



Delivering the Grid Action Plan (GAP)

DSO Entity's role and takeaways

The Grid Action Plan follows an institutional approach with:



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What is the Grid Action Plan, at a glance?

2023 marked the year of the “Grid momentum”, which welcomed initiatives at the European level acknowledging the high relevance of grids and, especially, the distribution level, in reaching the EU’s energy and climate targets and maintaining the EU’s competitiveness. It was a non-legislative initiative that focused on semi-institutional actors to deliver results. DSO Entity was a key player in delivering the objectives together with ENTSO-E and in good cooperation and close interactions with the European Commission and ACER.

What you should know about the Grid Action Plan (GAP):



Objectives

- **Aimed to accelerate** the expansion, digitalization, and optimization of EU electricity grids – DSOs and TSOs alike
- **Intended to support** grids in delivering the Green Deal’s objectives by overcoming key challenges



Contents

- **Non-legislative initiative** of the European Commission (EC) with tailor-made measures to **support the transposition of existing energy legislation**
- **Identification of 7 challenges and 14 Action Points** that should support the implementation within **18 months** (November 2023 – June 2025)



Role DSOs

- **DSOs** and the decentralised level **were in the focus** like in no EU communication before
- **DSO Entity appeared as key semi-institutional actor** and was responsible for the delivery of 7 out of 14 Action Points mostly together with ENTSO-E.



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.

What topics were tackled in the Grid Action Plan?

The Communication identified several challenges faced by grids and proposed concrete, but non-legislative actions to tackle them within the next 18 months. It was built on an institutional approach and assigned ACER, DSO Entity and ENTSO-E with the delivery of core tasks.

These manifold actions can be summarised in five thematic clusters:



Improving long-term grid planning to include renewables and deal with increased electrification: Measures proposed include the mapping and sharing of good practices of Distribution Network Development Plans, the establishment of a pan-EU overview of available grid hosting capacities, and guidance towards the digitalisation of grid connection requests.



Smartening the grid by supporting network efficiency and innovative technologies: Measures proposed include the creation of more clarity on existing smart electricity grid technologies via tools such as Technopedia to promote the uptake of innovation and improve network efficiency.



Improving access to finance and introducing regulatory incentives for forward-looking grid build-out: Measures proposed include the promotion of available funding instruments, addressing obstacles to private financing and the identification of the conditions to grant anticipatory investments.



Accelerating deployment through faster permitting and public engagement: Measures proposed include the acceleration and simplification of permitting procedures through the implementation of existing legislation, and the reinforcement of the public's involvement and support through the Pact for Engagement, of which DSO Entity is a founding signatory.



Strengthening grid supply chains: Measures proposed include the development of common technology specifications as well as improved visibility in grid projects pipelines for manufacturers.

1



Grid capacity and planning

- Good practices on Distribution Network Development Plans
- Overview of grid hosting capacity

2



Grid smartening

- Promotion of smart grid uptake
- Promotion of PCIs for smart grids

3



Grid investment and financing

- Regulatory framework
- Anticipatory investments
- Access to funds (PCIs)

4



Grid permitting and the Public

- Pact for Engagement (stakeholder, permitting)
- Faster processes and streamlining of permitting

5



Grid Supply Chains

- More visibility of grid project pipelines
- Development of common technology specifications

Illustration: High level overview of the GAP measures and actions specifically related to DSOs.

Overview of assigned action points to DSO Entity:

As legally mandated DSO association (EU/2019/944) DSO Entity was assigned with the delivery of several Action Points in the GAP. The table below gives a high-level overview of the tasks assigned to DSO Entity – often in cooperation with ENTSO-E. The table also gives an indication which of DSO Entity’s Expert Group or Task Force¹ was in the lead in the delivery of the task.

