EU Renewable Energy Permitting: State of Play

Tracking Member States' progress on the Renewable Energy Directive

SolarPower Europe

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Acknowledgements:
SolarPower Europe would like to extend a special thanks to all members of the Land Use & Permitting Workstream that contributed their knowledge and experience to this report.

Please cite as:
SolarPower Europe (2025): EU Renewable Energy Permitting: State of Play

For media use and queries:
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Date of publication:
16 July 2025.

ISBN: 9789464669336

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Cover image:
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About this document

This document is an updated overview of how well Member States have transposed RED III permitting provisions into national law. Our previous paper, the RES Booster Stocktake (2023) is available here: RES Booster Stocktake, (SolarPower Europe, 2023).

Questions? Get in touch.

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Solar energy continues to grow across the EU, with 65.5 GW of new solar capacity installed in 2024 — representing a 4% increase over the previous year.

While this marks a slowdown compared to last year, with the predicted growth rate between 3-7% in the coming years, solar can still just about be on the track to meet EU's target.

One of the main challenges that remains is project permitting. To this day, permitting remains a major bottleneck, preventing the sector from reaching its full potential. Recent data shows that in several European countries, permitting delays for solar projects exceed two years, and in some cases stretch up to four years. These timelines are double the maximum duration allowed under the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) framework.

Policymakers have acknowledged the issue. In response to the energy crisis and as part of the REPowerEU Plan, the EU Energy Council adopted the 'RES Booster' in December 2022. This was followed by the adoption of the revised Renewable Energy Directive (REDIII) in September 2023, which established a new structural framework for renewable energy development. Yet, two years into REDIII transposition (See Figure 1), Member States are still lagging behind on progress and permitting remains slow. Instead of simplifying permitting processes, many governments have created new layers of complexity, and legal uncertainty. Reforms are often poorly enforced, overinterpreted, or remain theoretical - resulting in limited impact on the ground. Meanwhile, the 2022 emergency regulation expired on 30 June 2025, risking legal uncertainty in countries where RED III has not been fully transposed.

This report builds on SolarPower Europe's first RES Booster Stocktake report (2023) and assesses the same eight key permitting provisions in the RED legislation across several Member States. An additional provision – RES mapping – has been included in this assessment. Overall, the findings present a mixed picture: while there are certainly good practices that could be more widely shared, the transposition of the legislation remains incomplete, and concrete progress is limited. This highlights an urgent need for the European Commission to engage more pro-actively with Member States to translate this legislation into tangible progress.

Key issues persist

Permitting timelines are not getting faster

Despite RED III provisions on digitalisation, streamlined processes, and one-stop shops, these measures are not being effectively implemented on the ground. As a result, permitting delays persist, risking non-compliance with the deadlines set out in the revised RED. More robust EU-level monitoring of member state performance, along with targeted support to build capacity within national, regional and local authorities, is urgently needed to accelerate progress.

Acceleration areas add confusion

The effective implementation of acceleration areas is critical to the success of renewable energy permitting. However, in some Member States, these provisions have led to overly complex and burdensome processes, and in some cases have even led to the establishment of 'no-go' areas. In some cases, legislation intended to simplify permitting has instead introduced legal uncertainty, stalling energy project deployment. To address this, the EU should offer clearer guidance and promote the exchange of best practices to ensure a harmonised and practical application of RAAs development and fast-tracked permitting procedures in these areas.

Simplified permitting for solar on artificial surfaces is overlooked, leaving huge untapped potential

While progress has been made in simplifying permitting for rooftop solar PV, PV on artificial surfaces and grid connections, current efforts still fall short of what the energy transition demands. Simplified procedures — intended to apply to all PV on artificial structures such as carparks, artificial water bodies, and more — are too often limited to rooftop installations. Similarly, simplified grid connections, which could extend to all systems under 50 kW, are frequently restricted to those under 10 kW. To meet EU energy targets, these simplifications must be expanded in scope and uniformly implemented.

Overriding public interest, at best, exists only in theory

While the principle of Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) has been transposed into national legislation in several Member States, its practical impact for solar PV projects on the ground remains limited. In number of countries, the IROPI principle does not apply to solar PV projects, or governments may lack the knowledge or political will to apply it effectively. More dedicated guidelines for the application of IROPI principles to renewable energy projects should be developed. These would help streamline permitting processes and reduce legal uncertainty.

As the transposition of the Renewable Energy Directive is long overdue, governments must act swiftly and decisively to deliver meaningful permitting reform. This document provides an indicative assessment of how EU member states are transposing RED III's permitting provisions into law, along with country examples and a set of policy recommendations aimed at guiding national authorities toward more effective and streamlined permitting practices.

