



BRIEF NEWS

September 2026

What's up in Brussels? Updates on latest developments of key policy initiatives

After the summer break, Brussels is back in full swing, and several dossiers on CEDEC's radar are moving fast forward. This edition looks at developments across electricity grids and network regulation, public procurement, and EU climate policy.

Grids Package: Both legislative files of the Grids Package – permitting and TEN-E - have moved into trilogue negotiations (interinstitutional negotiations between Parliament, Commission and Council) – the final phase before adoption. On the file for accelerating permit-granting procedures, discussions have been ongoing since July, with next rounds of trilogues scheduled for October and November. On the revision of the TEN-E Regulation focusing on multi-annual grid planning at EU level, the Parliament approved its report with compromise amendments on 10 September, which means trilogue negotiations can now start. Final agreement between institutions on both files is expected before the end of the year.

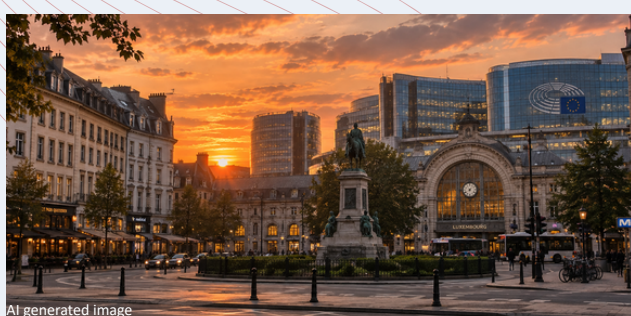
Electrification Action Plan: On 17 July, the Commission published a non-legislative Communication on measures to accelerate electrification in the EU. The plan includes, inter alia, an indicative electrification target of 46% of final energy consumption by 2040. Other actions in the plan include measures related to grids, energy taxation (see also the point below), flexibility, heating (heat pumps, district heating and cooling, waste heat), industry and – to a very limited extent – renewables. A separate Cooling and Heating Action Plan is also announced in the communication, although its publication date is currently uncertain.

Proposal on “future-proof electricity bills”: As part of the Electrification Action Plan, the European Commission published a legislative proposal related to network charges and taxation, revising the Electricity Regulation (2019/943). Specifically, the proposal foresees measures covering grid tariff methodologies, grid connections, smart grids and smart meter deployment, data exchange, electricity taxation and congestion management. The Parliament is expected to decide on the lead Committee (most likely ITRE) and the (shadow)-rapporteur(s) – those leading discussions in the Parliament – within the coming weeks. In the Council, Member States already started working on the file, with the Irish Presidency aiming for a general approach by the end of the year (10-11 December Energy Council). Adoption is estimated in Q2 2027.

Revision of the Public Procurement Directive: On 9 September 2026, the European Commission published its proposal for a Public Procurement Act, and a Regulation on public contracts and concessions, including the Utilities Directive covering water, energy, transport and postal services. The proposal consolidates the previously separate 2014 Directives into a single, directly applicable Regulation. Procurement rules continue to apply to entities in the water, energy, transport and postal sectors, with utilities also potentially exempt where the relevant activity is directly exposed to competition on markets. Key elements include a general shift toward awarding contracts on the best price-quality ratio with minimum quality-weighting requirements, and a coherent framework for green, social, security and resilience-related procurement objectives. It introduces rules on European preference, and a common digital ecosystem at national and EU level. The file now moves to the Parliament and Council as co-legislators.

ETS review: On 17 July 2026, the European Commission presented its proposal for reforming the EU ETS I, with the objective to stabilize the expected evolution of the CO2-price and avoid sharp price rises in the coming decade. It covers five main areas: adjustments to the emissions cap, extension of free allocations, dynamization of the Market Stability Reserve (MSR), new support mechanisms for emissions avoidance, and the inclusion of additional sectors. Main issue for CEDEC members is the inclusion of municipal waste incineration in the ETS system. Technically speaking, the reform eases the long-term tightening trajectory of the cap and extends the availability of allowances well beyond the current end-date, while recalibrating the MSR to withdraw fewer allowances from circulation and adjust more gradually to market conditions. A new Industrial Decarbonisation Bank is introduced to channel ETS resources directly into decarbonization investments, complementing the continuation of the Innovation and Modernisation Funds. The scope of the ETS is also expanded to cover aviation, smaller shipping vessels, and waste incineration, each with phase-in periods and safeguards to manage the impact on newly covered sectors.

CEDEC Board of Directors + CEDEC After Work evening event – 15/10, from 18:00 (Brussels): Join us at Cafe Luxembourg (Pl. de Luxembourg 10, Brussels) for an informal evening around an open bar and open buffet. [Register here.](#)



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Spotlight on: the 2026 State of the Union speech

On 16 September, Commission President von der Leyen delivered the State of the Union address, accompanied by the report *From promise to progress*. Held every September before the European Parliament, the address takes stock of the past year and sets out the Commission's priorities and main initiatives for the year ahead.

The speech was built around European independence – energy, industrial, technological and military – with kickstarting the economy named the number one priority, alongside completion of the Single Market by end-2027, faster permitting for strategic projects and a "pact against gold-plating" asking Member States to match EU-level simplification. From climate resilience and this summer's wildfires to artificial intelligence, from support to Ukraine and European defence to trade with China and the protection of minors online, the address covered a broad range of topics.

Energy was one of the most developed parts. The President stated that Europe cannot remain an industrial powerhouse if its energy prices are structurally too high. The response is to double down on affordable, homegrown clean energy – renewables and nuclear, biomethane and others – described as "technologically neutral". However, electrification was presented as the route to independence, alongside grids:

- the goal is to double the share of electricity by 2040, which according to the Commission could cut fossil-fuel imports by €260 billion a year;
- grids are the bottleneck: more than 80 GW of renewable capacity was installed last year, while six times that amount is still waiting to be connected;
- on this basis, the President called for urgent adoption of the Grids Package, faster investment, quicker grid connections and more storage.



Ursula von der Leyen during SOTEU in the European Parliament in Strasbourg
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Upcoming meetings and events

Working Group Grid Tariffs – 22/09, 10:00-12:00: Focus on the new legislative proposal on network charges and taxation, presentations on capacity mechanisms in Flanders and new grid tariff elements in the Netherlands.

Working Group Smart Grids – 29/09, 14:00-16:00: Focus on updates on the Grids Package, recent EU grid-related initiatives including the Electrification Action Plan, digital files and the post-2040 Energy Union package, as well as updates on the Smart Energy Expert Group.

Working Group Gas – 06/10, 13:30-15:00: Focus on the EU DSO Entity elections and the important outcome for future gas integration, and EU proposals on gas, or impacting gas.

Working Group Implementation – 07/10, 10:00-12:00: Focus on distribution network development plans, refusal of access and connection to gas grids, and demand response.

Working Group Digitalisation – 20/10 TBC

