DSO ENTITY
DSOs FOR EUROPE

Guidance on EU permitting-related provisions on grid and renewable energy projects

Permitting Paper / 9 January 2025

Table of Content

Introduction

In the first half of 2024 around 50% electricity generation came from renewables and, in 2023, a record of 56 GW of new solar energy capacity was installed[1] showing the surge of renewables in the EU. With 70% of the new renewable capacity to be connected to the distribution grid by 2030, permitting has become a growing challenge for the achievement of EU's Green Deal objectives, and especially the EU's 42.5% Renewable Energy Sources (RES) target by 2030.

Distribution System Operators (DSOs) are facing a massive increase in requests to connect the new distributed generation capacities, integrating into the power network renewables but also the growing electrification of transport and heating and cooling sectors[2]. Connecting RES often entails the expansion or reinforcement of grid infrastructure, for which DSOs must apply for grid infrastructure permits that can take up to 8 to 10 years for medium- and high-voltage network. Considering that 40% of the current distribution grid is 40 years old, the expansion, renewal and smartening of the distribution grid will necessitate significant investments estimated up to EUR 67 billion annual investment required between 2025 and 2050 in average (a near doubling of the current investment rate of €37 billion per year)[3].

Hence to speed up the RES deployment, permit-granting procedures for grid need to be streamlined and simplified. DSOs are already leading proactive initiatives, but the implementation of dedicated EU regulations must accelerate.

[1] European Commission (September 2024), "State of the Energy Union Report 2024" (COM/2024/404). Available online: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/bd3e3460-2406-47a1-aa2e-c0a0ba52a75a_en?filename=State%20of%20the%20Energy%20Union%20Report%202024.pdf
[2] 30 million of electric vehicles expected on the European roads and 60 million heat pumps units to be installed in the EU by 2030.
[3] Eurelectric (2024). Grid for Speed report, Available online: https://powersummit2024.eurelectric.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Grids-forSpeed_Report_FINAL_Clean.pdf

1. Relevance and obstacles of distribution grids on permitting

Relevance of DSOs when addressing issues related to permitting procedures:

The connection of new (renewable) installations to the distribution grid often entails grid infrastructure expansion or reinforcement. To facilitate the connection of the new installations, DSOs need to apply for infrastructure permits which often follow lengthy and protracted processes and can delay the deployment of renewables. These permit-granting procedures for energy infrastructure can take up to two to three years for additional or reinforced grid capacity on medium-voltage lines and eight to ten years for high-voltage lines and high-voltage lines and medium- and high-voltage substations.

Therefore, it is key to acknowledge that connection agreements between generators and DSOs and infrastructure permits for DSOs go hand in hand, and that DSOs need the right conditions to fulfil their missions. If the permit procedure for the DSO infrastructure takes too long, negative consequences for the application of the connection agreements for RES projects might follow. While the need for faster procedures for connection agreements is frequently discussed, the necessity to speed up infrastructure permitting for DSOs and early (and continuously) involve DSOs in the planning of new generation projects were neglected before the latest EU provisions set in the Fit for 55 package and the REPowerEU.

Challenges and possible solutions for DSOs regarding permit-granting procedures

An internal survey recently conducted by DSO Entity within its membership showed that DSOs face severe problems and struggle with long procedures when it comes to permit-granting procedures for grid infrastructure. **While permitting remains an issue highly regulated by national laws, most of the DSOs encounter the same challenges** at different scales, which contributes to increasing the connection time for RES installations, and hence can delay the overall deployment of renewables.

Permitting-specific challenges faced by DSOs:

- Diversity of national regulatory frameworks with various authorities in charge and different levels of responsibility (national, regional, local, sometimes all at once).
- Complex, costly and protracted granting procedures (e.g. special rules for public roads, railways, simultaneous authorisation permits).
- Administrative hurdles with local authorities (lack of resources and flexibility from authorities, overlap of responsibilities and needed documents to be collected, lack of coordination between authorities).
- Environmental protection duties.
- Access to land (e.g. expropriation issues).

