



2024/1343

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**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION (EU) 2024/1343**

**of 13 May 2024**

**on speeding up permit-granting procedures for renewable energy and related infrastructure projects**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 292 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Renewable energy is at the heart of the clean energy transition necessary to achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal <sup>(1)</sup>, to make energy affordable and to decrease the Union's dependence on fossil fuels and energy imports. It is also a source of growth and jobs and contributes to the Union's technological and industrial leadership, reinforcing EU strategic autonomy, and making the Union's economy more resilient. The accelerated deployment of renewables will make the Union less reliant on – primarily imported – fossil fuels.
- (2) Rapidly increasing the share of renewable energy is also crucial for addressing the problem of high and volatile energy prices. The decreased fixed costs and close-to-zero variable costs of renewable energy mean that renewable electricity costs have been more stable and lower than fossil fuel costs.
- (3) During the energy crisis, the accelerated rollout of renewables has proven its ability to reduce risks for the Union's security of supply, especially for gas and electricity and has contributed to reducing energy prices for Union citizens and businesses. As regards developments on security of supply in the Union, there has been an overall improvement since 2022. However, significant risks still remain and further acceleration of the deployment of renewable energy is required for the Union to meet the objectives of the REPowerEU plan <sup>(2)</sup>.
- (4) The construction and operation of renewable energy projects is normally subject to administrative authorisations and permits in all Member States. Permit-granting procedures help to ensure that such projects are sustainable, safe and secure. However, the complexity, variety and often excessive duration of those procedures constitutes a major barrier to the swift and necessary deployment of renewable energy and to achieving a more affordable, secure and sustainable Union energy system.
- (5) Delays in processing project authorisations put at risk the timely reaching of energy and climate targets and increase the cost of the projects necessary to do so. Delays could also lead to the installation of less efficient renewable energy installations by hindering dynamic innovation.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM(2019) 640 final.

<sup>(2)</sup> COM(2022) 230 final.

- (6) Building on the experience gained through the application of Directive 2001/77/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(3)</sup> and Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(4)</sup>, Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(5)</sup> addressed those problems by introducing enhanced requirements for the organisation of permit-granting procedures for renewable energy developers. Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(6)</sup>, which amended Directive (EU) 2018/2001, further strengthened those requirements. The full and rapid transposition of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 by all Member States will significantly help to shorten administrative procedures and is a matter of the highest priority and urgency. In addition to the structural changes introduced by Directive (EU) 2023/2413, Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577<sup>(7)</sup> introduced additional temporary, urgent and targeted measures addressed to specific technologies and types of projects. The application of some of those measures has been temporarily extended by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/223<sup>(8)</sup>, which also introduced new measures. Available data signals that several Member States have experienced double-digit increases in the volume of permits issued for onshore wind since the entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 as well as a strong increase in solar energy deployment<sup>(9)</sup>.
- (7) The Commission supports the Member States through different fora where good practices to accelerate permit-granting procedures for renewable energy and related infrastructure projects are exchanged<sup>(10)</sup>, as well as through the Technical Support Instrument established by Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(11)</sup>, providing tailor-made technical expertise to design and implement reforms, including those streamlining the framework for permit-granting processes for renewable energy projects. The technical support provided under the 2023 Flagship on Accelerating permitting for renewable energy projects<sup>(12)</sup>, for example, involves strengthening of administrative capacity, harmonising the legislative frameworks, and sharing of relevant best practices.
- (8) While there is broad public support for an increased deployment of renewable energy, individual projects may lack public acceptance which may hamper their implementation. To address this, the needs and perspectives of citizens, local authorities and societal stakeholders should be taken into account at all stages of renewable energy projects from policy development to spatial planning and project development, deployment and operation. Similarly, good practices for ensuring a just distribution of the various impacts and benefits of installations among the local population should be encouraged, in line with the Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality<sup>(13)</sup>.

<sup>(3)</sup> Directive 2001/77/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 September 2001 on the promotion of electricity produced from renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market (OJ L 283, 27.10.2001, p. 33, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2001/77/oj>).

