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Communication Strategy

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3. Version History

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1	28/2/2020	Mats Tiborn

4. Figures

Figure	Name
1	FlexiGrid's main target groups
2	The FlexiGrid logo
3	The FlexiGrid colours

5. List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
FlexiGrid	Enabling flexibility for future distribution grids with high penetration of variable renewable penetration– FlexiGrid
RES	Renewable energy sources
DSO	Distribution system operator
TSO	Transmission system operator
EIB	European Investment Bank
DG Regio	European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy
ISGAN	International Smart Grid Action Network
IP	Immaterial property

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Communication strategy

1. Introduction

This deliverable, D10.2, is the second within WP 10 in the FlexiGrid project. It is the natural continuation of the first deliverable, D10.1, Target Group Analysis. D10.2 will use D10.1 as a starting point for all planned communication activities in the project.

The following pages explain the dissemination strategy, its aims, goals, and objectives, including key messages and target groups, as well as targeted events. Finally, it provides insights on roles and procedures, as well as evaluation and monitoring, defining some clear KPIs for the 3,5 years.

2. Aims, goals, and objectives

Europe is heading into a large-scale transition to renewable energy sources (RES). Through initiatives such as the Clean Energy for all Europeans package¹ and the European Green Deal², where the EU commission's goal is to transform EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use (www.ec.europa.eu). The transition is depending on a robust and secure electric infrastructure. A European electric grid updated to fulfill the needs of the ascending electrification is a must.

FlexiGrid is created to provide new solutions for these new challenges. The project must also reach out and raise awareness of this crucial issue. Europe's electric grid is ageing and, in many parts, will have trouble providing the capacity needed and handle the growing use of RES like wind and solar power. Instead of massive investments in increasing the grid's capacity, FlexiGrid will contribute to the development of elasticity and smart solutions to unlock flexibility resources at a distribution level operator (DSO)-level. This will happen through new couplings between different energy vectors as well as demand response using charging schemes of electric vehicles. The project will also develop proper tools, and new business models, based on technologies like IoT and blockchain, for the interested stakeholders (i.e. the DSOs) to optimally monitor and control their systems, while creating the necessary secure and robust marketplaces for the exchange of energy and flexibility services in the local level.

Communication lies at the core of the FlexiGrid project, with a clear ambition to create impact by giving small and medium-sized DSOs the best possible preconditions to not only avoiding bottlenecks but also become the enablers of renewable energy up to and beyond 100 percent so that the energy transition is successful and Europe becomes fossil-free.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy/clean-energy-all-europeans>

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf

Therefore, the FlexiGrid communication activities are tightly related to the project's objectives:

- To drive cooperation between DSOs, transmission system operators (TSOs), consumers and generators (project objective 3);
- To enable future technical and commercial innovation (project objective 5).

The specific objectives of the WP10 are:

- To get DSOs (in general) to understand the affordable integrated solutions developed by FlexiGrid and to influence them to engage and be willing to adapt;
- To support implementation of changes of legislation needed for the integrated solutions to be rolled out;
- To support investment banks with information about the bankable business models of FlexiGrid;
- To support DSOs at the demonstration site to get local consumers engaged.

This communication strategy will work as a base to create activities that will fulfill these objectives.

3. The strategy's purpose

The purpose of FlexiGrid's communication activities is to reach our target audience and increase the chance to make a great impact by the implementation of the project's results. For this to happen, both engagement and cooperation from all parts of the project are needed. Results from the project must be high-lighted and lifted beyond deliverables, tasks, and milestones. The new knowledge and new technologies get their value when others know about them and understand them. By synchronizing our communication throughout this strategy, FlexiGrid will have a stronger case to make an impact and contribute to a fossil-free Europe.

4. Main target groups

FlexiGrid has detected four main target groups that are important to reach to make an impact on a larger scale.

The target groups are:

- DSOs and other actors such as TSOs, industries and building owners;
- Policymakers;
- Long-term investors;
- End-users of the power grids, citizens around the targeted DSOs

The DSOs are a target group of high importance, especially those that are partners of FlexiGrid. They are the ones that must embrace the results of the project for others to believe in their potential. Therefore, communication activities to build a relationship with these DSOs will be prioritized. Other DSOs in the same regions as the FlexiGrid partner DSOs will be easier to reach once a good understanding of FlexiGrid's work is established within the partner DSOs.