	Grid Action Plan – Tasks assigned to DSO Entity (mostly in cooperation with ENTSO-E)	Action	Lead
Grid Planning and Grid Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support DSO grid planning by mapping DSO development plans; by improving best practices and recommendations • Develop mechanisms for providing increased visibility to manufacturers into their upcoming procurement plans 	Action 3a Action 13b	TF NP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide harmonized definitions for available grid hosting capacity for system operators and to set a pan-EU overview 	Action 6a	EG DF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue recommendations to digitalise and streamline procedures for grid connection requests 	Action 6b	TF DESAP
Grid Smartening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote smart grid uptake, network efficiency and innovative technologies, e.g. Technopedia 	Action 7	TF DESAP
Grid Investment and Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness on the available options to increase funding applications for DSOs (PCIs) 	Action 3b,10a	TF FIN
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the EC in proposing guidance for conditions to approve anticipatory investments and to strengthen dialogue to address financing obstacles 	Action 4, 9	TF FIN
Grid Permitting and the Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of the Pact for Engagement to reinforce stakeholder engagement and permitting 	Action 12	CEG
Grid supply chains and Standardization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with technology providers to develop standard technology specifications [TSO-focus] 	Action 13a	All EG/TF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mechanisms for providing increased visibility to manufacturers into their upcoming procurement plans (see also grid planning) 	Action 13b	CEG TF NP

¹ DSO Entity counts eight Expert Groups and Task Forces (EG/TFs): EG Cybersecurity (EG CS) ; EG Distributed Flexibility (EG DF) ; EG Data Interoperability (EG DI) ; EG Existing Network Codes (EG ExNC) ; TF Digitalisation of the Energy System (TF DESAP) ; TF Network Planning (TF NP) ; TF Investing, Funding and Finance (TF FIN) and TF Legal. In addition to the EG/TFs a Country Expert Group (CEG) exists which has one representative for each Member State.

Which role DSO Entity played in delivering the Grid Action Plan?

The GAP stipulated that all 14 Action Points should be delivered within 18 months after its publication. While DSO Entity delivered all assigned Action Points on time, it became apparent that **several deliverables were transformed into permanent tasks** continuing well beyond the official due date. Already at the Copenhagen Infrastructure Forum in 2024, after DSO Entity had delivered on first Action Points, follow-up actions were defined and assigned. This approach is visible on topics such as network development planning, transparency on grid hosting capacities as well as for the cooperative approach for supply chains and the close engagement between the public and stakeholders via the Pact for Engagement.

The overview of DSO Entity's delivery on core Action Points is more to be understood as **an intermediate result rather than a final outcome**. DSO Entity will continue to contribute to these topics in the time to come based on follow-up actions deriving from the Copenhagen Infrastructure Forum and/or legislative and non-legislative acts. In addition, DSO Entity will continue to proactively engage in providing good practices and sharing knowledge and experiences from its members to help overcome these challenges.

The table below summarises DSO Entity's core assignments from the GAP, along with some selected highlights for deliverables. A more detailed overview of DSO Entity's deliverables and recommendations is provided in the annex to this publication.



What is the Copenhagen Forum?

The Copenhagen Energy Infrastructure Forum is organised by the European Commission, in cooperation with the Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities, and held annually in Copenhagen, Denmark. It serves as a platform for exchange between policymakers and stakeholders on topics related to the EU's energy infrastructure legislation. Initiated in 2015 as part of the Energy Union Strategy (COM/2015/080), it gathers representatives of the EU institutions, transmission system operators, distribution system operators, project promoters, regulators, energy companies, NGOs and the financing community to discuss the challenges of accelerating the deployment of Europe's energy infrastructure which will enable the achievement of EU's decarbonisation targets.

