



Reviewing and improving our public consultation process

Appendix 4



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Appendix 4

International Review of
Current and Evolving
Practice in Consultation
and Engagement
on Transmission

Introduction

This Review occurs in the context of established and evolving European and International practice for public and stakeholder consultation in respect of transmission infrastructure development. While there are a variety of established models relating to consultation in general, it is considered essential for the purpose of this Initiative to review current practice relating to strategic linear transmission infrastructure, which is being constructed for the common good, even though this is not always reflected in terms of public acceptability for projects.

For transmission infrastructure projects in Ireland and elsewhere within the European Union, current practice in public and stakeholder consultation derives in the main from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) *Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*, which was adopted in June 1998 in Aarhus, Denmark, and which entered into force in October 2001. The ‘Aarhus Convention’ was ratified by the Irish Government in June 2012. A key pillar (Article 6) of the *Convention* concerns *Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making*. Primarily this provides that arrangements should be made by public authorities to enable the public to comment on proposals for projects, plans and programmes relating to, or affecting, the environment. It also provides at Article 6(4) that “*Each Party shall provide for early public participation, when all options are open and effective public participation can take place*”.

In the European Union, Article 6 of the Aarhus Convention has been implemented by Directive 2003/35/EC on public participation (‘the Public Participation Directive’)¹. Subsequent National legislation has transposed this Directive into Irish law, including into the Planning and Development Acts.

Although the Aarhus Convention was not ratified in Ireland until 2012, it had entered into force in Europe over a decade earlier, and the provisions of the European Directive still applied; this was therefore the context within which EirGrid’s *Project Development and Consultation Roadmap* was prepared. Equally, it was also the common context for the development of current strategies for public and stakeholder consultation across the European Union, including in respect of transmission infrastructure development projects.

Given this common context, this Review has given significant consideration to the Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) document *European Grid Report – Beyond Public Opposition: lessons learned across Europe*, and its subsequent *Update 2013*. These documents explore the challenges arising, and lessons learned, concerning public and stakeholder consultation and engagement in respect of transmission infrastructure development, and highlight a commonality of issues across Europe in this regard.

¹ DIRECTIVE 2003/35/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 26 May 2003 providing for public participation in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment and amending with regard to public participation and access to justice Council Directives 85/337/EEC and 96/61/EC

Extending to the wider International experience, considerable regard has also been given in this Review to the findings of the Cigré² Working Group C3.04 document *Stakeholder Engagement Strategies in Sustainable Development – Electricity Industry Overview* (August 2013). This document “*summarises a survey of electricity organisations worldwide on their attitudes to, and experiences of stakeholder engagement particularly in relation to the development of electricity construction projects, within the context of sustainable development*” (Executive Summary); this document thereby also allows for an effective comparison of international experiences, and lessons learned, regarding this aspect of transmission infrastructure development.

On the basis of this documented European and International practice, the Review sets out some common themes relating to public and stakeholder consultation and engagement in respect of transmission infrastructure development.

It is the case that much that is identified as being established practice internationally in terms of public and stakeholder consultation and engagement also comprises established elements of EirGrid’s current processes. In addition, there are other documented practices that might also be appropriate for consideration by EirGrid; these primarily relate to wider strategic engagement, rather than to project-specific strategies.

Towards an Understanding of Public and Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement

At the outset of this Review, it is essential that there is a common understanding of the context for public and stakeholder consultation and engagement in respect of grid infrastructure development. Of particular interest in this regard, in setting the context for the Cigré WG C3.04 report, the *Introduction* notes that “*recent years have witnessed a growing voice within communities to be heard, and to seek to influence decisions and practices of large organisations*”. The issue of ensuring appropriate and adequate public and stakeholder consultation does not appear to be restricted to transmission infrastructure development.

However, the *Introduction* moves to this specific area, and concludes that:-

“Although there is universal acceptance of the benefits of electricity, by its very nature with its necessary pylons, overhead lines, underground cables and substations, the development of new networks can have an impact on communities, the natural environment, landscape and cultural heritage, as well as disturbance to individuals and communities particularly during its construction. Communities and other stakeholders will hold views on the importance of all these factors and the weighting they should be given in decisions about developing new electricity networks and the retention of networks.

