

The potential of power-to-gas A technology review and economical potential assessment

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Introduction

Historical background and technology status

Methodology for case studies analysis

Results of the case studies analysis



The potential of power to gas - A technology review and economical potential assessment



What is the potential for power-to-gas as a solution to valorise power for energy markets ?

- Massive development of renewable electricity production from intermittent sources is underway in Europe.
- With the merit order effects this produces periods of low spot prices of electricity.
- This represents an opportunity for the development of flexible electrointensive processes.
- Power-to-gas is one of these processes that can be considered as a solution to convert power into a fuel gas for energy markets.



The study assesses the potential of power-to-gas and alternative power-to-X processes targeting energy markets

- Power-to-X is the conversion of electricity in an energy carrier X
- Power-to-gas: production of gaseous fuels (hydrogen or synthetic natural gas)
- Power-to-liquids: production of liquid fuels (methanol, synthetic diesel...)
- Power-to-heat: production of heat (steam, hot water)
- Power-to-power is not considered (electricity storage)



Power-to-X as defined in the study can imply various routes, products and target different market







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Historical development of power to gas; from concept to industrial demonstration





Most of R&D projects (pilot & demonstration) have been launched since 2012, specifically for methanation





Europe is leading global R&D activity on PtG, specifically in Germany where 17 industrial pilot and demonstration projects have been launched



Water electrolysis: alkaline is the reference technology but could be challenged by PEM in the future, solid oxide electrolysis is still at laboratory stage of development

Alkaline electrolysers

- Reference technology used in industry
- Efficiency between 66% and 74% depending on the pressure of H₂ delivered
- Installed CAPEX ranges from 1,000 to 2,000 €/kWe depending on the capacity
- Slight margin of improvement on energy efficiency
- Cost reduction can be achieved but will remain limited (technology improvement and market volume effects)
- PEM electrolysers
 - Technology under demonstration
 - Efficiency is comparable to alkaline technology
 - Installed CAPEX for large capacities could reach 1,000 €/kWe at commercial stage, and decrease down to 400 €/kWe in 2050
- SOEC operates at high temperature to increase the energy efficiency but requires further development to confirm its performances and costs



Catalytic methanation is the most mature and investigated route for H_2 and CO_2 conversion into CH_4 but still requires technology development

Catalytic methanation

- Technology at demonstration status for power-to-gas applications
- The chemical reaction produces large amounts of heat
- Methanation is well known and controlled in the industry for large scale units and continuous operation
- Power-to-gas applications imply smaller scale units and intermittent operation and require new types of reactors (i.e. isothermal instead of adiabatic)
- R&D challenges are the control of the temperature inside the reactor and its operational flexibility
- CAPEX estimates for catalytic methanation vary widely in the literature and from project developers (400 to 1,500 €/kW_{HHV-SNG}).
- Biological methanation
 - Offers an alternative with convenient temperatures levels (20-70°C)
 - Faces scale-up challenges due to inherent limitations (mass transfer inside the reactor and kinetics of the reaction)





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The analysis is based on 6 case studies focusing on potential mass market applications for energy







We compare the levelized cost of the final product with the market price of alternative products on the target market, for 3 time horizons (2015, 2030 and 2050)

- LCOX is the levelized cost of the product X, it represents the breakeven selling price of the product
- LCOX is calculated from
 - Capital expenditures (CAPEX) of the plant
 - Operational expenditures (OPEX) of the plant over the lifespan
 - Production of the plant over the lifespan
 - Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC)
- CAPEX, OPEX and production are calculated from a process bloc analysis
- ► WACC is considered as 8%



CAPEX and OPEX are estimated per block for equipment, installation and project costs

- CAPEX & OPEX are calculated **per block** in the plant (electrolyzer, compression, methanation reactor...)
- CAPEX of a block have been assessed as a breakdown of project costs, factory gate cost of equipment and additional costs:
 - With project costs = 30% of Equipments CAPEX
 - Installed CAPEX are assessed from interviews, literature, ENEA's projects
- OPEX = Electricity & CO₂ consumption + O&M costs
- O&M costs are assumed to be fixed and based on the installed CAPEX (%CAPEX/year)