Funded by the EU, the project has a responsibility to support European regulatory bodies with relevant information about the legislative changes that need to be made for the future of smart grids.

FlexiGrid needs to contribute to the future of smart grids by building capacity for funding. By joining forces with other projects that share FlexiGrid's ideas a stronger case can be built and be presented for the large funders in the EU, paving the way for replication and increased scalability of project results.

The end-users are a target group that may have an indirect effect on FlexiGrid. This is not a prioritized target group, but still, a powerful and important group to create a dialogue with and inform. A public with a deep understanding of FlexiGrid and anticipation for a breakthrough in results will facilitate the implementation of FlexiGrid's.

4.1 Consortium Partners

The participants of the FlexiGrid project is an important target group. They need to be engaged and informed. This is of utter importance for the success of the project. Each representative of the partners in the project is obliged to contribute to the communication activities of WP10. Each partner also has staff engaged in WP10's work. These staff members are responsible to plan the communication for reaching into respective organization and make impact. All communication staff of WP10 support each other in this task and contribute with content and knowledge transfer for best possible impact.

4.2 DSOs

The DSOs in Europe and the other actors in the grid are, to a large extent, profit-driven and need proof that the demonstration of tomorrow's sustainable, cost-effective energy solutions will help them to cut costs, earn more money and/or position themselves as having a sustainable business profile living their brand by acting now. (see WP2).

FlexiGrid provides a context where the stakeholders get first-hand information and knowledge transfer through real-life demonstration activities regarding the integrated solutions with scale-up and replication potential. FlexiGrid provides a replication package (see Grant agreement 2.2.1.6), providing them an opportunity to strengthen their business model, interact and get feedback from consumers.

Within FlexiGrid there are five DSOs, located in Bulgaria (ENERGO-PRO), Turkey (OEDAS), Sweden (Göteborg Energi and Akademiska Hus), and Switzerland (OIKEN). These DSOs are important for this work package both as target groups that have already shown interest in what will come out of FlexiGrid as well as good ambassadors when reaching out to other DSOs.

Figure 1 FlexiGrid's main target audiences

4.3 European DSO organizations

There are four main European DSO associations that work to leverage the DSOs issues to a high level. These are E.DSO³, Eurelectric⁴, CEDEC⁵ and Geode⁶. In 2021 the new EU-level organization EU DSO Entity will start operating. All these organizations are in FlexiGrid's interest to reach. Main issues, regarding this work package's aims, are policy and financial issues.

4.4 BRIDGE

Bridge⁷ is a European Commission initiative that unites Horizon 2020 Smart Grid and Energy Storage Projects to create a structured view of cross-cutting issues that are encountered in the demonstration projects and may constitute an obstacle to innovation.

The Bridge process fosters continuous knowledge sharing amongst projects, allowing them to deliver conclusions and recommendations about the future exploitation of the project results, with a single voice, through four different Working Groups representing the main areas of interest: Data management, business models, regulation, customer engagement (h2020-bridge.eu).

FlexiGrid is a member of Bridge and may participate and collaborate in the Bridge-network. FlexiGrid is therefore invited to participate in their events, meetings, and webinars. Most of their activities are set in Brussels and the project needs to be present at these activities. By connecting to other similar projects, FlexiGrid builds strength and may have an impact on the EU-commission using Bridge as a channel.

4.5 European financial instruments

FlexiGrid is part of the transition to a fossil-free Europe and will work for financial capacity for smart and flexible electric grids and for stakeholders that need funding to implement the project's technology and similar technology. The main organizations that FlexiGrid aim to reach through communication activities are European Investment Bank (EIB)⁸, and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, DG Regio⁹.

FlexiGrid will work through BRIDGE, see above, to team up with similar projects and create cases. Collaborate with these projects will provide the funding agencies with convincing facts to promote FlexiGrid.

4.6 Regulatory bodies

FlexiGrid provides the means of lobbying towards the removal of policy and regulatory barriers at local, national, European (and even global) scale for large-scale uptake. The relevant governments and

³ <https://www.edsoforsmartgrids.eu>

⁴ <https://www.eurelectric.org>

⁵ <http://www.cedec.com>

⁶ <http://www.geode-eu.org>

⁷ <https://www.h2020-bridge.eu>

⁸ <https://www.eib.org/en/>

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/organisation/dg-regio-dg-regional-urban-policy_en

institutions need to get comprehensive information about the benefits of the new solutions provided, the potential for replication and what needs to be done to gain all the benefits.