Glossary

EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment

EP - European Parliament

EUCO - European Council

EU – European Union

RED – Renewable Energy Directive

RES – Renewable Energy Sources

IROPI – Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest

RAA – Renewable Acceleration Areas

SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment

Table 1

Overview of Member State transposition into law of EU permitting rules

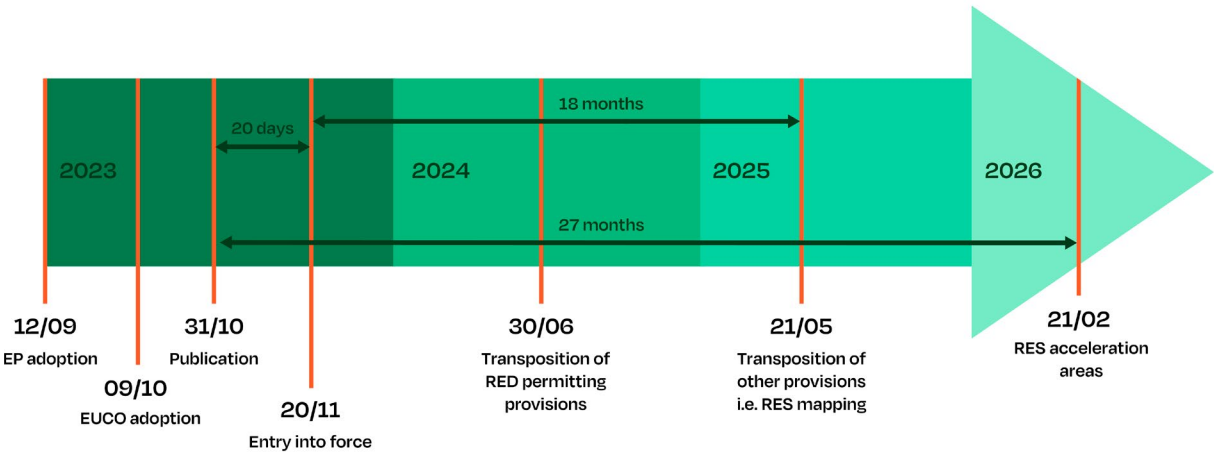
	BE (FL)	BG	CZ	FR	DE	EL	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	ES	SE	Transposition rate per dimension	Indicative plant scale concerned by the measure
Single contact point and digitalisation																					65%	small-scale + large scale
Deadlines for permit granting																					50%	small, medium + large scale
Acceleration areas																					15%	small-scale + large scale
Overriding public interest																					65%	small, medium + large scale
Simple rules for Repowering																					39%	large scale
Acceleration on artificial structures																					45%	mostly small scale
Positive silence																					45%	small-scale
Simple notification for small-scale PV (for grid)																					65%	small-scale
RES Mapping areas																					35%	small-scale + large scale
Transposition rate per Member State	33%	56%	33%	22%	56%	44%	22%	56%	22%	78%	56%	13%	22%	75%	67%	78%	78%	22%	44%	67%		

Fully transposed | Fully transposed but not effective | Mostly transposed or to be transposed | Mostly not transposed

Not transposed | No information

Figure 1

RED III transposition timeline



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Introduction

This section provides an overview of the relevant permitting provisions under RED III, including key timelines.

Single contact point and digitalisation

Under Article 15c of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 (Renewable Energy Directive III or "RED III"), Member States shall designate one or more contact points for the permitting process. Online submission of all documentation is mandated, and a public manual of procedures must be made available. Full digitalisation of all permitting procedures must be achieved by 21 November 2025.

Deadlines for permit granting process

Under Articles 16 and 16b of Directive (EU) 2023/2413 (RED III), Member States shall ensure that the permit-granting process for new solar installations does not exceed two years, and one year for installations below 150kW, repowering and co-located energy storage. All these deadlines can be extended to six months under exceptional circumstances with justification.

Acceleration areas

Articles 15b and 15c require Member States to map all suitable renewable areas with a deadline of 21st May 2025. Likewise, Member States are required to define renewable acceleration areas in zones of lower environmental impact such as artificial structures. These zones must be developed by February 21st, 2026. Within these areas, the permitting procedures must not exceed 12 months with possible extension of up to six months. In addition, PV installations should benefit from streamlined permitting as well as exemptions from EIA when developed in these areas.

Overriding public interest

Article 16f of RED III enshrines renewable projects (including grid infrastructure and storage) as serving an overriding public interest until climate neutrality is reached. This grants favourable standing in legal balancing and court decisions, though Member States may impose limited geographical or technological exemptions.

