

EU Energy Infrastructure and Environmental  
Assessment Procedures: options and challenges  
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***Good practices in streamlining  
environmental assessments and their  
applicability across the EU Member States***

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# Presentation content

- Project process and methodology
- Member State inventories
- Member State good practices and possible recommendations for guidance
- Assessment of practices and final report
- Questions and discussion

# Project process and methodology

28 Member State reports investigating current EA requirements and practices and existing streamlining measures in each country

Review and assessment of Member State practices (SWOT);  
Development of recommendations  
Peer group review  
Final assessment of recommendations

Final Report supporting the Commission's guidance on streamlining environmental assessments

# Member State Reports: Inventory of existing permitting procedures for energy infrastructure

<b>Phases of decision-making process</b>	
<b>Designated competent authorities</b>	
<b>Timeframe</b>	
<b>Status of specific projects</b>	

# Member State Reports: Inventory of existing environmental assessment procedures

Assessment	Transposing legislation	Role of assessment in permit granting process for infrastructure projects	Designated competent authorities for assessment procedure	Consultation requirements
SEA				
EIA				
Habitats/Birds				
Seveso II				
IPPC/IED				
WFD				

# Member State Reports:

## Inventory of national streamlining measures

- What legal provisions, institutional measures and good practices are in place in the MS to coordinate/improve efficiency and effectiveness of EAs?
- Literature, interviews and expert knowledge
- Output = List and initial evaluation of relevant measures

# Member State Reports: Inventory of national streamlining measures

Streamlining procedure	Basic description	Consequences for the permitting process	Advantages (A) and disadvantages (D)
<b>Institutional arrangements</b>			
<b>Legal measures</b>			
<b>Good practices</b>			

# Administrative measures for coordination of environmental assessment procedures

- Specific coordination entity for the overall EIA process (BE, FI, HU)
- One coordinator for all EA procedures (NL, IT, PL)
- ‘Application conference’ as project kickoff measure (DE)
- Obligatory procedures for cooperation between sub-national authorities (AT, DE)
- Smart sharing and management of data
- Supported via national guidance documents (DE, FI, NL)



# Integration of different types of assessment procedures

- SEA and EIA: ‘tiering’:
  - Enable continuous public engagement dialogue from the planning stage to project development consent
  - Sustainable, acceptable project development from the beginning stages
  - Results of plan-level environmental assessment taken into account for EIA/permitting (many MS)
- Coordination between other assessments – mostly AA and IPPC permitting with EIA

# Early and extensive public consultation procedures

- Authority or developer-led institutionalized mechanisms to improve dialogue (many MS)
- ‘Accompanying committee’ - as ongoing platform for dialogue (BE)
- Designated EIA coordinator manages public engagement and serves as contact point
- Online information platform (CZ, SK, ES)

# Time limits for EA procedures

- Overall time limit for all phases of EA (with exceptions) (SE)
- Time frames for different process steps (CY)
- Establishing priority status for certain types of projects, with associated time limits and other conditions

# Assessing practices – SWOT Analysis

	<b>Helpful to achieving the objective</b>	<b>Harmful to achieving the objective</b>
<b>Internal origin</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>External origin</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>

# SWOT process...Strengths and Weaknesses

- process effectiveness and efficiency (STRENGTH: avoiding double work, rework, inconsistencies, complexity; WEAKNESS: increasing (risk of) double work, rework, inconsistencies, complexity)
- administrative burden (STRENGTH: limited additional administrative requirements or even reduction of administration; WEAKNESS: important additional administrative requirements)
- financial consequences (STRENGTH: limited extra costs or even cost reduction; WEAKNESS: significant extra costs)
- duration (STRENGTH: substantial shortening of process duration; WEAKNESS: no or non-significant shortening of process duration)
- technical consequences (STRENGTH: no or little specific expertise required; WEAKNESS: strong need for specific expertise)
- legislative burden (STRENGTH: no or little additional legislation; WEAKNESS: complex additional legislation)

# SWOT process... Opportunities and Threats

## Threats

- risk of non-compliance with legislation (e.g. due to resulting low quality of environmental assessment, onerous requirements for screening or scoping procedures, etc.; non-compliance leads to increased (social) resistance, rework and associated delays).
- risk of public opposition (public opposition might be increased in case of speeding up procedures without respecting appropriate public consultation, lack of transparency in the permitting process, lack of information and data dissemination)

## Opportunities

- transferability to other Member States (institutional capacity to carry out the measure; relevance of the measure across different legal and administrative systems include extent of decentralization)
- expected effectiveness of the measure with regard to saving time whilst maintaining the integrity of the environmental assessment procedure or procedures in question.

# Next steps and final report

- More detailed review and critical assessment of the identified practices
- Development of recommendations and measures to achieve them
- Peer review workshop to get feedback on first findings and develop recommendations further
- Final report to support EC Guidance