Electricity utilities around the globe, with their equipment located across the countries in which they operate, will have an economic, environmental and social impact on society from a local through to a global scale. As a consequence, many stakeholders and communities will have an interest in the utilities’ activities, and will claim their right to be informed, consulted and involved in their decision-making process. On the other hand, the electricity sector will have the responsibility of responding accordingly to stakeholders’ concerns and demands, not only to fully inform decisions but also to

2 The International Council on large electric systems

ensure their reputation is not devalued. Consultation generally means finding ways to involve stakeholders in some of what the electricity organisation does. This process is as much about understanding opportunities as it is about preventing conflict and mitigating risk” (p8-9).

The Cigré report identifies five key levels of engagement (derived from Entec 2007):-

- Informing people (awareness raising, communication, education);
- Consulting people (obtaining feedback, gauging opinion);
- Involving people (contributing ideas, identifying priorities, developing vision/aspirations);
- Acting together (partnerships);
- Empowerment (stakeholder-led decisions).

In this context, “Consultation” is defined (p.12) as *“The process of gathering information or advice from stakeholders and taking those views into consideration to amend plans, make decisions or set directions. It should be understood as a dynamic process of dialogue between two or more parties that leads to a decision, based on an ongoing exchange of views and information rather than a one off event (Audit Commission 1999)”*.

The European Experience – The European Grid Report

The European Grid Report – Beyond Public Opposition: lessons learned across Europe, was published by the Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI) in 2013. The RGI, launched in July 2009, is a platform which brings together both European TSOs, as well as NGOs such as WWF International, Germanwatch, BirdLife Europe, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Natuur&Milieu, Friends of the Earth Scotland, and the Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe. The focus for the Initiative is to harmonise grid expansion with environmental protection principles, and improving public participation in planning procedures.

The information in the *Report* is primarily obtained directly from European TSOs; the context for this is the need across the European Union for expansion and upgrading of existing transmission networks, acknowledged as vital to meet EU energy and climate targets. Of significance, and consistent with the findings of the Cigré report, the *Report* notes at the outset that *“TSOs all over Europe face similar challenges concerning the involvement of different stakeholder groups during the planning and permitting of grid expansion projects”*.

The Report identifies two primary issues concerning grid development – *Transparency and Participation* and *Environment and Nature Conservation*.

In respect of *Transparency and Participation* the *Report* identifies four key areas:

- Need Discussion
- (Early) Engagement with Stakeholders
- Transparent Process and Decision
- Providing Credible and Understandable Information

In respect of *Environment and Nature Conservation* the *Report* identifies two key areas:

- Environmental Assessments and Reducing Environmental Impacts
- Continuous Cooperation with Environmental NGOs

Each of these areas has identified various *Challenges* and *Lessons Learned*; these are summarised below (as extracted from the accompanying summary brochure of the *Report*).

Need Discussion

Challenges:

- The need for greater capacity is identified by the TSOs before any new lines are planned, but this stage of the process is often without public involvement. As a result, people usually only get to know about the plans for a new line after the need has already been determined.
- Concerns can thus arise about whether alternatives to grid expansion have been sufficiently considered or whether the line is needed for transmitting electricity generated by renewables.
- Discussions whether TSOs are the right bodies to define the scope and methodology of grid development plans sometimes emerge.

Lessons Learned:

- Early engagement with stakeholders on the need for grid expansion can reduce the likelihood of lengthy discussions about the need later in the process.
- Explaining the drivers and procedures behind the need is necessary throughout the process, since not all actors will have been involved from the beginning.
- Since the need for new grids is closely linked to decisions on energy policy, it helps if politicians and regulators play an active role in explaining the reasons.
- The contribution of NGOs in the need discussion brings wider perspectives and increased legitimacy to the process. If environmental NGOs support a specific grid project because it is a necessary building block towards more renewable energy, they may be well-placed and willing to play a significant role in explaining the need for grids.

(Early) Engagement with Stakeholders

Challenges:

- A lack of resources can impede the engagement of both authorities and NGOs.
- Engaging the general public at a very early stage can be challenging since interest can be low if people don't feel affected. However, interest normally increases after major decisions have been taken. At this point, comments are harder to take into account as the TSOs are further advanced in the planning process.
- The support of politicians can be unstable and dependent on public opinion. Uncertainty normally increases before elections.

Lessons Learned:

- To ensure that important concerns are sufficiently discussed in time it is important to approach the public proactively before major decisions are taken.
- Through early consultation with the public, local communities and other stakeholders, important local information can be obtained.