4.7 ISGAN

International Smart Grid Action Network (ISGAN)¹⁰, has a powerful position when it comes to high-level regulatory issues and can reach many countries on a national level. FlexiGrid has good relations already established within ISGAN and possibilities are good to make an impact here. FlexiGrid reaches them by giving them a deliverable on one high-level regulatory issue. This could be in the shape of a report, video, webinar or other forms of well-established deliverables. This is preferably done in cooperation with other projects. One suggestion is to use FlexiGrid's sister project NESTNet¹¹. The special communication effort for ISGAN is mainly due to its importance as a catalyst for external communication to reach the primary audience, mainly national regulatory bodies.

4.8 National regulatory bodies

In EU member states, the electric grids are owned by companies in a monopoly position and are regulated by national authorities with the electric grid as one of their main tasks. There is also an Energy Authority that is executing the decisions from the countries' Energy Departments and the countries' governments. These are important target groups to reach to overcome the regulatory barriers for the project. For details on these organizations, see D10.1, "Target group analysis".

4.9 End-users of the power grids

The consumers want affordable, stable and clean energy and to be perceived as being smart. If they learn that the FlexiGrid solutions make their lives easier, they will share it with friends, family, co-workers to enhance their image leading to increased acceptance.

FlexiGrid DSO's operating the demonstration sites are the main actors for communicating with the end-users and they are to set up a locally adapted smart-citizen plan. FlexiGrid provides solutions that will make the consumers save money and understand that not only does the energy savings benefit herself/himself, but the local environment.

5. Overarching message

Tagline:

FlexiGrid – Unlocking distribution grids for renewable energy

6. Boilerplate:

FlexiGrid is a Horizon 2020-project, executed by 16 partners from 8 European countries. The aim is to provide distribution system operators, the DSOs, with a variety of advanced tools to meet new demands for the transition into fossil-free energy brings while remaining the lead actors on this changing market.

¹⁰ <https://www.iea-isgan.org>

¹¹ <https://www.ryerson.ca/nestnet/>

7. Message

7.1 Short version

FlexiGrid will provide the operators at the end of the electric grids, the DSOs, and with a variety of advanced tools to meet the new demands the transition into a fossil-free society brings and remain the lead actors in this changing market. To allow Europe into 100% renewable energy, the distribution grids need new flexibility to adapt to the variation in energy supply from weather-dependent sources like wind, hydro and solar.

7.2 Long version

FlexiGrid provides the necessary tools for Europe to take the lead in the transition into a fossil-free society with RES rapidly increasing.

To allow Europe into 100% renewable energy, the distribution grids need to adapt to the variation in energy supply from weather-dependent sources like wind, water, and the sun. However, the grids are designed for the past and need an update to handle this new situation. Congestions, lack of storage, old regulations and obsolete business models are barriers for the new energy production system to flourish in our electric grids.

FlexiGrid finds the solution at the edges of these grids. Roughly 2,350 European small and medium distribution system operators, the DSOs, are in a position to potentially facilitate the transition to 100% renewable energy. They have the potential to link the electricity system to other energy sources and through application of new technology and consumer engagement, unlock flexibility resources while remaining the lead actors in this changing market.

FlexiGrid equips the DSOs with advanced tools to do this by enhancing the observability and controllability of distribution networks, while demonstrating both pool-based and peer-to-peer market mechanisms by leveraging digital and smart grid technologies, such as IoT platforms, peer-to-peer and peer-to-pool market places, as well as vehicles-to-grid, power-to-heat, and power-to-gas.

