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## **Power Outage in Germany Sparks Electricity Collapses in Other Countries**

*Other Western states that suffered blackouts were Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium and Austria.*

German national electricity network officials issued a formal statement on Sunday morning, in order to announce that a massive power outage that occurred at about 9.30 p.m. on Saturday in the northwestern part of the country, created a domino-like effect in other Western countries as well, such as France, Italy, Austria, some parts of Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium and Morocco, immediately after it occurred in Germany. Officials stated that no less than 82 million German citizens were left without power for almost an hour, while electricity cuts affected around five million French inhabitants as well as the entire northern part of Italy. "We weren't very far from a European blackout", one of the managers of a French power company called RTE, highlighted, adding that the failure of two German high-voltage lines, stretched over a river in north-western Germany - which had been shut down by German utility company E.O.N. in order to let a ship pass through - bear the entire responsibility for the "house of cards" style European blackouts. In addition to this, the Deutsche Bahn, the national rail company in Germany, announced that 100 regional trains were disrupted by the blackout. "In the past, these operations were often performed with no problems", E.O.N. officials declared in great surprise, while Michael Glos, the German Economy Minister announced the fact that a thorough investigation into the circumstances of this terrible incident is already being conducted: "We will examine this report quickly so that together with the companies we can ensure that, if at all possible, such events are not repeated", he stated. Apart from blaming the Germans for the outage, Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi stressed upon a more important fact, the need for a stronger electricity policy in Europe legitimated by a powerful authority: "It's a rich contradiction that we depend on each other, but we can't help each other without a common authority".