Grid Action Plan – Tasks assigned to DSO Entity		
	Assignment	Selected <u>highlights</u> of delivery (for details see annex)
Grid Planning and Grid Capacity	Support DSO grid planning by mapping DSO development plans by improving best practices and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper “Identified good practices on Distribution Network Development Plans” Publication of “DSO Entity Key Messages on DNDPs” Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum
	Develop mechanisms for providing increased visibility to manufacturers into their upcoming procurement plans	
	Provide harmonized definitions for available grid hosting capacity for system operators and to set a pan-EU overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity-pedia website to be live 2026 Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum
Grid Smartening	Issue recommendations to digitalise and streamline procedures for grid connection requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upcoming paper “Digital solutions for handling connection requests” Response to the EC’s consultation on Grid Connection
	Promote smart grid uptake, network efficiency and innovative technologies, e.g. Technopedia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Statement “Implementation of Action 7 in the EU Action Plan for Grids - DSO/TSO Technopedia” with ENTSO-E Launch of the DSO/TSO Technopedia platform Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum
Grid Investment and Financing	Raise awareness on the available options to increase funding applications for DSOs (PCIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to EC-consultations on CEF-E funding and the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) Paper “EU Funding opportunities and challenges”
	Support the EC in proposing guidance for conditions to approve anticipatory investments and to strengthen dialogue to address financing obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper “Anticipatory Investments – An initial Regulatory Discussion” Paper “DSOs’ access to finance: Barriers and potential facilitation mechanisms”
Grid Permitting and the Public	Facilitation of the Pact for Engagement to reinforce stakeholder engagement and permitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper “Guidance on EU permitting-related provisions on grid and renewable energy projects” Response to Targeted Consultation on the Guidance on the designation of dedicated grid infrastructure areas (RED, 15e). Response to call for evidence on permitting-related simplification in environmental legislation (08/25). Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum
Grid Supply Chains and Standardization	Collaborate with technology providers to develop standard technology specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of a “joint roadmap towards future proof grids” with ENTSO-E, T&D Europe and Europacable Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum
	Develop mechanisms for providing increased visibility to manufacturers into their upcoming procurement plans (see also grid planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Paper “DSOs and the supply chain challenge” with E.DSO Follow up assignments from Copenhagen Forum

What is needed beyond the Grid Action Plan?

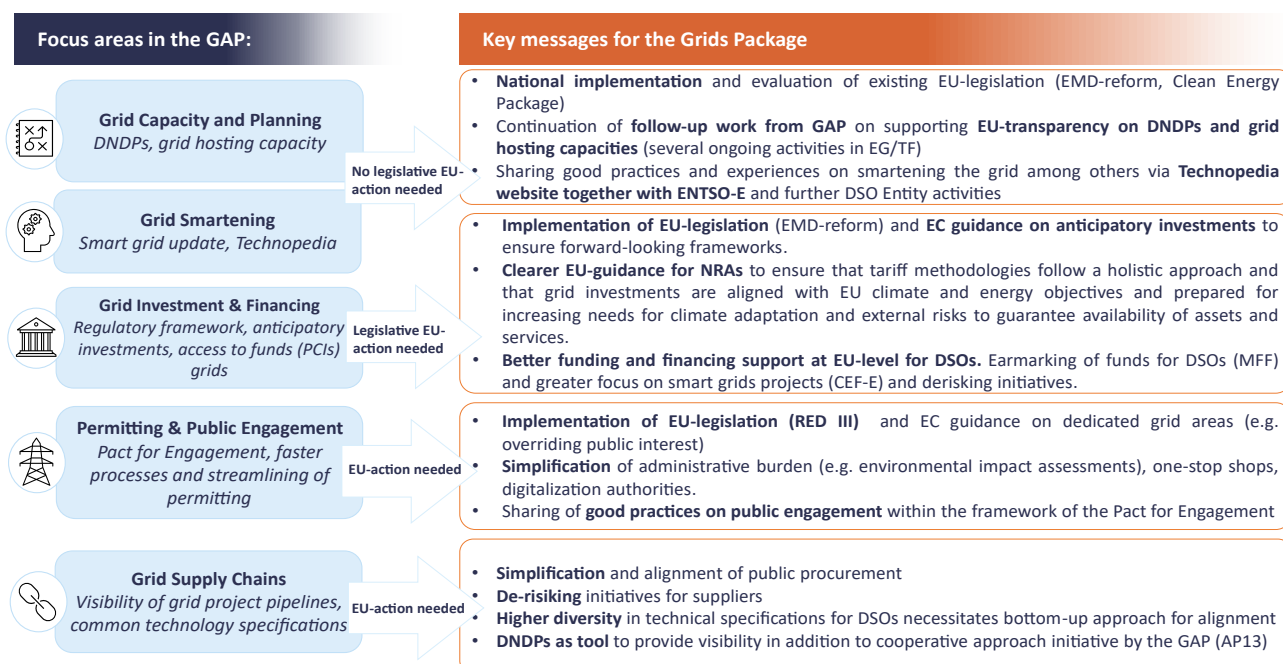
The GAP was a crucial building block to support the delivery and implementation of preceding EU-legislation such as RED III in REPowerEU or the Electricity Market Design reform (EMD reform). Both packages aimed at tackling targeted challenges faced by European grids, with RED III addressing permitting (via the introduction of the overriding public principle also for RES-related grid infrastructure projects) and the EMD reform by prescribing the inclusion of anticipatory investments in regulatory frameworks and requesting increased transparency on available grid hosting capacity for instance.