Note

When not available, additional costs are assumed as:

- 50% of factory gate cost for methanation & methanol synthesis
- 15% of factory gate cost for compression



The price of electricity is the most volatile and critical OPEX for power-to-X plants

Power-to-X plants should be operated preferably when the price of electricity is low

Spot NordPool prices of electricity in Denmark (DK1 zone) during the first week of January 2014





Electricity spot prices can be sorted hourly in a year from the lowest to the highest to give a price duration curve

Electricity spot price duration curve for selected European zones in 2014





The average wholesale price of electricity for a power-to-X plant operating at the cheapest hours depends on the load factor and is calculated with the minimum average electricity spot price curve

Operation on the cheapest hours requires the plant to be ideally flexible



Minimum average electricity spot price for selected European zones in 2014



For 2030 and 2050 time horizons, prospective scenarios of electricity price available in the literature were used

- Sources used from the literature
 - Thesis published in 2011 by Marco Nicolisi (EWI University of Köln)
 - Presentation performed in 2013 by Alfred Voss (IER University of Stuttgart)
 - Report published in 2014 by DNV GL in cooperation with the Imperial College and NERA Economic Consulting



Prospective price duration curves derived from models and published in the literature.

Finally, one minimum average electricity spot price curve was selected for each time horizon



Minimum average electricity spot prices selected



The final consumer price of electricity also comprises grid fees and electricity taxes

- ► The consumer price for electricity is composed of:
 - The wholesale price (curves shown previously)
 - Grid fees
 - Electricity taxes, for renewable electricity feed-in tariffs notably
- ► Grid fees were assumed to be fully variable although they are generally composed of a fixed share. The value used in the model is 10€/MWh.
- ► 4 different assumptions on electricity taxes were used for LCOX calculation
 - No electricity taxes
 - 20€/MWh
 - 40€/MWh
 - 60€/MWh

Note

Grid fees and electricity taxes values do not vary with timeframe (2015; 2030; 2050) in the model.



Market values of competitor energy carriers

Market values of competitor energy carriers are defined with low/high values

- ► For fossil fuels
 - The low value is the current market value without CO2 tax
 - The high value is the forecast market value 2030 (IEA WEO 2012) with a CO2 tax of 100€/tCO2
- ► For renewable fuels
 - The low value is the current (2015) lowest production cost or wholesale price
 - The high value is the current (2015) highest production cost or wholesale price

| | | Low value | High value |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Mobility | | | |
| Gasoline without taxes | €/100km | 2,7 | 4,2 |
| Gasoline with taxes | €/100km | 6,6 | 9,1 |
| Ethanol | €/100km | 3,8 | 4,6 |
| BioCNG | €/100km | 5,6 | 12,6 |
| Gas grid injection | | | |
| Natural gas wholesale | €/MWhHHV | 22,0 | 47,8 |
| Biomethane production cost | €/MWhHHV | 62,1 | 103,4 |
| Industrial heat | | | |
| Heat from natural gas | €/MWhth | 32,7 | 62,3 |

Market values of competitor energy carriers





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Total CAPEX of a plant varies significantly with scale effect and assumptions used on equipment cost decrease by 2030 and 2050



Total specific CAPEX of plants for the 3 time horizons



To compete with biomethane, power-to-gas with grid injection requires drastic CAPEX reduction, very low electricity prices and relatively high load factor





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To reach low LCOX a power-to-gas plant with grid injection must run at a relatively high load factor (i.e. from 2,500 to 6,000 hours/year)







Hydrogen and methanol produced from power already compete with bioCNG but are not likely to compete with fossil fuels without incentives

LCOX of mobility fuels from PtG or PtL plants at optimal load factor



To reach low LCOX a power-to-gas plant for mobility applications must run at a high load factor (i.e. more than 6,000 hours/year)





The competitiveness of power-to-heat for industry with electrode boilers is highly depending on the spread between natural gas and electricity prices

LCOX of heat from electrode boiler at optimal load factor





Power-to-heat for industry with electrode boilers is suited for operation at reduced load factors (i.e. 1,000 to 2,000 hours/year)



Power to heat for industry (10 MWel)



Green mobility is the most promising market for power-to-gas and should be the first target for large scale deployment of power-to-gas

