

Trans-European energy infrastructure: guidelines

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The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted a report by Tsvetelina PENKOVA (S&D, BG) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, amending Regulations (EU) 2019/942, (EU) 2019/943 and (EU) 2024/1789 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2022/869.

Subject matter and scope

The proposed regulation lays down guidelines for the timely development and interoperability of the priority corridors and areas of trans-European energy infrastructure that contribute to ensuring **energy affordability, energy system resilience and climate change mitigation**, in particular achieving the Union's targets for energy and climate and its climate neutrality objective by 2050 at the latest, and climate change adaptation.

Members insisted on increasing resilience of the networks, ensuring interconnections, energy security, market and system integration and competition that benefits all Member States, as well as affordability of energy prices, enabling low energy system costs and leading to higher affordability of energy.

Projects of common interest

A new Union list of projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest should be established **every two years**. The project should contribute significantly to the objectives of the regulation and to sustainability, including through the **integration of renewable and low carbon energy** into the grid and the transmission and distribution of renewable and low-carbon generation to major consumption centres and storage sites. They should be aligned with the principle of 'energy efficiency first'.

Members added that projects of common interest should have a **sufficient level of technological maturity** or is supported by credible evidence of current or expected future demand for the energy vector concerned in the Union market.

Smart grid projects must contribute to grid security, flexibility, and quality of supply, while ensuring that the digital and physical solutions used for the project comply with applicable EU legislation and relevant **cybersecurity, resilience, and security of supply** frameworks. They must also contribute to the **climate resilience of the electricity grid**, particularly through predictive, preventive, and anticipatory measures against climate-related risks, supported by digital and data-driven solutions.

Granting of permits and public participation

The permitting process must include the following two procedures: (a) an optional pre-application procedure, covering the period between the start of the permitting process and acceptance of the submitted complete application file by the national competent authority, which must take place within a maximum period of **18 months**; (b) a mandatory statutory permitting procedure, covering the period from the date of acceptance of the submitted complete application file until the date of the comprehensive decision, which must not exceed **12 months**. The national competent authority must ensure that the combined duration of the two procedures does not exceed **36 months**.

Enhanced stakeholder participation

Members consider it essential that stakeholders, including civil society, are provided with information and are consulted, in order to ensure the success of projects and to limit objections to them.

Union strategic scenario for the Union list

The Commission should draw up, within one year of the entry into force of the regulation and then at least **every two years thereafter**, a strategic scenario for the Union's electricity, hydrogen and gas, and, where appropriate, CO transport and storage. This scenario will serve as a reference for network planning, the identification of infrastructure needs, cost-benefit analyses and the cross-border allocation of costs. It should be consistent with European energy and climate objectives, incorporate a perspective up to 2050 and include:

- **an initial scenario**, consistent with the Union's targets;
- **an alternative scenario** based on different policy and system assumptions actual progress of Member States; and
- **mandatory sensitivity analyses** assessing the robustness of infrastructure planning.

The report confirms **the Commission's central role** in defining and adopting the central scenario, while ensuring it acts in cooperation with the Member States, in light of the national energy and climate plans, and adopts the final scenario only after consulting the Member States within the relevant Regional Groups.

Comprehensive assessment of the Union energy infrastructure framework

The Commission should prepare a comprehensive framework assessment every two years to complement the Union's strategic scenario. Such an assessment should provide an indicative assessment of the future architecture of the Union energy system and cover the planning horizon up to 2050 and include two successive ten-year planning periods within the overall planning horizon, the first one until 2040 and the next one until 2050.

It should include, *inter alia*: (i) priority cross-border infrastructure and strategically relevant internal infrastructure; (ii) an indicative Union-wide network map identifying major infrastructure corridors, **bottlenecks**, reinforcement needs and interdependencies between **electricity, hydrogen, gas and CO transport** and **storage** infrastructure; (iii) indicative investment costs and financing needs; (iv) remaining infrastructure gaps and strategic priorities requiring further action at Union level.