

Romania: Transelectrica and Prysmian Power agree to develop electricity export route with Turkey

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National Power Grid Company Transelectrica and Italian group Prysmian Power Link signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the submarine cable that should transport electricity from Romania to Turkey. It covers the pre-planning, planning, financing, construction and operation of the submarine power infrastructure meant to interconnect the two Balkan electricity markets.

Talks between Romania and Turkey on a transport electricity cable began in 2006. At that time, the investment was estimated at EUR 400-500 million. In June 2009, Transelectrica and Vattenfall Power Consultant AB of Sweden signed a service contract for the feasibility study, including an environmental study and specifications for a Romania-Turkey submarine power cable project. The EUR 1.24 million feasibility study costs were borne by Transelectrica (75 percent) and Nuclearelectrica (25 percent).

The submarine cable was expected to be able to transport electricity between Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Turkey. Other options included the transmission of electricity between Turkey, Romania, Poland, Serbia and Hungary, and the feasibility study was to determine other possibilities of energy transport between the European states.

Nuclearelectrica recently announced that it no longer intends to be involved in the feasibility study for the submarine cable. The undersea cable is particularly important for units 3 and 4 at Cernavoda, which will increase energy production. It is expected that units 3 and 4 at Cernavoda will become more attractive to investors.

The National Power Grid Company Transelectrica and Italian group Prysmian Power Link signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the submarine cable that should transport electricity from Romania to Turkey. It covers the pre-planning, planning, financing, construction and operation of the submarine power infrastructure meant to interconnect the two Balkan electricity markets.

Prysmian Group, which has three production facilities for submarine cables, has a long-term presence in Romania and the whole Danubian region.

The two companies will form a team of experts that will analyze the technical, financial and legal implications of developing this cable connection. The memorandum does not entail mutual financial liabilities among signatory parties or the obligation to actually participate in project implementation, except when it is deemed feasible and Transelectrica gives the go-ahead for developing the electricity transmission line.

According to the agreement, the project is compliant with the policies of the Romanian and

Turkish governments as well as those of the European Union, and is expected to bring a significant contribution to the development of the regional markets in South-East Europe. It is in line with the EU policy known as the ENTSO-E, and the Romanian policy to increase the interconnection capacity of the national electro energetic system with South-East European systems.

The initiative aims to enhance the transmission capacity and improve exchanges in South-East Europe, thereby facilitating the security, quantity and quality of the supplied electricity.

The cable is likely to be joined by a second, fiber optic one for data traffic. “The 400 kV DC cable that will connect Romania and Turkey for the provision of energy will, most likely, have a corresponding fiber optic for data provision that will make the project even more attractive,” said Octavian Lohan, vice-president of Transelectrica. According to him, this would not significantly increase the overall cost of the scheme.