



Trading Hub Europe (THE): Project partners sign comprehensive package of contracts for the joint German gas market area

THE market area to start on 1 October 2021

Berlin/Ratingen, 22 April 2021 • On 21 April 2021, the cooperation contract, which provides for the merger of the two gas market areas GASPOOL and NetConnect Germany to form the Trading Hub Europe (THE) market area, was signed in Berlin.

Since November 2017, the transmission system operators (TSOs) have been working on the details of the new nation-wide market area, which is to become one of the most attractive and liquid gas trading hubs in Europe. "The signing of the cooperation agreement marks a major milestone in this project. We now have a sound basis for the new joint THE market area, which will start trading on 1 October 2021," said Jürgen Fuhlrott from the project team.

In addition to the cooperation contract, the contracts for the merger of the two market area managers GASPOOL Balancing Services GmbH and NetConnect Germany GmbH to form Trading Hub Europe GmbH were also signed. After entry in the commercial register, Trading Hub Europe GmbH will take over management of the GASPOOL and NetConnect Germany market areas until 1 October 2021 and subsequently become the operator of the new THE market area from 1 October 2021.

Intensive work is currently underway to push ahead with the operational implementation of the new market area. This work has included extensive IT system upgrades, which will undergo thorough testing over the coming weeks. "We are looking forward to the launch of THE with a great deal of confidence. The close cooperation of the TSOs and the market area managers has allowed us to take today's step," said Bianca Dittmann, another member of the project team. "The continuous and constructive dialogue with the market participants and the Federal Network Agency has also been a key success factor."

THE will benefit shippers and end users, network operators and balancing group managers alike. Due to its central location in the heart of Europe, the new Germany-wide market area will act as an international hub linking other European gas markets.

Trading Hub Europe GmbH will operate from its two offices in Berlin and Ratingen. The launch date for the nationwide market area is 1 October 2021. The high-pressure pipeline network in the new market area will have a total length of around 40,000 km and connect more than 700 downstream networks.

The market area manager's responsibilities will include balancing group management, operation of the virtual trading point and the procurement of balancing gas for the new market area. In GY 2019/20, the virtual trading points of GASPOOL and NetConnect Germany registered transactions totalling 3790 terawatts of natural gas and 24 terawatts of biogas. Trading Hub Europe will serve approx. 600 balancing group managers.

Thus, Trading Hub Europe will ensure the operation of the joint market area and make an important contribution to the security of natural gas supplies in Germany and Europe.