<sup>(4)</sup> Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC (OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 16, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2009/28/oj>).

<sup>(5)</sup> Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 82, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/2001/oj>).

<sup>(6)</sup> Directive (EU) 2023/2413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 amending Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 and Directive 98/70/EC as regards the promotion of energy from renewable sources, and repealing Council Directive (EU) 2015/652 (OJ L, 2023/2413, 31.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2023/2413/oj>)

<sup>(7)</sup> Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 of 22 December 2022 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy (OJ L 335, 29.12.2022, p. 36, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2577/oj>).

<sup>(8)</sup> Council Regulation (EU) 2024/223 of 22 December 2023 amending Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy (OJ L, 2024/223, 10.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/223/oj>).

<sup>(9)</sup> Report from the Commission to the Council on the review of Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 of 22 December 2022 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, COM(2023) 764 final.

<sup>(10)</sup> These include the informal expert group on accelerating permitting for renewable energy projects, the Single Market Enforcement Task Force, the Concerted Action CA-RES, the expert groups on SEA/EIA and on maritime spatial planning, and the regional High-level Groups such as NSEC, BEMIP and CESEC as well as the Cohesion for Transitions-C4T community of practice.

<sup>(11)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 establishing a Technical Support Instrument (OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/240/oj>).

<sup>(12)</sup> [https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/accelerating-permitting-renewable-energy\\_en](https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/accelerating-permitting-renewable-energy_en).

<sup>(13)</sup> Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality (OJ C 243, 27.6.2022, p. 35).

- (9) Most of the barriers related to permit-granting for renewable energy projects and the related infrastructure, as well as good practices to overcome them, have been identified at Member State level.
- (10) This Recommendation addresses those concerns, calling for solutions to be found within the existing legal framework. It is without prejudice to Union law, in particular in the area of energy and environment, and in the area of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, for which the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ('the Aarhus Convention') applies
- (11) As it is urgent to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy projects, Member States should start as soon as possible to identify suitable land and sea areas and to prepare plans for particularly suitable areas ('renewables acceleration areas'), in accordance with Articles 15b and 15c of Directive (EU) 2018/2001. Dedicated guidance on the designation of renewables acceleration areas has been published alongside this Recommendation, in Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2024) 333.
- (12) Maritime Spatial Planning is a key tool for identifying future areas for the deployment of renewable energy as well as facilitating multiple uses of the maritime space, including conservation and protection of the marine environment. Member States were required by Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>(14)</sup> to have their national maritime spatial plans adopted by 31 March 2021. The Commission encourages all Member States that have set national targets for offshore wind in their national energy and climate plan to identify and allocate at early stage the necessary maritime space and integrate it in their maritime spatial plan.
- (13) Barriers resulting from permit-granting procedures might also affect the future deployment of innovative decarbonisation technologies needed for climate neutrality. Setting up regulatory sandboxes, that is to say the testing, in a real-life environment, of innovative technologies, products, services or approaches, which are not fully compliant with the existing legal and regulatory framework, could support innovation and facilitate the subsequent adaptation of the regulatory environment to accommodate them. Furthermore, ensuring sufficient and adequate staffing of local and regional authorities involved in environmental assessments and permit-granting procedures and addressing labour and skill shortages<sup>(15)</sup> are essential enabling conditions for speeding up the project development and deployment of renewable energy.
- (14) Along with this Recommendation, the Commission is making available digitally consolidated datasets on a wide range of relevant energy and environmental factors through the Energy and Industry Geography Lab<sup>(16)</sup> (EIGL), to help Member States identify renewables acceleration areas for the rapid deployment of new renewable energy projects.

<sup>(14)</sup> Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning (OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 135, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/89/oj>).

<sup>(15)</sup> In line with the Commission Action Plan on labour and skill shortages in the EU, COM(2024) 131 final.

<sup>(16)</sup> <https://energy-industry-geolab.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>.

