



Elia to build sustainable service centre in the Port of Ostend for its offshore activities

- The site on which the centre will be built is located along the quay near 14 Esplanadestraat
- The multi-purpose building will be an exemplar of sustainability
- In addition to housing offices, the building will also include a visitor centre
- The building is due to open its doors at the end of 2025

OSTEND | Elia and the Port of Ostend have signed a concession agreement which covers the construction of a service centre for the TSO's offshore activities. The signing took place in the presence of Mayor Bart Tommelein; the alderwoman responsible for businesses, Charlotte Verkeyn; and the CEO of the Port of Ostend, Dirk Declerck. The agreement marks the first step in the construction of a new multi-purpose building at the heart of the Port of Ostend. Its location along the quay will be ideal for operations carried out at sea.

"The service centre will become an important centre of expertise for offshore high-voltage infrastructure. As a grid operator, Elia Group wants to be a leader and role model for new talent. Although we undertake our activities in different seas, Ostend was an obvious choice. Indeed, it is the birthplace of offshore wind energy in Europe - a sector that will experience unprecedented growth over the years to come."

Chris Peeters, CEO of Elia Group

"We are delighted by the partnership that has been established between Elia Group and the Port of Ostend which covers the construction of a service centre for the TSO's offshore activities. The Port of Ostend is the ultimate hub for offshore wind energy in the southern part of the North Sea. Many large companies involved in the construction, maintenance and operational management of infrastructure linked to energy production are based in Ostend. This marks another important moment for the energy transition."

Dirk Declerck, CEO of the Port of Ostende

"As the former Secretary of State for the North Sea and Flemish Minister of Energy, the wind power industry is very close to my heart. We will stimulate the further development of the offshore sector. Blue growth is and will remain extremely important for our city."

Bart Tommelein, Mayor of Ostende

"The blue economy, which offshore wind energy is part of, massively contributes to the Port of Ostend's mission: that of creating sustainable jobs. It is an essential source of local employment. We are therefore delighted with Elia Group's choice, which also strengthens the Port's position in the offshore wind sector."

Charlotte Verkeyn, President of the Port of Ostend and alderwoman responsible for businesses

Additional investments are needed

The North Sea is the power plant of the future. The European Commission, along with energy ministers and the heads of state and government from nine European countries, further strengthened this joint ambition at the end of April during the North Sea Summit which was held in Ostend. The international energy summit was hosted by Belgium.

The rise in renewable energy sources and extensive electrification of our energy-intensive industries have created emergencies that are fast requiring additional investments in the grid. By providing sufficient transmission capacity in a timely manner, we are making our energy system more independent, resilient and sustainable.

From 2.3 to 6 GW by 2030

Belgium currently has a total offshore wind capacity of 2.3 GW (nine wind farms), which will grow to 6 GW by 2030 due to the development of a second offshore wind zone (the Princess Elisabeth zone). Our country is also planning to construct new subsea interconnectors that will allow massive amounts of offshore wind energy generated in other zones to be transported to the mainland.

To achieve the above, Elia will build numerous offshore assets over the next decade, such as the artificial Princess Elisabeth Island and subsea interconnectors that will run from Belgium to the UK (Nautilus) and Denmark (TritonLink). To build and maintain this infrastructure, an onshore support base is needed.

Elia specifically chose the Port of Ostend since it is an important offshore wind energy hub. The offices of Belgian wind farms, offshore suppliers and many maritime agencies and authorities are located in the Port. Many companies focusing on offshore research and development are also based in Ostend. Elia currently rents a building in the Port, although it is not big enough to accommodate the planned expansion of its offshore activities in the area.

A sustainable project

The invitation to tender for the building's design was launched last week. Architecture firms have been asked to develop a sustainable and multi-purpose building which will have international standing. Indeed, the building will include a multifunctional space (500 m²) which will serve as a centre of expertise and will be used to host visitors.

The site will cover an area of approximately 3000 m² and will accommodate a number of buildings and activities, such as a control room to monitor Elia's offshore activities and a warehouse that will be used to store construction

equipment and spare parts. Up to 30 people will work in the offices on site; two thirds of these individuals will be technicians who will regularly carry out offshore inspection and maintenance work.

The site will serve a purely administrative and operational purpose. No pylons or high-voltage installations will therefore be constructed on it. The building is due to be commissioned at the end of 2025.

Location of the site next to 14 Esplanadestraat in Ostend



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 19,349 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 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.

For further information, please contact:

Corporate Communication

Marleen Vanhecke | M +32 486 49 01 09 | marleen.vanhecke@elia.be

Elia Transmission Belgium SA/NV

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

eliagroup.eu

