



Brussels, 26 February 2026
(OR. en)

6281/26

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: European Grids Package
- Policy debate

In view of the TTE (Energy) Council on 16 March 2026, delegations will find in the Annex the Presidency background note on the European Grids Package.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENT**POLICY DEBATE ON THE EUROPEAN GRIDS PACKAGE**

The TEN-E Regulation and the Permitting Directive proposed by the Commission as part of the European Grids Package aim to improve cross-border interconnectivity and boost electrification as a strategic pillar for reinforcing EU competitiveness, energy security, and the transition toward a decarbonised economy.

The Cyprus Presidency has been driving forward a thorough examination of the proposals with the Member States and the Commission. This has resulted in progress on technical provisions and clarifications in the texts, as reflected in the two revised texts issued so far. Progress on some other issues requires political guidance from the Council.

1. TEN-E: Integrated Grids Planning based on a common scenario

In order to complete a genuine Energy Union, a more European approach to energy network development planning is needed. The Commission has proposed a “central scenario” which would be prepared by the Commission based on input from Member States and transmission system operators with close involvement of ACER and the TEN-E Regional Groups. The central scenario would serve as common basis for the assessment of cross-border energy infrastructure needs and the benefits of candidate projects. In their reactions so far, Member States have underlined the need to ensure a balance between EU-level planning and national policy choices. They have also stressed the need for transparency in the development of a central scenario, to take into account regional specificities.

Question for Ministers:

Q1. *How can we ensure that future cross-border infrastructure planning, based on a common scenario, serves the needs of a genuine Energy Union, without encroaching on the role of Member States’ authorities in the development of national energy infrastructure?*

2. Financing the Grids and Cost-Sharing

The recent energy crisis and our accelerated transition have proven that our electricity grids are no longer just national assets, but the backbone of a collective European security of supply. As we move from planning local connections to building a genuine Energy Union, the traditional methods of funding and decision-making are being pushed to their limits. Achieving our 2030 and 2050 climate goals requires an unprecedented scale of cross-border infrastructure. Currently, the costs of these projects are often concentrated in a few Member States while the benefits are shared regionally or even across the Union.

Question for Ministers:

Q2. *To what extent are Member States prepared to evolve their financial and planning frameworks – including the use of congestion revenues and broader cost-sharing – to ensure that the financial burden of projects of European significance is distributed more equitably?*

3. Permitting and Administrative Reforms

Member States have expressed broad support for the goal of speeding up permitting procedures for energy infrastructure, renewable energy and storage projects. However, the practical implementation of the Commission proposal has raised questions of legal certainty, since Member States fear that spreading permitting rules over multiple legal acts (RED III, EMD, TEN-E, Environmental Omnibus) may increase the risk of conflicting national interpretations and hence of challenges in court. In addition, a number of Member States are not keen on the proposed prohibition to identify large territories where the installation of renewable energy projects is a priori not possible, since land-use planning is considered a core national competence. Several Member States also insisted that any presumption of "overriding public interest" for energy projects must include explicit protections for national security and defence.

Question for Ministers:

Q3. *Speeding up permitting will necessarily require a compromise between different, and sometimes conflicting interests. Where do you see the point of balance between streamlined permitting procedures, environmental protection and the respect of the subsidiarity principle?*