

**4th European Grid Conference on Energy and Democracy**  
**THE POWER OF COLLABORATION**  
**Brussels, 27 January 2015**

**SUMMARY**

**Key messages**

*Antonella Battaglini, CEO Renewables Grid Initiative: “The power sector. Evolution or revolution?”*

We are in the middle of a revolution, changes are happening across the power sector at global level, the challenges we face are increasingly opportunities for new actors and those who can master change. The EU energy policy drivers need to be re-interpreted. Competitiveness can only be achieved and maintained if based on innovation. We need policies that reward and support innovation in technologies, in new approaches and that stimulate new business models. Energy security needs to be achieved together with Europe’s neighbours and shared across the Union. There is no security in restrictive nationalistic approaches. Interconnectors are important for energy security as well as for fostering interdependencies. The broad concept of sustainability should remain in the focus of all energy policies because it is the base to protect the environment we live in and address the needs and wants of citizens. Public opinion is indispensable to achieve European energy and climate goals. We need leaders who can inspire citizens, who can explain how to turn challenges in opportunities and de facto lead the transition. Collaboration across the energy sectors are needed and also the source of new business opportunities. RGI is an excellent example of collaboration. Only those who learn how to manage change will survive.

*Maroš Šefčovič, European Commission, Vice President Energy Union*

The electricity sector is currently facing a great number of challenges and many new developments will be seen in the coming years, including the roll-out of smart grids and smart metres, individual home energy management or increased efficiency in the building and transport sector. Technology and innovation will be the main drivers of this change. The integration of an increased share of renewables will also come with challenges. These will become easier to overcome when a cross-border European market is considered. Instead of sub-optimal national solutions, European solutions should be pursued and will be much more cost-effective. Moreover, a European electricity system is much more robust and secure.

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The energy union is one of Juncker's priorities for the coming years. For instance, energy infrastructure, efficiency and an increased share of renewables are examples of the priorities in Juncker's investment plan that was introduced last year. The five pillars of the energy union entail:

1. Security of energy supply by solidarity and trust within the EU
2. Well-functioning and fully integrated internal market
3. Moderation of energy demand by tapping into the potential of energy efficiency
4. Decarbonisation of EU energy mix
5. Focus of the EU's agenda for research and innovation on objectives in these areas

### **Main discussion outcomes**

#### *1. Innovation and Structural Change*

*Including contributions from: Olivier Feix, Head of Communications/Public Affairs 50Hertz; James McDougall, CEO Younicos; Roberto Zangrandi, Special Advisor EDSO*

Participants agreed that we should not think in old roles, but rather be open to new forms of collaboration. This might entail new fields of activities for both TSOs and DSOs, but certainly more cooperation between the two players. It is certain that more electricity than ever needs to be transported and balanced. However, who does it and who pays for it remains to be seen. Challenges lie ahead in making organisational cultures fit for the future and new players will try to seize opportunities that result out of the coming changes. Financial structures of the energy sector were considered one of the biggest structural changes to be seen in the coming years. Closely related were questions about ownership – public or private and centralised or decentralised. The discussion also showed that public stakeholders continuously set high hopes into technological innovation (underground cables) to reduce the impact of necessary infrastructure development and made evident the need for better information on the comparatively high impacts of constructing such projects.

#### *2. Energy and Democracy*

*Including contributions from: Christoph Bals, Policy Director Germanwatch; Graham Watson, President Climate Parliament; Tor Eigil Hodne, Senior Vice President for European Affairs Statnett; Ivana d'Alessandro, Secretary of the Bern Convention Council of Europe*

In the second discussion round, the right of people to participate in decisions that affect them was stressed. On the one hand, this right should entail democratic decision-making procedures concerning

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energy sources and on the other the implications of this energy mix, such as the planning of infrastructure or impacts on communities and nature. In addition, participation could exceed the mere engagement in discussions when citizens become actual participants in the generation and balancing of electricity. While this trend, stirred by digitalisation and big data, brings many new opportunities and new structures of ownership, it comes with challenges related to data security.

Another aspect of democracy in the energy system is related to energy fairness and the opportunities closer cooperation between different countries – within Europe, but also beyond – could bring.