- (15) To address the need for the accelerated development of the necessary grids to integrate renewable energy into the electricity system and, thus, avoiding further delays in its deployment, the Commission has presented on 28 November 2023 an Action Plan <sup>(17)</sup> to make sure that electricity grids will operate more efficiently and will be rolled out further and faster in the Union.
- (16) Several actions of this plan focus on accelerating the implementation of grids through faster permit-granting, long-term planning and predictability, and enhancing stakeholder engagement, complementing the provisions regarding the acceleration of renewable energy.
- (17) Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(18)</sup> establishes that projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest shall be granted the status of the highest national significance possible, where such a status exists in national law, and be appropriately treated in the permit-granting processes. All dispute resolution procedures, litigation, appeals and judicial remedies related to projects on the Union list in front of any national courts, tribunals, panels, including mediation or arbitration, where they exist in national law, shall be treated as urgent, to the extent possible under national law.
- (18) This Recommendation replaces the Recommendation of 18 May 2022 <sup>(19)</sup> on speeding up permit-granting procedures for renewable energy projects and facilitating Power Purchase Agreements,

HAS ADOPTED THIS RECOMMENDATION:

#### DEFINITIONS

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation, renewable energy projects should be understood to mean production plants for the generation of renewable energy <sup>(20)</sup>, including in the form of renewable hydrogen, and the assets needed for their grid connection and for the storage of the energy produced. Related infrastructure, referred to in this Recommendation, should be understood to mean electricity, gas and heat networks or storage assets which are necessary to integrate renewable energy into the energy system.

#### FASTER AND SHORTER PROCEDURES

2. Member States should ensure that the planning, construction and operation of renewable energy projects and related infrastructure projects qualify for the most favourable procedure available in their planning and permit-granting procedures. In particular, as regards network development projects, Member States should ensure that all of those projects enjoy the status of the highest national significance possible, where such status exists in national law, with all advantages deriving therefrom in any administrative or legal proceedings.
3. Without prejudice to the permitting deadlines of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, as amended by Directive (EU) 2023/2413, Member States should establish clearly defined and as short as possible deadlines for all the steps required for the granting of permits to build and operate renewable energy projects and the related infrastructure projects, specifying the cases in which such deadlines may be extended and under which circumstances. Member States should establish binding maximum deadlines for all relevant stages of the environmental impact assessment procedure in order to ensure that the deadlines defined in Directive (EU) 2018/2001 are met.

<sup>(17)</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Grids, the missing link – An EU Action Plan for Grids, COM(2023) 757 final.

<sup>(18)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2022 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2009, (EU) 2019/942 and (EU) 2019/943 and Directives 2009/73/EC and (EU) 2019/944, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 (OJ L 152, 3.6.2022, p. 45, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/869/oj>).

<sup>(19)</sup> C(2022) 3219 final.

<sup>(20)</sup> As defined in Article 2, second subparagraph, point (1), of Directive (EU) 2018/2001.

4. Member States should establish timeframes and lay down specific procedural rules with a view to ensuring the efficiency of the legal proceedings related to access to justice for renewable energy projects and the related infrastructure projects.
5. Member States should create a single unified application process for the entire administrative permit application and granting process for renewable energy projects. Simultaneous applications should be prioritised over sequential applications if different authorisations are required, including for related grid connection projects.
6. Member States should allow applicants to update the technology specifications of their projects in the time between the submission of the permit application and the construction of projects to facilitate the uptake of innovative technologies.
7. When implementing the recommendations under points 2 to 6, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 2 of the guidance in the Staff Working Document (SWD) linked to this Recommendation <sup>(21)</sup>.

