



# CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING electricity grids

AN RGI PERSPECTIVE

Renewables  
Grid Initiative



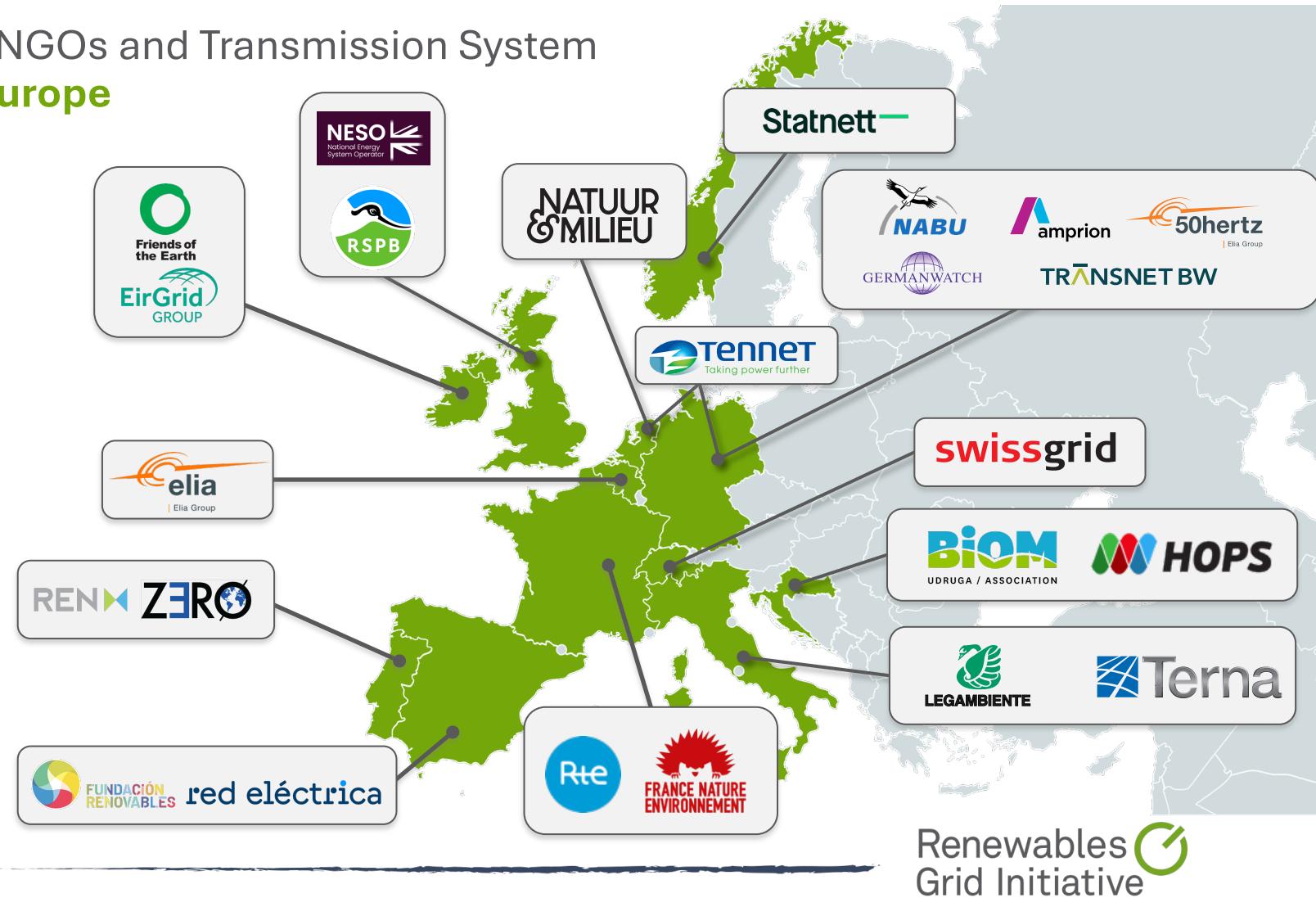
Co-funded by  
the European Union

7 May, Brussels  
Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Permitting

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# Renewables Grid Initiative

RGI is a unique collaboration of NGOs and Transmission System Operators (TSOs) from **across Europe**



# How is our work structured?

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We foster knowledge exchange, discussions on the grid infrastructure needs, and the implementation of best practices within **three dimensions**:

## GRIDS & ENERGY SYSTEMS

We enable discussions on how to **model, plan and implement** decarbonised and optimised clean energy systems, including different voices in the process.

## ENERGY & NATURE

We ensure energy systems both onshore and offshore are developed in **coherence with nature and biodiversity**, promoting mitigation, enhancement and restoration measures.

## ENERGY & SOCIETY

We include and engage **citizens, civil society and policymakers** on strategies towards full decarbonisation, building capacity on the role of grids within the energy transition.

# Permitting is hampering the energy transition



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EURACTIV

## Years-long wait for permits blocking European wind farms, industry says

By Kate Abnett

July 5, 2024 2:15 AM GMT+2 · Updated 9 months ago



Energy, Environment & Transport

## Permitting issues risk derailing EU's renewable energy targets, warns wind industry

Complex and slow permitting procedures are stalling the rollout of wind power in Europe, meaning the EU will miss its climate goals and be dependent on unreliable gas supplies for longer, the wind industry has ned.



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ENERGY TRANSITION

## How permitting processes are hampering Europe's energy transition

Sep 17, 2024

Atlantic Council

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EnergySource | July 24, 2024

## European energy security requires stronger power grids

By Andrei Covatariu

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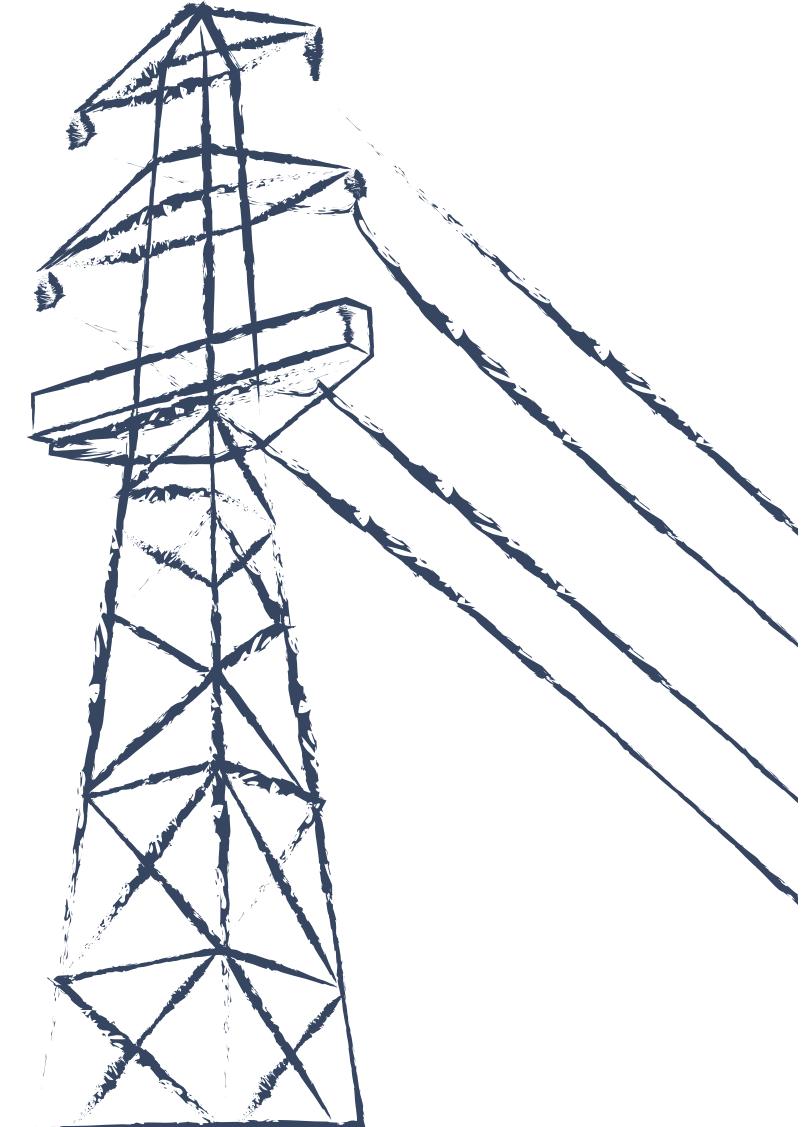
Economy Companies Markets Tech

## New power lines take a decade to build because of red tape, complains National Grid

Energy company blasts Britain's planning rules amid ongoing row over delays

Renewables Grid Initiative

*grid*  
**ACCELERATION AREAS**  
AN APPROACH TO TACKLE PERMITTING CHALLENGES



# POLICY & REGULATORY framework



## Renewables Acceleration Areas

Article 15c

By **21 February 2026**, Member States **shall** ensure that competent authorities adopt one or more plans designating, as a sub-set of the areas referred to in Article 15b(1), renewables acceleration areas for **one or more types of renewable energy sources**.

## Emergency regulation

Article 6

Member States may exempt renewable energy projects, as well as energy storage projects and **electricity grid** projects which are necessary to integrate renewable energy into the electricity system, from the environmental impact assessment [...] and from the species protection assessments [...]



## Grid Acceleration Areas

Article 15e

Member States **may** adopt one or more plans to designate dedicated infrastructure areas for the development of **grid and storage** projects that are necessary to integrate renewable energy into the electricity system [...] The aim of such areas shall be to support and complement the renewables acceleration areas.