To ensure quicker connection of new renewable installations to the distribution grid, **grid infrastructure permitting processes need to be streamlined and simplified addressing several key points listed below.**

2. Assessment of the latest EU's permitting provisions for grid and renewable energy projects

The EU has set new provisions to accelerate and simplify permit-granting procedures for grid and renewable energy projects (see below) as part of the EU Green Deal. In 2022, after the start of the war in Ukraine, the provisions previously proposed were reinforced by the REPowerEU Strategy[4], and the Council's Emergency Regulation[5] (extended to one more year, until 31 January 2025) to reduce Europe's energy dependency on Russia and to accelerate the deployment of renewables in the EU. These new provisions are of positive significance as they recognize the relevance of grids in the energy transition and can help simplify the procedures for grids in future projects. Yet, their implementation is lagging behind at national level, and most DSOs have not yet felt any direct practical impact a year after their entry into force[6].

New EU permitting provisions

Overriding public interest

Faster and simplified permit-granting procedures for grid

Identification of renewables acceleration areas

Relevance & potential benefits

Implementation in Member States

[4] European Commission (May 2022), "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions : REPowerEU Plan", (COM/2022/230). Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2022%3A230%3AFIN

[5] Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 of 22 December 2022 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy. Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022R2577

[6] In 2023, DSO Entity consulted its experts from the Country Expert Group (i.e., expert body composed of a representative for each EU Member State) to assess the implementation of the Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 in their respective countries. DSO Entity's members reported a lack of implementation, and at times, of awareness, of the EU provisions on permitting leading to a lack of noticeable improvement.

Renewable Energy Directive (EU) 2023/2413/EU (RED III)[7]

(ARTICLE 16F) OVERRIDING PUBLIC INTEREST (*TO BE TRANSPOSED BY 1 JULY 2024*)

The introduction of the **principle of overriding public interest is highly relevant for DSOs** as it foresees that, in the permit-granting procedures, Member States shall ensure:

- *"[T]he planning, construction and operation of plants and installations for the production of energy from renewable sources, and their connection to the grid, the related grid itself and storage assets* ***shall be presumed as being in the overriding public interest*** *[…]*".
- **Such projects are given priority** when balancing legal interests in the individual case.

(ARTICLE 15C) RENEWABLE ACCELERATION AREAS (TO BE TRANSPOSED BY 21 MAY 2025)

The Directive provides for the designation of renewable acceleration areas where the RES deployment "*is not expected to have a significant environmental impact*".

In these areas, competent authorities shall:

- **Give priority to small RES projects not expected to have a significant environmental impact**, in view of the particularities of the selected area, hence **giving priority to artificial and built surfaces (i.e. small ones) mainly connected to the DSO grid**[8].
- **Apply faster and simplified permit-granting procedures** as set in Art 16a.

(ARTICLE 15E) AREAS FOR GRID AND STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSARY TO INTEGRATE RENEWABLE ENERGY INTO THE ELECTRICITY SYSTEM (TO BE TRANSPOSED BY 1 JULY 2024)

Supporting the RES acceleration areas, **dedicated infrastructure areas for the development of grid and storage projects may be planned by Member States**. Such projects 1) are necessary to connect RES installations and 2) are not expected to have a significant environmental impact. When preparing these plans, Member States "*shall consult the relevant infrastructure system operators*".

Grid projects located in these areas may benefit from simplified procedures as they can be exempted from environmental impact assessment[9].

---

[7] Directive (EU)2023/2413 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.Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202302413

[8] "*Artificial and built surfaces, such as rooftops and facades of buildings, transport infrastructure and their direct surroundings, parking areas, farms, waste sites, industrial sites* […]".

[9] Member States "*may, under justified circumstances, including where needed to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy in order to achieve the climate and renewable energy targets, exempt grid and storage projects from environmental impact assessment*".

(ARTICLE 15B) MAPPING OF AREAS NECESSARY FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE OVERALL UNION RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET FOR 2030 (TO BE TRANSPOSED BY 21 MAY 2025)

Member States will carry out coordinated mapping to **identify the domestic potential and the available land surface necessary for developing renewable energy plants and their related infrastructure, such as grid facilities** required to meet their national contributions towards the EU's RES target by 2030.

It contributes to ensuring an earlier involvement of DSOs in the planning of RES installations as, in doing so:

- "*Member States shall ensure coordination among all the relevant national, regional and local authorities and entities <u>including network operators</u>, in the mapping of the necessary areas, where appropriate*".
- When identifying these areas, Member States shall take into account "***the availability of relevant energy infrastructure, including grids, storage or other flexibility tools or the potential to create or upgrade such grid infrastructure and storage***".

