

## #GridsEmpower

# Electricity Grids: The Backbone of Europe's Future

**Electricity grids are key for the future of Europe. They are the bedrock of our economic growth and enable our energy independence.**

Electricity grids empower our lives, jobs, industry, communities, security, electrification, and more. Accelerating grid development in and between EU Member States is a joint effort, not only from policymakers and national and local authorities but also industry, local communities, and civil society.

For #GridsEmpower, European energy industry representatives, grid operators, and civil society actors have joined forces to raise a unified voice for accelerated grid development in support of Europe's energy transition, energy security, and economic growth. CEOs and senior managers across Europe are joined in their message to policymakers: Grids empower Europe. It is time for us to empower grids!

In response to the interests of Member States, the outgoing European Commission reaffirmed the relevance of accelerated grid deployment and related needs in the Action Plan for Grids. As new leadership arrives in Brussels, Europe must continue to collaborate on an expanded grid, while in parallel maximising flexibility in the system and utilising cross-sector partnerships to develop standards for fair, cost-effective, and nature-friendly energy transition.

## Grids Empower Europe

Electricity grids drive economic prosperity and competitiveness by supporting national industries: a reliable electricity supply is essential for thriving markets and industries, and it is grids that deliver that supply every single day. We need to protect and expand this critical infrastructure to maintain our quality of life and economic interests. As grids expand, they provide a solid foundation for new ventures to succeed, fostering jobs and innovation across Member States. In 2020, the European Commission assessed that the benefits of “a fully functioning single market [including the electricity market enabled by grids] could amount to €713 billion by the end of 2029.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [EU Single Market Strategy](#)

## Catherine Vandendorpe, CEO a.i. of Elia Group (Belgian/German TSO)

***“Support for more cross-border connections between European countries needs to be at the heart of the energy agenda. This will guarantee that our renewables targets and competitiveness objectives go hand in hand.”***

Elia Group employs 3473 people, serves 30 million consumers across Belgium and Germany and has an economic turnover of €3953.6 million.

Full statement [here](#).

## Dr. Werner Götz, Board Chair of TransnetBW (German TSO)

***“European countries must continue to work together for a grid that’s fit for the future. Making sure grid expansion is part of any EU energy policy is key for our prosperity.”***

TransnetBW GmbH employs around 1600 people and operates the electricity transmission grid in the German state of Baden-Württemberg, ensuring that electricity is supplied to the region, Germany and Europe. Their customers include numerous electricity traders and operators of power stations and distribution grids both in Germany and abroad.

Full statement [here](#).

## Dr. Volker Wendt, Secretary-General of Europacable

***“Europe has the technological know-how needed to expand its grids. Our industry is investing boldly into strengthening this expertise, increasing our manufacturing capacity, and creating more lasting, green jobs. European countries must collaborate to support grid upgrades and expansion, using our home-grown cable manufacturing expertise to connect Europe, boost our industries, and drive our innovation.”***

Europacable represents Europe’s 38 leading cable producers with factories across Europe and a total of 80,000 employees worldwide, more than 50% of which in Europe, generating a worldwide turnover over €80 billion in 2023.

Full statement [here](#).

## Antonella Battaglini, CEO of Renewables Grid Initiative

***"An enlarged European grid, which is connected across Member States, delivers factories and business with the opportunity to transit towards a fully decarbonised system. This is essential. Without electricity grids, we will risk deindustrialisation across Europe."***

RGI is a unique coalition of environmental and climate NGOs and transmission system operators representing 28 Members from twelve different countries as well as multiple organisations working at European level.

Full statement [here](#)

## Grids Empower Lives

Electricity powers our lives, keeps our homes warm, our water flowing, and our economy growing. Grids are the key pieces of critical infrastructure that provide this power we rely on every day. Expanding and upgrading electricity grids ensures a secure electricity supply and a greater energy independence for each Member State and the entire EU during a time of growing demand and seemingly constant crises. By enhancing electricity trade between European countries and connecting an increasing share of renewables, grids development will continue to reduce dependency on energy imports every day.

## Giles Dickson, CEO of WindEurope

***"The EU must make [electricity] grids a political priority. There is no energy security without them. There is no Green Deal without them."***

WindEurope represents more than 500 companies along the supply chain of wind energy in Europe. The European wind industry currently employs 370,000 people. This number is set to rise to more than 500,000 people if national Governments deliver on their existing 2030 pledges for the expansion of onshore and offshore wind energy. The European wind industry has more than 250 factories across Europe and contributes €57.2 billion to Europe's GDP (direct contribution + indirect contribution + taxes not linked to corporate benefits), or €52.1 billion to the EU's GDP.

Full statement [here](#).

## Patrick ten Brink, Secretary-General of European Environmental Bureau

***“Our daily lives are made possible with power lines that cross immense distances, connecting our homes to sun and wind energy sourced right here in Europe. [...] Cross-border power lines help keep (these) essential services online in these uncertain times, maintaining a reliable supply of electricity when so much else feels unreliable.”***

The EEB is the largest network of environmental citizens' organisations in Europe. It currently consists of over 180 member organisations in 40 countries, including a growing number of networks, and representing some 30 million individual members and supporters.

Full statement [here](#).

