



**BÜRGERDIALOG**  
STROMNETZ

**The prospects of undergrounding power lines.**

**July 5th/6th, Raesfeld, Germany**

**An RGI workshop hosted by Amprion**

***„New Regulation: Mainstreaming Undergrounding  
in Germany?“***

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1. **Short idea of „Bürgerdialog Stromnetz“**
2. Triggers and challenges of undergrounding power lines in Germany
3. History & current legal situation of AC/DC underground cables
4. Out of sight, out of mind?!? New challenges, different discussions
5. Q&A

# Who we are: three partners, one initiative

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HIRSCHEN GROUP  
Home of the brave

**DUH**  
*Umweltschutz-  
Service GmbH*

IKU\_DIE DIALOGGESTALTER

Gefördert durch:



aufgrund eines Beschlusses  
des Deutschen Bundestages

# Bürgerdialog Stromnetz - Objectives

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- De-emotionalise the public debate
- Promote common understanding
- Provide appropriate contacts and know-how
- Facilitate encounters as equals / on a level playing field

**→ Establishing a new culture of dialogue –  
public dialogue on grids**

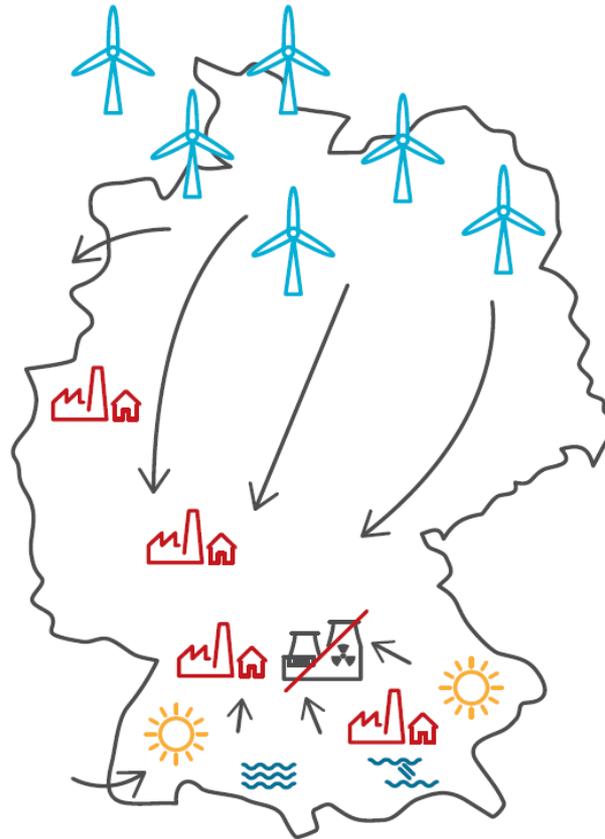
- **Energy transition and grid development**
- **Administrative procedures for planning and approvals**
- **Public participation**
- **Technical options / alternatives**
- **Health and nature protection**
- **Mediation and conflict resolution**

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# Energy transition in Germany

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**Bottlenecks in the grid are increasing**



Quelle: Eigene Darstellung

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# Legal framework

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- 2007 Lower Saxony underground cable act
- 2009 Power Grid Expansion Act (EnLAG)
- 2013 Federal Requirements Plan Act (BBPIG)
- 2015 Act to change provisions of law on energy cable construction (Erdkabelgesetz/underground cable act)

# Legislation for underground cables, EnLAG 2015

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- **Power Grid Expansion Act (EnLAG)**
  - 2009:
    - 4 AC pilot projects labelled for partial underground cabling
  - After 2015 underground cable act:
    - 2 additional AC pilot projects added (new total: 6)
    - On demand of approval authority obligation for underground cabling on segments, if
      - minimum distance to housing developments undershot,
      - overhead line breaks federal nature conservation act,
      - crossing of federal waterways
  - Gain practical experience in construction, operation + maintenance of underground AC power cables

# Legislation for underground cables, BBPIG 2015

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- **Federal Requirements Plan Act (BBPIG)**
  - 2013:
    - 2 DC pilot projects labelled for partial underground cabling
    - Priority of overhead lines, underground cables are exception
  - After 2015 underground cable act:
    - 5 DC electricity highways priority for underground cabling (total planned: 1.500 – 2.250 km)
    - 5 AC pilot projects labelled for partial underground cabling

# DC underground cables - BBPIG

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- All major DC electricity highways labelled for underground cabling, with exception of Ultranet
- Priority of underground cables
- Strict exclusion of overhead lines in vicinity of housing developments
- Use of overhead lines only exceptionally in certain cases:
  - underground cable would break federal nature conservation act,
  - existing overhead line in proximity and no additional significant environmental effects expected (bundling of lines),
  - assessment for overhead lines can be request by affected regional authorities(on strict conditions)

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# Shift in opposition

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- Out of sight, out of mind?
  - Not all, but large parts of the population seemed satisfied with legislative changes
- „New“ opposition in the spotlight:
  - Farmers
  - Forest Owners
  - Land Owners
  - Environmental groups  
(esp. Soil protection)

# Present situation

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- **Uncertainty for land-owners/farmers/forest owners**
  - How will the agricultural land be affected by underground cabling?
- **Environmental concerns**
  - Greater impact on nature than overhead lines (especially on soil)
- **Financial compensation**
  - Demand for yearly financial compensation
- **Rising costs for projects**
  - How much will the additional costs be for the general public?
- **Less health concerns than with overhead lines (especially in regards to electromagnetic fields)**

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# Questions and Answers

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**Thank you for your attention!**



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