



NEWSLETTER



Interview: new Norwegian government agreement secures a bright future for electrical contracting sector

On 17 January, the newly formed Norwegian coalition government agreed on a multi-party contract, which outlines the executive's main policy priorities for the next few years. NELFO, AIE Norwegian member, has welcomed this document, as it provides the basis for the growth of the national electrical contracting sector. We have sat down with Tore Strandskog, Director for Governmental Affairs at NELFO, who has summarized for us the most important new government commitments.

Q: Norway is one of the world leaders in electromobility. Does the new executive's plan ensure that your country will keep its leading role?

A: Yes, definitely. The continued electrification and digitalization of the transport sector stand out as a clear priority in the plan. The government does for instance commit to extend for some more years today's financial support provided for the purchase of new electric cars and to introduce incentive schemes for the installation of electric car charging points in multi-occupancy buildings. What is more, new policy makers intend to electrify vans and trucks, construction sites and shipping, and to introduce more intelligent traffic systems. All this is excellent news for electrical contractors in Norway, as they are the key professionals taking care of electromobility infrastructure roll-out and installing all the electrical and digital technologies needed to improve traffic management. Their activities in these areas will certainly grow in the next years.

Q: The design, installation and maintenance of solar photovoltaic plants is another growing business area for electrical contractors in Norway. What does the government's plan say in this regard?

A: Solar is indeed becoming successful in Norway. This technology is becoming competitive and many Norwegians are keen to produce clean energy for their own needs. The new government's plan is positive, as it indicates that policy makers intend to create more opportunities for self-produced solar for households, housing cooperatives and agriculture.

Q: What about the building renovation market?

A: The government has announced alignment with EU energy efficiency legislation and a target of 10 TWh energy savings by 2030. This will be a boost for the building renovation market, creating additional job and business opportunities for Norwegian electro-technical service companies.

Q: Which role will NELFO play in the next few months and years to ensure that the plan is delivered?

A: NELFO has provided important input to the government strategy during the consultation phase. The executive's plans for the electrification of the shipping sector are inspired by recent NELFO reports in which we showed the electrification potential of Norway's coasts and we provided ideas of how to realistically tap into this potential. Now our main role will be to help our electrical contracting member companies to ramp up their skills and competences, strengthen their network and work on concrete implementation projects. Our sector has already almost a 5 billion EUR annual turnover, and we are sure that electrification and digitalization will allow us to grow strong and healthy.

French electrical contractors well on the way to delivering massive roll-out of fiber optic infrastructure

In 2013 the French government launched a massive plan to improve the quality and speed of internet connections across the country. So far, the so-called "Plan France Très Haut Débit" has resulted in the installation of 10 million fiber optic outlets and in the creation of 10 thousand new jobs. By 2022, the government aims to install another 20 million outlets, creating additional 12 thousand jobs.

As most of these new jobs are being created in the electrical contracting sector, AIE members FFIE and SERCE, representing almost 6.000 businesses and more than 200.000 professionals in the French electro-technical industry, have been playing a very active role ever since the launch of this initiative. Now that the end of the plan approaches, FFIE and SERCE, together with public authorities, social partners and other professional organisations, are ramping up efforts to make sure electrical contractors deliver on the targets.

In particular, FFIE and SERCE are involved in the recently launched "Objectif Fibre" Platform, which ensures the referencing of the technical platforms of training organizations. FFIE and SERCE specifically contribute to the delivery of quality training electrical contractors, for them to have the necessary skills and competences to implement the government plans.

The French fiber optic initiative is just one out many projects in Europe which are making the electro-technical sector increasingly digitalized. Just a few days ago, FFIE also published a guidebook for their member companies providing suggestions on how to seize the business opportunities offered by connected objects, or the so-called "Internet of Things". With the borders between electricity and IT becoming more and more blurred, the electrical contracting profession increases in importance and moves to the forefront of technological advancements in Europe.

Belgium launches initiative to test local electrical contractors' skills

On 29 January, VOLTA – the Belgian support organization for the electro-technical sector, powered by AIE member Techlink and other associations – launched the so-called "Electro Brain" initiative, which, over the next four months, will test the competences of hundreds of electricians-to-be across the country.

Volunteering electricians who are about to enter the job market will pass some theoretical and practical tests, the results of which will be used by VOLTA and other sector organisations to identify areas of improvement in educational and training programmes.

This initiative is really important, as it helps make sure that the sector keeps pace with fast-evolving technologies, markets and standards. The electricity system in Europe is in the midst of a transformation, and first-class education and training are key to ensuring that electricians are able to deliver safe, high-quality and modern electrical-based installations and services.

AIE on the future of EU product policy: more targeted and more meaningful!

A few days ago, AIE replied to a European Commission consultation on product policy.

European product policy is key to minimizing the environmental footprint of products on the European market, from the design phase down to the final disposal.

Electrical contractors are committed to designing, installing and maintaining electrical, lighting and IT systems based on clean and efficient products. We play a key role in ensuring the successful implementation of EU product policy, as we select the products which perform best according to technical and consumer requirements and needs, and as we maximise product efficiency by optimally integrating single pieces of equipment into high-performing, quality systems and installations.

So, in our reply to the EU Commission consultation we encouraged the EU Commission to keep up their efforts to improve product environmental performance in Europe.

We however made two important recommendations for the future of the EU product policy.