## EU Action Plan for Grids

Action 11

At the latest by **mid-2025**, in view of the permitting obstacles encountered by energy infrastructure projects, the Commission will provide guidance on the designation of dedicated infrastructure areas for grid projects necessary to integrate renewables as provided by the revised RED.

# A MAKE-OR-BREAK opportunity



Renewables and grid acceleration areas are not always **considered jointly**



**Not enough alignment** between frameworks stemming from EU legislation and lack of guidance



Need to strengthen qualitative & quantitative **capacities of national permitting authorities**



**Mitigation measures** are not part of national discussions yet



Room for improvement on **stakeholder engagement** processes



# A MAKE-OR-BREAK opportunity



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Need to strengthen

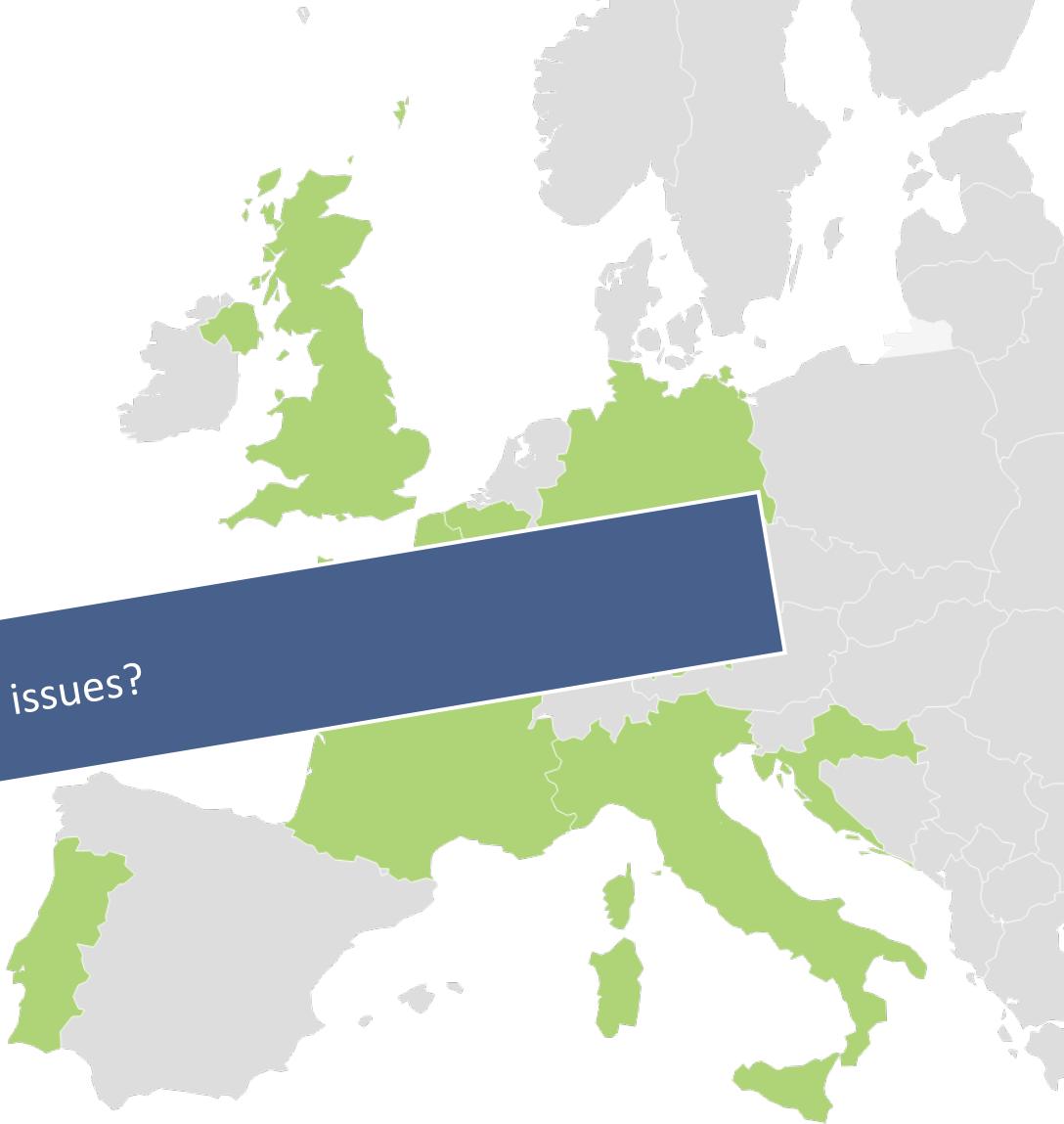


**Mitigation measures** are not part of national discussions yet



Room for improvement on **stakeholder engagement** processes

How can we tackle all of these issues?



