

[Home](#) > New EU Governance in the Energy Sector - What can be learned from Projects of Common Interest (PCIs)?

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## EVENT

Workshop  
Climate  
Energy  
Governance

# New EU Governance in the Energy Sector - What can be learned from Projects of Common Interest (PCIs)?



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What shape will the future governance framework of European climate and energy policy take? The proposal submitted by the European Commission at the beginning of this year raises more questions than it answers in this regard. Dr. Camilla Bausch and Christine Lucha of the Ecologic Institute invited experts to a workshop to discuss what impact the new EU Governance has on the electricity sector and how to design the requested regional cooperation. The discussions focused on the workshop participants' experience with and lessons drawn from Projects of Common Interest.

### **Commission proposal for a 2030 climate and energy package**

In early 2014, the Commission published suggestions for the potential structure of a climate and energy package through 2030. Part of that package is an EU-wide renewable energy goal that is connected to a suggested new governance by which Member States create new energy plans in consultation with their neighbours based on commission guidelines. Those plans would include intended infrastructure changes, such as new electricity interconnections. Further, the new governance framework would strengthen regional approaches and cross-border cooperation.

### **Projects of Common Interest (PCI)**

As one example for cross-border cooperation, Projects of Common Interest contribute to the infrastructure expansion in Europe. PCIs are meant to integrate the energy markets physically and develop the networks to ensure that they can handle the increasing share of renewable energy. Accelerated permit procedures, enhanced

transparency and, if necessary, financial support provided by the Connecting Europe facility. The first PCI list was published in October 2013. It includes electricity network projects with German participation in the North and Baltic Sea region.

### **Implications of the new EU-Governance for Projects of Common Interest**

The workshop participants focused on a number of selected central questions, such as practical experience with PCIs in the electricity sector in the North and Baltic Sea regions, how to overcome financing and regulatory constraints and whether the Governance approach can contribute to the project implementation. Despite the fact that implementation experience is still somewhat limited, participants already identified certain structural deficits in view of the identification, selection and implementation of PCIs and what implications this has for regional cooperation and the new EU Governance. Furthermore, the participants addressed the cross-border cost allocation within the regional cooperation and the role of the public.

### **Challenges and opportunities**

The participants from academia, government, civil society and business identified a number of challenges and opportunities resulting from Projects of Common Interest and other regional cooperation fora such as the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E). It was noted that the increased cross-border cooperation in fora and projects and the PCIs' strong focus on cross-sectoral and cross-institutional coordination can broaden stakeholders' understanding of other perspectives and European constellations. Potential benefits can result from greater coherence regarding the planning of infrastructural measures and enhanced cross-border cooperation. In that respect, participants identified further potential for improvements of structures, transparency, coordination of fora, working groups and Member States. Increasingly transparent processes can result in greater public acceptance of planned projects.

However, the intended accelerated permit granting - commonly seen as one of the benefits of PCIs - can conflict with increased participation of the public. Some participants also noted that so far there is no sufficiently clear approach to the cross-border allocation of costs of PCIs. Another challenge was held to be that some processes at the regional level are not yet sufficiently harmonised. Overall, the processes should ensure that projects, planning and scenarios are in line with political objectives at the European level. A resulting challenge is the potential discrepancy between planning, project and policy cycles (for example, Europe's 2030 objectives and the development of the Ten-Year Network

Development Plan).

Speakers: Olgerts Viksne, Marta Mituta, Antina Sander, Paul Wilczek, Rotraud Hänlein

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**Antina Sander, Renewables Grid Initiative,**

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**Paul Wilczek, EWEA**

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1 July 2014

Berlin

### Attachments

-  Viksne, DG Energy, Europäische Kommission, Implementing the Projects of Common Interest
-  Mituta, Bundesnetzagentur, Projects of Common Interest in Deutschland
-  Sander, Renewables Grid Initiative, What can be learned from PCIs for a European Energy Governance?
-  Wilczek, EWEA, Neue EU - Governance im Energiesektor, Windkraft und Stromnetze im Kontext der EU Energiepolitik
-  Hänlein, Germanwatch, Neue EU - Governance im Energiesektor
-  Workshop Report - New EU-Governance in the Energy Sector (in German)

### Ecologic Related Articles

- German Perspectives on the Idea of an Integrated Offshore Grid
- The Relevance of Cross-Border Electricity Grids on the North and Baltic Seas for Offshore Wind Energy in Germany
- Regional Cooperation in the Commission's Proposal for a New Energy Governance
- Transition towards Low-Carbon Energy Security (MILESECURE 2050)
- Commission Proposal on Energy Governance and Electricity Infrastructure Measures

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- [1] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0007\\_1.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0007_1.jpg)
- [2] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0015\\_1.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0015_1.jpg)
- [3] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0005.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0005.jpg)
- [4] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0015\\_new.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0015_new.jpg)
- [5] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0018.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0018.jpg)
- [6] [https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc\\_0007\\_0.jpg](https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/event/2014/dsc_0007_0.jpg)