Simplified procedures for repowering

Provisions on repowering are laid out under Articles 16 and 16c of REDIII. The deadline for the relevant authority to provide an answer on repowering your project is six months, including the grid connection and, where relevant, the environmental impact assessment. If the repowering increases the renewable capacity by less than 15%, grid connections should be authorised within three months, following application to the relevant administrative bodies. If the solar project, and/or the grid infrastructure necessary for its integration needs an environmental impact assessment, this assessment will only consider the changes to the original project.

Accelerated procedures on artificial structures

Article 16d mandates a three-month permit timeline for solar PV installed on rooftop, integrated on a building, or located on an artificial structure. To be eligible for this three-month deadline, the main aim of the artificial structure should not be primarily for solar energy production. This means

that the structure should have another purpose, like a carpark roof, factory roof, or public transport infrastructure. These installations should benefit from an exemption from Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements.


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Positive silence for small-scale projects

Article 16d introduces 'positive silence' permitting for small-scale projects (below 100kW), where the absence of a response from the relevant authority within a one-month period is deemed to constitute automatic permit approval. Member States can lower the threshold by up to 10.8 kW.

Simple notification for grid connection of small-scale PV

Under Article 16d of REDIII, Member States shall establish a simplified notification procedure for grid connection of smallscale PV (<10,8 kW). This threshold can be extended up to 50 kW under Member States' discretion.

RES mapping

Article 15b of REDIII mandates coordinated mapping of RES by 21 May 2025. This exercise requires a mapping of all sea, inland water and land areas to meet national and EU RES targets. RES mapping shall be done in a coordinated manner with relevant stakeholders, including grid operators and in compliance with EIA and SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) rules.

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02

Key findings

When assessing the transposition rate per dimension across all Member States, an average of around 50% of the measures are transposed at the national level.[1] Theoretically, some of the most successfully transposed measures include single contact point and digitalisation, deadlines for permit granting, overriding public interest, simple rules for repowering, acceleration on artificial structures and positive silence. More than 50% of Member States have transposed or are in the process of finalising these measures at the national level.

Table 2

Comparison between the transposition rate per dimension across Member States between 2023 and 2025

	2023	2025
Single contact point & digitalisation	50%	65%
Deadlines for permit granting	25%	50%
Acceleration areas	38%	15%
Overriding public interest	31%	65%
Simpler rules for Repowering	38%	39%
Acceleration on artificial structures	25%	45%
Positive silence	44%	45%
Simple notification for small-scale PV (for grid connection)	75%	65%
RES Mapping areas	N/A	35%

Upgrade Downgrade

Comparing the transposition rate per dimension between 2023 and 2025[1] (see Figure 2), there is an increase in transposition for six out of eight measures. However, significant bottlenecks remain for acceleration areas and the simplification of grid connection procedures for small-scale PV. The decline in the transposition rate for some measures may be attributed to a lack of political drive to adopt specific reforms or the expiration of emergency regulation without subsequent transposition of new provisions of RED III. However, it's worth noting that the transposition of these rules at the national level remains largely theoretical, and in many cases, member states fail to effectively implement them in practice.

The following section provides a breakdown of each measure and assessment on the level of implementation by Member States.

[1] Please note that a direct comparison between the 2023 and 2025 data sets is not possible, as the number of Member States assessed differs in each sample.

Single contact point and digitalisation

The transposition of a single contact point for the permitting process and of digital procedures has made progress at the Member State level: in particular Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden have been able to transpose it, or are in the process of full transposition with few restrictions or exceptions. In countries such as Hungary, a centralised permitting system has been introduced; however, full digitalisation of all permits is still underway.

In Poland, although the concept of a single contact point and digitalisation appears promising on paper, its real-life implementation remain challenging. Fragmented IT systems particularly, the lack of incompatibility between platforms used by different Ministries – hinders efficient data coordination. Additionally, in some cases, administrative staff still prefer paper-based procedures, which further slows down the adoption of digital processes.

In Italy, a Legislative Decree and Ministerial Decree established a national permitting platform to digitalise and streamline the permitting process; however, no concrete implementation has occurred to date. Moreover, despite the original intent of the Decree to unify permitting, subsequent simplification laws have instead resulted in greater fragmentation – particularly by separating environmental and landscape assessments.

Notwithstanding the importance of introducing a single point of contact to simplify exchanges with public administrations, this measure will not in itself accelerate renewables permitting and deployment unless public administrations have sufficient staff and create proper internal coordination mechanisms. Otherwise, the task of coordinating the different administrations is transferred to the developers. As external actors, developers are in the worst position to perform this coordination, and it increases the overall bureaucratic burden of the process.