- To reach competitiveness power-to-gas plants require:
 - To operate at a high load factor
 - To position on high product value markets
- Finally, power-to-gas plant should be resilient to the price level of electricity which means that other power-to-X routes (ex: power-to-heat) potentially competing for the "low cost electricity" resource are not a real threat
- ► To compete with biomethane, power-to-gas for grid injection requires dramatic CAPEX decrease and electricity available at very low cost which are not likely.
- H₂ production from power for the green mobility market already compete with bioCNG and could be incentivised to compete with fossil fuels in the long term
 - Financial incentives on product taxes are mandatory to compete with fossil fuels
 - The cost structure is relatively resilient to electricity price level
 - In the long term, CAPEX reduction of plants will allow for reduced financial incentives
- But other solutions for green mobility comes in competition

A complementary analysis is worth to better assess the potential of power-tohydrogen in comparison with the various available options for green mobility

- The present study is not oriented on mobility specifically and thus does not fully compare power-to-hydrogen with all other mobility options such as BioCNG, bioLNG, e-MeOH, biofuels 2G, electricity...
- A detailed comparison of these options, at country level and on multiple parameters is recommended to confirm the potential of power-to-hydrogen for this market:
 - Economics, CO2 emissions and air pollution, service provided (ex: autonomy), technology readiness, geographical coverage and infrastructure required, ramp-up scenario...
- The potential of power-to-X processes for non energy markets has not been considered in this study but could play a role in technology development (ex: H₂ for industrial use).



ENEA Consulting, your energy project partner



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ENEA Consulting 89 rue Réaumur, 75002 Paris

Tel:+33 (0)1 82 83 83 83 <u>contact@enea-consulting.com</u> <u>www.enea-consulting.com</u>



Document produit par ENEA Consulting I 89 rue Réaumur, 75002 Paris I +33 (0) 1 82 83 83 83 I www.enea-consulting.com



Input parameters used in the model

Sensitivity analysis



Input parameters used in the model (1/5)

Legend

Hard parameter

Calculated from another parameter

| General assumptions | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------|------|------|------|
| Project costs | % of Total CAPEX of proces blocs | 30,0% | | | |
| WACC | - | 8,0% | | | |
| Load factor | h/year | 6 000 | | | |
| Electricity cost | €/MWhe | 20 | | | |
| CO2 cost @ 10 bar | €/ton | 50 | | | |
| CO2 cost @ 100 bar | €/ton | 100 | | | |
| CO2 density | ton/Nm3-CO2 | 0,0018 | | | |
| HHV volumic H2 | MWh/Nm3-H2 | 0,0035 | | | |
| HHV massic H2 | MWh/kg-H2 | 0,0394 | | | |
| HHV volumic SNG | MWh/Nm3-SNG | 0,0113 | | | |
| HHV massic SNG | kWh/kg-SNG | 0,0145 | | | |
| HHV massic MeOH | kWh/kg-MeOH | 0,0056 | | | |

| Power grid connection | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|------|------|------|
| Lifetime power grid connection | years | 40 | | | |
| Transformer capacity out - 1MW | MWe | 1,0 | | | |
| Transformer capacity out - 10MW | MWe | 10,0 | | | |
| Transformer losses | % | 2,5% | | | |
| Length HV line | km | 1,0 | | | |
| Total CAPEX HV circuit breaker | € | 125 000 | | | |
| Specific CAPEX HV line | €/km | 100 000 | | | |
| Total CAPEX transformer | € | 30 000 | | | |
| Fixed OPEX power grid connection | %CAPEX/year | 0,00 | | | |



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Input parameters used in the model (2/5)

