



PRESS RELEASE | 6 APRIL 2022

Elia Group publishes white paper on promoting hybrid offshore interconnectors for reaching Europe's goal of 300 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2050

BRUSSEL – BERLIN | The geopolitical crisis and record-breaking energy prices have returned a sense of urgency to the European energy debate. Accelerating the establishment of a net zero society has never been as relevant as it is today. However, an important mismatch exists between European ambitions and the few structural actions that are actually being undertaken. This is the reason behind Elia Group's white paper on hybrid interconnectors. The combination of offshore wind farms and subsea interconnectors could enable Europe to harness the full renewable potential of the North and Baltic Seas while more effectively distributing the green electrons produced among its Member States.

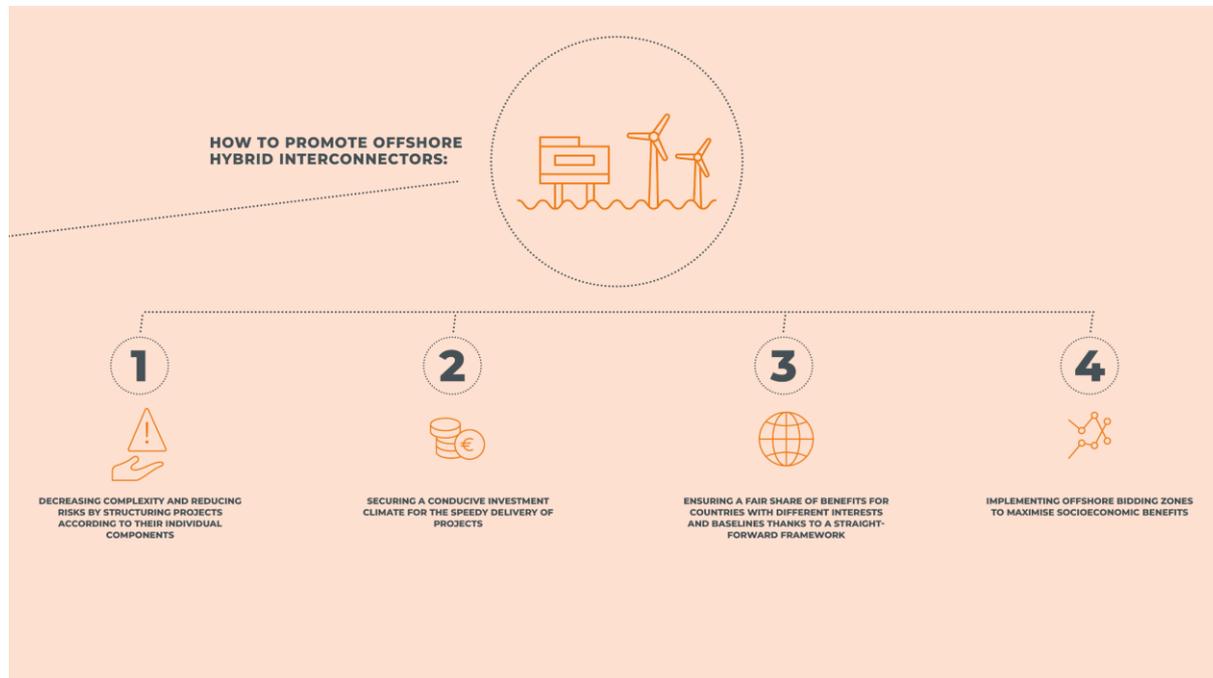
"Our proposals aim to provide incentives for countries with different amounts of renewable potential to collaborate and de-risk the investment provided by wind generation and transmission developers. If we manage to make it work, our recommendations will provide part of the solution for reaching Europe's goal of 300 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2050".

Chris Peeters, CEO Elia Group

If offshore wind development is left to an uncoordinated country-by-country approach, a substantial part of Europe's 300 GW offshore wind potential will be left untapped and Europe is at risk of failing to reach the objectives of the Green Deal - both in terms of timing and in terms of volumes.

In its vision paper, Elia Group therefore outlines four focus areas aimed at promoting hybrid interconnectors.

Four focus areas aimed at promoting hybrid interconnectors



Measures that will support the delivery of hybrid projects

Within these 4 areas, Elia Group has identified a number of measures that will support the delivery of hybrid projects that are either already underway or have yet to be started.

To **accelerate the delivery of projects which are currently under development**, Elia Group urges the EU to review the criteria and increase the size of the CEF and other funds to support hybrid interconnectors that have positive socioeconomic effects across Europe; this would help to match the scale of the enormous investment needed to reach its Green Deal ambitions and reduce its dependency on fossil fuel imports. Member States are asked to simplify and to speed up permitting processes (to halve their delivery time), to ensure that national marine regulations are harmonised and develop regional win-win partnerships via memoranda of understanding.

To **boost the development of new projects**, Elia Group urges the EU to set ambitious hybrid offshore interconnector targets and to set up a Task Force of Transmission System Operators (TSOs), offshore wind developers, industrial suppliers and regulators to standardise technical parameters for hybrid interconnectors and offshore wind farms. Member States are urged to mandate their national TSOs to develop hybrid grid plans and to develop the legal basis for selling/buying marine offshore wind concessions amongst countries (extending their national energy policies to allow for foreign developments to contribute to meeting national renewable energy and CO₂ targets).

If we succeed in ensuring that Europe acts quickly in this area and, as a result, hybrid interconnectors are more widely adopted, Europe will become more energy independent and will be able to demonstrate to the world that a sustainable future is possible.

The white paper is now available online and can be accessed via [this link](#).



About Elia Group

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 northeastern Germany (50Hertz), we operate 19,276 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.

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.

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.

In addition to our activities as a transmission system operator, we provide various consulting services to international customers through our third subsidiary, Elia Grid International (EGI). Elia (in Belgium) is also part of the Nemo Link consortium, which operates the first subsea electrical interconnector between Belgium and the UK.

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

More information: [eliagroup.eu](https://www.eliagroup.eu)