swissgrid

Press release
15. July 2020

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Swissgrid presents its position on the revision of the Energy Act (EnG)

The legal framework must also support the integration of renewable energies into the overall system

By revising the Energy Act (EnG), the Federal Council is looking to create more incentives for the expansion of domestic renewable energies while also ensuring the long-term security of supply. For this to succeed, the legal framework must also support the integration of renewable energies into the overall system. This requires measures, such as the consistent optimisation and acceleration of the approval processes for grid projects, innovative solutions for load management, an electricity agreement with the EU as well as better data exchange.

The combination of the lack of an electricity agreement, the considerable expansion of renewable energies with volatile production and sluggish grid expansion presents a challenge for the operation of the transmission grid.

Optimisation of the approval process for the grid projects

Even today, grid expansion cannot keep up with the pace of the expansion of renewable energies. This will likely be further exacerbated if the number of grid projects increases due to the support for renewable energies. On the operations side, this would lead to unusual grid flows and congestion, and the grid infrastructure would quickly reach its limits. This would also generate costs for end consumers. To achieve the objectives of the Energy Strategy 2050, it must be ensured that the deadlines for the sectoral plan and planning approval procedures can be met and the grid expansion projects can be completed on time.

Innovative solutions for load management

Innovative solutions can help to flexibly control loads in the lower grid levels and thus allow frequency services to be made available to the transmission grid. In light of increasing electromobility, Swissgrid could envisage load management by distribution system operators or third parties. The «EQUIGY» crowd balancing platform is currently developing exactly this type of solution, one which also makes it possible to provide decentralised resources (such as electric vehicles, battery storage as well as heating and cooling loads) on the ancillary services market with the help of blockchain technology. The pilot project launched in Switzerland is targeting the use of storage technologies in the area of primary control energy. The EQUIGY platform could also be used to prevent congestion in the transmission and distribution grid by intelligently controlling the decentralised resources. It could be used in addition to redispatch,

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15. Juli 2020

which is used by domestic and international transmission system operators to eliminate grid congestion.

Electricity agreement with the EU

Swissgrid welcomes the Federal Council's goal of concluding an electricity agreement with the EU and ensuring an *«EU-compliant»* structure of this revision to the maximum extent possible. However, an electricity agreement should not just be viewed as a framework condition to be considered for this draft law but also as an element for efficient and secure integration of renewable energies into the overall system. Even if renewable energies are significantly expanded, import and export capacities will make an important contribution to maintaining the security of supply in Switzerland.

Improving the exchange of data

The availability, quality and transparency of data is becoming increasingly important for secure grid operation, particularly if the electricity market is liberalised and the use of renewable energies continues to expand. Swissgrid considers non-discriminatory access to the necessary data to be absolutely essential for secure grid operation. In the event of an increase in decentrally generated renewable energies, the provision of aggregated information in real time at the node and sub-node level, for example, will become increasingly important. A legal basis is required to regulate the free provision of the data necessary for the legal mandate among distribution system operators, the National Grid Company, storage facility and power plant operators as well as other participants.

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