Legend

Hard parameter

| Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| years | 25 | | | |
| MWe | 1,0 | | | |
| MWe | 10,0 | | | |
| kWhHHV-H2/kWhe | | 66% | 69% | 69% |
| MWHHV-H2 | 0,7 | | | |
| MWHHV-H2 | 6,6 | | | |
| €/MWe in | | 1 500 000 | 1 000 000 | 800 000 |
| €/MWe in | | 1 000 000 | 800 000 | 500 000 |
| % CAPEX/year | 4,5% | | | |
| % CAPEX/year | 1,5% | | | |
| Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
| years | 20 | | | |
| MWHHV-SNG | 5,24 | | | |
| MWhHHV-SNG out/MWhHHV-H2 in | 79,4% | | | |
| €/MWHHV-SNG out | | 1 500 000 | 1 000 000 | 700 000 |
| % cost methanation reactor | 50% | | | |
| % cost methanation reactor/year | 7,5% | | | |
| Nm3H2/Nm3SNG | 4,0 | | | |
| Nm3CO2/NmSNG | 1,0 | | | |
| | UnityearsMWeMWeMWeMWHHV-H2/kWheMWHHV-H2€/MWe in€/MWe inØCAPEX/year% CAPEX/yearWHHV-SNGMWHHV-SNG out/MWhHHV-H2 in€/MWHHV-SNG out% cost methanation reactor% cost methanation reactor/yearNm3H2/Nm3SNGNm3CO2/NmSNG | Unit Fixed years 25 MWe 1,0 MWe 10,0 kWhHHV-H2/kWhe 0,7 MWHHV-H2 0,7 MWHHV-H2 6,6 €/MWe in 6,6 €/MWe in 1,5% Voit CAPEX/year 4,5% % CAPEX/year 1,5% Voit Fixed years 20 MWHHV-SNG out/MWhHHV-H2 in 79,4% €/MWHHV-SNG out 79,4% €/MWHHV-SNG out 79,4% €/MWHHV-SNG out 50% % cost methanation reactor 50% % cost methanation reactor/year 7,5% Nm3H2/Nm3SNG 4,0 Nm3CO2/NmSNG 1,0 | Unit Fixed 2015 years 25 MWe 1,0 MWe 10,0 kWhHHV-H2/kWhe 66% MWHHV-H2 0,7 MWHHV-H2 6,6 €/MWe in 1500 000 €/MWe in 1 500 000 % CAPEX/year 4,5% % CAPEX/year 1,5% Unit Fixed 2015 years 20 MWHHV-SNG out/MWhHHV-H2 in 79,4% €/MWHHV-SNG out 1500 000 % cost methanation reactor/year 7,5% Mm3H2/Nm3SNG 4,0 Nm3CO2/NmSNG 1,0 | Unit Fixed 2015 2030 years 25 MWe 1,0 MWe 10,0 kWhHHV-H2/kWhe 66% 69% MWHHV-H2 0,7 MWe in 1 500 000 1 000 000 €/MWe in 1 500 000 800 000 % CAPEX/year 4,5% % CAPEX/year 1,5% Unit Fixed 2015 2030 years 20 WhHHV-SNG out/MWhHHV-H2 in 79,4% €/MWHHV-SNG out 1 500 000 1 000 000 % cost methanation reactor 50% % cost methanation reactor/year 7,5% % cost methanation reactor/year 1,0 |



Input parameters used in the model (3/5)

Legend

Hard parameter

| Compression H2 | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|--|-------------------|-----------|------|---------|---------|
| Lifetime compressor H2 | years | 15 | | | |
| Compressor H2 capacity out - 1MW | MWHHV-H2 | 0,66 | | | |
| Compressor H2 capacity out - 10MW | MWHHV-H2 | 6,60 | | | |
| Cost compressor H2 - 1MW | € | 200 000 | | 180 000 | 160 000 |
| Cost compressor H2 - 10MW | € | 1 261 915 | | | |
| Additional cost compressor H2 | % cost compressor | 15,0% | | | |
| Fixed O&M compressor H2 10-60bar | % CAPEX/year | 6,0% | | | |
| Power consumption compressor H2 10-60bar | MWhe/MWhHHV-H2 | -0,93 | | | |

| Compression SNG | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|---|-------------------|---------|------|------|------|
| Lifetime compressor SNG | years | 15 | | | |
| Compressor SNG capacity out - 10MW | MWHHV-SNG | 5 | | | |
| Cost compressor SNG - 10MW | € | 630 957 | | | |
| Additional cost compressor SNG | % cost compressor | 15,0% | | | |
| Fixed O&M compressor SNG 10-60bar | % CAPEX/year | 6,0% | | | |
| Power consumption compressor SNG 10-60bar | MWhe/MWhHHV-SNG | 0,02 | | | |



