

October 2023

UFE's reaction to the european « Wind power action plan »

Wind energy is a strategic choice for European sovereignty and its industry. Wind energy, both onshore and offshore, contributes to the energy independence of states as well as the fight against climate change. The IPCC estimates that it is one of the few solutions that can contribute the most to greenhouse gas emission reduction worldwide at a lower cost by 2030. However, the sector faces a series of challenges, such as high inflation, investment and demand uncertainties, lengthy authorizations, a shortage of labor and expertise, and unfair foreign competition, among others.

In response to these current challenges, the European Commission has unveiled an action plan aimed at strengthening the resilience and competitiveness of European wind energy. This plan, eagerly awaited by the industry, does not propose regulatory reform but rather a series of fifteen relevant measures, avoiding a cumbersome legislative process. The UFE (Union Française de l'Électricité) states its positions on the key axes:

Accelerating Permit Procedures

With nearly 80 GW of wind capacity undergoing authorization procedures, **the European Commission primarily seeks to accelerate permitting through the "Accele-RES" initiative**, which the UFE supports, this issue affecting France among other Member States. While waiting for the full implementation of the RED (Renewable Energy Directive), **the Commission may consider extending the application of the emergency regulation adopted in 2022. A report on this possibility will be presented in November to resolve this issue. The UFE believes it is an absolute necessity**, especially for the presumption of overriding public interest in renewable projects and the simplification of repowering.

Improving Auction Design

The Commission encourages Member States to enhance auctions with criteria designed to reward higher value-added equipment and provide greater transparency on their tender schedules and project volumes. This information will be made available through a digital platform to be the sole

source of information for companies. **The UFE particularly supports the Commission's desire to develop transparent and non-discriminatory qualitative criteria.**

Protecting the Sector from Unfair Competition

The UFE shares the Commission's goal of securing the development of the European industry and ensuring effective and fair global competition. Any evidence of distorted competition should indeed be reported by the industry. Access to foreign markets will also be facilitated.

Developing Employment and Skills

The UFE welcomes the Commission's emphasis on this crucial point and supports the choice of developing large-scale skills partnerships in renewable energies, especially in wind energy, to achieve the additional 100,000 jobs needed in the sector by 2030. **Each Member State must intensify its support for the development of employment and skills in all components of the electricity sector.** The UFE will soon update the french commitment to the development of employment and skills (EDEC) in the sector to better align with territorial needs for jobs and skills.

In conclusion, the European Commission's plan will contribute to achieving a 42.5% share of renewables in its members' energy consumption by 2030, thanks to a minimum of 500 GW of installed projects, compared to 204 GW by the end of 2022. While the UFE welcomes these ambitious objectives that will undoubtedly support the European industry, it emphasizes the importance of simultaneous development of electrical networks to integrate all new sources of electricity production, including wind energy. **The UFE also welcomes the announcement of an action plan on networks scheduled for November 29, which will help unlock a greater number of wind projects.**