

**CurrENT Europe, the European sector association for innovative grid technologies,
welcomes the European Parliament vote on the provisional TEN-E Agreement.**

27th January 2022

The TEN-E regulation needed to be aligned with the European Green Deal and the EU Climate Law. When TEN-E started, it was all about markets to be connected, about speeding up permitting and infrastructure to be developed. While market integration continues to be important, the overarching goal today is climate change mitigation. This comes with a massive increase in renewables but also the rise of electricity in the energy mix. What networks are needed to see the green energy transition to be successful?

Areas that needed to be covered in the new draft are offshore grids, new technologies, and the application of digital solutions to ensure efficiency across the system.

'Smart grids', 'smart electricity grids' and 'smart energy systems' appear 36 times in the text, which is an important achievement by itself.

currENT Europe welcomes the definition of smart electricity grids in article 8 as it includes all the benefits that smart grids provide: cost efficiency, community involvement, high RES integration, high security of supply, as well as innovation and digital solutions:

'Smart electricity grid' means an electricity network, including islands that are not interconnected or not sufficiently connected to the trans-European energy networks that enable the integration, in a cost-efficient manner and active control of the behaviour and actions of all users connected to it, including generators, consumers and prosumers, to ensure an economically efficient and sustainable power system with low losses and high levels of renewable sources integration, security of supply and safety, and in which the grid operator can digitally monitor the actions of the users connected to it, and information and communication technologies (ICT) for communicating with related grid operators, generators, energy storage facilities, and consumers and/or prosumers, to transmit and distribute electricity in a sustainable, cost-efficient and secure way.

currENT Europe equally welcomes the scope for PCI projects on smart electricity grids, as per Annex II D: the annex outlines the toolbox of solutions that are at hand both for transmission and high or medium voltage distribution grids, and reiterates the benefits as above. We appreciate here that it is clearer in emphasising the contribution of innovative grid technologies; we suggest this point also to be added to the definition of smart electricity grids in article 8.

‘Smart electricity grids: any equipment or installation, digital systems and components integrating ICT, through operational digital platforms, control systems and sensor technologies both at transmission and medium and high voltage distribution level, aiming at a more efficient and intelligent electricity transmission and distribution network, increased capacity to integrate new forms of generation, energy storage and consumption and facilitating new business models and market structures, including investments in islands and island systems to decrease energy isolation, to support innovative and other solutions involving at least two member states with a significant positive impact on the EU energy and climate targets, and to contribute significantly to the sustainability of the island energy system and that of the Union.’

The governance of the Ten-Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) for gas and electricity forms equally part of the TEN-E revamp. While a stakeholder group could not be set up, which currENT Europe regrets, we welcome the advisory role of the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC) ensuring that we move from network planning to system planning with a strong commitment to Net Zero (Art.12)

We equally welcome that ENTSO-E will have to publish separate integrated offshore grid plans based on the offshore wind volumes agreed by governments in addition to - but coordinated with- the TYNDP (Art. 14). However, it is insufficient to base the offshore renewable grid infrastructure plans on non-binding agreements. Achieving Europe's climate targets depend on our ability to plan, agree and construct offshore grids to accommodate the expansion of renewables. For that to materialise, we still need a stronger governance framework.

TEN-E was established in 2013, with a strong commitment to timely delivery of projects. Experience since then shows that such a speed-up has proven difficult, as it depends on many factors. currENT Europe highlights therefore that the no regrets solution consists of the fast deployment of solutions that can get more out of the existing infrastructure, awaiting the needed additional infrastructure.

Turning from a network development plan to a system development plan is highly relevant and must include smart electricity grids and smart solutions.

Grid enhancing technologies ensure better utilisation of the grids we have, affecting both where, when and if new grids are needed. Assuming no benefits from these digital grid technologies for the next ten years seems like a risky assumption for grid investors. Demand-side response, batteries and energy storage are similar measures that will have to be applied at a much larger scale going forward.

The reached TEN-E regulation compromise is an important step in that direction.



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The TEN-E sets the guidelines for the timely development and interoperability of the priority corridors and areas of trans-European energy infrastructure.

It also addresses the identification of projects of common interest (PCIs) and projects mutual interest (PMIs, between EU Member States and third countries), facilitates projects implementation by accelerating permitting granting processes, provides rules for cross-border allocation of costs and risk-related incentives, and determines conditions for eligibility for getting financial assistance.

The revision of the TEN-E regulation was required in view of the European Green Deal and the EU Climate Law.

currENT was founded in 2020 as the key industry association representing innovative grid technology companies operating in Europe.

Our members are taking Europe's power network to the next level – developing and supplying innovative technologies that optimise and maximise the use of the existing electricity grid.

These next-generation solutions advance the transition toward a decentralised, distributed and active power network: the future for Europe's electricity industry.