Council Emergency Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy (applying until 30 June 2025)[10]

Article	Provision	Enshrined permanently
2	The definition of **"permit-granting process" is clarified** as "*all relevant administrative permits issued to build, repower and operate plans for the production of energy from renewable energy sources including […] <u>assets necessary for their connection to the grid, including grid connection permits and environmental impact assessments where those are required</u>*".	**REDIII, Art. 16**
3	**Overriding public interest**	REDIII, Art. 16f
6	**Acceleration of permitting processes for necessary grid infrastructure** in RES acceleration areas and/or dedicated grid infrastructure areas	REDIII, Art. 15c, 15e and 16a

[10] Council Regulation (EU) 2024/223 of 22 December 2023 amending Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 of 22 December 2022 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy. Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02022R2577-20240701

Chapter III of Regulation (EU) 2022/869 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure (TEN-E)[11]

DSOs' smart grid projects that are selected as Project of Common Interest (PCIs) can benefit from a **"priority status" at national level (Art. 7**) which gives them access to:

- **Accelerated planning and permit-granting procedures (Art. 10).**
- **One-stop-shop** to obtain a permit with the setting up of a national competent authority (NCA) (Art. 8).
- **Manual of procedures** issued by the NCAs for permitting procedures (Art. 9).
- Lower administrative costs due to **streamlined environmental assessment process** (Art. 7).

However, with only a little number of smart grid projects ending up on the PCI list, few DSOs actually benefit from these easier advantages (one-stop shop in particular is particularly key for DSOs).

Action Points 11 and 12 of the European Action Plan for Grids (COM 2023/757)[12]

The EU Grid Action Plan identifies **permitting as one of the core challenges faced by grids in the energy transition** and proposes tailor-made measures (Action Points 11 and 12) to further accelerate permitting procedures.

- **Action Point 11 provides for an increasing support to the applications of permitting rules** in REDIII and the Council Emergency Regulation (2022/2577/EU) as regards DSOs.
- **Action Point 12 is enshrined in the signature of a Pact for Engagement[13]** aiming to reinforce stakeholder engagement, especially on speeding up permitting procedures.

As one of the founding signatories, DSO Entity is highly involved in the Pact's delivery by raising awareness on DSO-specific issues related to permitting, sharing best practices from DSO members, highlighting the need to speed up the implementation of the new EU provisions and ensuring closer cooperation with local authorities.

[11] 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. Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022R0869

[12] Commission Communication COM(2023)757 of 28 November 2023 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. Available online: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0757

[13] European Commission (November 2023). « Pact for Engagement: Ensuring early, regular and meaningful stakeholder engagement in grid development". Available online: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/65ffb0ca-928e-4746-adac-74c8f918c7f3_en?filename=Pact%20for%20Engagement%202023.pdf

3. Recommendations

1. The need for cooperative planning in RES projects

As grid infrastructure projects imply extensive planning and permitting procedures, grid operators need to be early informed about plans for new installations of power generation sites to ensure they can start as early as possible with grid planning. When developing their Distribution Network Development Plans, DSOs must regularly submit information on the location and date of the building of new grid assets. Therefore, for strategic grid planning, it is essential for DSOs to know in advance the type of generation and consumption facilities which are planned (e.g., PV and wind farms, data centres, etc.) and where and when they will be installed.

Long permitting processes for renewable installations are problematic not only for RES developers, but also for DSOs. DSOs must keep the reserved network capacity for delayed projects or start searching for new available capacity in case of expiration of the issued capacity during the time of the authorisation process. If the installation of renewable facilities is delayed due to protracted permitting processes, the plant cannot be connected to the grid at adequate times. In the meantime, the power plant connection costs may significantly change, and the project may become economically unprofitable. As a result, some projects may be completely cancelled, and, in some countries, DSOs must unnecessarily hold reserved network capacity for long periods of time without allowing other available technologies to be connected in a fast and efficient way without additional investment to the expansion of the grid capacity.

Recommendation

The **early inclusion of DSOs in the planning process of RES projects is key** to strategically planning potential needs for grid infrastructure expansion or upgrading and anticipating technically feasible connection points, thus preventing problems at a later stage, especially for larger generation projects.

