



Starting signal given for European electricity highway - converter for SuedOstLink connection enters construction phase

- Groundbreaking ceremony attended by Vice Chancellor Dr Robert Habeck and Minister President of Saxony-Anhalt Dr Reiner Haseloff
- Building for the energy transition - important grid development project enters execution phase
- Converter marks starting point of 540 km direct current connection that will run from Saxony-Anhalt to Bavaria

Wolmirstedt | **At the Wolmirstedt substation near Magdeburg, transmission system operator 50Hertz held the groundbreaking ceremony which marked the first day of construction of the SuedOstLink's first converter. The ceremony was attended by Dr Robert Habeck, the German Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, and Dr Reiner Haseloff, the Minister President of Saxony-Anhalt, as well as many other guests of honour. The SuedOstLink is the most important grid development project for the German energy transition. The converter, which will be about the size of a sports hall, will convert alternating current from the surrounding extra-high-voltage grid into direct current.**

The SuedOstLink (SOL) converter is the starting point of the direct current connection that will run for a distance of around 540 kilometres between Wolmirstedt in Saxony-Anhalt and Landshut in Bavaria. The SOL will reliably transport large quantities of electricity from onshore wind farms in the federal states of Saxony-Anhalt, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and offshore wind farms in the North and Baltic Seas to the south of Germany. It will therefore secure the supply of electricity for several millions of private households and companies and ensure the stability of the German and European power grids. The SOL is a joint project that is being constructed by two transmission system operators: 50Hertz and TenneT. Whereas 50Hertz is responsible for the northern part of the project in Saxony-Anhalt, Saxony and Thuringia, TenneT is accountable for the southern section in Bavaria. TenneT will also build a converter in the Isar substation to convert the direct current back into alternating current.

Dr Robert Habeck, Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Action:

“The construction of the converter in Wolmirstedt marks the start of the construction of the SuedOstLink. We

have reached a key milestone in the expansion of the electricity grid in Germany. To achieve climate neutrality in the power sector, we need thousands of kilometres of additional power lines within the next two decades. These must be built - and planned and approved in advance. The converter was approved in just seven months and is scheduled for completion in 2025. The plant is thus be a model for accelerated planning and approval procedures related to electricity grid expansion."

Dr Reiner Haseloff, Minister President of Saxony-Anhalt: "In Saxony-Anhalt, the energy transition is not a buzzword: it's a reality. We are among the top three German states in terms of both wind and solar power generation. The converter is an important prerequisite for the transmission of renewable energy to the south and for the further development of wind and solar generation capacity."

Stefan Kapferer, CEO of 50Hertz: "The acceleration of permitting procedures plays a key role in meeting ambitious climate action objectives and achieving greater energy sovereignty. Here in Wolmirstedt, this has worked out wonderfully: after only seven months, the permit for the construction of the converter was issued. This demonstrates how fast we can progress when all parties involved are working towards the same goal in an open and solution-oriented manner. I hope that for this project, we can maintain the momentum for all further planning and permitting steps, including during construction phases."

Chris Peeters, CEO of Elia Group: "The SuedOstLink is one of the most important north-south links in Germany and will mark an important next step in the successful realisation of the energy transition. This direct current power link between Saxony-Anhalt and Bavaria will integrate increasing volumes of renewable energy into the system and will transmit the latter to consumption centres in the south of the country."

Once the converter has been completed, the substation in Wolmirstedt will become an even more important node in the 50Hertz transmission grid. Inside the converter halls, which are approximately 20 metres tall, up to 2 GW of renewable energy from the north-east of Germany will be converted into direct current. From there on, the electricity will be transported to southern Germany, mainly through underground cables. As part of the SuedOstLink, a second high-voltage direct current (HVDC) line will run parallel to the SOL that will start in Wolmirstedt. This second line will start further north, near Schwerin, and will enter the SuedOstLink route in the Börde district. Together, the two HVDC lines will transport around 4 GW of electricity at a voltage level of 525 kV. Once the projects are completed, they will constitute a major step forward for the energy transition in the east of Germany. The converter in Wolmirstedt should be operational in 2025. From then onwards, it will also be able to help stabilise the voltage of the surrounding alternating current grid.



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About 50Hertz

50Hertz operates the electricity transmission system in the north and east of Germany, which it expands as needed for the energy transition. Our extra high voltage grid has an electrical circuit length of more than 10,000 kilometres, or the distance between Berlin and Rio de Janeiro. The 50Hertz control area covers Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia, as well as the city states of Berlin and Hamburg. Within these regions, 50Hertz and its around 1,600 employees ensure that 18 million people are supplied with electricity around the clock. 50Hertz is a forerunner in the field of secure integration of renewable energy. In our grid area, we want to integrate 100 percent renewable energies securely into the grid and system by 2032 - calculated over the year. The shareholders of 50Hertz are the Belgian holding Elia Group (80 percent), which is listed on the stock exchange, and the KfW bank group with 20 percent. As a European TSO, 50Hertz is a member of the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E).



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