#### FACILITATING CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

8. Member States should apply simplified permit-granting procedures for small-scale renewables and renewables self-consumers, including lighter consent requirements, such as reduced majorities, for installing renewables in multi-apartment buildings, or avoid them altogether. Member States should ensure that consumers willing to participate in renewables self-consumption have access to information related to permit-granting procedures and consent requirements.
9. Member States should stimulate the participation of citizens, including from low- and middle-income households, and energy communities in the planning, development, deployment and operation of renewable energy projects and the related infrastructure projects, as well as take measures to encourage passing the benefits of the energy transition on to local communities, including through participation in energy communities or other co-ownership structures. In that respect, Member States are encouraged to adhere to the pillars of the 'Pact for Engagement to ensure early, regular and meaningful stakeholder engagement in grid development' announced in the Commission's communication on a EU Action Plan for Grids and reinforce the current engagement practices towards the public to ensure a regular process that harnesses trust and participation in grid development and addresses the impact on communities and nature, including through sharing and distribution of benefits.
10. Member States should ensure that public hearings, or other stakeholder engagement opportunities, are organised early and regularly in the design and planning procedure when they can still influence the location, routing or technology of network assets. Member States should ensure that public hearings and other stakeholder engagement initiatives are inclusive and accessible, allowing the public to interact with the project promoters and decision-makers in a timely manner, and encouraging active participation in all stages of project development, deployment and operation.
11. Member States should implement simplified permit-granting procedures and proportionate permit-granting requirements for renewable and citizen energy communities, including for the connection of community-owned plants to the grid and reduce to a minimum production licensing procedures and requirements and similar operational permits or certifications, while ensuring compliance with EU law.
12. When implementing the recommendations under points 8 to 11, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 5, point (c) and Section 6, point (a), of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation <sup>(22)</sup>.

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<sup>(21)</sup> Guidance to the Member States on good practices to speed up permit-granting procedures for renewable energy and related infrastructure projects, SWD(2024) 124.

<sup>(22)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.

### IMPROVING INTERNAL COORDINATION

13. Member States should ensure effective coordination between national, regional and municipal levels regarding the roles and responsibilities of the competent authorities, as well as streamlining of the applicable legislation, regulations and procedures for the authorisation of renewable energy projects and related infrastructure.
14. Member States should design single contact points for granting permits for renewable energy projects and for projects of common interest and projects of mutual interest required in Directive (EU) 2018/2001 and in Regulation (EU) 2022/869, respectively, in such a way as to limit the number of authorities involved to what is necessary. Member States should maximise efficiency, taking into account the benefits of concentrating technological, environmental and legal expertise.
15. Member States should ensure that the single contact points mediate exchanges between project developers and other relevant authorities to ensure a uniform interpretation of permit-granting rules and capacity-building in all involved authorities.
16. Member States should incentivise exchanges between the single contact points and other relevant authorities on the needs and potential risks in the permit-granting of the projects, immediately after the start of the permit-granting process.
17. Member States should introduce, also outside renewable acceleration areas and with the necessary safeguards, rules to attribute consequences for any delays or lack of action from administrative authorities, such as the introduction of tacit approval of intermediate steps following the lack of an explicit reply from the competent authority or authorities within the established deadlines.
18. When implementing the recommendations under points 13 to 17, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 3 of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation <sup>(23)</sup>.

### CLEAR, TRANSPARENT AND DIGITALISED PROCEDURES

19. Member States should communicate to the applicants clear, complete and transparent information on all requirements and procedural stages, including complaint procedures <sup>(24)</sup>, at the beginning of the permit-granting procedure for renewable energy projects and related infrastructure.
20. Member States should introduce fully digital permit-granting procedures and e-communication as soon as possible and no later than 21 November 2025 as per Article 16, paragraph 3, of Directive (EU) 2018/2001. In doing so, Member States should make use of digital tools to monitor and enforce the deadlines set and to inform applicants of the status of their application. The online manual of procedures to be made available to project developers as per Article 16, paragraph 4, of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, including via the YourEurope portal <sup>(25)</sup>, should include a clear sequential description of the stages and binding deadlines for each stage of the permit-granting process, specifying the maximal duration of each extension thereof, templates for applications, environmental studies and data, as well as information on options for public participation and on administrative charges.

<sup>(23)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.

<sup>(24)</sup> See for instance the summary of all relevant national rules on environmental complaint-handling presented in a user-friendly manner: [https://e-justice.europa.eu/300/EN/access\\_to\\_justice\\_in\\_environmental\\_matters](https://e-justice.europa.eu/300/EN/access_to_justice_in_environmental_matters).