- Formally agreeing with politicians on the rules of engagement and common objectives, for example through a written Memorandum of Understanding, can ease long-term relationships.

Transparent Process and Decision

Challenges:

- Knowledge on decision-making criteria and legal procedures is low.
- There is also a lack of clarity on how public input is taken into account, which can lead to frustration for stakeholders who have taken the effort to engage with a project.
- When TSOs cooperate with authorities and politicians, an appearance of “behind-the-scene” decision-making can arise if details of the discussions are not made available.
- The legal framework can impede full data transparency.

Lessons Learned:

- Processes and criteria have to be continuously communicated to both the general public and other stakeholders.
- It is very important to show in a credible way how stakeholder involvement is taken into consideration within the concerned project.
- Continuous and transparent information about interaction with authorities and politicians minimises the risk of negative rumours.
- TSOs should explain to what extent data transparency is possible within the legal framework. Communications support from public authorities increases credibility here.
- TSOs should challenge consolidated behaviours and explore new approaches to data transparency and information sharing.

Providing Credible and Understandable Information

Challenges:

- Frustration is likely to arise if information is unavailable or hard to find.
- The independence of information provided by TSOs is sometimes questioned, particularly on controversial topics such as electromagnetic fields (EMF) or undergrounding.
- There can be criticism of information material which is designed for a non-expert audience for being “commercial material” or “glossy brochures without content”.
- It is often hard to find the right balance in information provided between a sufficient level of detail and accessibility to readers.

Lessons Learned:

- It is highly beneficial to provide information proactively from the beginning of a project, especially on critical topics such as EMF.

- References to external information sources can increase the credibility of information on critical topics.
- A useful strategy is to provide information in different formats for different target groups and information needs.

Environmental Assessments and Reducing Environmental Impacts

Challenges:

- The capacity of environmental authorities plays an important role for environmental assessments. If they are over-stretched, proper scrutiny and high quality assessments cannot be guaranteed.
- The interpretation of requirements related to SEAs differs substantially from country to country.
- If the EIA is the only option for stakeholder input, it might be relatively late in the process since major (spatial) decisions have already been taken. This can be avoided through rigorous application of SEAs, to ensure those higher-level spatial decisions are environmentally sound.

Lessons Learned:

- The SEA can have positive impacts on the planning of grid expansions. If done well, SEAs can be a time-saving investment for later stages.
- The exchange of data used for projects can enhance both assessments and working relations with authorities.
- Spatial planning techniques and the use of sensitivity maps can help to minimise environmental impacts.
- Going beyond the minimum requirements of SEAs and EIAs and implementing additional measures can be highly beneficial for the environment and for stakeholder relations.

Continuous Cooperation with Environmental NGO

Challenges:

- There is often a lack of resources and as a consequence less in-depth expertise on the NGO-side for dealing with grid issues.
- Complex internal structures in both NGOs and TSOs can sometimes make cooperation difficult.
- The perceived independence and credibility of NGOs can be at stake when working closely with TSOs, in particular if environmental concerns, public participation and transparency are not sufficiently and systematically considered.

Lessons Learned:

- A structured approach to cooperation can help to deepen relationships.
- Taking environmental concerns sufficiently into account in the planning process creates an opportunity for productive cooperation.
- It is of great importance for the TSOs to understand the NGOs need for independence.

The subsequent RGI European Grid Report – Beyond Public Opposition: lessons learned across Europe, Update 2013 is intended to be the first in a series of follow-up reviews deriving from the original *European Grid Report*. It notes that certain grid development projects forming the subject of the original *Report* are now in a later stage of development, with more detailed knowledge about the specifics of those projects, and thereby which require “*new customised participation approaches*”.

Of particular relevance to this *Review*, the *Update* includes case-study experience from Swissgrid, which owns and operates the approximately 6,700 km of transmission circuits in Switzerland; this figure is comparable with the extent of transmission circuits in Ireland.

Also comparable with the current experience of EirGrid in Ireland, Chapter 2 of the *Update* states in respect of “Challenges” that: “*Compared to the findings of 2012, many TSOs are now in the later stages of their projects (end of permitting and preparation of construction). Other TSOs are dealing with the implementation of a new legislative background and related challenges. Moreover, new technologies like underground cabling or HVDC are currently being realised for the first time or will be in the coming years*”. It is thus the case that current and future issues that EirGrid is facing, and which require to be addressed in its public consultation strategies, are similar to those that other European TSOs are facing.