2. Acceleration of the implementation of recent EU permitting-specific provisions

The new EU provisions could contribute to simplifying and streamlining the permit-granting procedures and further supporting DSOs. **Permitting issue is still highly national, and even regional and local.** Various regulatory frameworks are in place in Member States **and hence permitting is subject to the subsidiarity principle**. Yet, new EU provisions could already address several of the obstacles faced by grids when it comes to applying for a permit for energy infrastructure. The principle of overriding public interest could for instance help with issues related to land access, the permit granting environmental issues balancing legal interests, and the RES acceleration areas provisions can provide exemptions from environmental impact assessments where feasible, hence simplifying procedures for grid operators. Furthermore, the latest regulations show a growing recognition at the EU level of the need to address the lack of human and financial resources in the local authorities in charge of granting the permits, other key factor to mitigate administrative hurdles.

While the new EU provisions are promising, latest reports attest of a **lack of implementation of these measures by Member States** despite the adoption, and extension, of the Council Emergency Regulation 2022/2577 aiming at taking immediate effect and being directly applicable in Member States. In 2023, DSO Entity's members reported no observable impact of these measures in their respective countries on DSO projects. More recently, on 26 September 2024, the European Commission opened infringement procedures against 26 Member States notifying their failure to fully transpose into national law the permitting-related provisions of the revised RED, past the 1 July 2024's transposition deadline for some provisions (only Denmark has notified full transposition in due time)[14].

Recommendation

The different permitting-specific provisions need to be quickly implemented into Member States' laws, especially those related to the overriding public interest principle and the RES acceleration areas for grid projects. Member States should be supported and incentivised to comply with the different pieces of legislation and raise awareness on their benefits among competent authorities at national, regional and local levels. The recent guidance and recommendations[1] published by the European Commission at the occasion of the REPowerEU's two-year anniversary are a positive step in this regard. Closer scrutiny of the implementation of these provisions should be ensured to follow and provide accessible information about the progress achieved (through score board for instance).

3. The need to look beyond TEN-E to support DSO projects when it comes to permitting

While Chapter III of the TEN-E Regulation (2022/869/EU) contributes to simplifying and streamlining permitting procedures by offering increased advantages for projects listed as Projects of Common Interest (PCIs), the **Regulation is mainly designed for transmission grid projects and offers limited benefits for DSOs.**

TEN-E should not be the privileged instrument used to support distribution grids with permitting procedures considering that:

- **Only DSO smart grid projects can fall under the scope of the TEN-E but these projects struggle less compared to RES-connection projects** since smart grid projects do not involve heavy infrastructure developments[15]. The TEN-E Regulation therefore brings simplifications to projects where it is less needed.

- **Few DSO projects end up on the PCI list and hence benefit from the attached advantages for permitting** despite their potential positive benefits. While the overriding public interest set in REDIII (2023/2413/EU) can apply to RES projects as an alternative to the priority status conferred to PCI projects, the one-stop shop granted through the NCAs is not matched with corresponding measures in the other regulations despite the benefits it could bring to DSOs.

[14] Commission Infringement Decisions, 26 September 2024. Available online: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/api/files/document/print/en/inf_24_4661/INF_24_4661_EN.pdf

[15] Unlike smart grid projects, RES projects require DSOs to collect proof of property right and back-up documents for building permits which lead to more complex and protracted procedures and resulting delays. With DSOs in charge of connecting most of the small local RES projects (onshore wind at medium-voltage and low-voltage level, solar installations, etc.), DSOs need other tools to support them

Recommendation

The different permitting-specific provisions need to be quickly implemented into Member States' laws, especially those related to the overriding public interest principle and the RES acceleration areas for grid projects. Member States should be supported and incentivised to comply with the different pieces of legislation and raise awareness on their benefits among competent authorities at national, regional and local levels. The recent guidance and recommendations[1] published by the European Commission at the occasion of the REPowerEU's two-year anniversary are a positive step in this regard. Closer scrutiny of the implementation of these provisions should be ensured to follow and provide accessible information about the progress achieved (through score board for instance).

4. Simplify and streamlined the complex and protracted infrastructure permit-granting procedures

DSO Entity's 2022 survey showed that DSOs struggle with the various levels of responsibilities (between national, regional and local levels) which exist to request permits as well as administrative hurdles and overlapping administrative procedures. A one-stop shop approach would thus be very beneficial for DSOs. Yet, while the new Article 16(3) of the REDIII states that a permit applicant "s*hall not be required to contact more than one contact point during the entire procedure*", Member States can "*designate one or more contact points*" which leads to difficulties for DSOs to know where to apply for permits. Furthermore, usually, TSOs need fewer building permits for one big line, while DSOs often need to collect separate building permits for the different local areas covered by their distribution lines. This administrative complexity makes it difficult for DSOs to collect in a smooth manner their infrastructure permits and can lead to increased delays to connect RES installations.