<sup>(25)</sup> Permit-granting procedures are covered by the point on starting, running and closing a business of Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2018/1724 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018 establishing a single digital gateway to provide access to information, to procedures and to assistance and problem-solving services and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1724/oj>).

21. Member States should also explore making better use of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and geospatial data, to see where the processing of information can be sped up and automatised and reporting by project promoters can be replaced by data obtained through other means, thus cutting the burden for project promoters while speeding up the permit-granting procedure.
22. Member States should ensure that projects with cross-border relevance are dealt with at the national level, involving any local authorities concerned, as appropriate.
23. Member States should ensure that permit-granting authorities for renewable energy and related infrastructure projects hold bilateral discussions with developers and, where relevant, local authorities early in the planning process to assess the project permitting and public consultation needs, as well as the required mitigation measures to minimise environmental impact, resulting, if possible, in the drawing of a comprehensive permitting schedule.
24. When implementing the recommendations under points 19 to 23, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 3 of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation <sup>(26)</sup>.

#### **SUFFICIENT HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS**

25. Member States should ensure sufficient and adequate staffing, with relevant skills and qualifications, for their permit-granting entities and authorities in charge of conducting environmental assessments. To that end, Member States should consider setting up, in close cooperation with the social partners of the sectors concerned, national centres of excellence for thematic training as well as platforms for exchange among permit-granting authorities.
26. Member States should ensure sufficient and adequate financing of permit-granting authorities and use Union and national funding opportunities available for upskilling and reskilling, in particular at regional and local level, and cooperate with the Large-Scale Partnerships for Skills established under the Pact for Skills in the Onshore and Offshore Renewable Energy Ecosystems <sup>(27)</sup> to bridge the skills gap of staff working on permit-granting procedures and on environmental assessments.
27. When implementing the recommendations under points 25 and 26, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 4 of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation <sup>(28)</sup>.

#### **BETTER IDENTIFICATION AND PLANNING OF LOCATIONS FOR PROJECTS**

28. For the purposes of the mapping obligations in Article 15b and 15c of Directive (EU) 2018/2001, Member States should swiftly remove regulatory barriers, identify data gaps and ensure early involvement of the relevant stakeholders to facilitate environmental data gathering and improve public support. For that purpose, Member States are encouraged to make use of the updated datasets available in the Energy and Industry Geography Lab <sup>(29)</sup> ('EIGL') and the Photovoltaic Geographical Information System <sup>(30)</sup> ('PVGIS') and further complement them with datasets available at national or regional level.

<sup>(26)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.

<sup>(27)</sup> [https://pact-for-skills.ec.europa.eu/about/industrial-ecosystems-and-partnerships/renewables\\_en](https://pact-for-skills.ec.europa.eu/about/industrial-ecosystems-and-partnerships/renewables_en).

<sup>(28)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.

<sup>(29)</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/energy-industry-geography-lab>.

<sup>(30)</sup> [https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/photovoltaic-geographical-information-system-pvgis\\_en](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/photovoltaic-geographical-information-system-pvgis_en).

29. Member States should limit the zones where renewable energy cannot be developed ('exclusion zones') to the necessary minimum. They should provide clear and transparent information with reasoned justification on restrictions related to distance to housing and military or civil aviation zones. The restrictions should be evidence-based and designed in such a way as to fulfil their intended purpose while maximising the availability of space for the development of renewable energy projects, taking into account other spatial planning constraints.
30. Member States should streamline environmental assessments requirements for renewable energy projects and related infrastructure. To that end, they should apply available technical guidance on reconciling the deployment of renewable energy and related grids and the Union's environmental legislation. Member States should make scoping<sup>(31)</sup> mandatory also for related infrastructure projects in order to improve the quality of the environmental impact assessment process. Member States should apply joint or coordinated procedures for all relevant assessments stemming from Union environmental law.
31. Member States should facilitate the sharing of data from past environmental assessments and from the monitoring of environmental impacts of renewable energy and related infrastructure projects, including by digitalising such data into a publicly accessible portal. Member States should enhance their efforts to fill knowledge gaps concerning the distribution and condition of protected habitats, as well as the distribution and migration paths of species, especially in the marine environment, and ensure that monitoring data become swiftly available to the public and project promoters in particular.
32. Member States should encourage early public involvement in defining spatial plans, promoting the multiple use of sites and ensuring transparency about where and how renewable energy projects and related infrastructure may be built or installed, including small-scale installations at municipal level. Member States should pursue long-term coordinated and anticipatory planning of networks, storage and renewable energy generation capacities at all levels, including in the context of regional cooperation.
33. When implementing the recommendations under points 28 to 32, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 5 of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation<sup>(32)</sup>.

