

The energy system is undergoing considerable changes, mainly driven by decarbonisation, decentralisation and digitalisation, calling for smarter, flexible, responsive networks and markets that empower consumers and place them at the heart of it all.

Standards are needed to cover the communication needs of the grid management, balancing and interfacing with the millions of new renewable energy sources, as well as for the complex interactions of the new distributed energy market which is also enriched with demand-side response services.

Communication standards will also be crucial for the deployment of electric vehicles and the building-up of smart cities. Harmonised communication protocols would provide standard components and interfaces giving "plug-and-play" capability for any new entrant to the network, such as renewables or electric cars, or the use of open architectures based on global communication standards. To further promote interoperability, in addition to standardisation, testing and profiling should also be considered.

A major challenge is engaging the right stakeholders which need to be brought together to conduct the standardisation work taking into account that between smart grid management (of relevance to energy producers, the utility network operators) and smart consumption (involving the end consumer) a seamless environment should be established where interests are not identical and potentially conflicting.

status of implementation of the required standardised interfaces and of the EC recommended³¹ functionalities related to the provision of information to consumers. A report summarising the main findings was published in October 2015 and August 2016³².

More recently, during 2017-2018, the Task Force engaged in activities to help prepare the ground for the development of secondary legislation complementary to the (then under negotiation and recently completed) Clean Energy Package, and specific to the issue of data interoperability, and also for network codes on demand-response, and cybersecurity.

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