

Joint Press Release
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Hubert Aiwanger, Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs, presses the symbolic button to return the Irsching 4 and 5 gas-fired power stations to the electricity market

- **Uniper, ENTEGA, Mainova and N-ERGIE resume responsibility for operations at the state-of-the-art gas-fired power stations**
- **Lower gas prices allow for more economical operation than in the grid reserve**
- **Aiwanger: "Create a systematic investment framework for secure generation capacity"**

An event was held today at the Irsching 4 and 5 gas-fired power stations near Ingolstadt, Germany, to celebrate the fact that the two plants returned to the market on 1 October 2020. Uniper (the sole owner of the gas power plant Irsching 4), N-ERGIE, Mainova and ENTEGA were in attendance as the joint operators of the plants. As honoured guests, Hubert Aiwanger, Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs, and Martin Schmid, Mayor of Vohburg, pressed the symbolic button to launch the power stations onto the market. The launch means that after seven years in the grid reserve, two of the most state-of-the-art, efficient and clean gas-fired power stations in the world returned to the market on 1 October.

The reason for the relaunch is improved market prices—more specifically lower gas prices—that should make it possible to operate these highly efficient gas-fired power stations more economically than if they are in the grid reserve. The owners had already announced that they would reassess the situation from year to year and revise the decision in the event of a deterioration in market conditions.

Hubert Aiwanger, Deputy Prime Minister of Bavaria and Bavarian Minister of Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy: "I very much welcome the fact that the highly efficient and state-of-the-art Irsching 4 and 5 gas-fired power station units will be used more frequently in the future, especially in times of low supply from renewable sources. This return to the regular electricity market also relieves the burden on consumers, who previously had to pay grid fees to fund the grid reserve that these power stations have been part of for years."

"As we phase out nuclear and coal power, we have to ensure that there is a sufficient and secure generation capacity in the future. I therefore urge the Federal Government to create a systematic investment framework for power stations like these", **said Economy and Energy Minister Hubert Aiwanger.**

David Bryson, Board Member and COO at Uniper: "Today is a good day for climate protection in Europe. If Germany and Europe had started taking climate protection as seriously years ago as they do today, the power station would probably not have been shut down. But it is only in the last one or two years that CO₂ pricing has become a factor in the switch from coal to gas. Fortunately, our politicians are signalling that this strengthening of emissions trading is still wanted and supported. This makes us more confident about the foreseeable future".

Josef Hasler, Chairman of the Management Board of N-ERGIE: "With today's official starting signal for the return to the electricity market, a misguided political decision has finally been corrected after many years. After all, we will still need highly efficient and flexible power stations, such as Irsching 5, as a transitional technology during times when there is reduced wind or solar energy generation. If we succeed in making natural gas more climate friendly, for example by using power-to-gas, the power station will remain one component of a successful energy transformation in the future. At present, it is unfortunately still

not profitable to operate the power station, but we are reducing our losses compared to the grid regime under the conditions imposed by the Federal Network Agency".

Norbert Breidenbach, Board Member of Mainova: "We have always believed in the market opportunities of Irsching 5. After all, climate-friendly gas-fired power stations with high primary-energy utilisation will continue to play an important role in the energy transition. They are the obvious partner for renewables and will make a significant contribution to securing the energy supply of tomorrow.

Dr Marie-Luise Wolff, Chairwoman of the Management Board of Entega: "It is an important step that our state-of-the-art power station can now compete with the much more inefficient and climate-damaging coal-fired power stations, even coal is phased out by the government. Prioritising climate protection must mean prioritising gas-fired power stations as a bridging technology".

The two power station blocks Irsching 4 and 5 were previously covered by the "Reserve Power Plants Ordinance" (Netzreserveverordnung). This means that the units have only been used when their output was needed to maintain the stability of the grid. This was the case, for example, when the grid in southern Germany required additional support due to temporary bottlenecks. In September 2019, the owners of Irsching 4 and 5 indicated that the units would be subject to a temporary closure between October 2020 and the end of September 2021 — the owners have now withdrawn this notification. Irsching 5 has an output of 846 megawatts and was commissioned in 2010. With an efficiency rate of 59.7%, it is one of the most state-of-the-art gas power stations in Europe. It is operated by Uniper Kraftwerke GmbH on behalf of the owners. Uniper has a 50.2% share, N-ERGIE 25.2%, Mainova 15.6% and ENTEGA 9%. Irsching 4 was commissioned in 2011 with a capacity of 561 megawatts and an efficiency rate of 60.4%, making it one of the most efficient gas power stations in the world.

For more information, please contact:

Uniper SE

Georg Oppermann

T +49 211-4579-5532

georg.oppermann@uniper.energy

N-ERGIE Aktiengesellschaft

Dr. Heidi Willer

T +49 911 802-58063

Heidi.Willer@n-ergie.de

Mainova AG

Volker Wasgindt

T +49 69 213-25491

v.wasgindt@mainova.de

ENTEGA AG

Michael Ortmanns

T +49 6151-701-1160

michael.ortmanns@entega.ag



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