

INFORSE-EUROPE

International Network for Sustainable Energy

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INFORSE-Europe Comments on the Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on common rules for the Internal Market in electricity (recast, COM(2016)864/F1)

For INFORSE-Europe it is important the the electricity market directive ensures a faster transition to renewable energy, by ensuring both rights and opportunities for producers of renewable energy.

The regulations must also ensure that the energy transition and other changes caused by the directive are not contributing to increase of energy poverty, where consumers are not able to pay their energy bills. Increased energy poverty can contribute to create resistance against the transition to a low-carbon society, as well as to EU-regulations covering the the electricity market.

It is further important that the regulation in particular gives smaller consumers and energy communities the best possible conditions to produce renewable energy and to participate in an energy market as flexible consumers. Flexible consumers react in real time on signals about the current price and on environmental effects of the power system. By involving these consumers the transition to renewable energy is supported. This is both because they can use the power, when renewable power is abundant and because they can act as local ambassadors for the transition.

The support for renewable energy should be directed towards sustainable use of renewable energy, for instance with criteria for sustainability of biomass, as included in the draft renewable energy directive. The electricity market directive should include a reference to these criteria.

It is important that the energy markets are promoting environmentally benign electricity supply, in particular renewable energy. This shall be specified in Art.3.2, which shall include the opportunity to limit access to the EU electricity market of power from power plants that do not fulfil EU environmental requirements. This shall include limiting imports from substandard power plants outside the EU.

It is important that the transition does not increase energy poverty and also does not increase profits of market actors that have a de-facto monopoly in their sub-sector of the market. Therefore the demand on unregulated power prices in Art. 5 must be limited to areas, where there is effective competition among suppliers, and where consumers have access to buy from a power pool with reasonably low transaction costs.

The regulation must support the construction of renewable energy plants that contribute to meet the EU's 2030 target for renewable energy that currently is at least 7%. This must be specified in Art.8.2 (i) similar to the reference to the 2020-target for renewable energy in this article. As part of this we propose to include a priority access for renewable energy in Art.8.2.

It is important that the rights for consumers that produce electricity (prosumers) and for energy communities are secured as proposed in art.15 and art.16, but if the local production is not based on renewable energy it is also important that this right does not compromise the transition to renewable energy and that such local electricity production is levied the same climate and environmental charges that is levied to other non-renewable electricity production. This shall be included in art.15 and art. 16.

The size of energy communities shall be defined in the same way as in the EU renewable energy directive, for instance with an upper limit of 18 MW for wind power. This shall be included in art. 16.

Newly established energy communities must have the possibility to restrict members leaving it for a period. This shall be included in art.18.

Electricity distribution companies should not be limited in their opportunities to install chargers for electric cars, as is proposed in art.33. As long as EU countries as Denmark have so few electric cars that a competition among charging stations is not possible, and that most chargers are owned by power companies, power companies should not be limited in their rights to install chargers. Instead it should be a requirement that all interested parties can establish chargers under the same conditions regarding the power supply connection. This should be included in art.33.

To stop the possibility for power distributors to install chargers is similar to stop that oil companies can run petrol stations. We also propose that all chargers in public spaces should be available for use without subscriptions, for instance with payments via SMS.

Regarding the proposal that electricity distributors cannot own energy storages (art. 36), it should as a minimum be clarified that this does not limit the opportunities for energy communities to operate energy storages. Furthermore we propose that the ban on distributor-owned energy storages is changed to a requirement that investors in energy storages must be treated equally by the distribution companies.

We propose that in addition to the committee of countries that shall follow implementation of legislation (art. 68) is also established a consultation forum of non-state interests including consumer groups, environmental interests, representatives of energy communities, and renewable energy producers. The consultation forum shall be consulted on the same issues than the committee, including delegated acts in preparation.

Finally we propose that the directive ensures that distribution companies can set dynamic (time-varying) tariffs following the local demands and that transmission tariffs are set dynamically following variations in renewable energy production to promote the use of power, when the share of renewable electricity is the highest.

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