

Strategic boost for Galicia

The Network Development Plan with a 2026 horizon has been approved to drive a greener future for Spain

- The Network Development Plan 2021-2026 is a key instrument for developing the electricity infrastructure needed to continue guaranteeing the security of supply in addition to promoting the energy transition process nationwide to ensure that renewable energy will account for 67% of the national electricity generation mix by 2026.
- The drafting of the Plan has followed a rigorous Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure to ensure it is sustainable and environmentally friendly.
- The projects included in the Plan will contribute to achieving significant efficiencies and savings for the system as a whole, more than 1.6 billion euros per year. In addition, the investments will help boost Spain's recovery from the crisis.
- The Plan for the region of Galicia foresees the construction of the future northern cross-border connection with Portugal, as well as developments in the regional transmission grid that will boost the Atlantic High-Speed Axis, bolster the security of supply in the region and facilitate the connection and integration of renewable energy capacity, including offshore wind power.

Santiago de Compostela, 22 March 2022

The Network Development Plan 2021-2026, which is binding for Red Eléctrica, has been given the green light after having been approved today by the Spanish Government following its presentation in the Spanish Congress of Deputies. With an investment of 6,964 million euros, this new Plan is a strategic instrument through which the necessary infrastructure will be developed so that Spain may continue to enjoy an electricity supply with high levels of quality and will allow further progress to be made in the decarbonisation of its energy model and in its fight against climate change.

In this regard, the actions included within the Plan will size and prepare the transmission grid in the coming years to be able to connect and integrate a higher share of renewable energy generation in line with the pace set by Spain's National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) and make it available to consumers. Thanks to the development of this infrastructure, it is estimated that in 2026 renewable energy will reach a share of 67% in the national electricity generation mix and will enable CO₂ eq emissions to be reduced by 66% compared to those recorded in 2019 (the year before the pandemic), provided that the NECP forecasts and the full implementation of this Plan are met. Similarly, the projects included in the Plan, will contribute to achieving significant efficiencies and savings for the system as a whole, more than 1.6 billion euros per year. In addition, the investments will help boost Spain's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

The planning process followed a rigorous Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure to ensure it is sustainable and environmentally friendly. It should be noted that the Plan took into account the environmental and territorial conditioning factors and has prioritised these aspects in the final design. Furthermore, the Network Development Plan 2021-2026 includes making greater use of the existing transmission grid, thus avoiding those areas that are most environmentally sensitive and reducing those actions that may have an impact on the territory.



In fact, only 13% of all renewable generation expected to be connected by 2026 will require new transmission substations.

The Network Development Plan for Galicia will enable the construction of the northern cross-border connection with Portugal; a connection which is key to achieving European energy and climate targets. Similarly, developments are planned for the region's transmission grid in order to not only facilitate the powering of railway lines but also strengthen the security of supply in the region and continue to promote the change from a model based on fossil fuels to one characterised by a greater presence of renewable energy, including offshore wind power.

New northern cross-border connection between Galicia and Portugal

One of the main milestones of this new Plan for Galicia will be the construction of the ninth cross-border connection with Portugal, a link that will connect Fontefría in the province of Pontevedra with Vila Fria in the Portuguese region of Minho. Specifically, the project will involve the construction of a new substation (the 400/220kV Fontefría substation) and a new double-circuit line between Fontefría and the Portuguese border. This new infrastructure will be connected to the existing grid via the new double-circuit 400kV Fontefría-Beariz and a new 400kV substation in Beariz.

This new link will improve Spain's interconnection level by increasing the exchange capacity with Portugal in order to help meet the European targets for the integration of European markets. In addition, its commissioning will contribute to the green transition process in Spain, facilitating a greater integration of renewable generation, up to an additional 293 GWh per year. This cross-border connection will allow a reduction of 150,000 tonnes of CO₂eq emissions per year and will represent an annual saving of 22 million euros for the system as a whole.

This new cross-border connection is considered essential to meet European targets and those set out in the inter-governmental agreements of the Madrid Declaration. For this reason, it has been designated as a Project of Common Interest by the European Commission and forms part of the Europe's Network Development Plan of the ENTSO-e organisation, which designates the energy infrastructure that is considered a priority for Europe.

Boosting the Atlantic High-Speed Axis

Moreover, the 2021-2026 Plan includes actions that will boost the electrification of rail transport, specifically the Atlantic High-Speed Axis that will link Vigo, Orense, Lugo and La Coruña.

To this end, the Plan includes the construction of two new substations (the 220kV O Incio and the 400kV Abegondo substations) and the enlargement of the 220kV Fontefría and the 400kV Ludrio substations. As a whole, all these actions will facilitate the powering of the high-speed Atlantic axis that will run along the Galician Atlantic coast between Ferrol and the Portuguese border and that will connect with the Madrid-Galicia axis at Santiago de Compostela.

Bolstering of the electricity supply and integration of renewables. Driving offshore wind power

The Plan also foresees the construction of other infrastructure in the region that seek to meet two key objectives: provide support for the electricity distribution network in the Tomeza area (in Vilaboa, Pontevedra) and facilitate the evacuation of renewable energy capacity connected to the distribution network in the Boimente area (Lugo). To this end, the existing 220 kV Tomeza and 400 kV Boimente substations will be enlarged through the incorporation of new substation bays.

In terms of renewable energy, the Plan will give a strong boost to Galicia's commitment to offshore wind power. Thus, actions are included to enable the future connection of offshore wind power generation in priority areas included in the Marine Spatial Planning. To this end, the 400 kV Xove and 220 kV Atios substations will be enlarged.

Additionally, noteworthy is the construction of the new 400 kV Villarino de Conso substation in Orense to facilitate the connection of new energy storage facilities. Lastly, the new Abegondo substation also includes the installation



of a 220 kV transformer in order to facilitate the connection of new renewable generation in the area, specifically wind power generation projects.

A Plan conceived by all for society as a whole

This Network Development Plan is the result of the responsible and collective efforts of all stakeholders. The public administrations and the different agents of civil society have participated in its preparation, working together with a common goal: to build, together, a useful and valuable transmission grid for everyone. For the first time, the consultation process has been open to all citizens, companies and public administrations, whose high level of participation has demonstrated the enormous interest of society as a whole in the energy transition process.

- **More information at** <https://www.planificacionelectrica.es/>