

## Netherlands: TenneT partners with EIB to power new transmission connection for offshore wind energy



©T. Smit/EIB

- **EIB signs EUR 250 million loan agreement with TenneT to finance the 43km high-voltage transmission connection between Borssele and Rilland.**
- **High voltage connection upgraded in anticipation of connecting North Sea wind farms to the electricity grid and maintaining high security of supply**
- **This financing increases the total EIB commitment to TenneT projects to EUR 1.8 billion.**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed a EUR 250 million loan agreement with TenneT Holding B.V. The financing will be used for the western section of TenneT's "Zuidwest 380 kV" project, which will enable the transmission of rapidly growing amounts of offshore wind energy to users in the Netherlands and beyond. In its entirety, the Zuidwest 380 kV project also supports increased connectivity of European electricity markets. Specifically, the EIB financing will support the construction of a new 380 kV transmission line – combined with a 150 kV line for part of the route – from the substation at Borssele to a new substation at Rilland.

One of the main reasons for the upgrade is the ongoing growth of offshore wind power generation capacity off the Dutch southwest coast, as part of the 1.4 GW Borssele Wind Farm Zone. The new grid connection will allow for the avoidance of congestion on the high voltage grid once the wind farms are in

operation and will facilitate transfer of green, offshore electricity to demand centres.

*"The Netherlands' ambitious targets for renewable energy generation require more investment in the transmission network."* stated EIB Vice-President **Andrew McDowell**. *"That's why the EIB, as the EU Climate Bank, is pleased to support this project."*

**Otto Jager**, CFO of TenneT added: *"The switch from traditional fossil fuels to renewable energy sources is one of the biggest challenges the world is currently facing. It is an immense task for transmission system operators. This project in the southwest of the Netherlands will support us in maintaining our strong track record in the availability of our electricity grids. At the same time, this connection facilitates the integration of sustainable offshore wind energy into the Dutch electricity system."*

The EIB has increased its total lending commitment to TenneT to EUR 1.8 billion. The EIB commitments are provided for the upgrading and expansion of TenneT's electricity transmission networks in the Netherlands and Germany as well as interconnectors. Today's transaction underlines again the strong relationship between the EIB and TenneT.

#### **Background information:**

**TenneT** is a leading European high voltage grid operator (Transmission System Operator (TSO) that has its most important activities in the Netherlands and Germany. With 23,000 kilometres of high-voltage connections, we ensure a reliable and secure electricity supply to the 41 million end users in the markets that we serve. With close to 5,000 employees, we achieve a turnover of 4.2 billion euros and a total asset value of 22 billion euros. TenneT is one of the largest investors in national and international onshore and offshore electricity grids. Our focus is on bringing together the North Western European energy markets and facilitating the energy transition. TenneT makes every effort to meet the needs of society by being responsible, engaged and connected.

---

## **Coronavirus: Further preventive measures introduced in Council**

The Secretary-General of the Council, having consulted the Presidency, has decided on a number of new preventative measures which take into account latest developments in the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) as well as updated expert medical advice. The measures have been communicated to member state delegates and others who are affected by them. They take effect as from today (9 March).

- The number of meetings of the Council, its preparatory bodies and working groups will be reduced. Decisions on which meetings to maintain will be taken on a regular basis by the Presidency.
- The size of delegations participating in meetings will be limited.
- All visitor groups and non-essential training will be suspended
- GSC staff are encouraged to limit as far as possible internal meetings and to continue to observe scrupulously the recommended hygiene measures.

In addition, the list of areas for which travel restrictions apply to GSC staff has been updated to take into account the latest decisions by the Italian authorities.

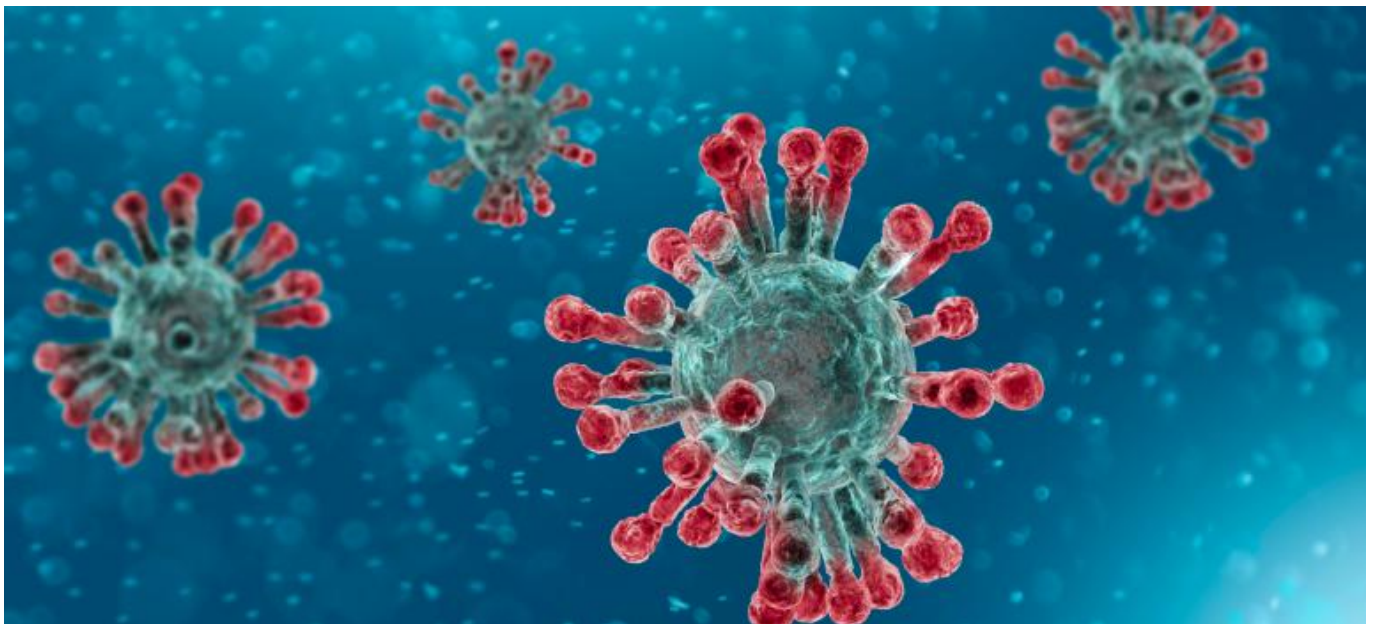
The emphasis of this approach reflects a shift towards more general measures given that the virus is now present to a considerable extent in most member states, including Belgium, and that this development is likely to continue.

