Capacity mechanisms: ACER publishes technical guidance for CO2 emission limits

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​The European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) published today an Opinion providing technical guidance on the calculation of the CO2 emission limits in generation capacity, in the frame of Capacity Mechanisms as mandated by the European Union's revised Electricity Regulation established this year.

The opinion follows intensive consultation with interested stakeholders, including regulatory authorities, capacity providers and transmission system operators.

In case of resource adequacy concerns, Capacity Mechanisms are temporary measures taken by EU Member States to ensure that electricity supply can match demand, in times of expected system stress. Acting as a safety net for EU decarbonisation objectives, CO2 emission limits will contain the environmental impact of capacity mechanisms, by filtering out generation units with high carbon intensity.

In this context, the Agency's Opinion lays the foundation for a harmonised introduction of emission limits for generation capacity to participate in Capacity Mechanisms: an essential tool to limit the impact of Capacity Mechanisms on EU climate objectives.

After setting out the scope of application of the emission limits, the technical guidance introduces a formula for the calculation of the limits and debates key topics of the future electricity systems, including demand side response, carbon capture and storage.

Specifications are also provided for generation units that already report their emissions under the EU ETS framework, for which a streamlined process is suggested. Another technical document will be released in early 2020, in order to address specific cases of application of the emission limits and provide stakeholders with calculation examples.

Access the Opinion here.

The Evaluation of Responses to the Public Consultation is available here.​