



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 7.11.2018
C(2018) 7266 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Assembleia da República for its Opinion on the proposal for a regulation on streamlining measures for advancing the realisation of the trans-European transport network {COM(2018) 277 final}.

The Commission acknowledges that, while the trans-European transport network includes national or regional transport networks, the development of a European network requires a concerted and synchronised approach. The Commission's role is to promote a European-wide approach to coordinate the delivery of the elements of the whole network.

The Commission agrees that according to the principle of proportionality, any action at the level of the European Union should not exceed what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaties. In this respect, the measures proposed by the Commission target the core trans-European transport network, the transnational and European-wide importance of which is clear. Only by delivering the whole trans-European transport network can the European Union draw all the benefits of the network, which means that all parts of the network have to be treated with appropriate attention.

In this respect, it should be noted that the permit granting procedures differ greatly across the European Union, with some systems being already integrated, as in the scheme proposed by the Commission. In these cases, the overall process is managed by one competent body acting as a leader, while safeguarding the competences of other players by means of binding opinions which feed into the whole process. The Commission sees value in promoting and extending these good practices and concepts across the European Union. This aims at incentivising changes and reforms in those Member States that face more problems and delays in this field and at ensuring a more coherent approach across Member States. The initiative is expected to benefit the whole Union, as the network effect will also positively contribute to the neighbouring Member States.

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The Commission would also like to draw the attention of the Assembleia da República to the streamlined permitting procedures, which are already applicable for the Projects of Common Interest in the energy sector as provided for by Chapter III of the Regulation on trans-European energy infrastructure¹. This legislative act, in force since 2013, contains similar permit granting procedures for the project of common interest in the energy sector, similar to those proposed in the transport sector, and has proven to be quite effective. According to recent assessments, in terms of energy transmission projects the expected time for clearing the permit granting procedures has been brought down from 10 to 3.5 years².

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Assembleia da República and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Violeta Bulc
Member of the Commission*

¹ Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009.

² Commission Staff Working Document Accompanying the document Commission Delegated Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the Union list of projects of common interest, SWD(2017) 425 final, based on the report of the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators.