



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 14 October 2013

Energy: Commission unveils list of 250 infrastructure projects that may qualify for €5,85 billion of funding

A modern infrastructure with adequate interconnectors and reliable networks is crucial for an integrated energy market where consumers get the best value for their money. Today, the European Commission has adopted a list of some 250 key energy infrastructure projects. These "projects of common interest" (PCI) will benefit from accelerated licensing procedures and improved regulatory conditions and may have access to financial support from the Connecting Europe Facility, under which a €5.85 billion budget has been allocated to trans-European energy infrastructure for the period 2014-20. This will help them get implemented faster and make them more attractive to investors. Once completed, the projects will help Member States to integrate their energy markets, enable them to diversify their energy sources and help bring an end to the energy isolation of some Member States. They will also enable the grid to uptake increasing amounts of renewables, and consequently help reduce CO₂ emissions.

Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger said: *"We have to make sure that our limited funds are used wisely and that EU money goes where it can create most benefits to European consumers. With this list of energy infrastructure projects and their accompanying benefits, we also hope to attract more investors."*

The list includes up to 140 projects in the field of electricity transmission and storage, about 100 projects in the field of gas transmission, storage and LNG, and several oil and smart grids projects. The projects will benefit from a number of advantages:

- **accelerated planning and permit granting procedures** (binding three-and-a-half-years' time limit);
- **a single national competent authority** will act as a one-stop-shop for permit granting procedures;
- **less administrative costs** for the project promoters and authorities due to a more streamlined environmental assessment procedure, whilst respecting the requirements of Union law.
- **increased transparency** and improved public participation;
- **increased visibility and attractiveness** for investors thanks to an enhanced regulatory framework where costs are allocated to the countries that benefit most from a completed project;
- **possibility to receive financial support** under the Connecting Europe Facility. This will play a key role in leveraging the necessary private and public funding, and possible financing can come in as early as 2014.

For a project to be included in the list, it had to have significant benefits for at least two Member States; contribute to market integration and further competition; enhance security of supply, and reduce CO₂ emissions.

The Commission will monitor closely the implementation of the permit granting measures and the construction of the projects. Finally, the list of PCIs will be updated every two years with the aim to integrate newly needed projects and remove obsolete ones.

Background

The huge need for investment in energy infrastructure was one of the reasons for proposing the Regulation on the Guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure (TEN-E Guidelines) in 2011. The TEN-E Guidelines provide a strategic framework for the long-term energy infrastructure vision of the European Union and introduce the concept of Projects of Common Interest. They identify nine strategic infrastructure priority corridors in the domains of electricity, gas and oil, and three EU-wide infrastructure priority areas for electricity highways, smart grids and carbon dioxide transportation networks.

The endorsement of the final list by the Commission is the result of a thorough identification and evaluation process. Twelve *ad-hoc* regional working groups, each covering one strategic priority area or corridor, evaluated the proposed projects, and established a regional list of PCIs by July 2013. They also consulted public and stakeholders, including environmental NGOs, on the main infrastructure bottlenecks and on the draft list of potential PCIs. Representatives of the Member States, the European Network of Transmission System Operators for electricity and gas (ENTSO-E and ENTSO-G), national transmission system operators and project promoters, national regulatory authorities, and the Agency for Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) all participated – as members of the Regional Groups - in the preparation of the final list.

More information

Full list of projects of common interest by country:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/pci/doc/2013_pci_projects_country.pdf

Memo on projects of common interest [MEMO/13/880](#)

Contacts :

[Nicole Bockstaller](#) (+32 2 295 25 89)

[Marlene Holzner](#) (+32 2 296 01 96)