Focus on national implementation:

Important initiatives were set in motion with these acts, although they remain to be fully implemented at the national level. In the meantime, additional action at the EU level can guide Member States in their implementation processes with guidance documents (such as on anticipatory investments or dedicated grid-areas (EC)) and support DSOs, through knowledge sharing and increasing European-wide transparency on good practices. However, no explicit new legislative action at the EU level is required for topics with a local character and ongoing implementation activities such as for DNDPs, grid hosting capacities or grid smartening. For these matters, the ongoing and follow-up GAP's activities are deemed sufficient to support the implementation of existing EU legislation at the national level and increase transparency and accountability at the EU level.

Need for further direct EU action:

Some other areas still require stronger direct EU support, especially where progress at the national level is stalling. For instance, the topic of investments, funding and financing needs more direct EU attention. In line with the latest EMD reform national regulatory frameworks need to shift towards a more long-term, forward-looking and anticipatory approach that secures predictability and competitive remuneration. In parallel, funding and financing support for DSOs need to be strengthened at the EU level, with the earmarking of funds for DSOs (through the design of the next MFF) and greater focus on smart grids projects (through the current CEF-E funds allocation) and derisking initiatives. While the implementation of existing EU legislation is crucial for permitting, new legislative attempts from the EU side to further shorten lead times by simplifying environmental impact assessments and reducing administrative burden are a welcome step forward. EU leadership and support are further needed on strategic and complex topics such as reliable supply chains, accessible raw materials, or simplified EU public procurement rules. These are areas where active EU-action and support are needed to ensure the right conditions for DSOs on the ground.



ANNEX Detailed overview of DSO Entity's delivery and recommendations from the Grid Action Plan

