auction times to further improve the efficiency of its explicit auctions and auction schedules may be updated upon regulatory approval.

More opportunities for balancing grids

Nemo Link provides more opportunities for balancing grids. It gives market players and system operators more options for adapting to sudden fluctuations in consumption or generation. In this regard, the HVDC interconnector has already demonstrated its usefulness in limiting the impact of imbalance between supply and demand. The additional flexibility provided by the HVDC interconnector could limit peaks in price imbalances, for example.

” *Nemo Link is now two years old and continues to perform brilliantly. We are delighted to be celebrating this birthday and to be reporting such good numbers for the interconnector. The advanced technology used for the cable was a world first, making it possible to design and implement a robust and efficient interconnector that guarantees electricity is available when needed. Nemo Link was a pioneering project in Europe, providing new opportunities for exchanges between countries. We can already see today that offshore development will be one of the pillars of the European power grid in the future.* “

Patrick De Leener, Chief Customer, Market & System Officer

Elia is electrically connected to France, the Netherlands and, thanks to Nemo Link, the United Kingdom. In late 2020, another step was taken with the commissioning of the ALEGrO interconnector with Germany. Interconnectors are essential to the electricity systems of the future and will enable, among other things, the massive integration of renewable energies by making it easier to exchange surplus production.

For more information: <https://www.nemolink.co.uk/about-us/>

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About the Elia Group

One of Europe's top five players

The Elia Group is active in electricity transmission, ensuring that generation and consumption are balanced at all times. We supply 30 million end users with electricity and manage 19,271 km of high-voltage power lines via our subsidiaries in Belgium (Elia) and north-east Germany (50Hertz). As such, our Group is one of Europe's top five system operators. 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, 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. In this way, the Elia Group is 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 are constantly adapting our transmission grid to the rapidly changing energy mix, incorporating ever more renewable energy. We also ensure that investments are made on time and within budget and guarantee maximum safety. When we carry out our projects, we manage stakeholders proactively by establishing two-way communication with all affected parties from the outset. We also offer our expertise to our sector and relevant authorities to help 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 a member of the Nemo Link consortium, which operates the first subsea electricity interconnector between Belgium and Great Britain. Elia Group is a listed company whose core shareholder is Publi-T, a municipal holding company.

For more information, visit [elia.be](https://www.elia.be)

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