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Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC

- Orientation debate
- = Contribution from the Greek delegation

Delegations will find attached a contribution from Greece on the above.

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC

= Orientation debate

Question 1

The Regional Groups will be one of the main drivers of the identification process. How do Member States see their role in the Regional Groups and consider that these Groups could build on work on project identification so far and engage in additional work to conclude the first stage of the identification of 'projects of common interest' so as to accelerate the development of these projects?

Greece welcomes the significant role attached to Regional Groups by the Commission's infrastructure proposal and expresses confidence that their functioning will serve to reinforce the spirit of solidarity between Member States.

We agree in principle that these Groups should be based on each priority corridor and area and also agree with their respective geographical coverage, as set out in Annex I. Greece considers that the Groups could build on the endeavours of existing regional fora and also take into account the work carried out in the context of regional cooperation, pursuant to the 3rd package legislation as well as Regulation 994/2010 on security of gas supply. Moreover, care should be taken to avoid excessive bureaucracy which results from too many groups.

With regard to the process for the identification of PCIs, Greece appreciates the combination of a regional and centralized approach provided by the Commission's proposal. However, the method which the Commission will follow in order to establish the final list needs to be specified. For example, will the list consist of all the projects submitted by the Regional Groups, or will the Commission make a selection of projects? Will there be an opportunity to 'appeal' the decision? Regarding both the methodology for selecting PCIs as well as for establishing the CBA, this should be clear and avoid grey areas in order to facilitate investments.

Further, Article 4.4 refers to the “ranking of projects contributing to the same priority.” However, the proposal does not clarify if the final list will be based on a ranking system and if the Regional Groups are also expected to adopt a ranking system in submitting lists to the Commission. Moreover, Greece is of the opinion that the Regulation could stipulate that the final list will ensure certain principles such as, inter alia, regional balance, territorial integration, taking into account peripheral and isolated regions, and be accompanied by an analysis explaining the selection of projects.

Regarding the role of the Member States, Greece considers that together with the Commission they should be involved in the adoption of the final list and an appropriate decision-making process should be provided for in the Regulation. Member-States should also be involved with the process regarding the removal of a project from the list of PCIs (Article 5.7), and for the appointment of Coordinators (Article 6).

Regarding Article 5.6, by which the Commission can launch a call for proposals open to any project promoter, in case a specific project is facing delays, Greece considers that the Member States should have the option to launch the call and/or decide if this could be undertaken by the Commission.

Question 2

The regulatory measures proposed in Chapter IV complement provisions of already existing legislation. What is the Member States' view on these measures and their aim to maximise market-based investment in networks across borders?

Greece considers that reinforced cooperation among all parties, including NRAs, networks operators, Member States and the Commission is necessary in order to achieve the EU's infrastructure goals and the interconnection of the EU markets. Moreover, we agree with the Commission that, for this, further regulatory measures are required and the issues hindering cross-border investments including asymmetric benefits and externalities and insufficient incentives need to be addressed.

In this respect, Greece agrees with the concept of the proposed cost-benefit analysis, which could serve as a harmonised tool at EU level to identify projects with positive socio-economic and environmental impact, based on an evaluation with common input data, grid and market modelling, thereby assisting decisions on cross-border cost allocation. Moreover, the CBA could enhance the investment climate for cross-border projects.

However, in order to ensure this, we would stress that apart from economic costs, social and environmental costs have to be taken into account. According to Annex 5, the methodology of the CBA will be based on extensive data sets and scenarios, however clarification is needed regarding who will elaborate the data and formulate the scenarios and what sources of “common input data sets” (scenarios/predictions) for the next 5, 10, 15 and 20 (30) years will be used.

Consideration could also be given for ACER to issue guidelines for the CBA methodology which could facilitate the task of the ENTSOs. Moreover, the one-month deadline provided for the ENTSOs to elaborate the methodology would appear unrealistically short. In addition, given its complexity and the importance of an agreement on it by all Member States, Greece considers that the Member States should also approve the adoption of the methodology.

Greece agrees with the Commission that the user-pays principle should be the first and main approach for funding energy infrastructure.

Regarding Article 13 (1) which stipulates that the investment costs of projects referred to in points 1(a) to (d) and 2 of Annex II should be borne by the transmission system operators, the role of the project promoters could be further clarified.