Observation

Streamlining of permitting procedures is needed to support DSOs and especially, a more generalised one-stop shop for all permitting procedures to simplify the applications of permits for grid development projects. Furthermore, a grid mainstreaming approach is also needed in permitting-related provisions to always consider the needs of grids in relevant legislation. For instance, the recognition of physical energy infrastructure as net-zero strategic projects in the Net-Zero Industrial Act[1] would enable DSO projects to benefit from the streamlining of permit-granting processes (incl. one-stop shop approach and priority status). Eventually, more contact between DSOs and local authorities should also be further encouraged to raise awareness about the specific challenges encountered at the distribution level and share experiences and best practices to improve current procedures.

4. List of good practices from DSOs on permitting

A. Good practices: Digitalisation of grid connection request procedures	
By digitalising their grid connection request procedures, DSOs contribute to simplifying and accelerating permitting procedures for the installation of new RES projects, and hence the deployment of renewables.	
Country	**National practice**
Estonia	Full digitalization and automatization of permitting procedures and submission of formal designs via a single and digitalised platform (e.g., national building registry). It contributes to simplifying procedures and accelerating the permit granting.
France	The digitalization of permitting procedures is well advanced in France. Since 2019, most permits can be granted through online procedures, for example for environmental assessments, environmental authorization, as well as the preliminary consultation with mayors and public domain managers.
Portugal	The Portuguese DSO, E-Redes has joint efforts with the national authority to develop and implement a single digital platform that allows the total dematerialisation of the complex permitting process ("zero paper" needed). The platform will enter into force in December providing all the necessary tools to guarantee interaction and control of response deadlines for all interested entities, as well as the possibility for the responsible permit-granting authority to impose a response deadline or a tacit approval.
Slovenia	Online applications on website were put in place to simplify and digitalise the process of grid connection requests to the distribution network.
Spain	National regulation requires DSOs and TSO to offer a digital platform that allows them to optimally submit any access and connection applications, and to ensure that the client can track the state of their application along the different stages. The platform's content and its functionalities are specifically regulated in order to homogenize them among DSOs and the Spanish TSO.

B. Good practice: Improving Connection Queue Management	
DSOs already face a massive increase in the number of demands to accommodate the integration of new decentralised energy resources to the grid, with a 3-4-fold growth of connection requests for solar PV for DSOs between 2021 and 2022[16]. To face this challenge, DSOs are actively working to reduce connection queues and speed up grid connection procedures for RES projects.	
Country	**National practice**
Republic of Ireland	In the Republic of Ireland, a process known as the Enduring Connection Policy (ECP) was designed to face the huge (and still growing) number of connection applications (said 'queue') received by the DSO and TSO, worsened by the imposition of a moratorium for a certain period. The process relies on batches following a group processing approach of generators applications with increased cooperation between the national regulator, the TSO and DSO, and the wind industry to decide on criterion. A non-batch process for small scale generation runs in parallel. Processing projects with planning permission (permitting) has proven successful, shovel ready projects, avoids capacity hoarding, etc. In the country, the backlog of projects with permits for planning was cleared through ECP2 policy process. It is considered critical that grid capacity is only awarded to projects with planning permits, otherwise it could result in numerous modification requests, temporary connections, use of system risk, etc., and therefore slow down the renewable roll-out.
Spain	In Spain, economic guarantees have always been mandatory for the grid access application in order to ensure the firmness of the project. Additionally, in 2020 the Spanish national regulator established a new requirement, in which they set a maximum time for each administrative milestone until the commissioning of the installation ('expiration deadline') to be respected. If these administrative milestones are not delivered in time to the DSO (or TSO), the access permits expire as a result and are cancelled, and the economic guarantees are executed. With this, the regulator has tried to reduce and control speculative behaviors, avoiding granting capacity to projects that, in the end, are not built. With the introduction of expiration deadlines, DSOs do no longer have the obligation to seek new available capacity in case of expiration, as passed the deadline, the RES generator loses its right to the reserved capacity, which can then be re-allocated to other projects.
Sweden	In Sweden, on request of the regulator, the DSOs have started a project on queue management aiming to collect more information from customers in order to resolve the excess demand for network connection in several urban areas. By clarifying the type of information that is required, DSOs were able to more effectively assess the maturity of the project that requests a grid connection. The guidance which has been drafted is mainly based on the already existing guidelines for connection to the transmission grid which the Swedish TSO has been using for some years now.