In some cases, municipalities act as a single point of contact which can facilitate clear communication at the local level. However, if coordination is needed with provincial or environmental authorities, the municipality often acts as an intermediary. This indirect communication leads to indirect and fragmented exchanges and can result in project delays. Streamlining these cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms is therefore essential.

Additionally, some countries, such as France, Lithuania and Portugal, have introduced digital permitting processes, but have yet to establish a single contact point. Conversely, in other cases, single points of contact have been set up but permitting procedures are not yet digitalised.

Country Examples

Moderate example

Portuguese "EMER2030" - the Mission Structure for Licensing Renewable Projects is a special taskforce set up by the current Portuguese government that is actively engaging with stakeholders to understand how to improve, streamline, and simplify renewables permitting. It will act as both a single point of contact for developers that will coordinate all other public administrations involved in the permitting process, and as a steering authority. The forthcoming "one-stop shop" will help to improve and merge the existing platforms SILiAmb and SIRJUE, which have long been used for processing the environmental and municipal permits. As these platforms are operated by different entities, information is often not harmonised across them, which substantially delays the permitting procedure.

Deadlines for permit-granting

Implementation rate for introducing two-year permitting deadlines theoretically have improved with an increase of over 50% between 2023 and 2025. However, most Member States, even if they have introduced rules on permitting deadlines, lack specific rules to enforce the permit-granting deadlines outlined in RED III. In most countries' governments do not apply penalties for delays or implement the 'silence means agreement' provisions that would provide certainty for developers. Even where deadlines exist, they are often undermined by insufficient administrative capacity to process applications in a timely manner. Moreover, permitting authorities can delay decision-making by issuing rounds of questions on the project application. Until these are fully resolved, the decision-making process is often put on hold, leading to significant procedural delays.

Only a few countries – namely, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal - have introduced dedicated permitting reforms at accelerating project deployment. Within this group, Belgium, Hungary, Lithuania, and to some extent Romania, have implemented effective measures to ensure compliance with the two-year permit-granting deadline.

However, in countries such as Bulgaria, Italy, Poland and Portugal, the lack of adequate staffing and administrative resources continues to limit the practical impact of the reforms. Specifically, in Poland, overall costs and regulatory burdens for developers remain largely unchanged, providing limited evidence that the regulatory framework has improved approval rates or reduced the workload for public authorities.

Figure 2 compares the RED III-mandated two-year permitting timeline with the average permitting timelines for large scale solar PV across several Member States. The graph highlights that even with stricter enforced time limits, it still takes on average more than two years to grant permits for solar PV projects. Strengthening capacity within permitting authorities is therefore critical. Establishing clear, enforceable deadlines for permit-granting authorities – combined with sufficient and skilled administrative support – is essential to meeting the EU's RES targets.

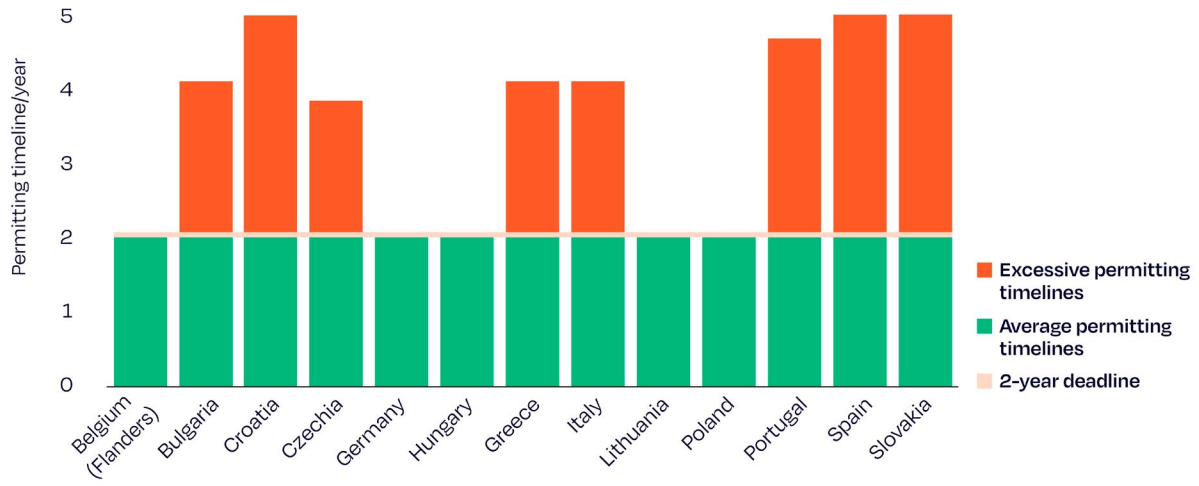
Country Examples

Poor example

A notable example is Croatia, where a persistent deadlock in solar PV and wind project approvals stemming from stalled grid connection agreements over the past three years — is primarily due to the absence of a defined grid connection fee. During the summer months of last year, Croatia imported 23% of its electricity needs and generated an additional 20% from thermal power plants using natural gas and coal. Meanwhile, the transmission system operator has been delaying the development of approximately 3 GW of solar and wind projects, along with significant energy storage capacity.

