

New EU rules will improve security of electricity supply in crisis situations

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A new framework of rules on how to prevent, prepare for and manage electricity crisis situations will lead to better risk preparedness and strengthen the energy security pillar of the Energy Union. EU ambassadors today endorsed an agreement reached with the European Parliament on 22 November on a regulation setting out these new rules.

Today we have taken another important step towards completing the Energy Union. This new Regulation makes it easier for member states to assist each other in the event of an electricity crisis. We will be better prepared and there will be fewer electricity cuts at peak times. I am confident that this agreement will pave the way for a rapid and successful outcome to the negotiations on the other files in the Electricity Market Design package.

Elisabeth Köstinger, Federal Minister for Sustainability and Tourism and President of the Council

Europe's electricity system is increasingly interconnected. As a result, the consequences of electricity crises sparked for example by extreme weather conditions, malicious attacks or a fuel shortage can easily extend beyond national borders.

Under this regulation, a **common methodology** to identify risks will be developed. The European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity, ENTSO-E, will draw up **regional crisis scenarios** and identify the most relevant risks for each region. On the basis of both these regional and national electricity crisis scenarios, each member state will be required to draw up a **risk-preparedness plan**, including both national and regional measures. Close coordination between Member States and all those involved, as well as the provision of a template for the risk-preparedness plans, will ensure that the preparedness of Member States is harmonised as far as possible. At the same time there will be sufficient flexibility to enable Member States to take into account their own specific circumstances.

The Council has ensured that sufficient time will be allocated for the development of risk-preparedness plans so that all Member States can be ready with plans of high quality. Furthermore, the Council has ensured that a clearly-defined **assistance mechanism between Member States** will be introduced, so that that cross-border assistance can be provided rapidly in the event of an electricity crisis.

The provisions of the regulation concerning regional cooperation shall not apply to Cyprus, for as long as it is not directly interconnected with any other member state.

Background and next steps

The Commission proposal for the Regulation on risk-preparedness in the electricity sector was published on 30 November 2016 as part of the Clean Energy package. The Council adopted its position on 4 December 2017. Negotiations with the European Parliament started in autumn and were successfully concluded on 22 November 2018.

The file will now be passed to the European Parliament for approval in the plenary before final adoption by the Council, most likely in spring 2019. The regulation will enter into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal.

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