

12th meeting of the Commission Expert Group on electricity interconnection targets

Brussels, 19 June 2018

Summary minutes

1. Welcome and the presentation of the agenda

Mr Tomasz Jerzyniak, Policy officer, apologised for the absence of the Chair of the Expert Group Ms Catharina Sikow-Magny due to unexpected institutional obligations, and then welcomed the participants and opened the morning session by presenting the agenda and recalling the conclusions of the previous meeting.

2. Session on electricity interconnectors with third countries

In the first session the Chair summarised the technical information on interconnectors with third countries discussed in the previous meeting and presented a general analytical framework on the role of interconnectors with EU neighbouring countries.

To provide further information, two presentations were given; Firstly, ENTSO-E presented different forms of technical cooperation agreements with neighbouring countries, taking into account rights and obligations stemming from the ENTSO-E membership as well as other forms of technical cooperation outside the ENTSO-E context. Secondly, Ms Anne-Charlotte Bournoville, Head of unit for international relations, presented a comprehensive overview of political agreements with the neighbouring countries with a particular focus on energy and energy network issues, notably with Energy Community, in the context of the Eastern Partnership, with Mediterranean countries as well as bilateral cooperation schemes.

The experts pointed out to the need to develop a set of criteria for the assessment of interconnectors with third countries. On the one hand, the main focus should be on the analysis of drivers for interconnectors with third countries (benefits for the EU). On the other hand, any possible risks linked to such cooperation, both at political and technical levels, must be factored in. More specifically, elements such as security of supply for the EU system, the role of renewables in the neighbouring countries and their impact on meeting EU energy and climate targets as well as the intensity of regulatory and political agreements between the EU and third countries must be addressed in the assessment framework. The experts also underlined, that the EU neighbours are characterised by a high level of heterogeneity in terms of their political profile, intensity of cooperation on energy issues and applicability of EU energy law and rules. In that context, the experts noted that the Western Balkan contracting parties of the Energy Community have advanced collaboration agreements with the EU.

As summarised by the Chair, the experts agreed that the possible recommendations on interconnectors with third countries should separate political and technical elements. They should outline the political risks but also analyse the role of such interconnectors for the EU energy system. The Chair concluded that the Commission will circulate a first draft of a

structure for a chapter on electricity interconnectors with third countries for experts' input and comments.

3. Session on sector coupling and its possible impact on the electricity interconnectors

The Chair introduced the session by recalling the conclusions of the previous meeting on the need for a more detailed assessment of the scenarios development process and the relevant cross-sectoral assumptions in the framework of the Ten Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP).

The introductory presentation was prepared jointly by ENTSO-E and ENTSG. It comprised an overview of the three scenarios developed for TYNDP 2018 including detailed assumptions for different technologies (e.g. heat pumps, power to gas, energy demand electricity vehicles, etc.). Further, the joint scenario building process for TYNDP 2020 was presented including the presentation of the five storylines and development timeline.

The presentation on scenario building process were complemented by a presentation of the ongoing focus study on the gas and electricity interlinked model which aims at conceptual assessment of which electricity and gas interactions would be relevant from a TYNDP perspective, including potential interaction and cost-benefit analysis between relevant network projects.

The experts noted that the recommendations on the role of interconnectors in the changing energy and interlinked energy system as formulated in chapter 3 of the first Expert Group Report represented the current views of the Expert Group on integration of different energy sectors. Furthermore, the experts concluded that further discussion would be needed to refine the current observations and recommendations.

The Chair concluded that the Expert Group will further reflect on coupling of energy sectors in its next meetings.

4. Next steps

The next meeting of the Expert Group is scheduled on 18 July 2018

Present

Commission: Tomasz Jerzyniak (Policy officer), Irina Minciuna (Policy officer), Lukas Bieber (Trainee), Anne-Charlotte Bournoville, Head of Unit for international relations in DG ENER (partially in the morning session), Adam Cwetsch (Policy officer, partially in the morning session), Zsuzsanna Szeles (Policy officer, in the afternoon session)

Expert Group members:

Robert Schroeder and Concha Sanchez Perez (ENTSO-E),

Celine Heidreich (ENTSOG),

Paulina Beato

Nikolaos Vasilakos (EREF),

Pierre Bernard (FoSG),

Daivis Virbickas (Litgrid),

Michal Smyk (PKEE),

Tor Eigil Hodne (Statnett),

Jochen Kreusel (T&D Europe),

Cécile George,