

Delegated Regulation on a common Union rating scheme for data centres – views from the power sector

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As an association representing leading clean electricity producers and suppliers of Guarantees of Origin (GOs), we as Eurelectric support preserving a credible, technology-neutral and market-coherent framework that accelerates decarbonisation while attracting new users, such as data centres, into the European economy.

As a more general point, EU policy makers should carefully calibrate the introduction of disclosure requirements while considering whether it is sensible to introduce mandatory matching requirements for specific electricity consumers like data centres, despite being a new fast-growing load with specific characteristics, not least to avoid the impression that this consumer type receives a differentiated approach over other industries. Applying requirements specifically to data centres would create inconsistencies across sectors and risk undermining a level playing field within the internal energy market.

More specifically we urge EU policy makers to tackle the following points in the upcoming delegated act establishing a common Union rating scheme for data centres:

Avoid an overly restrictive approach on the eligibility of clean power assets

Importantly, the delegated act should encompass all clean power generation sources and technologies and avoid artificially discriminating against certain power generation sources in the calculation of the REF based on the proposed additionality requirement. The delegated act should not be limited to clean power generation within a limited operational lifetime (such as ten years), as older clean power assets produce electricity with the same climate benefit as new ones. Such a provision would unduly discriminate against existing installations that contribute to clean power generation, in particular hydro, nuclear and wind power generation and would be inconsistent with the current application of the Renewable Energy Directive. By taking such a strict approach linking energy origin labelling to additionality, Europe would not reap the benefits of the impressive build-out of clean power in the past decade which has led to more than three quarters of its electricity mix already being decarbonised.

Moreover, it is important to ensure that a focus on data centers' energy efficiency criteria does not hinder other sectors of the European industry from accessing clean electricity.

Preserve consistency with the intended role of Guarantees of Origin

Guarantees of Origin (GOs) are a voluntary, market-based, instrument designed to document and track the consumption of clean electricity in the internal market, independent of physical electricity flows in real time. Using GOs beyond this original function by introducing additionality requirements, asset age limitations, overly strict temporality and

geographical criteria should be considered carefully to avoid undermining the incentive structure for clean power generation. Introducing a definition for the use of GOs for data centres should be coherent with other EU policy frameworks and not undermine the usability and liquidity of the GO market by limiting electricity procurement to generation within a Bidding Zone rather than benefiting from a well-functioning European-EU-EEA single market. In addition, while a move towards GOs issued at more granular time intervals, such as hourly or even 15-minute GOs, should be enabled to improve the accuracy and credibility of sourcing disclosures, they should not be mandated to preserve market liquidity and to not hamper clean energy procurement.

A new delegated act without due recognition of the two key concerns above will, in our view, undermine investor confidence, fragment the internal energy market and reduce the overall attractiveness for new grid users such as data centres to locate in Europe.



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