GRID CAPACITY AND PLANNING	
NETWORK PLANNING	
<i>Action Point 3: Support DSO grid planning by mapping the existence and characteristics of DSO development plans and by improving best practices and recommendations</i>	
ACTIVITIES	DSO Entity gathered information and good practices from different Member States on DNDPs, collected the views of external stakeholders and shared recommendations in a report published in June 2024 . Throughout 2024 and 2025 TF NP further explored options of how accessibility and transparency of DNDPs could be enhanced, explored the links between DNDPs and anticipatory investments and intensified the exchanges and cooperation with actors such as ENTSO-E and ACER. In that regard, TF NP welcomed ACER and CEER's Guidance on Electricity Distribution Planning, publishing eight key messages on the topic that should remain a cornerstone when considering the DSOs' DNDPs. TF NP will continue to deliver on follow-up assignments from the Copenhagen Forum in 2025 which invited "EU DSO Entity and ACER, with steering from the Commission, to organise workshops to support implementation of ACER guidance on distribution network development plans to be published in July 2025, in line with 2024 Forum conclusions."
RECOMMENDATIONS	The current approach of collecting good practices, sharing knowledge between DSOs, and engaging stakeholders is appropriate while some Member States are still transposing Art. 32(3-4) (EU/2019/944). Given their local nature and diversity, DSO planning differs from cross-border TSO planning. Member States therefore apply different approaches regarding the detail of DNDPs and their relation to other planning instruments (e.g. investment plans). Ways to improve the transparency and accessibility of DNDPs at EU level are currently examined by TF NP. As a first step, compiling links on one website to existing DNDPs could support deeper analysis of good practices. To further improve accessibility, DNDPs could apply the FAIR principle—making information Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable.
GRID CAPACITY	
<i>Action Point 6(a): Provide harmonised definitions for available grid hosting capacity for system operators and to set a pan-EU overview</i>	
ACTIVITIES	This assignment was delivered in close cooperation with ENTSO-E. A joint Task Force was launched in July 2024 that carried out internal surveys and several external stakeholder consultations to define common goals and deliverables and to collect published hosting capacity information and definitions. These elements were presented in a progress report at the Copenhagen Forum in 2025. Ongoing work includes the development of an information portal in the form of a "Capacity-pedia" providing information and access to existing grid hosting capacity maps in the EU for DSOs and TSOs expected to go live in 2026. The information portal will serve as a single-entry point for users, enabling easy navigation of grid hosting capacities and providing access to websites displaying current grid hosting capacity status. In parallel, DSO Entity organised a public webinar " Delivering the Fit for 55: How to face the grid capacity challenge ", with the participation of DG ENER, which showcased best practices implemented by DSOs across the EU to address capacity challenges (04/24).
RECOMMENDATIONS	Substantial progress has been achieved under the current legal framework through DSO Entity, ENTSO-E, and Member States' delivery of the GAP. The framework's flexibility enables operators to adapt to local conditions while applying methodologies and tools suited to their networks. This diversity has produced innovative, efficient solutions in many regions, driving continuous improvement and faster evolution of capacity information. Given the dynamic, context-dependent nature of hosting capacity data, top-down rules on calculation and presentation could create inefficiencies, administrative burdens, and limit innovation. They may also discourage operators who have already developed effective processes. Flexibility, rather than a uniform prescriptive approach, better supports diverse operator needs and sustains momentum.

Action Point 6(b): Issue guidance and recommendations to digitalise and streamline procedures for grid connection requests

ACTIVITIES	<p>DSO Entity kicked-off the delivery of this Action Point with a public webinar “Connecting the surge of renewables to the distribution grid: How can digitalisation contribute to support DSOs?” (11/24) in which good practices from DSOs were presented. An upcoming report by TF DESAP “Digital Solutions for Handling Connection Requests” will delve deeper into good practices carried out by DSOs. The paper supported the need for balanced development of digital solutions with regards to grid safety and reliability, as well as the need to safeguard the local specificity of DSOs, and their role as neutral facilitator with regards to the development of prioritisation criteria. In parallel, DSO Entity contributed to the European Commission’s consultation on Grid Connection, to provide input for the upcoming guidance on Grid Connection (Q4-2025) that aims to shorten waiting times for grid connections, and give guidance on how to better manage connection requests.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>Despite progress by DSO Entity and ENTSO-E on grid connection requests and their digitalization, some issues remain to be tackled, mainly at the national level. Grid connection queues are often caused by speculative and immature applications leading to “virtual grid saturation,” blocking capacity and complicating DSO planning. To address this, stricter eligibility criteria should be considered, such as (1) financial guarantees at application stage, (2) binding milestones, and (3) prioritizing mature, ready-to-build projects. Also, the “first-come, first-served” approach applied in several Member States seems to be increasingly inefficient; however, as neutral market facilitators, DSOs cannot set preference criteria, which must be decided by governments and authorities after consultation with operators. Any such criteria should be simple, consistent, and transparent, while retaining flexibility.</p>

GRID SMARTENING

Action Point 7: Promote smart grid uptake, network efficiency and innovative technologies, and update the Technopedia