A key challenge identified in the *Update* concerns the governing permitting process itself, relates to new legislative procedures designed to speed up the permitting process – in Ireland this includes legislation governing Strategic Infrastructure Development, and Projects of Common Interest; if not properly managed, this can conflict with separate concerns to enhance public acceptance of, and involvement in, projects and project development.

The *Update* addresses the timing for consultation, noting that: “The best point in time to inform the greater public about a project and engage them in discussions is still disputed. On the one hand, TSOs have learned from experience that detailed discussions can only begin as soon as some details concerning the route corridor have been decided. On the other hand, they also know that there is an inherent need to start informing and including stakeholders at an earlier point in time” (p8). EirGrid has adopted the latter approach in its Project Development and Consultation Roadmap in order to facilitate public participation from as early a point in the project development process as is meaningful and appropriate.

In addition, the *Update* acknowledges that public consultation often concerns technically complex or complicated issues which might not always be understandable to a lay person; it is noted that “*it is the TSOs continuous task to explain all of the aspects that need to be taken into account when deciding on technical options*” (p9).

Another challenge identified in the *Update* is that “Many stakeholders and the public have very high expectations concerning their level of influence...Thus some people expect that their viewpoint have an impact on every decision” (p10), and that “people taking part in consultations expect their recommendations to be implemented. At the same time, suggestions are very different from each other”. The *Update* concludes that “It is thus very important to convey to all participants that involvement does not necessarily mean deciding what will be built in the end. TSOs and others conducting public consultations need to manage these expectations and explain in detail how much leeway is available in which phase of the projects” (p10).

Finally, the *Update* identifies the challenge of “Addressing the wishes of affected citizens while, at the same time, considering environmental concerns...” (p11); it is difficult to explain why an ecological or environmental designation can often be considered to be of greater priority than a perceived impact upon an individual or community.

The *Update* looks at new information concerning the experiences for grid development in Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands. Interesting issues emerge which have resonance for, or relevance to, EirGrid’s experience of grid development in Ireland:

- Creation of “advisory groups” (also termed “guidance groups” or “multi-stakeholder working groups”) – to meet regularly (“continuous dialogue”), to discuss general matters relating to grid development, rather than project-specific consultation, for example as community forums, or as thematic groups. The groups are generally comprised of both Prescribed Bodies, and NGOs, and sometimes with representatives of communities.
- Transparent Government-led decision-making regarding technology type on a case-by-case basis for each project. Government-sponsored independent feasibility studies of key technical issues (e.g. OHL or UGC).
- Strategic approach to stakeholder engagement – at the outset of a project, drawing up a strategy for who will be engaged with, and when, with what message.
- A more sophisticated approach to communications, particularly focused on use of new technology to present messages, e.g. digital modelling apps (such as “fly-thrus” or 3d animation), availability of high quality GIS and other cartographic data, and greater use of social media and online resources. An interesting example from Germany is the insertion of supplements into local newspapers, over a number of weeks leading up to a public consultation event, which identifies the project, promotes the event, and provides information on a different aspect of the project each week leading up to the event.
- Need for enhanced internal co-ordination and communications within TSOs, particularly between the asset management (grid development) and communications departments.
- New approaches to community gain funding and proximity payments.
- Restructuring of development departments to focus more on having a local presence within the area where a project is to be developed.

The *Update* concludes with identification of a number of “Lessons Learned” over the period since publication of the *European Grid Report* in 2012. These are summarised below:

- Beneficial to undertake pro-active non-statutory public engagement prior to submitting an application for development consent.
- Challenging to define the best point in time to commence public engagement; it appears that early engagement is preferable, even if messages are vague as a result.
- Stakeholder mapping and analysis at the beginning of each project is key for effective, early and continuous engagement.

- Need for a clear and transparent set of rules for public participation and to manage expectations carefully, even if this means pointing out limitations to participation.
- Easier to target messages through people that already have established channels and access to citizens – e.g. through media and local politicians.
- Promotion of “benefit sharing” and compensation, although it is acknowledged that problems can arise in dealing with people who live just outside a “compensation zone”.
- Benefit of undertaking environmental appraisals, even for small projects, in order to capture and address issues and potential challenges.