#### **EASIER NETWORK CONNECTION AND EFFICIENT USE OF NETWORKS**

34. Member States should implement long-term network planning and anticipatory investment consistent with the planned expansion of renewable energy production capacities, taking into account future demand and the objective of climate neutrality.
35. Member States should establish simplified procedures for repowering existing renewable energy plants, including by clarifying the applicable land use restrictions, distance requirements and issuing guidelines on how the difference between repowering and new projects should be treated in the national framework.

<sup>(31)</sup> Scoping means issuing an opinion on the scope and level of detail of the environmental information to be submitted in the form of an environmental impact assessment report.

<sup>(32)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.



36. Member States should ensure that system operators:
- (i) develop network development plans that appropriately integrate renewable and electrification needs;
  - (ii) apply a transparent and digital procedure for grid connection applications;
  - (iii) provide information on available grid capacities;
  - (iv) optimise the use of grid capacity by allowing its use by power plants combining multiple complementary technologies.

Member States should ensure that distribution system operators conduct such actions, where this is not already the case.

37. Once adopted, Member States should swiftly transpose the recast Gas Market Directive <sup>(33)</sup> into national law in order to provide legal certainty for the repurposing of natural gas pipelines to hydrogen by clearly stating which new authorisations might be required and allowing the grandfathering of their existing authorisations.
38. When implementing the recommendations under points 34 to 37, Member States are encouraged to take into account the practices described in Section 6 of the guidance in the SWD linked to this Recommendation <sup>(34)</sup>.

### INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

39. Member States are encouraged to put in place regulatory sandboxes to grant targeted exemptions from the national, regional or local legislative or regulatory framework for innovative technologies, products, services or approaches, to facilitate permit-granting in support of the deployment and system integration of renewable energy, related grids, storage, and other decarbonisation technologies, and to facilitate permit-granting for testing sites for new technologies.

### MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW

40. Member States should set up a contact point for project developers and for the Commission, tasked with regularly monitoring the main bottlenecks in the permit-granting process and addressing the issues encountered by developers of renewable energy and related infrastructure projects. Member States should continue monitoring the employment, social and distributional impacts of renewable energy development and deployment, in line with the Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality <sup>(35)</sup>.
41. Member States should carry out an audit of their permit-granting procedures applicable to renewable energy projects and related infrastructure, mapping the processes and authorities involved, and conduct regular evaluations in order to determine and implement measures to accelerate such procedures.

<sup>(33)</sup> Not yet adopted. It has been approved by the European Parliament ([https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0283\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0283_EN.html)), but adoption by the Council is still pending.

<sup>(34)</sup> SWD(2024) 124.

<sup>(35)</sup> Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality.

- (42) Member States are encouraged to communicate to the Commission, in particular as part of the integrated national energy and climate progress reports to be submitted pursuant to Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>(36)</sup>, all available detailed information on the national measures taken in the context of this Recommendation.
- (43) The Commission, taking into account information submitted by the Member States, will review the implementation of this Recommendation when assessing, by 21 November 2025, pursuant to Directive (EU) 2018/2001, whether further measures are needed to support Member States in the implementation of the permit-granting procedures provided for in that Directive, including by means of developing indicative key performance indicators.

Done at Brussels, 13 May 2024.

*For the Commission*  
Kadri SIMSON  
*Member of the Commission*

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<sup>(36)</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1999/oj>).