## Stewart Maginnis, Deputy Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

***“Ensuring renewable energy can access an expanding and efficient grid system is good for people and the environment. [...] Building well-managed, sustainable energy infrastructure requires us to work together. By supporting the deployment of green grid corridors, European countries can create harmony between energy and nature.”***

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) is a membership Union of government and civil society organisations. It is the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1400 Member organisations and 16,000 experts from over 160 countries.

Full statement [here](#).

## Jochen Kreusel, President of T&D Europe

***“A robust electricity grid is the cornerstone of Europe's renewable evolution. It is essential for keeping Europe's energy supply secure, reliable, and cost effective. Grid upgrades and expansion will ensure security for every EU Member State and the EU as a whole.”***

T&D Europe is the voice of Europe's grid technology providers, who employ over 200,000 people in the industry manufacturing, innovating, and supplying smart systems for the efficient transmission and distribution of electricity. T&D Europe Members include 10 National Trade Associations representing more than 200 companies as well as 10 corporate members ranging from medium-sized to large multinational companies.

Full statement [here](#).

## Grids Empower Our Future

Grids empower the future of our energy system by enabling the energy transition. Direct renewables-based electrification is not only a fast and efficient way to decarbonise and to power our lives and economies, but it also enables Europeans to connect to more reliable domestic energy sources, making us less dependent on energy imports. This transformation of our energy system depends on adequate financing and a strong grid supply chain. Without investing in renewables and grids, by 2100, Europe will pay over 300 billion Euros every year in climate costs and damages. In contrast, adopting the 1.5°C-aligned transition pathway, would require an almost four times lower expenditure.<sup>2</sup>

### Xavier Piechaczyk, CEO of RTE (French TSO)

***“There will be no transition without transmission. [...] The European Union must lead a strong industrial policy and activate all levers – procurement rules, financial support, permitting – to support a competitive power grid supply chain located in Europe.”***

RTE employs 10,000 collaborators and plans to maintain a consistent recruitment drive in the coming years. RTE connects 1271 clients across France, including distributors, industrial clients, electricity producers, and traders. Considering its clients, especially the distributors, RTE effectively connects nearly the entire French population. By the end of 2023, RTE achieved a revenue of €6.131 billion.

Full statement [here](#).

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<sup>2</sup> [Paris Pact Payoff: Speeding Up the Green Transition for Socio-Economic Co-Benefits](#) (CAN Europe report in the context of the EU's LIFE Programme)

### Gerald Kaendler, Director Asset Management of Amprion (German TSO)

***“It should be the ambition of the EU to provide an investment friendly environment for the renewable power production, for the grids, and for our customers, but also should support innovation in this modern technology.”***

With its 11,000-kilometre-long extra-high voltage grid and its 2,700 employees, Amprion secures jobs and quality of life for 29 million people and plans to invest around €27.5 billion in the expansion and upgrading of its transmission grid by 2028.

Full statement [here](#).

### Dr. Jan-Justus Andreas, Managing Director of Bellona Deutschland

***“Grids enable the trade of green electricity we need to decarbonise industry. Wherever possible, we need to limit the use of inefficient decarbonisation methods. To fully remove emissions and fossil fuels from the system, we need to electrify.”***

Bellona is an international, independent and non-profit organisation working on environmental and climate challenges. They have a solution-oriented, comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach to assess the economics, climate impacts and technical feasibility of necessary climate actions.

Full statement [here](#).

### Manon van Beek, CEO of TenneT (Dutch/German TSO)

***"Europe's competitiveness depends on a secure supply with cost-effective renewables. Thus, expanded and future-proof grids are the backbone of a competitive transition. Determined collaboration throughout sectors and countries will drive us towards sustainable prosperity."***

TenneT is a leading cross-border transmission system operator in Europe. With more than 8300 employees, we design, build, maintain and operate over 25,000 kilometres of high-voltage electricity grid in the Netherlands and large parts of Germany. With our 17 interconnectors to neighboring countries we also contribute to a functioning European internal electricity market onshore as well as offshore.

Full statement [here](#)

## About #GridsEmpower

#GridsEmpower is a collaboration between European grid operators, electricity industry actors, and environmental civil society, coordinated by the Renewables Grid Initiative. We believe that electricity grids are key for the future of European competitiveness, jobs, energy security, and the energy transition.

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Watch video statements from the partners [here](#).

## About the Renewables Grid Initiative

The [Renewables Grid Initiative \(RGI\)](#) is a unique collaboration of NGOs and TSOs (Transmission System Operators) from across Europe engaging in an 'energy transition ecosystem-of-actors'. We promote fair, transparent, sustainable grid development to enable the growth of renewables to achieve full decarbonisation in line with the Paris Agreement.

RGI Members originate from a variety of European countries, consisting of TSOs from Belgium (Elia), Croatia (HOPS), France (RTE), Germany (50Hertz, Amprion, TenneT and TransnetBW), Ireland (EirGrid), Italy (Terna), the Netherlands (TenneT), Norway (Statnett), Portugal (REN), Spain (Red Eléctrica) and Switzerland (Swissgrid); and the NGOs Bellona Europa, BIOM, BirdLife Europe, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, Ember, France Nature Environnement (FNE), Friends of the Earth Ireland, Fundación Renovables, Germanwatch, Legambiente, NABU, Natuur&Milieu, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), WWF International and ZERO. Europacable and IUCN are Supporting Members.