### 3. *The European Energy Union*

*Including contributions from: Pierre Schellekens, Deputy Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete; Ben Voorhorst, COO TenneT; Claude Turmes, MEP Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance; Monica Frassoni, President of European Alliance to Save Energy; Ariel Brunner, Head of EU Policy BirdLife Europe*

Pierre Schellekens explained the current state of thinking within the European Commission regarding the Energy Union. According to him, the starting point is that the EU is not delivering on energy policy. The goal of a European energy policy is a competitive, secure and sustainable energy system. However, while climate policy is European right now, energy policy is still highly national. The European energy sector could be much more efficient if it were integrated, including the market, security of supply and infrastructure.

In the subsequent discussion, there was no agreement on how well the EU is already delivering on the Energy Union and what this Union should include. Some individuals proposed to rename it to “Climate and Energy Union” to stress the importance of the overarching goal to fight climate change. Ben Voorhorst raised the question how renewables could best be integrated into a future market regime and what this would mean for their business model. Monica Frassoni suggested to include a ‘saving test’ into the Union, i.e. the decision on building something new, such as a power line or a gas pipeline, should always be compared with the costs of saving the amount of energy delivered by this.

There was an agreement on the fact that more focus should be laid on citizens in any given project and that the project needs a strong narrative in order to become successful. However, opinions on what this means differed substantially. One suggestion was to focus more on the consumption side of the energy system since this is what citizens relate to. Ariel Brunner pointed out that Europe is not popular at the

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moment, neither are big businesses and the free market. However, the EU has already proven that it can deliver on innovative and peaceful projects, such as the transition towards renewables.

**If you have any questions, comments or relevant information, please contact us:**

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## IMPRESSIONS OF THE DAY



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## PARTICIPANTS

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Volker	Wendt	Europacable
Adam	White	WWF European Policy Office
Peter	Wicks	Kontou Associates
Paul	Wilczek	EWEA
Christoph	Wolff	European Climate Foundation
Gunnar	Wrede	Yunicos
Clemens	Wunderlich	German Greens
Roberto	Zangrandi	EDSO
Judit	Zegnal	Bruxinfo - Hungarian News Agency

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## PROGRAMME

**13:00**      **The power sector: evolution or revolution?**  
Antonella Battaglini | CEO Renewables Grid Initiative

**Video keynote**  
Maroš Šefčovič | Vice President European Commission

**14:00**      **Innovation and structural change**  
*Inputs and fishbowl discussion*

- How can TSOs master the challenges of the energy transition? | Boris Schucht, CEO 50Hertz
- Disruptive storage options | James P. McDougall, CEO Younicos
- Collaboration between DSOs and TSOs: policies required to lead the energy transition | Roberto Zangrandi, Special Advisor EDSO

**16:00**      **Energy and Democracy**  
*Inputs and fishbowl discussion*

- Prosumers - Responsibility and Democracy | Christoph Bals, Policy Director Germanwatch
- Trust your neighbour: the need for interconnections | Graham Watson, President Climate Parliament
- Big data in the electricity sector: peoples' concerns and needs | Tor Eigil Hodne, Senior Vice President for European Affairs Statnett
- Greener grids: infrastructure and biodiversity | Ivana d'Alessandro, Secretary of the Bern Convention, Council of Europe

**17:00**      **The European Energy Union**  
*Keynote: Pierre Schellekens | Deputy Head of Cabinet Commissioner Arias Cañete*

*Inputs and fishbowl discussion*

- What should the Energy Union deliver for the electricity sector? | Jerzy Buzek, MEP, Chair of the ITRE Committee, Group of the European People's Party
- Is Europe fit for a sustainable market design? | Ben Voorhorst, COO TenneT
- Liberalisation 2.0 | Claude Turmes, MEP, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- Efficiency vs. flexibility | Monica Frassoni, President European Alliance to Save Energy
- There is no 'Union' without sustainability | Ariel Brunner, Head of EU Policy BirdLife Europe

**19:00**      **"Good Practice of the Year"**  
*Award Ceremony*

- Priorities 2015 | Marie C. Donnelly, Director for new and renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency and innovation at the European Commission
- Award procedure and evaluation criteria | Patrick Oelze, Certified Auditor MAZARS

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