Figure 2

Permitting timelines across EU Member States



Comparison between 2-year deadline as set out in RED III and the current average permitting timelines for large scale solar PV in number of Member States.

Acceleration areas

The establishment of renewable acceleration areas is gradually progressing across Member States; however, in terms of implementation rate, it remains one of the biggest challenges across the majority of EU countries. So far no country has fully transposed the acceleration areas.

Some countries such as Poland, Italy and Slovenia have introduced a basic legal framework or have regulation ready in the pipeline to enter into force. However, practical implementation remains a challenge. In some cases – in Ireland for example – the designation of acceleration areas has resulted in no-go zones, limiting rather than enabling project development. In some countries, such as Czechia and Hungary, certain areas are banned for the use of solar PV deployment, including agricultural areas. In many EU countries, the responsibility for defining acceleration areas lies with local authorities, leading to a fragmented approach and increasing administrative complexity. In addition, in several countries, including Hungary, governments are working on designating acceleration areas without any clear timelines or provisions on which acceleration measures will be applied on the ground.

Moreover, essential provisions such as time limits for permitting and exemptions from EIA procedures are still missing in most countries. For acceleration areas to deliver on their intended purpose, Member States must not only designate these areas but also adopt clear, streamlined rules to ensure they function as effective enablers of fast-track renewable deployment.

Country Examples

Moderate example

In France, Renewable Acceleration Areas were introduced in 2023, aligning with the acceleration zones outlined in RED III. However, no concrete measures have been implemented to reduce permitting times or offer associated benefits within these designated areas

Poor example

In July 2024, Italy adopted the "Suitable Areas Decree" to support its 2030 renewable energy target by requiring Regions to map their territory into zones (suitable, ordinary, unsuitable, and forbidden zones). However, the Decree is under legal challenge and was partially suspended by the Court of Lazio, creating uncertainty over its final form. The court of Lazio published the verdict on 13th May. According to the verdict the Environmental and Energy Security Ministry must publish the new release of Suitable Areas Decree within 60 days.

Despite delays and legal ambiguity, some Regions have begun mapping their territorial plans, with wide discretion—such as optional 7 km buffers around protected areas—and no enforcement mechanism for non-compliance. The Decree lacks grandfathering, putting even approved projects at risk.

Sardinia's initial plan, which classified approximately 99% of its land as unsuitable and jeopardised 39 GW of projects, was annulled by the Constitutional Court. Still, ongoing legal and regulatory fragmentation

threatens Italy's renewables deployment without stronger national coordination. A second version of Sardinia's plan has similarly restrictive impacts, and a second hearing by the Constitutional Court is scheduled for 7 October. This ongoing legal conflict has also resulted in the blockage of several PNRR-funded projects.
"GSE (Gestore Servizi Energetici) has published the platforms for suitable areas and RAAs, but the maps—particularly those of the suitable areas—should be interpreted with caution, pending the new decree from the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security.
A promising development in the 2025 Infrastructural Decree designates industrial areas as official RAAs. However, there is still uncertainty about how these nationally recognised areas will align with those identified by the Regions.

Overriding public interest

The principle of overriding interest has been transposed across number of Member States, with an implementation rate reaching up to 65% - a twofold increase compared to 2023. So far, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Ireland, Latvia and the Netherlands have not introduced legal basis to apply IROPI for renewable energy projects, while Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania Poland and Slovenia have fully transposed these provisions into national legislation. By contrast, countries such as Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden are still in the process of developing or partially applying these rules on the ground and thus its effectiveness is still to be determined. In Hungary, for instance, overriding public interest is based on EIA Directive and National Energy Law and is subject to specific conditions. Despite the high rate of transposition, successful examples of effectively applying this measure on the ground remain limited.

A key challenge for Member States has been to implement IROPI without introducing exemptions or conditionalities that could undermine its legal effectiveness. In Italy, IROPI is referenced in the Testo Unico, however, the legislative text contains ambiguities that may hinder its practical application and leave room for misinterpretation. To ensure legal clarity and consistency across the EU, IROPI should be enshrined in a clearer and more uniform manner in future legislative updates. In addition, while IROPI is transposed at the national level in several countries, its application on the ground remains limited. For instance, in Belgium, there has been a lack of awareness and understanding regarding the application of IROPI to renewable energy projects. Providing guidance to the governmental authorities on the practical application of IROPI to renewable energy projects could serve as a valuable tool to support consistent implementation.

