

bridge

General Assembly 2026

Brussels, 23-24 March

Concept note

Europe's energy transition is unfolding in a time of profound geopolitical tension. As the Commissioner for Energy and Housing recently underlined, *Europe is not at peace* - and energy has become a central dimension of strategic autonomy and security. Building a resilient, stable and interconnected power grid is therefore not only an environmental or technological goal, but a pillar of Europe's sovereignty and competitiveness. Research and Innovation should be leveraged to this end.

The 2026 BRIDGE General Assembly will examine how collaborative R&I efforts can reinforce Europe's energy grids to remain reliable amid rapid electrification, renewable integration, and evolving security threats. Discussions will focus on key pillars: (i) **digitalisation and automation** of grid infrastructure; (ii) **interoperability** and **sectoral integration** to enhance flexibility; (iii) **flexibility and storage solutions** enabling renewable integration; and (iv) **risk management and planning** to address both physical and cyber threats.

Through high-level panels and project showcases, participants will explore how BRIDGE projects can contribute to a more secure, sustainable and sovereign European energy system.

Agenda Day 1

Date 23 March (14.00 – 19:00 CET)

Venue: The Skyline, Rue de Trevès, 74, 1040, Bruxelles

Time	Session
14:00	Registration
14:30	Introduction and keynote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the policy priorities to future-proof Europe's grid infrastructure Rosalinde Van der Vlies, Director Just Transition, Consumers, Energy Efficiency and Innovation, DG ENER, European Commission Overview of the financing instruments to support the futureproofing of Europe's grid infrastructure Martin Lange, Head of Unit - Horizon Europe Energy, CINEA Presentation of the agenda by Beatrice Profeta, BRIDGE Secretariat
15:00	Policy update session on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU Grids package Eduardo Vega Fanjul, DG ENER (C.4), European Commission Electrification Action Plan Andrea Bruno, Policy Officer, DG ENER (C.1), European Commission Clean Energy Investment Strategy Evan Walker, Deputy Head of Unit, Chief Economist, DG ENER (A.4), European Commission

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applying the AI Strategy Antoine-Alexandre André, Legal and Policy Officer – AI Office, DG CNECT (A.4), European Commission
16:00	BRIDGE Group Speed Dating (interactive session on Success Stories & Lessons Learnt)
16:45	<p>Panel showcasing BRIDGE projects: “Key pillars to reinforce Europe’s energy grids to remain reliable amid rapid electrification, renewable integration, and evolving security threats” (moderation by Andrea De Angelis, BRIDGE Secretariat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitalisation and automation of grid infrastructure Ferdinando Bosco (TwinEU), R&I Project Manager, Engineering Ingegneria Informatica S.p.a Interoperability and sectoral integration Edoardo Corsetti (SENERGY NETS), Senior Researcher, RSE Flexibility and storage solutions David Verez (HYSTORE), Senior Project Manager, Wattega Risk management and planning for physical and cyber threats Néstor Rodríguez Pérez (eFort), Assistant Professor, Universidad de Comillas
17:45	<p>Panel: “The work of BRIDGE amid Europe’s energy transition” (moderation by Elena Gallo, BRIDGE Secretariat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Regulatory and market frameworks</u> to enable renewable integration, flexible solutions and sector integration: José Pablo Chaves Ávila, Regulation WG chair, Universidad Pontificia Comillas <u>Digitalisation, data exchanges and the use of AI in smart grids:</u> Dune Sebilleau, Data Management WG chair, Trialog <u>Competitiveness in smart grids and market uptake of research outputs</u> presentation of the Repository of BRIDGE promising solutions Andrej Gubina, Business Models WG honorary co-chair, University of Ljubljana <u>Consumer-centric energy transition:</u> Michael Brenner-Fließner, Consumer and Citizen Engagement WG chairs, Joanneum Research
18:25	Conclusions Day 1 and Group photo
18:30	Networking Aperitivo

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Agenda Day 2

Date 24 March (9.00 – 17.30 CET)

Venue: The Skyline, Rue de Trevès, 74, 1040, Bruxelles

Time	Session	
09:00	Welcome Coffee	
09:15	Welcome and wrap-up from the previous day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alexandros Kotronaros</i>, Policy Officer, DG ENER, EU Commission • <i>Beatrice Profeta</i>, BRIDGE Secretariat 	
09:30	Panel: The role of AI in the energy grids - moderation by <i>Natalie Samovich</i> (ENERCOUTIM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mark Van Stiphout</i>, Deputy Head of Unit, DG ENER (B.4), European Commission • <i>Rolf Riemenschneider</i>, Head of sector IoT, DG CNECT (E.4.), European Commission • <i>Elissaios Sarmas</i> (NTUA) lead member of the ETIP SNET WG4 Task Force on AI technical applications in power grids • <i>Antonello Monti</i>, Professor and expert on digitalisation and AI, Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft 	
10:15	Regulatory barriers from Innovation fund projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ugo Miretti</i>, Project Adviser – Innovation Fund unit, CINEA 	
10:30	Division into Working Group sessions	
10:45	Parallel Session 1 - Main Conference Room CONSUMER & CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT WG	Parallel Session 2 - Europa Room (Floor 6) BUSINESS MODELS WG
12:45	Networking Lunch	
13:45	Joint meeting (REGULATION WG & DATA MANAGEMENT WG) <i>Supporting the flagship action of the Strategic Roadmap: establishing the governance of the Common European Energy Data Space (CEEDS)</i> Main Conference Room	
14:45	Parallel Session 3 - Main Conference Room REGULATION WG	Parallel Session 4 - Europa Room (Floor 6) DATA MANAGEMENT WG
15:45	Networking coffee	
16:15	Plenary: “BRIDGE Working Groups – What are the next steps?” <i>(moderation by Elena Gallo, BRIDGE Secretariat)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of conclusions from the moderators of the breakout rooms BRIDGE WG Chairs: Andrej Gubina, José Pablo Chaves Ávila, Michael Brenner-Fließer, Dune Sebilléau • DG ENER feedback on the presentations by WGs with definition of priorities for the next activity year 	
17:15	Closing session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of key takeaways by the BRIDGE chairs • Final words and thanks from DG ENER and Secretariat 	
17:30	End of the event	