

## **currENT Reaction to Draft ITRE Report on the Renewable Energy Directive and Proposed Amendments**

### **Introduction**

Since the Commission first published its proposal for the renewed Renewable Energy Directive in July 2021, the geopolitical landscape in Europe has changed beyond recognition. The sudden need to reduce Europe's reliance on Russian fossil fuels will require an unprecedented scale-up in the deployment of renewable energy projects. This has also been stated as a key component of the REPowerEU communication and in the Versailles declaration.

These goals cannot be achieved without powerful and climate-proof power grids, both at the transmission and distribution level. Innovative grid technologies can help Europe deliver on this ambition.

### **General**

Although currENT supports the overall increase in ambition of the Renewable Energy Directive, particularly in the innovation aspect, more will still be needed to achieve Europe's decarbonisation goals.

### **Article 1 (2) 40% renewables target - amending Article 3:**

While the Commission had proposed increasing the renewables target to 40%, the majority of the amendments coming out of the ITRE committee propose a further increase to 45% or even 50%. currENT strongly supports an acceleration by increasing the renewables target to at least 45%. Such increased targets should be accompanied by a European Commission assessment of the needed cross-border electricity infrastructure to facilitate such higher renewable energy targets, including for offshore interconnectors.

### **Article 1 (4) Cooperation on grid infrastructure – amending Article 9:**

#### **New Paragraph 1a)**

While the Commission had proposed a requirement of at least one joint project with another Member State, many of the amendments coming out of the ITRE committee would propose requiring at least 2-3 joint projects. currENT would support increasing the ambition in this area, but would suggest allowing joint projects with non-Member States to count toward this requirement. On the other hand, currENT does not support the amendments that would make such joint projects voluntary.

currENT also very much welcomes the amendments that recognize the importance of infrastructure and the reflection of the agreements made under TEN-E. For example, that “Member States shall ensure the corresponding interconnection capacity in addition to the needs identified under TEN-E”.

**Article 1 (4) New paragraph 7a**

currENT strongly supports having Member States bordering a sea basin jointly define the amount of offshore renewable energy they plan to produce by 2050 with intermediary steps in 2030 and 2050 and associated reporting. It's a regional approach to EU grid planning that must, hopefully before long, develop into a truly pan-European approach to grid planning, development, investment and operation.

currENT welcomes amendments considering a technical and economic feasibility of the transmission grid infrastructure as part of these joint projects, as close coordination with TSOs will be key in successfully implementing these projects. However, it should be clarified how this technical and economic feasibility is assessed, and all innovative grid technologies should be considered in this assessment.

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 4 – point b**

currENT also supports any amendments that provide support in relieving administrative burdens. For example, currENT welcomes the addition of a one-stop-shop that can “facilitating the permit granting process for offshore renewable energy projects of common interest.”

**Article 1 – paragraph 1 – point 4 – point b a (new)**

currENT also welcomes the support of the European Commission in assessing “any possible gap between the potential amount of offshore renewable energy resources of the Member States and the amount of offshore renewable energy planned for 2030, 2040 and 2050,” and any additional measures they may take to reduce this gap.