In line with international norms, the GSC has protocols in place in case it needs to deal with any further confirmed cases of COVID-19 among its staff or in its buildings.

The GSC will continue to monitor the situation closely, and stands ready to introduce further measures depending on developments.

---

## **Coronavirus: no evidence that food is a source or transmission route**



EFSA is closely monitoring the situation regarding the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that is affecting a large number of countries across the globe. There is currently no evidence that food is a likely source

## **or route of transmission of the virus.**

EFSA's chief scientist, Marta Hugas, said: "Experiences from previous outbreaks of related coronaviruses, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), show that transmission through food consumption did not occur. At the moment, there is no evidence to suggest that coronavirus is any different in this respect."

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has said that while animals in China were the likely source of the initial infection, the virus is spreading from person to person – mainly via respiratory droplets that people sneeze, cough, or exhale. More information on coronavirus and food can be found in this [FAQ](#) by the BfR, Germany's risk assessment body.

Scientists and authorities across the world are monitoring the spread of the virus and there have not been any reports of transmission through food. For this reason, EFSA is not currently involved in the response to the COVID-19 outbreaks. However, we are monitoring the scientific literature for new and relevant information.

Regarding food safety, the World Health Organization (WHO) has issued precautionary [recommendations](#) including advice on following good hygiene practices during food handling and preparation, such as washing hands, cooking meat thoroughly and avoiding potential cross-contamination between cooked and uncooked foods. More information can be found on the [WHO website](#).

## **Reducing the chances of contagion – measures in place at EFSA's headquarters**

EFSA is based in Parma, in the north of Italy, which is one of the areas currently subject to emergency restrictions on movement imposed by the Italian government. As of the last week in February, we have adopted a series of measures in line with advice from the Italian authorities.

We have introduced homeworking for most of our staff and telemeetings with experts and partners, while events, staff travel and public visits to EFSA premises have been suspended until at least 8 April. These measures are being reviewed constantly in light of new information.

Rolling information on the outbreak and risks assessments used by the EU Member States and the European Commission in their response activities are being updated continuously by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The World Health Organization is coordinating global efforts.

You can find more information, on the [website of the European Commission](#).

---

# EU-Turkey leaders' meeting, Brussels, 9 March 2020

## **Indicative programme**

18.00 – Arrival of President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (*Europa building VIP entrance*)

Official welcome by President Charles Michel (*Europa building Forum, photo/TV opportunity*)

18.05 – Meeting between Presidents Michel, von der Leyen and President Erdoğan

## **Media accreditation**

Media representatives wishing to cover the arrival and departure must register by email to [\[email protected\]](#) attaching ID (passports for non-EU nationals) and assignment letter signed by the editor of the media organisation, confirming the journalist status and stating that the journalist is assigned to cover this event.

Media representatives applying for the first time or who have not been screened recently will be the subject of a comprehensive and detailed verification by our security service. Considering the time and resources needed for these verifications, not all requests may be processed. Media are therefore advised to avoid sending representatives falling into these categories.

Media representatives holding a Council 1 year badge (2020) do not need to register. For organisational purposes, please confirm your presence by email to [\[email protected\]](#).

Deadline: **Monday 9 March 2020, 15.00.**

---

## **Press release – All for equality – 2020 is a pivotal year for Gender Equality**





For this year's International Women's Day on 8 March, the European Parliament is marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration on gender equality. Twenty-five years after it was adopted, women's rights and gender equality have not yet been realised. No country in the world has fully achieved equality and empowerment for women and girls. Women in Europe and around the world still face numerous challenges, some of which are newly emerging.

As the European Parliament recently stressed in its latest [resolution](#), MEPs reaffirm their unwavering commitment to the BPfA and to the full range of actions for gender equality outlined therein. We strongly believe that working to achieve women's rights and gender equality demands a coordinated and multisector approach that involves all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and women's organisations as well as the business world. The Parliament shall continue to fight for a strong leadership role in achieving girls' and women's rights and gender equality in the European Union as well as at a global level.

**David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament, said:** "Altogether, we have to lead by example and join forces to achieve genuine gender equality. We must double our efforts to implement Agenda 2030 and all Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure that no woman or girl is subject to discrimination, violence or exclusion, and that all women and girls have access to health, food, education and job opportunities.

Europe is at the crossroads of transitions: green, industrial and digital. We must lead the transition to a green economy for a healthy planet and a new digital world, while leaving no one behind. All women in the world need to be actors of change. Now it is time to move from words to deeds!"

**Evelyn Regner, Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality said:** "Let us continue to raise our voices. Let us denounce injustice and fight for a better, more inclusive and fair world. On International Women's Day, as well as on every other day of the year. Because, and it still needs to be stressed, women's rights are fundamental human rights."