



# Expanding energy infrastructure in the EU

Committees: Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

**Draft legislation designed to accelerate work on developing and co-ordinating energy infrastructure projects, such as pipelines and power grids, that would benefit several EU countries at once, was amended by the Industry Committee on Tuesday, with a view to negotiations with the Council of Ministers.**

"To meet the objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020, increase the share of renewable energy to 20% of final energy consumption and increase energy efficiency by 20%, more efforts are needed to modernise and expand Europe's energy infrastructure", underlined rapporteur Antonia Correira de Campos (S&D, PT).

## Picking projects of common interest

The new proposal defines twelve EU priority corridors and areas in urgent need of development. Based on these pre-defined corridors, projects of "European interest" would be selected for financing and faster building permits.

These projects are to be selected by regional expert groups, set up for each priority corridor, with the advice of the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy regulators. MEPs amended governance rules for the regional expert groups to increase their transparency.

MEPs also defined more clearly which commercially non-viable projects should be entitled to EU funding from the Connecting Europe Facility, which earmarks €9.1 billion for energy projects. This funding should "promote the further integration of the internal energy market and interoperability of electricity and gas networks, enhance the Union's security of energy supply and contribute to a sustainable development and protection of the environment", they said.

## Implementing projects

The time between the start of planning and final commissioning of a power line is frequently more than 10 years, according to the Commission. The proposed legislation would establish one-stop-shops to coordinate and thus accelerate the grant of all building permits necessary for projects of European interest. MEPs backed the idea that "time limits" should be set for granting project permits within the next five years.

## Next steps

The amendments to the legislation were adopted with 49 votes in favour, 1 against and 6 abstentions. MEPs also approved a mandate for negotiations with the Council, by 55 votes to 1. The vote on Parliament's final resolution will take place after these negotiations.

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