Input parameters used in the model (4/5)

Legend

Hard parameter

| Pipeline H2 & SNG | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|---|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Lifetime pipeline | years | 35 | | | |
| Pipeline capacity out - 1MW | MWHHV-H2 | 0,66 | | | |
| Pipeline capacity out - 10MW | MWHHV-H2 | 6,60 | | | |
| Pipeline length | km | 1,00 | | | |
| Fixed CAPEX pipeline H2 @10 bar | € | 50 000 | | | |
| Variable CAPEX pipeline H2 @10 bar | €/km | 130 000 | | | |
| Fixed CAPEX pipeline H2 @60 bar | € | 200 000 | | | |
| Variable CAPEX pipeline H2 @60 bar | €/km | 300 000 | | | |
| Fixed O&M pipeline | % CAPEX/year | -98% | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Injection station H2 & SNG | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
| Lifetime injection station | years | 15 | | | |
| Injection station capacity out - 1MW | MWHHV-H2 | 0,66 | | | |
| Injection station capacity out - 10MW | MWHHV-H2 | 6,60 | | | |
| Total CAPEX distribution injection station - 1MW | € | | 600 000 | 480 000 | 360 000 |
| Total CAPEX distribution injection station - 10MW | € | | 700 000 | 560 000 | 420 000 |
| Total CAPEX transport injection station - 1MW | € | | 700 000 | 560 000 | 420 000 |
| Total CAPEX transport injection station - 10MW | € | | 900 000 | 720 000 | 540 000 |
| Fixed O&M injection station | %CAPEX/year | 8,0% | | | |
| | | | | | |



Input parameters used in the model (5/5)

Legend

Hard parameter

| Refueling station H2 | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
|--|------------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Lifetime H2 refueling station | years | 30 | | | |
| H2 refueling station capacity out - 1MW | MWHHV-H2 | 0,66 | | | |
| Total CAPEX H2 refueling station - 1MW | € | | 3 000 000 | 1 800 000 | 1 620 000 |
| Fixed O&M H2 refueling station - 1MW | %CAPEX/year | -92,5% | | | |
| Power consumption H2 refueling station | MWhe/MWhHHV-H2 | -0,82 | | | |
| Methanol synthesis | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
| Lifetime methanol reactor | years | 20 | | | |
| Methanol reactor capacity out - 10MW | MWHHV-MeOH | 4,99 | | | |
| Methanol reactor H2 consumption | kgH2/kgMeOH | 0,19 | | | |
| Methanol reactor CO2 consumption | kgCO2/kgMeOH | 1,38 | | | |
| Methanol synthesis efficiency | MWhHHV-MeOH out/MWhHHV-H2 in | 0,76 | | | |
| Specific CAPEX methanol reactor - 10MW | €/MWHHV-MeOH out | | 1 500 000 | 1 000 000 | 700 000 |
| Additional cost methanol reactor | % cost methanol reactor | 50% | | | |
| Fixed O&M methanol reactor - 10MW | %CAPEX/year | 7,5% | | | |
| Electrode boiler | Unit | Fixed | 2015 | 2030 | 2050 |
| Lifetime electrode boiler - 10MW | years | 40 | | | |
| Electrode boiler capacity out - 10MW | MWth | 10 | | | |
| Electrode boiler efficiency | MWhth/MWhe | -1% | | | |
| Specific total CAPEX electrode boiler - 10MW | €/MWth out | 89 999 | | | |
| Fixed O&M electrode boiler - 10MW | %CAPEX/year | -98,8% | | | |





Input parameters used in the model

Sensitivity analysis



Conditions used for sensitivity analysis

- Common nominal parameters
 - Load factor : 6000 hour/year
 - Electricity price: 20 €/MWh
 - WACC: 8%
- ► Type of sensitivity analysis
 - LCOX structure: variation of +/- 10% on each parameter
 - Project and technologies: ranges on each parameter with uncertainties or potential improvements/underestimates



Hydrogen injection at small scale (1 MWe)

- LCOX structure: CAPEX and electricity price
- ▶ Project & technologies: HV line & pipeline length, electrolyzer efficiency