First, while measures like eco-design and energy labeling are key to improving the environmental performance of single products in the EU (e.g. white goods, industrial machines), they are not suitable to maximise the performance of systems or installations (e.g. lighting systems, automation and control systems, solar PV systems), which are the aggregation of several individual products. Going forward, we see the potential for improvement of installations quality in measures for minimum installers' skills and for regular inspections and monitoring of the installations.

The second recommendation we made is to adapt the indicators used to inform consumers about the environmental performance of the products they buy. Specifically, we recommend replacing today's reference to primary energy consumption with reference to final energy use. Final energy use provides objective and tangible information to consumers; it is what people have always seen on their energy bills! Reference to final energy consumption could also be coupled with information about product carbon footprint. Both these parameters clearly show how products score and provide consumers with an incentive to invest in cleaner solutions.

AIE plays active role in Europe's long-term plans for climate and energy sector

A few months ago, the EU Commission unveiled their strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate-neutral economy by 2050 – A Clean Planet for All. The strategy shows how Europe can lead the way to climate neutrality by investing into realistic technological solutions, empowering citizens, and aligning action in key areas.

In early January, we organized, together with Europacable and T&D Europe, the EU business associations for wire, cable and power infrastructure equipment and services, a very successful webinar for our respective members. During the webinar, which was attended by over 50 attentive participants, a European Commission representative having crunched the long-term vision numbers, overviewed the different pathways which the roadmap is built upon, and explained their implications for the electrical sector.

There is no doubt that the strategy outlines a big growth for our sector: our economy will continue down the electrification pathway, and electrified transport, buildings and industry will push the share of electricity in final energy consumption up to 53% in 2050. In our view, the electrification of the EU economy will involve a growing amount of digital solutions, demand-side flexibility and decentralised energy resources.

This is the reason why, as the EU Parliament Environment Committee prepares its comments to the Commission strategy in the form of a Resolution, in late January, AIE signed an open letter with other 10 organisations, inviting policy makers to conduct an in-depth analysis of the potential of demand-side flexibility. Such analysis will be key to show how system efficiencies can be achieved and how these can enable the large-scale adoption of renewable energies. Already today, electrical contractors are advising consumers and offering them a large number of decentralized clean and flexible technologies to optimize their energy use and decrease their environmental footprint. This market is just kick-starting and the potential for growth is immense and should be well considered by policy makers.

European News

- EU News: [New data and analyses for building the Energy Union in a robust way - the 2018 energy prices and costs report in Europe](#)
- EU News: [Energy Union: EU invests a further €800 million in priority energy infrastructure](#)
- Euractiv: [Cañete: 'No way around it', climate neutral EU is needed](#)
- Euractiv: [EU revises energy efficiency targets in view of Brexit](#)
- Euractiv: [EU at risk of missing 2020 energy efficiency targets: Lessons for 2030](#)
- EU Observer: [Seven member states miss climate plan deadline](#)

Upcoming European Events

SolarPower Summit 2019
6-7 March 2019 | Brussels, Belgium

Europe is back in solar business ! With the agreed EU 32% renewable energy target by 2030 and the end of the solar trade measures, we are on the cusp of a new solar boom in Europe. SolarPower Europe's latest forecast shows strong market growth in Europe in 2018, with solar demand growing over 60% this year! The energy landscape in Europe is moving fast, shaped by ever falling technology costs, breakthrough innovations, as well as national and international policy developments. Has the European Union succeeded in bringing its energy transition to the next level, and will it become a global leader in solar again? Will solar energy thrive in a subsidy free era and how can you capture the enormous opportunities that lie ahead? Join us on the 6-7th of March to get the latest strategic, political and market intelligence shaping the future of solar in Europe! The SolarPower Summit is SolarPower Europe's annual flagship event. It takes place for two days and brings together over 300 industry representatives from all major energy players, as well as SMEs and a range of decision makers from across the EU and beyond, and is recognised as one of the most important energy events in Brussels.

AIE Members receive an exclusive discount for this exciting event - contact [Giorgia Concas](#) to learn more.

World Summit on Digital Built Environment 2019
24-25 September 2019 | Helsinki, Finland

Registration to the summit is now open! Super Early Bird fee is available until the end of March for 100 first registrations. So act now and register for only 399 EUR (+ VAT 24 %). From the beginning of April the registration fee will be 599 EUR (+ VAT 24 %). Take advantage of the Super Early Bird fee and register for the event [here](#).

Call for presentations now open - World Summit on Digital Built Environment WDBE 2019 will showcase the best digital ideas and individuals improving the built environment - from incremental steps to revolutionary leaps.

Submission Categories

- Oral presentation
- Demo
- Workshop

Themes

- User Experience
- Leading Transformation
- Enabling Technologies
- Ecosystems and Business Models
- Data, Learning, Knowledge, Adaptability
- Public Sector as Enabling Partner
- Country Reports - The Big Picture
- Other

Deadline for submissions is 15 March 2019.

Upcoming AIE Events

12 February 2019 | Management Committee Meeting

12 February 2019 | Board Meeting

13 February 2019 | General Secretaries Meeting

13 February 2019 | BIM Working Group Meeting

21 May 2019 | Technical Working Group Meeting

22 May 2019 | Policy Working Group Meeting

European Association of Electrical Contractors - The Voice of Electrical Contractors in Europe

Who we are:

For over 60 years, the European Association for Electrical Contractors (AIE) has represented the interests of electrical contractors from 15 different countries at the EU-level. The AIE works as a network to exchange information and best practices for electrical contractors between its members and to inform policy makers to ensure all electricity is installed safely and efficiently in Europe.

For more information, visit our website: www.aie.eu or send us an email.