ACTIVITIES	<p>In collaboration with ENTSO-E, a joint knowledge-sharing platform about grid technologies and use cases for distribution and transmission system operators (SOs) was developed. The DSO/TSO Technopedia will serve to showcase existing technologies that support the roll-out of smart grids, improve grid efficiency and strengthen security of supply across Europe. The platform will feature detailed descriptions of technologies available to system operators, along with use cases and deployments from across the continent. A first outlook on the formal processes and guidelines for including use cases on the platform was published in December 2024. This was followed by the official launch of the DSO/TSO Technopedia platform on 29 April 2025 and the start of the application submissions for relevant technologies and their use cases. The submitted content is currently under review by each association and will undergo a joint review process, with a publication expected by end 2025, in line with the Copenhagen Forum 2025’s conclusions which invites ENTSO-E and DSO Entity to deliver the GAP Actions on a Technopedia platform. Furthermore, the Technopedia platform will be updated annually, with the intent of adding additional technologies and use cases presented, as well as updates made to existing technologies when needed. This will allow the platform to remain expansive yet relevant based on current technological advancements.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>Ongoing activities jointly led by ENTSO-E and DSO Entity for the development of a joint DSO/TSO Technopedia provide solid progress on grid smartening. The launch of the shared platform lessens the need for additional EU-led action at this stage as the dissemination of good practices and direct industry experience will provide extended information to feed in innovation and developments from other DSOs. This will also allow DSOs to draw in the experience best fitting to their own operation model, with regard to the local specificities of each. However, direct EU support towards smart grid projects eligible to funding under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and other nationally distributed funds would be welcomed, through better earmarked funds for those DSO-led projects. From the CEF-funded energy infrastructure projects worth €5.324 million, only €237 million was allocated to smart grid projects for DSOs between 2014 and 2020.</p>

GRID INVESTMENT AND FINANCING	
FUNDING	
Action Points A3(b) ; A10: Reinforce support to the design and submission of PCI applications or smart grid projects ; Raise awareness on the available options to increase funding a; Kick-start with dedicated high-level meeting with Member States on DSOs funding	
ACTIVITIES	<p>To facilitate the delivery of Action Points 3, and 10, DSO Entity launched a dedicated Task Force on Investment Funding and Finance (TF FIN). In July 2024 TF FIN organised alongside four DSO associations a workshop “PCIs for DSOs – Good practices and potential barriers” in support of PCI applications and smart grid projects, and to raise awareness on available funding options for DSOs. On 13 July 2024 DSO Entity contributed to the EC and Energy Managing Authorities workshop aimed at increasing funding opportunities for DSOs. In 2025 DSO Entity delivered responses to the EC’s consultation on the evaluation of the CEF and on the design of the next Multiannual Financial Framework, accompanied by a letter to Energy Commissioner Jorgensen. In addition, a dedicated paper on EU funding opportunities and challenges was published in June 2025.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>Given the scale of the funding challenge, further EU-level action is required. Many DSOs pursue EU and national funding, yet barriers still restrict their participation. Administrative complexity particularly burdens smaller DSOs with limited resources and discourages applications. Streamlined processes and common forms for the available funds, as proposed for the next MFF, are a welcome step forward. Simplification should cover both direct funding (e.g. EU grants for companies or consumers) and indirect funding (e.g. de-risking mechanisms via the EIB). Finally, a substantial increase in resources dedicated to DSOs is needed, through earmarking more funds from existing and future programs, as for instance a greater focus on smart grid projects under CEF-F could provide, as well as earmarked funds under the proposed National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPP) and European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) for distribution grid development.</p>
INVESTMENTS and FINANCING	
Action Point 4: Support the EC in proposing guidance for conditions to approve anticipatory investments Action Points 8&9: Promotion of smart grids and network efficiency technologies through tariff design and support EC in its task to improve access to finance and to strengthen dialogue to address financing obstacles	
ACTIVITIES	<p>TF FIN led the assignment supporting the EC in preparing guidance on conditions to approve anticipatory investments. Throughout 2024–25, it contributed to several EC workshops and consultations on the topic. In February 2025, TF FIN published its report “Anticipatory Investments: An Initial Regulatory Discussion”, outlining DSO Entity’s working definition, good practices, and recommendations for robust investment frameworks, including a long term planning in the development of the DNDPs and the development of regulatory frameworks that encourage the long-term efficiency of the grid. TF FIN also actively followed and contributed to meetings of the Investors Dialogue on the topic of financing DSOs in March 2024 and February 2025. In April 2025, DSO Entity organised a Workshop on blended finance, gathering DSOs, private and institutional investors (including the EIB and EBRD), and EC stakeholders to explore ways to expand blended finance for European DSOs. A paper “DSOs’ access to finance: Barriers and potential facilitation mechanisms” was published in June 2025 and presents potential barriers and distortions that DSOs face when accessing different financial sources. In addition, TF FIN also published in June 2025 a paper on Innovation for regulated companies regulation for innovation identifying regulatory tools that would facilitate innovation and long-term efficiency of investment for grids. This paper is being complemented with a paper dedicated to tariffs expected by the end of 2025.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>In a rapidly changing energy system, regulatory frameworks must evolve towards a more long-term and forward-looking (i.e. anticipatory) approach as encouraged in the latest EMD reform (Art. 18(2), 69 (2024/1747). The EC’s Guidelines on how to implement Anticipatory Investments provide important recommendations for Member States to be applied fast. Longer-term planning on the DSO-side combined with an anticipatory regulatory approach and a greater focus on DSOs in EU funding guarantees electrification of transport and heating as well as that renewables can be connected on time and that positive (price) effects from cheap renewables will be felt in the medium- and long-term. In many circumstances anticipatory investments will be more efficient and faster. Adequate compensation for DSOs with easier access to EIB and EU financing to de-risk projects is central to acquire the required capital. In addition, the EU level should give clearer guidance for NRAs to ensure that grid investments are aligned with the European climate and energy objectives and prepared for increasing needs for climate adaptation and prevention of physical and cyber-attacks. This can be done by either providing guidance(s) for implementation by the NRAs of Art. 18 or the Regulation 2024/1747/EU or by revising the article in itself.</p>