[16] DSO Entity (November 2023). DSOs fit for 55: Challenges, practices and lessons learnt on connecting renewables to the grid paper. Available online: https://www.eudsoentity.eu/publications/download/51

C. Good practice: Introduction of public consultation to raise acceptance on grid infrastructure projects	
Public consultations can provide support to DSOs in their procedures to get infrastructure permits by raising awareness on the relevance of the grid development project, and hence helping increase public acceptance (essential for DSOs when asking for the right to use the land from owners).	
Country	**National practice**
Slovakia	In Slovakia, DSOs encounter difficulties in the process (which can differ according to the voltage levels) of collecting the necessary documentation to request the right to use the land and getting the land user's acceptance. As part of the PCI smart grid project named 'ACON' (Again Connecting Networks) led jointly with the Czech DSO E.ON Distribuce, the Slovak DSO Západoslovenská distribučná introduced public consultation processes via an online platform, as part of their permitting procedures. It led to positive results in enabling dialogue and raising awareness and acceptance among the citizens impacted by the development of the grid infrastructure and resulting in a lack of opposition to the project. Public consultations were assessed as a 'non-regret' investment, and it will be used for all new projects.

D. Good practices: Simplification of permitting procedures for grid infrastructure	
Simplifying infrastructure permit granting procedures can lead to reduce delays and therefore accelerate the deployment of renewables.	
Country	**National practice**
Bulgaria	New regulations entered into force in Bulgaria with simplified notification procedures which help reduce the delay of the permitting procedures. Since 2022, Bulgaria's national legislation allows the connection of self-consumption RES power plants up to 5 MW to the grids via a simple notification procedure to the DSO/TSO in one step. It contributed to shortening delays by reducing the steps followed in the usual process which could take from 6 months to 5-6 years in total depending on the generator volume and voltage level, etc. As a result, such power plants can now be connected within less than one-month period from the notification. Since 2023, an even faster and simpler notification procedure is in place for self-consumption RES power plants up to 20 kW for household installations.
France	The French "Green Industry" Law contains several provisions including the improvement and acceleration of administrative procedures and processes both for industrial plant and their grid connections. For instance, the environmental authorisation procedure has been simplified, allowing for public consultation and the application review to be carried out simultaneously. As a result, one may estimate a 3-month time saving during the procedure. The environmental authorisation procedure has also been eased by allowing project developers to carry out environmental compensation operations in advance by producing or acquiring biodiversity restoration units. A simplified special procedure has been created for "industrial projects of major national interest" (to be identified by decree). In particular, grid connection procedures will be accelerated and building permits will be issued by the French government and no longer by different local authorities.

Spain	New Spanish provisions introduced simplified administrative procedures for grid connections in case of installation of charging points for electric vehicles. The obtention of a license or prior authorization from the competent administrative authorities for grid works, operation or activity of an environmental nature (or other analogous class), previously required to connect the installation of charging points to the grid, is no longer mandatory. They were replaced by a '*responsible declaration*' to be provided to the competent administrative authorities. The 'responsible declaration' must contain an explicit statement of compliance with current regulations, including, where appropriate, being in possession of whatever documentation that may be required (including proof of payment of the corresponding tax from the declarant, when it is mandatory). The 'responsible declaration' allows installing charging points and commencing the energy recharging service from the day of its presentation, without prejudice to the verification, control and inspection powers of the competent public administrations. This simplified administrative procedure cannot apply to buildings of historical-artistic heritage in the category of cultural-interest assets, as they are subject to an exemption from the law.

About DSO Entity

DSO Entity is a technical expert body mandated by the Electricity Market Regulation (2019/943/EU) to promote the functioning of the electricity market and to facilitate the energy transition. DSO Entity represents around 830 diverse Distribution System Operators (DSOs) connecting 250 million households to the electricity grid in 27 Member States. Among DSO Entity's core tasks are the development of technical rules for the electricity system in the form of Network Codes together with the mandated organisation of the Transmission System Operators (ENTSO-E), the facilitation of renewables integration and the promotion of the digitalisation and smartening of the grid as well as sharing knowledge and best practices.

This paper was developed within DSO Entity's Country Expert Group embodying the diversity of DSOs in the European Union and connecting all of DSOs from each country through their DSO national representatives.