# THE ‘NO-BRAINERS’

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**Strengthened capacities** for competent authorities



**One-Stop-Shop** to ensure better communication with authorities and provide clear guidance for project promoters



**Simplified and digital procedures** – including sharing applicable regulation, documentation of project decisions, deadlines



**Streamlined data** collection and integration

# Holistic approach INSTEAD OF DEREGULATION



**Regulatory and political support**, as well as policy and process integration



**Strategic planning**, with optimisation and sensitivity mapping



Robust, early and continuous **stakeholder engagement**

## PRACTICES

-  Early start of construction
-  Elisabeth Energy Island
-  Single environmental assessment for offshore wind and electricity grid

## PRACTICES

-  Integrated approach
-  Grid hosting maps
-  Onshore zoning

## PRACTICES

-  EU Pact for Engagement
-  North Sea Agreement
-  Long-standing collaborations



# DEEPENING THE *dialogue*

- Complex and long permitting procedures
- Capacities and coordination in and between competent authorities
- Political continuity and public opposition
- Lack of policy integration
- Data availability and robustness

# THANK YOU – LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!



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Contribute to better strategic planning and stakeholder engagement



## ArcGIS

Considers different elements for spatial planning, enables interfaces to other applications and checks the data quality.



## SISIFO Software

Simulate solar-PV generation potential to support renewable integration to the grid.

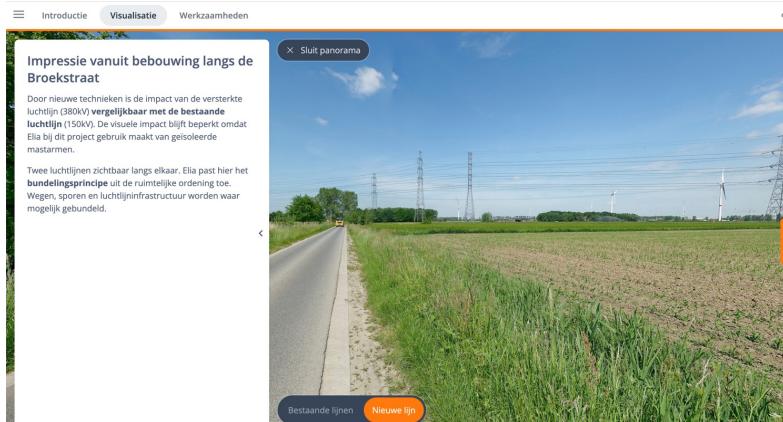


## Pathfinder

Geographic Information System (GIS) collaborative decision-making platform, aimed at increasing transparency, communication and stakeholder engagement. [More information here.](#)



Contribute to better strategic planning and stakeholder engagement



## Project Atlas | Elia Group, Belgium

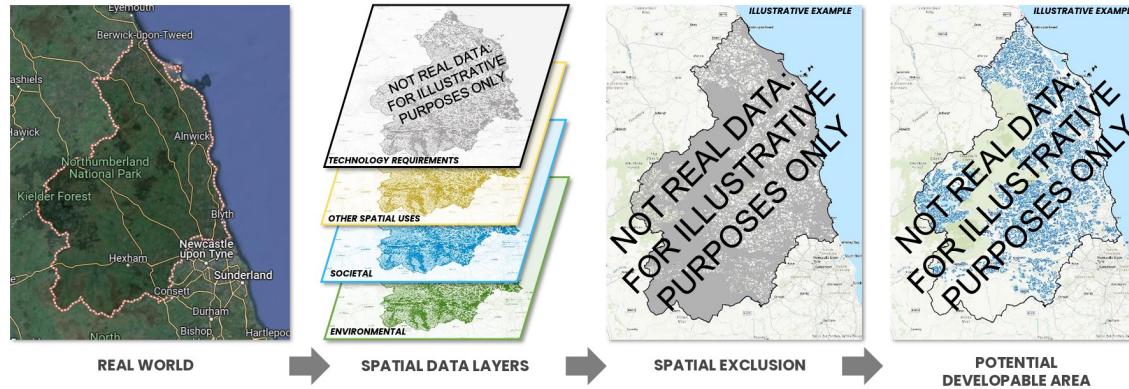
Information from the project is summarised in one platform, as well as an interactive map in both the current and future scenarios. This allows users to see the different route possibilities and the impact of infrastructure in the landscape. [See an example here.](#)



## Suedlink | Tennet & TransnetBW, Germany

Innovative and transparent public participation, including co-creation with local governments and other stakeholders, as well as various engagement formats. [More information here.](#)

Contribute to better strategic planning and stakeholder engagement



## Strategic Spatial Energy Planning | NESO, Great Britain

Methodology that combines energy system planning and spatial planning in Great Britain, by assessing optimal locations, quantities and types of energy infrastructure required to meet future energy demand.

[More information here.](#)