The International Experience – Cigré Working Group C3.04

In August 2013, Cigré Working Group C3.04 published *Stakeholder Engagement Strategies in Sustainable Development – Electricity Industry Overview*. The document summarises a survey of electricity organisations worldwide on their attitudes to, and experiences of stakeholder engagement particularly in relation to the development of electricity construction projects, within the context of sustainable development. The document includes a number of international case studies concerning public and stakeholder consultation and engagement.

Of particular interest, Section 2.2 of the Cigré Report summarises *Recent industry development on the subject*, and refers to the output of Cigré Working Group B2.15 in respect of “*Consultation Models for Overhead Line Projects*” (2005, TB 274).

The conclusions of that Working Group are summarised in the Report as follows (p.20-21):-

1. Provide as much information as possible to present the best option and deliver it via the best communications methods available.
2. Provide as much information as possible about alternatives (e.g. routing, tower designs, removing of lower voltage lines etc) and allow some choices.
3. Start the in-house examination of the project and consultations as early as possible and consider engaging the public and other stakeholders in the scoping of the project, consideration of the need for the line, transmission alternatives, the identification of route corridor options and ranking of route selection criteria.
4. Conduct open and engaging consultation with a broad range of representative and interested groups.
5. Allow stakeholders the opportunity to comment on and make suggestions or choices with regards to alternatives options.
6. Embrace the use of “best practice” mitigation measures to minimise the overall temporary construction and permanent environmental impacts of the proposed line works.
7. Try and get the balance right in undertaking consultation and providing sufficient relevant information, tailored to the needs of the intended consultees, whilst recognising the need to secure landowner agreements and the company’s ultimate recourse to expropriation.

8. It is also important to remember to plan for communication requirements during the construction phase of a project.

It is clear that these conclusions are consistent with the *lessons learned* set out in the *European Grid Report and its Update 2013*.

A key part of the document is the output from a survey of stakeholder engagement practices used by electricity organisations (it is noted that this survey was undertaken in 2008). There was a wide geographical response – most of the responses came from European countries, but responses were also received from the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia.

Cigre Key Principles for Stakeholder Engagement

The responses to the various questions are synthesised into a Commentary on Findings; from this, the Report sets out eight Key Principles for Stakeholder Engagement (p.67-68):-

1. **Approach to stakeholder engagement:** The approach to stakeholder engagement should be fundamentally consistent for all of a company's construction projects. This approach could be flexible, varying according to the scale and type of the project, but should still be consistent. Consistency should occur across stakeholder groups and localities. The aim must be to establish trust among stakeholders.
2. **Project Scoping (proportional approach):** The value from engagement should be optimised by scoping the requirements for the project. Be clear about the real constraints of the project – what engagement and communication can assist with, and what is out of scope. Be aware of what project phases are to be the subject of engagement. A lot of effort and resource on engagement at the margins of a project may realise limited additional benefit. It may also be beneficial to engage key stakeholders (particularly those representing different community interests) at the start of a project to establish their views on what they would consider to be a 'proportionate approach'.
3. **Stakeholder Identification (identify and understand your stakeholders):** Establish a consistent approach to mapping stakeholders and understanding their likely viewpoints, needs and expectations from engagement, and the potential value that could be realised from engaging them. There should be a clear commitment to community engagement at a local level. It is also important to define the 'voiceless' or 'hard to reach' stakeholders such as those with mobility difficulties, sight or hearing loss, literacy difficulties, alternative language requirements, etc; or people too busy to engage with traditional consultation methods. Identify and target these groups specifically.
4. **Start engagement early:** Early engagement in a scoped manner will help to build project awareness and understanding, so helping to reduce the risk of 'surprise' later. Engage key stakeholders early in the scoping phase to enable them to contribute to the development of effective solutions. They may have information and views that will be of benefit to the proposal, and securing their endorsement for an approach to stakeholder engagement, and for securing data will be of considerable value. Stakeholders must have the opportunity to comment and influence at the formative stage. Be clear about the stage of the project when

engaging: stakeholders should not expect all project details to be available at the early stages, and should appreciate that they are being involved in the formative stages.