GRID PERMITTING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	
GRID PERMITTING	
<i>Action Point 11: Support the acceleration of permitting procedures and applications of permitting rules in the Renewable Energy Directive (2023/2413/EU; RED) as regards DSOs</i>	
ACTIVITIES	<p>The CEG gathered good practices from different Member States on how to further speed up, simplify and streamline permitting procedures and developed guidance and recommendations shared in a report published in January 2025. Throughout 2025, the CEG further engaged on the topic providing contributions to related European consultations including on the designation of dedicated grid areas and on simplification of environmental assessment permitting. DSO Entity intensified its exchanges with the EC, notably by bringing expertise during the two dedicated Implementation Dialogues organised by Commissioners Roswall and Jorgensen in April and June 2025.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>The EU has launched a growing number of initiatives on permitting, including guidance to encourage Member States to swiftly implement and use all RED III provisions. These efforts rightly acknowledge the importance of permitting for grid projects and should be maintained to support implementation and foster exchanges with stakeholders on remaining challenges and good practices, building on existing cooperation initiative by the GAP. Indirect EU support is also needed to further simplify and streamline permitting by extending one-stop shops beyond TEN-E (given its limited relevance for DSOs), digitalising procedures, and setting binding deadlines for authorities. DSOs' needs should remain central through a grid mainstreaming approach. DSO Entity and the CEG will continue working on permitting and supporting the EC's simplification efforts to accelerate renewable and grid deployment, notably as part of the future Grids Package.</p>
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	
<i>Action Point 12: Sign the Pact for Engagement to reinforce stakeholder engagement</i>	
ACTIVITIES	<p>As one of the founding signatories of the Pact, DSO Entity actively engaged in the stakeholder exchanges organised by sharing knowledge and good practices from DSOs on public engagement collected within the CEG since 2023. During the PCI Days 2024, DSO Entity brought further DSOs to sign the Pact and get involved in its activities to further close the gap between the EU level and the national and local levels. DSO Entity also maintained good alignment with ENTSO-E through regular exchanges on grid topics to ensure TSO-DSO cooperation. By being part of the focus group set up by DG ENER (to start in September 2025), DSO Entity will continue to support the delivery of follow up assignments from the 2025 Copenhagen Forum which invites "the Commission, RGI and ACER, in collaboration with EU DSO Entity and ENTSO-E and other stakeholders, to co-create a roadmap for the development of Public Engagement Plans and to prepare a set of recommendations as the basis for future guidelines [to] be presented at the next Forum in 2026" and "DSO Entity and the ENTSO-E to develop a report on best practice on TSO-DSO collaboration and best practices on citizens engagement and present it in the next Forum".</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>The Pact has built on the sharing of knowledge and good practices from involved stakeholders on public engagement and has worked to bring together the EU level and actors engaged on the ground at the national and local levels. Given the local nature of public engagement legislation and efforts, the current approach of using the Pact as a forum of knowledge sharing is the right approach and should be maintained when considering other potential actions on the topic. DSOs are actively engaged in enhancing public engagement in Member States by regularly consulting and collaborating with local authorities as well as organizing consultations with impacted stakeholders and citizens. Due to the diversity of DSOs in sizes and shapes in Europe, and in some cases of the low impact of their small-scale infrastructure projects, these contributions are not always visible from Brussels despite existing good practices. As a result, there are no one-size-fits-all solutions, and additional binding rules and further harmonisation at the EU level should be avoided as it would add complexity and uncertainty for involved actors and overlap with existing rules. Potential future actions should therefore favour the sharing of knowledge and good practices instead.</p>

