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Planning Europe's future electricity highways / EU-consortium develops modular plan for a pan-European transmission system

Brussels (ots) -

A European research consortium, supported in part by the European Commission, has launched the e-Highway2050 project with the aim of developing a long-term planning methodology for the necessary expansion and conversion of the European electricity transmission grids. The resulting approach will propose a Modular Development Plan for the pan-European transmission network from 2020 to 2050. The development of an integrated European electricity market emphasises the importance of increasing interconnections between existing and future transmission networks. This research project paves the way for an integrated pan-European grid, able to meet European commitments such as integrating large quantities of electric power generated by renewable energy sources (wind, biomass and solar) and transporting it over long distances to consumption sites. Such a complex and networked transmission system at a pan-European level raises interest in the innovative concept of "electricity highways".

The e-Highway2050 partnership comprises transmission systems operators, energy associations, a non-governmental organisation, research institutes, universities and companies coming from all over Europe.

Today, the Ten Years Network Development Plan - TYNDP - drawn up by the European Network of Transmission Systems Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E) is the basis for the expansion and conversion of the European electricity grid: it pinpoints potential investment gaps within the next ten years and highlights technological and socio-economical approaches to reach the energy aims of the EU policy. The e-Highway2050 research project plans to develop an appropriate methodology for longer-term horizons and to guarantee sustainable and economically advantageous development.

In this context, the e-Highway2050 research project examines framework conditions and develops solutions for planning the European electricity grid expansion from 2020 to 2050, and involving several growth and energy scenarios for Europe. Key stakeholders from all over Europe are invited to discuss the interim results in consultations and workshops and contribute actively to influencing the outcomes.

The Network Development Plan will first serve policy makers, regulatory authorities and the power industry as key players to support the expansion of the pan-European transmission grid. The network planning methodology will be made available to all ENTSO-E members: it will also provide roadmaps for further research and innovation in the development of improved grid expansion planning instruments.

Further information at www.e-highway2050.eu

e-Highway2050 is a 40-month project which started on 1st September 2012. It is supported in part by the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation within the Seventh Framework Programme for Research. The consortium is led by the French grid operator RTE and comprises: SINTEF, Norway; AMPRION, Germany; TECHNOFI, France; REN, Portugal; ELIA Group, Belgium/Germany; RSE, Italy; dena, Germany; ENTSO-E, Belgium; CEPS, Czech Republic; SWISSGRID, Switzerland; TERNA, Italy; Brunel University, UK; COMILLAS University, Spain; IST, Portugal; KU Leuven KUL, Belgium; ENSIEL, Italy; TU Berlin, Germany; ECN, Netherlands; IPE, Poland; EURELECTRIC, Belgium; EUROPACABLE, Belgium; EWEA, Belgium; T&D EUROPE, Belgium; POYRY, UK; E3G, Belgium; PSE, Poland; CEP, UK.

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