Country Examples

Good example

In France, presumption of overriding public interest is enshrined in the Renewable Energy Act (2023) for solar projects above 2.5 MW. The principle of IROPI is effectively applied to solar PV projects, particularly when aligned with national decarbonisation and energy security goals. However, difficulties remain in meeting the requirement to demonstrate the absence of alternative solutions.

Simplified procedures for repowering

Compared to the 2023 assessment, there has been a slight increase in implementing permitting rules for repowering, with the overall implementation rate increasing from 38% to 39%. Countries such as Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden have fully or partially adopted these provisions at the national level or are in the process of doing so within defined timeframes. However, in Italy for instance, uncertainty remains regarding clear timeframes for repowering. In Germany, building-based repowering does not require permits. However, while the legislative framework for remuneration is in place, its implementation is currently stalled due to the Commission's delay in granting state aid.

In contrast, the remaining Member States analysed have either not introduced any specific rules for repowering or have adopted measures that, in practice, do not accelerate permitting for such projects. For instance, in Hungary, certain projects may be exempted from impact assessment if repowering does not significantly alter environmental conditions – though this only applies to small-scale PV projects. In France, the previously transposed emergency regulation included a specific provision for repowering. Although this temporary regulation has now expired and the repowering provisions of current RED III have not yet been transposed, this regulatory gap has created legal uncertainties and hindered efforts to simplify procedures for repowering solar PV projects. It is therefore critical for the Member States to rapidly and efficiently implement and streamline the RED III permitting provisions, including those related to repowering.

Country Examples

Good example

In Portugal, the current regulatory framework allows for a simplified repowering process when only minor modifications are made or when the capacity increase is less than 20%. Such projects are subject to shorter permitting deadlines and are exempt from undergoing a full new environmental impact assessment.

Accelerated procedures on artificial structures

Measures to accelerate permitting for artificial structures have increased in many Member States, resulting in an average transposition rate of 45%.

Only countries such as Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden have introduced specific rules for permit granting on artificial structures, or are in the process of introducing such rules, including exemptions from planning processes or shortened permitting deadlines for installations under certain capacities. It should also be noted that several countries have established accelerated procedures, often including exemptions from construction permits for rooftop PV systems. Extending such provisions to other types of artificial lands – such as carports, parking lots, or industrial areas – would significantly support wider PV deployment. For example, while Bulgaria has not adopted fast-track procedures specifically for artificial structures, it has introduced simplified processes for solar PV installations on or adjacent to industrial areas.

In Slovenia, while mandatory placement of PV systems on artificial structures exists, it is not effectively implemented in practice (except for new builds, where PV installation is a requirement for obtaining a construction permit). Rooftop PV systems are exempt from construction permits, but carports are not, despite the obligation to install PV on large parking lots. Introducing a permit exemption for carports up to certain threshold, supported by relevant documentation, would help accelerate the permitting process for PV on artificial structures.

Another example worth noting is France, where no specific acceleration measures have been implemented for man-made or artificial structures. Moreover, the French government is currently slowing the legislative progress on solar PV requirements for buildings and parking lots. Artificial structures represent low-hanging fruit for accelerating renewable energy, all while having limited or no environmental impact. National governments should therefore prioritise legal reforms targeting the use of these structures.

Country Examples

Good example

In Portugal, solar PV projects on artificial structures are typically small-scale installations for self-consumption, often placed on rooftops or other man-made surfaces. These projects benefit from streamlined permitting procedures and are generally exempt from environmental impact assessments, except when located on artificial water bodies or within protected heritage zones. The permitting requirements vary by installed capacity:

- Between 1 MW and 30 kW – Prior Registration and operating certificate are required.
- Between 700 W and 30 kW – a simple notification is sufficient.
- Below 700 W – no formal communication is required.

Good example

In Czech Republic, solar PV projects with an installed capacity of up to 100kWp are exempt from both building permit and operating license requirements.

Good example

In Hungary, solar PV projects with an installed capacity of up to 0.4kW benefit from simplified registration procedures. Additionally, solar installations with capacity of up to 500 kW that do not feed electricity into the public grid (zero feed-in systems) are exempt from building permit requirements.

Moderate example

In Croatia, simplified permitting processes are introduced for certain artificial structures. The planning permits can be issued directly based on the Physical Planning Act and in designated areas. However, these structures are not exempt from environmental assessments, even if they underwent such assessments at the time of their original construction.

