European Union energy policy. Green Paper

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The broad lines of action by the Community on trans--European energy networks must be: - the identification of projects of common interest; - the creation of a more favourable context for development of these networks. Any energy network project may be considered to be of common interest if it corresponds to the objectives and priorities set and displays potential economic viability taking economic, social and technical factors into account. In this connection, the Council considers that the concept of viability includes not only the financial profitability of the projects but also other considerations such as the reliability and security of energy supplies, the strengthening of economic and social cohesion and protection of the environment in the Community. A committee composed of the representatives of the Member States will assist the Commission in implementing the Decision, in particular with regard to updating the list of projects of common interest. The common position concerning a more favourable context for the realisation of projects of common interest in connection with trans--European energy networks and for the interoperability of such networks on a Community--wide scale identifies the action to be taken to achieve those objectives. The text therefore provides that the Community should promote as necessary: - technical cooperation projects between the entity or entities responsible for the trans--European energy networks involved in the proper functioning of European interconnections; - cooperation between Member States through mutual consultations with a view to facilitating implementation of the authorisation procedures for the realisation of projects on trans--European energy networks in order to reduce delays. In close collaboration with the Member States concerned, the Commission should take all relevant initiatives for promoting the coordination of the activities in question. As regards the creation of a more favourable financial context for the development of trans--European energy networks, the common position provides that the Community: - may provide financial support as part of the action on trans--European energy networks. These measures would be adopted by the Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Council Regulation laying down general rules for the financing of trans--European networks; - will take account of the projects of common interest in providing assistance from its Funds, instruments and financial programmes applicable to those networks, within the terms of their own rules and purposes. A committee composed of the representatives of the Member States will assist the Commission in implementing the Decision.