GRID SUPPLY CHAINS

Action Point 13(a) and 13(b): Collaborate with technology providers to develop standard technology specifications, Develop mechanisms for providing increased visibility to manufacturers into their procurement plans for equipment and systems

ACTIVITIES	<p>In close cooperation between four associations, DSO Entity, ENTSO-E, T&D Europe and Europacable, developed a “Joint Commitment for Resilient European Manufacturing” and the “Joint Roadmap towards future-proof grids” throughout 2024-25 and presented the results at the Copenhagen Forum 2025. The joint Roadmap builds on four Action Points to be undertaken by the four associations on the topics of technical assets and components, visibility of needs, public procurement and skills. Workforce shortages were further addressed in a joint webinar in May 2025, where members shared best practices. In parallel, DSO Entity conducted an internal survey on DSOs’ specific needs and the results were published in May 2025 in a joint paper with E.DSO “DSOs and the Supply Chain Challenge”. Efforts to progress on the topic will be maintained, and the results of the exchanges will be presented at the next Copenhagen Forum of 2026, as invited to do by the Conclusions of the 2025 edition.</p>
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>DSOs face growing challenges in sourcing essential equipment and components, driven by accelerating decarbonisation and electrification efforts. These require adapting the grid to new sustainability and resilience requirements while integrating the rapidly rising share of renewable energy, over 70% of which connect to the distribution network. Additionally, the inherent diversity of DSOs directly impacts their needs, as they face higher technical complexity and differences in equipment as other utilities and require more tailored solutions shaped by and for local and structural specificities. Proactive measures have emerged at local and national levels including the adoption of good practices to streamline certification processes, simplify procurement procedures for suppliers and participate in joint procurement activities which lessen the need for European intervention through the imposition of “one-size fits all” standards. DSOs are also working on improving their Distribution Network Development Plans (DNDPs), offering visibility into future grid developments and help raise awareness of upcoming energy needs towards manufacturers. However, additional EU leadership is needed to support these initiatives with a fit-for-purpose framework, ensuring simpler and more flexible procurement, fairer market access (especially for smaller DSOs), and support the scaling up of EU manufacturing capacity (e.g. through de-risking measures) to meet the rising demand.</p>