5. **Targeted mix of consultation/engagement methods:** A combination of methods for stakeholder engagement should be considered and chosen depending on the stage of the project, the stakeholder groups involved and their individual concerns, needs and priorities. Methods should be tailored to the required output, such as awareness building, gaining understanding, inviting comments, or enabling constructive debate. Methods could include provision of information through news media; published information sheets or leaflets; exhibitions; websites; on-line questionnaires; discussion events; workshops, perhaps independently facilitated; community panels, etc. Dedicated community liaison and engagement staff could be utilised. Regular engagement with key stakeholders will enable relationships to be developed and maintained.
6. **Create an open and transparent process:** It is important to manage the expectations of stakeholders by clearly stating the objectives and scope of the engagement from the outset. Some aspects of a project will be ‘out of scope’ for consultation, such as legislative or regulatory obligations, however it should be recognised that there may be different ways of satisfying these obligations. Similarly, timescales should be clearly defined at the outset. The engagement or project process should be openly publicised, and be clear, so that as many obstacles to engagement are removed as possible. Project information should be tailored for audiences in format and style, for example, non-technical material or specialist, detailed material.
7. **Provide feedback to stakeholders (monitor and evaluate):** It is important that stakeholders can see how their comments have been taken into consideration. Feedback mechanisms should be developed to demonstrate how views have been considered and addressed. This is not necessarily a simple task for complex or controversial projects where large numbers of comments may be received. It is important to demonstrate not only that engagement has taken place, but that it has been an effective part of the process. It is important to be clear about how views are reflected in, or used to influence, subsequent decisions, processes and plans. When comments have been considered but the proposals have not changed, it is good practice to explain why not.
8. **Engagement should be proactive and meaningful:** Stakeholder engagement should be appropriate for the purpose and the target audience and should be proactive and meaningful. Stakeholders should generally be involved at project stages where they are able to influence an outcome or decision. The approach to the engagement of citizen communities should be proactive, accessible and inclusive.

Conclusions

This Review has considered current European and international practice regarding matters of public and stakeholder consultation and engagement. It has identified various challenges to grid development that appear to be similar for the various TSOs charged with delivering a modern grid infrastructure network. It has also identified lessons learned, which together might be a foundation for an understanding of best practice in consultation and engagement.

Some common themes emerging from the review of European and International practice, experience, and lessons learned can be summarised as follows:-

- Proactive lead taken by policy-makers and Regulator in the development of plans: policy-makers taking a greater role in the debate surrounding need for grid infrastructure; facilitating and co-ordinating public input and consultation in the scoping and preparation of strategies and plans, including the generation and consumption scenarios upon which such strategies and plans are based; fostering greater political buy-in for policy-led grid development. The *European Grid Report* concludes in this context (p13) that “Clear roadmaps would help to overcome concerns regarding the need for new grids and the increased contribution of energy from renewable sources”.
- Early Public and Stakeholder participation in the identification of projects: including in the pre-project phase when key parameters have not been decided; holding of non-project specific public regional discussion forums and NGO stakeholder forums on matters of need and strategy, including the context and consequences of political decisions on the need for grid development, possibly using the focus of regional Masterplans rather than project-level consultation; field trips with NGOs and authorities to demonstrate working projects, similar infrastructure, environmental matters etc.
- Stakeholder “mapping”: identifying different stakeholders and the public, but also ensuring appropriate means of communications for different groupings who have different needs, e.g. literacy difficulties, mobility impairment, time constraints etc. This needs to include both internal as well as external stakeholders.
- Transparency in decision-making: demonstrating how public and stakeholder consultation and engagement has been taken into consideration, e.g. providing a personal ID reference and response; being explicit about meetings with different stakeholders, e.g. publication of records of meetings with different stakeholders.
- Outreach, information and learning experiences: co-ordinated programmes of education and information-sharing, e.g. educational events for parents and children within schools; using new forms of information media e.g. apps, 3D visualisations, roadshows, social media, online, as well as in traditional format; ensuring that information is accessible to all in a variety of media forms to match different preferences.

Overall, it is clear from the review of international practice that public and stakeholder consultation and engagement is now one of the core pillars for grid development strategies and projects. As such, it requires the significant dedication of specific experienced and specialist resources, which has consequent cost and time implications, both for the delivery of strategies and plans, and for the evolution of projects from their earliest stages.

It is also noted that the current significant expansion and uprating of transmission networks in Europe is generally at an early stage, and it is therefore unclear whether the identified challenges have been successfully resolved by means of the identified innovative practices in public and stakeholder consultation and engagement; it is anticipated that this will become apparent with further and ongoing updates to the various studies and reports referred to in this review.

