[Simplifying & Accelerating the Grid Connection & Permitting Processes: An Open Letter from Europe's EV Charge Point Operators](#)

To meet the urgency of the moment Europe is facing, from the climate crisis to quickly reducing the continent's reliance on imported oil, transport needs to be decarbonized and electrified.

The electric vehicle (EV) fleet is already growing rapidly and set to grow much more. A successful transition to e-mobility requires a large amount of charging infrastructure for EVs deployed across Europe. Crucially, it also needs to be deployed fast.

For charge point operators (CPOs), this means a laser-sharp focus on tackling every obstacle and bottleneck standing in the way of the fast rollout of charging infrastructure.

The largest bottleneck CPOs face across Europe today is the amount of time it takes to establish a grid connection point, the complexity of the process to get one, and access to sufficient grid capacity.

Delays resulting from these bottlenecks can add months or years to a project's timeline. While the resulting "soft costs" are difficult to quantify, there is no doubt that they significantly impact the rollout of charging infrastructure across Europe today, and weigh on organisational, financial and hardware resources that could be deployed elsewhere to support the growth of EV charging infrastructure.

Without concerted action, this problem will only get worse. Delays are particularly long for multiple fast charging stations, which will become more prevalent in the future. They also happen against the broader backdrop of a vast electrification agenda for the EU across economic sectors.

We, the following CPOs, are ready and willing to work collaboratively with Distribution System Operators (DSOs), who are key enablers of the transition to e-mobility, to address this challenge together and design common solutions that would best support the interests of the communities we serve across Europe.

From a CPO perspective, a "best-in-class" connection and permitting process would meet the following benchmarks:

Standardisation – An efficient process would see a standardization of steps and procedures which would be based on digital tools and a digitalized approach. This would reduce fragmentation, e.g., in data CPOs must provide, contractual arrangements, timelines etc, reducing the administrative costs that come with dealing with hundreds of DSOs.

Transparency - An efficient process would deliver transparency at all stages. First, it would give CPOs a view on where there are load capacity constraints on the grid. Second, it would ensure clarity on interconnection processes, and the timelines associated with each step of the process. Lastly, it would let CPOs track the progress of their requests.

Predictability – An efficient process would provide predictability for outcomes, as well as costs. It would ensure that outcomes do not vary from one DSO to another depending on the account manager in charge, leading to waste of scarce manpower within CPOs. It would also offer CPOs predictable fees and costs in the preparation of the business case for a location.

Harmonisation – An efficient process would take into account that CPOs operate across borders, and encourage DSOs across Europe to converge toward one standardized process acting de facto as the "industry standard" for multiple jurisdictions, supporting the scale-up of charging networks.

Speed - An efficient process would guarantee that the time between a request for a permit and realisation of the connection to the grid is specific as well as accurate. This could be supported by differentiated treatment between system users, prioritizing connection requests which contribute to Europe's decarbonization objectives. Depending on the power requested, timelines could be:
- Power requests below 100kW: <12 weeks;
- Power requests from 100kW to 350kW: up to 6 months;
- Power requests above 350kW: up to 8months.

These timelines could be improved in the future, depending on the demand for charging points, as driven by the pace of EV uptake as well as other process improvements that allow for accelerated timelines.

We are ready to share concrete proposals with DSOs to collectively move towards these benchmarks, to increase predictability, transparency and support project siting, and to make the best of limited resources (human, financial, and technical) and shrink timelines at all stages of the process.

We call on organisations representing DSOs at EU level to work with us on a collaborative way forward and develop an "EU network code/guide of best practices" for the deployment of EV charging infrastructure.