H2 injection 1 MWe







Hydrogen injection at medium scale (1 MWe)

- LCOX structure: CAPEX and electricity price
- ▶ Project & technologies: Electricity price, electrolyzer efficiency, WACC



H2 injection 10 MWe Sensitivity analysis (+/- 10%)









LCOX structure: CAPEX, electricity price and O&M methanation

Project & technologies: electricity price, CAPEX and O&M methanation



SNG injection 10 MWe Sensitivity analysis (+/- 10%)

SNG injection 10 MWe Sensitivity analysis (range)







► LCOX structure: CAPEX, O&M refueling station

Project & technologies: CAPEX, electrolyzer efficiency, electricity price, O&M refueling station



H2 mobility 1 MWe Sensitivity analysis (+/- 10%)

H2 mobility 1 MWe Sensitivity analysis (range)



Low

High



Methanol mobility (10 MWe)

- LCOX structure: CAPEX, electricity price, O&M methanol synthesis
- Project & technologies: electricity price, CAPEX, O&M methanol synthesis, electrolyzer efficiency



Methanol mobility 10 MWe Sensitivity analysis (+/- 10%)

Methanol mobility 10 MWe Sensitivity analysis (range)







- ► LCOX structure: electricity price
- Project & technologies: electricity price







Variations on costs of technologies under development can significantly modify the LCOX (high uncertainty)

- CAPEX intensive blocks and O&M based on the CAPEX
- Wide range of value due to the lack of commercial maturity and feedback on the actual cost of these blocks

| Type of parameter | Technology/block | Range (Low/Nominal/High) | Variation on LCOX |
|----------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| CAPEX | Injection station (distribution) | 500/600/700 k€ for H2 injection (1 MWe) | -4% to +4% |
| CAPEX | H2 refueling station | 2/3/4 M€ for 1MWe | -19% to +19% |
| CAPEX | Methanation reactor (without integration costs) | 1200/1500/1700 €/kWout | -8% to +5% |
| CAPEX | Methanol synthesis (without integration costs) | 1200/1500/1700 €/kWout | -7% to +5% |
| 0&M | H2 refueling station | 6%/8%/10% of CAPEX (with integration costs) | -8 to +8% |
| 0&M | Methanation reactor | 6%/8%/10% of CAPEX (with integration costs) | -5% to +5% |
| 0&M | Methanol synthesis | 6%/8%/10% of CAPEX (with integration costs) | -5% to +5% |



Variations on input consumption and price impact all case studies concerned but are controlled (low uncertainty)

- Electricity price and load factor are critical parameters that are the focus of our modelling with electricity price duration curves
- ► Electrolyzer efficiency
 - Current value (66% with auxiliaries) is well known from commercial operation
 - A slight improvement is assumed by 2030 (69%) due to auxiliaries mutualization
- ► CO2 price
 - The impact on the LCOX is limited
 - The purchase of CO2 can be discussed for methanation (free CO2 from biogas upgrading facility)

| Type of parameter | Technology/block | Range (Low/Nominal/High) | Variation on LCOX |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Energy efficiency | Electrolyzer | 61%/66%/71% | -7% to +8% for H2 cases -4% to +4% for SNG & MeOH cases |
| CO2 price | Methanation | 20/50/80 €/t _{CO2} | -3% to +3% |
| CO2 price | Methanol synthesis | 80/100/120 €/t _{CO2} | -3% to +3% |



Long distances to power grid and gas grid can rapidly increase costs

- ▶ These parameters are sensitive for small scale capacities (1 MWe) and depend on the project
- A plant located at 10 km from the power grid or the gas grid and with a small production capacity (1 MWe) will be highly impacted by the CAPEX of HV line or pipeline.
- With a nominal value set at 1 km for both HV line and gas pipeline the potential for cost reduction is low.

| Type of parameter | Technology/block | Range (Low/Nominal/High) | Variation on LCOX |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Length | HV line | 0/1/10 km | -2% to +17% for H2 1 MWe -1% to +10% for H2 mobility |
| Length | Gas pipeline | 0/1/5 km | -3% to +12% for H2 1 MWe -1% to +5% for H2 10 MWe |