Designated areas include:

- Water surfaces such as lakes formed by mineral extraction, fishponds, and aquaculture farms, subject to approval from the concession or leaseholder.
- Waste disposal sites.
- Exploitation fields for solid mineral raw materials, subject to approval from the mining authority, and salt exploitation fields, requiring approval from the relevant ministries.
- Areas within the plots of existing infrastructure and water management facilities, subject to approval from the authority managing the infrastructure.

Positive silence for small-scale projects

Around half of the Member States analysed have fully or partially transposed rules regarding positive silence, resulting in an implementation rate of 45%. Countries such as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden have established or are in the process of adopting provisions on positive silence. However, these rules apply under different circumstances, for instance, for environmental impact assessments, sel-fconsumption installations or in certain permitting cases. It is worth noting that in some cases – such as in Italy - the principle of positive silence applies for small-scale PV projects, and to cases involving multiple authorities.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However, administrative complexities continue to hinder its practical effectiveness on the ground. In many instances, projects are delayed due to non-responses from relevant authorities, or because required opinions are submitted and accepted even after official deadlines have passed. Another noteworthy example is Belgium, where no tacit approval measures exist. Furthermore, specific national departments have considered applying tacit refusal in cases where no response is provided. Such approach would clearly contradict RED III provisions and, in practice, further delay the permitting process.

Good example

In Portugal, the principle of positive silence – where approvals are granted automatically if authorities do not respond within legal deadlines – is applied to renewable energy projects. For small-scale projects, the deadlines for Prior Registration have been halved. Additionally, if no response is given within 10 days of the inspection report, the Operation Certificate is issued automatically. Applications must be processed within one month for systems under 100 kW and within three months for larger systems; if not, positive silence applies, provided grid capacity is available.

Good example

In Slovakia, the principle of positive silence is applied under both the EIA law and the building law. The framework is fully implemented and applies to small-scale PV projects. Authorities are required to issue decisions within 30 days, which may be extended by an additional 30 days for more complex cases such as those involving environmental assessments. If no decision is made within the deadline, the permit is considered granted by default. Systems with installed capacity of up to 50kW are exempt from building permits and formal notification.

Good example

In Czechia, the principle of positive silence means that if certain authorities do not respond within a set deadline, their approval is automatically assumed. This helps speed up the permitting process for renewable energy projects like solar PV.

When applying for a building permit, if other authorities (such as environmental or fire safety offices) do not give their opinion within 30 days (or 60 days for complex cases), their approval is considered granted.

For small-scale PV installations (up to 50kW), no building permit is needed at all, so the process is even simpler.

Poor example

In Slovenia, positive silence is officially applied to small-scale PV projects up to 50kW. However, a growing number of permit rejections – caused by grid congestion and a high level of virtually reserved grid capacity – has made investors hesitant to rely on this mechanism.

Simple notification for grid connection of small-scale PV

The measures for grid connection of small-scale PV remain among the more straightforward provisions to implement, with an overall implementation rate of 65%. Most Member States have partially or fully transposed the rules at the national level. Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands and Slovenia remain the only countries that have not yet transposed this provision. It is worth noting that the notification threshold for small-scale PV varies across Member States – some have set a threshold of 400kW, while others apply to smaller systems with thresholds of 10.8 kW.

Country Examples

Good example

In Croatia, there is a simple notification procedure for connecting solar PV to the electrical system of a building for up to 11.04kW and 3.68kW respectively. For facilities up to 50kW, the procedure includes a request for verification of connection feasibility and a notice outlining the connection conditions. The relevant authorities (DSOs) are requested to respond within 15 to 30 days.

RES mapping

The RES mapping exercise, which was due for submission to the Commission by mid-May 2025, reveals that many Member States are still falling short of implementing the required processes at the national level. Only three Member States, Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovenia, have fully completed the RES mapping while four other Member States, Czech Republic, Ireland, Lithuania, and Poland, are in the process of completing it or are awaiting approvals. In contrast, no initial framework for RES mapping has been initiated in countries such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

