

Trans-European energy infrastructure: guidelines

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The Council held a public exchange of views on a draft regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure following the presentation of the proposal by the Commission.

Ministers were invited to focus their discussions in particular on the methodology proposed to identify projects of common interest and on the measures on the granting of permits, public participation and regulatory issues.

The Commission presented its proposal in October 2011, following the call from the European Council last February. The main challenges relating to the construction of energy infrastructure that this Commission proposal therefore aims to address are: the delays in construction due to lengthy permit procedures, the lack of focus on projects of common interest, and the need for a more attractive and efficient investment framework and for a mechanism that properly allocates costs and benefits across borders.

The presentation of the proposal by the Commission, a first exchange of views on the basis of the following questions:

1. Does the methodology proposed by the Commission to identify projects of common interest provide the necessary elements for a comprehensive but quick decision making process?
2. Do the measures on permit granting, public participation and regulatory issues taken together with the tools of the Third Internal Energy Market package - provide a legal and regulatory framework for infrastructure investments which is sufficiently conducive for the private sector to build urgently needed infrastructure of European interest?