

## France: EIB, with the support of the European Commission, is financing the deployment of 150 000 smart boxes to actively manage electricity demand

- A EUR 20m loan to speed up the home installation of devices helping to reduce electricity consumption
- This strengthens the strategic partnership between Meridiam and Voltalis and speeds up the deployment of smart boxes that actively manage electricity demand from private consumers and SMEs
- This is the first investment in the area of domestic 'demand response' supported by *InnovFin Energy Demonstration Projects* and financed under Horizon 2020 and the NER 300 funding programme

The European Investment Bank has announced the signing of a EUR 20m loan – guaranteed by the European Commission – to a company owned by Meridiam (60%) and Voltalis (40%) to support the large-scale deployment of the demand response technology developed by Voltalis. A smart box, installed free of charge in homes with electric heating, enables consumers to save energy without impacting their comfort. At national and local level, Voltalis aggregates in real time these reductions in consumption in order to offer this flexibility to the wholesale markets.

Thus, instead of matching increasing energy demand through an equivalent increase in production capacity, Voltalis is proposing a smart electricity management, enabling demand to be reduced when prices are high or during peak usage times. Ultimately, providing small consumers with a smart box enables Voltalis to reduce overall power consumption and enhance the security of the power grid.

This new-found ability to manage usage, implemented with the support of the EIB, will help limit the use of polluting means of production while enabling consumers to make energy savings: two key aspects of energy transition that further the objectives of the Green Deal and EU climate action. Active demand management will also facilitate Electrical Vehicles charging, help reduce investment requirements when distribution networks are saturated and facilitate the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources. Ultimately, the company aims to install smart boxes in a third of the electrically heated French homes, and deploy this system throughout Europe.

This financing operation is being carried out thanks to the *InnovFin Energy Demonstration Projects* facility, financed under the EU's framework programme for research and innovation, Horizon 2020, and by NER 300, the innovative low-carbon energy programme.

**Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth**, said: "By backing Voltalis with EU funding, we aim to

*show that energetic, dynamic and smart management is a viable solution for reducing energy needs without compromising comfort and the economy, whilst at the same time facilitating the integration of renewables within the energy system. This will enable the firm to reduce its carbon emissions, save money and help us attain our climate goals.”*

*“Voltalis is a firm that illustrates very well how successfully combating climate change cannot be achieved without embracing innovative solutions”, stated **EIB Vice-President Ambroise Fayolle**. “For the EU and its climate bank, it is vital to help these firms speed up the deployment of these innovations, so enabling consumers to combat global warming and make energy savings at the same time.”*

*“We are proud to have the backing of the EIB and Meridiam, a strategic partner for Voltalis: this truly confirms the unique expertise of Voltalis and the value of actively managing electricity demand as part of the energy transition process. This support will allow to speed up the large-scale deployment of our technology, which will benefit both the power grid and consumers by enabling them to better manage their energy costs”, said **Voltalis CEO Mathieu Bineau**.*

*“Energy transition is one of Meridiam’s three strategic priorities. We are confident that this can only be implemented successfully by exploring innovative solutions to design the infrastructure of the future. Our strategic partnership with Voltalis reflects this conviction. The inclusion of small-scale businesses is one of the conditions for successfully negotiating the environmental transition and we are delighted to work alongside the EIB in supporting the deployment in France of Voltalis’s technology, which will make rapidly evolving power systems more resilient. This ties in with our substantive goal of contributing actively to the European Green Deal”, stated **Meridiam CEO Thierry Déau**.*

## **Note to editors:**

### **About InnovFin Energy Demonstration Projects (EDP)**

[InnovFin Energy Demonstration Projects](#) (InnovFin EDP) is a venture financing instrument designed to support the demonstration of innovative clean energy projects in the fields of renewable energy, energy storage, smart energy systems and carbon capture, use and storage. The aim is to bridge the gap from demonstration to commercialisation and thus contribute to the deployment of the next generation of innovative low-carbon energy technologies. Given the high risk involved, these EIB loans are guaranteed by the European Commission in the event of default. InnovFin EDP is financed by Horizon 2020 and NER 300 funds.

### **About Voltalis**

Operating at the heart of the energy transition process, Voltalis is Europe’s leading player in the field of flexibility management, specialising in active management of residential energy consumption. Established in 2006 and certified by the French power grid operator RTE since 2008, Voltalis offers

consumers innovative solutions helping them to make energy savings without impacting their day-to-day comfort whilst at the same time actively contributing to the equilibrium of the power grid and to the environmental transition. With its smart boxes already installed in over 100 000 homes, Voltalis has the largest active management capacity in Europe in terms of residential consumption and is now investing in the deployment of an additional 150 000 boxes. [www.voltalis.com](http://www.voltalis.com)

### **About Meridiam**

Meridiam was founded in 2005 by Thierry Déau, with the belief that the alignment of interests between the public and private sectors can provide critical solutions to the collective needs of communities. Meridiam is Benefit Corporation, within the meaning of the french law, specialising in the development, financing, and management of long-term and sustainable public infrastructure projects and assets in three sectors : mobility of people and goods, energy transition and social infrastructure sectors. It currently manages EUR 7bn worth of assets and more than 75 projects. Meridiam is certified ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 26000 Advanced by VigeoEiris and operates on a proprietary methodology in relation to ESG (environmental, social and governance criteria) and impact based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). [www.meridiam.com](http://www.meridiam.com)