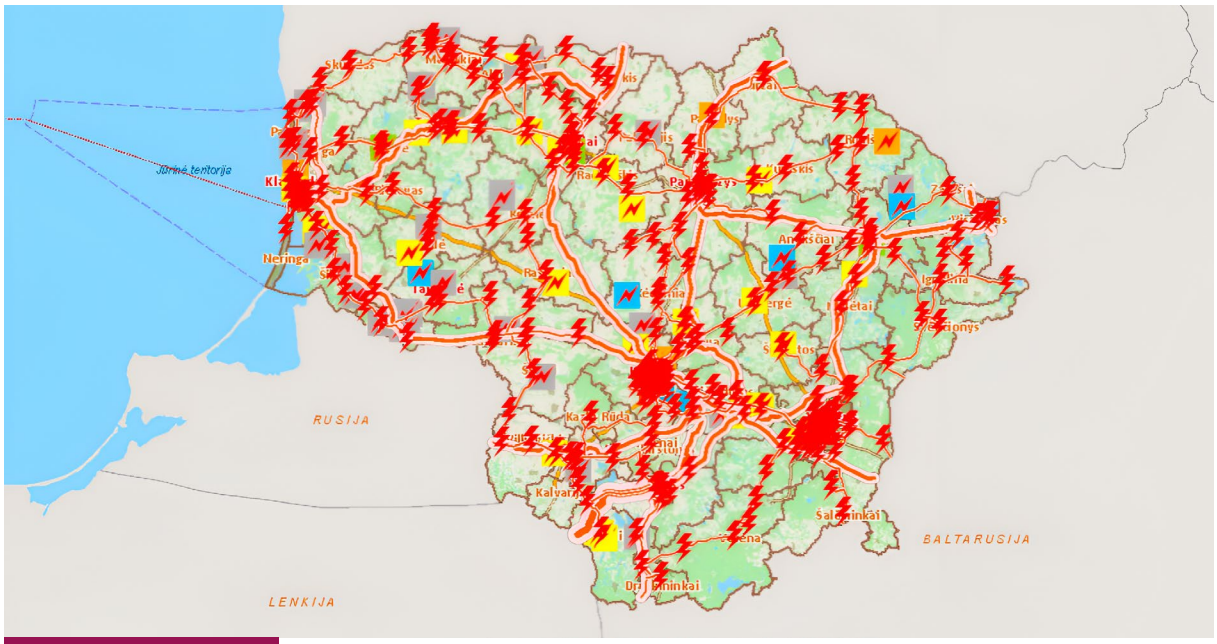
Country Examples

Good example

Lithuania is actively implementing RED III by mapping areas suitable for renewable energy like wind, solar, and biomass to fast-track project deployment. These designated zones, called Renewables Acceleration Areas, align with the country's National Energy and Climate Action Plan.

Figure 3

Lithuania map



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03

Policy Recommendations

Based on the assessment above,

many Member States are still falling behind in the full and timely implementation of permitting rules (RED III) at the national level.

Case studies also highlight that, even where legal frameworks are in place, they often are not functioning effectively in practice.

To ensure the successful and timely implementation of the RED III permitting provisions, coordinated action is required at both the EU and national levels. Member States continue to face a range of administrative, technical, and procedural barriers – particularly in the areas of capacity building, bureaucracy and lack of coordination of procedures. The following recommendations aim to strengthen Member States' capacity, streamline permitting frameworks, and accelerate the deployment of solar energy across Europe.

The European Commission should:

1. Prioritise the implementation of existing EU rules – particularly RED III – rather than pursuing deregulation[3], which risks causing delays and undermining investors' confidence and public acceptance at a time when the sector requires stability.

2. Support Member States in the timely implementation of RED III permitting provisions, including streamlined procedures and ensuring that all legal and procedural requirements are in place ahead of key deadlines.

3. Help Member States to introduce non-binding RES targets at the regional level, to provide investors with sufficient visibility, coupled with mechanisms that reward regions who exceed these targets. This will help in accelerating progress and ensure balanced contributions across regions.

[2] In the context of a new Omnibus Energy Package, as announced by Commissioner Jørgensen earlier in May. The goal of this initiative is to streamline and accelerate the permitting process for renewable energy projects by reviewing EU laws.

4 Monitor the implementation and compliance with RED III provisions by establishing Key Performance Indicators and enforcing sanctions in cases of non-compliance.

5 Facilitate knowledge-sharing and best practice exchange among Member States, including use of existing tools, to streamline and simplify permitting processes, including for application of clear time limits, application of positive silence and implementation of fully digitalised and transparent permitting platforms. In addition, there is a need to ensure that there is a consistent enforcement and coordination measures put in place across all administrative levels to prevent unnecessary delays.

6 Support the development of clear, publicly accessible guidelines for overriding public interest to enhance regulatory certainty and consistency across the EU.

7 Provide dedicated funding for capacity-building and training of regional and local authorities involved in permitting, to strengthen their administrative capabilities and technical expertise.

8 Promote simplified and harmonised permitting procedures for innovative solar technologies – such as agrivoltaics and floating PV systems – to lower administrative barriers and support market uptake of the dual land solutions.

9 Provide simplified and harmonised permitting processes for hybrid RES projects such as in combination with wind and solar, or storage.

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