8. Communication process

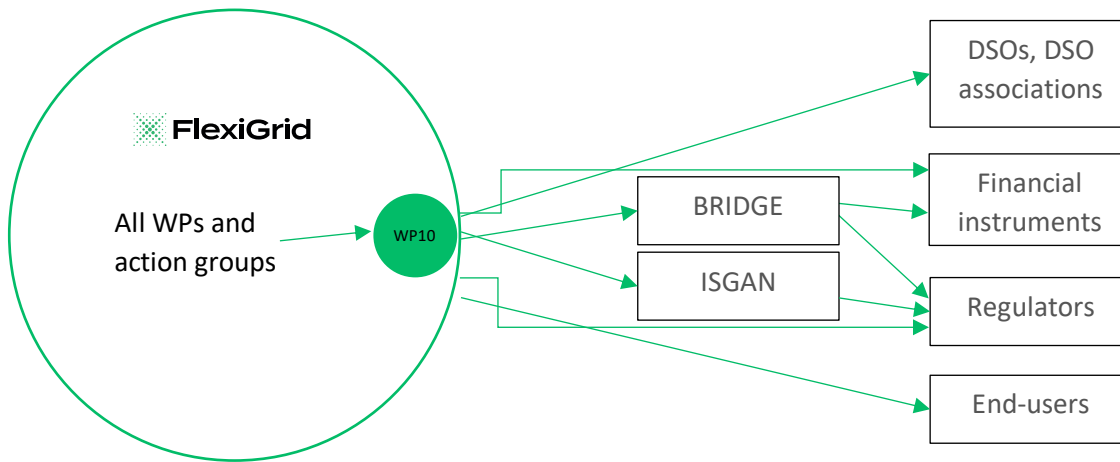
The project's communicators will map up their respective communication situation, both internally in their respective organization and nationally: communication channels, intelligence on current and upcoming events that are relevant for FlexiGrid and a dissemination plan for communication.

The communication staff that are responsible for the international and EU-target groups, will deliver activity plans for these target groups. The plans will follow the communication strategy and contain activity timeline and sort of communication activity. The plan will also contain monitoring indicators.

The communication activities will be managed by the WP10-leader and the communication staff in the project. The group decides what communication activities are to be executed within WP10. Once a month the communications group will have a web-based video meeting. Here the communication partners collaborate and keep each other updated on both passed actions and upcoming actions. During the meetings the coming actions will be decided. The group will strive for having a common voice

through all channels and that content is shared and translated to be spread in many different channels. These meetings are also an important forum for knowledge sharing.

All participants of the project support the communication of the project through interactions in social media: liking, sharing, commenting, tagging relevant people and writing own posts to support the project. The communication staff will support their participating colleagues at their organizations to keep the communication active.



9. Regulatory bodies and financial instruments

Within FlexiGrid there are experts with close relations to regulatory bodies in the EU and long experience in working with the kinds of issues that end up on these organizations' tables. There is also expertise in financing and capacity building regarding financial instruments. FlexiGrid will form one group dedicated to regulatory issues and one group dedicated to financial issues with the purpose to monitor the progress of the project and lift results regarding these issues to a higher level through collaboration in organizations like Bridge and Celsius. The FlexiGrid representatives will here build relations with other projects that share FlexiGrid's goals and visions and together the projects will have the relevance and capacity to create the high-level messages that the regulatory bodies and financial organizations are interested in and make an impact that way.

The groups will be formed by the WP10-leader and will create activity plans for reaching out to financial bodies respective regulatory bodies.

10. DSOs and end-users

The communication activities reaching out to the DSOs that are detected will be operated by the WP10-leader and the communication staff at the different DSOs and the partner organizations close to the DSOs within the project. The communication staff in every location have a responsibility to contribute with suggestions and plans about how to accomplish our mission with their local perspective and knowledge about current events and how to get the most out of our work for every specific location.

11. Communication tools

11.1 Visual identity and promotion material

The full description of FlexiGrid's visual identity is available for partners in the project's Dropbox. The name of the document is "FlexiGrid_Logotype_Concept_w_Guideline". Here is a summary:



Figure 2 The FlexiGrid logo.

The FlexiGrid mark symbolizes the meeting point or crossroad of energy flows, and as it connects, this crossroad creates a core which forms an almost living, breathing energy entity.

This crossroad, through its structured grid system, allows the symbol to be used in many creative ways such as tiling brand patterns where multiple symbols can be connected, creating an entire network of energy focal points, as well as in animations where the observer can experience first-hand how the energy network connection is being fused. For details, see the guidelines.

The grid system which the FlexiGrid symbol is based on has also other types of future uses beyond the symbol itself. For example, it invites and inspires to build other visual brand assets with this as a foundation, such as a custom-designed icon library to hold the brand together under one unified structure.

11.2 Colors



Figure 3 The FlexiGrid colours.

Inspired by nature, the FlexiGrid color palette is dominated by a confident vibrant green tone, to both attract the eye but also to build excitement and a positive feeling about the future of energy and smart grids.

The word "FlexiGrid" is based on the typeface Termina, which breaks the norm with its generously wide letterforms. Going bolder and wider with the typography, generates a contemporary look, while at the same time being immensely clear and readable for every print size and screen. All the components which together bind the complete logotype, create a unity which is a strong, modern and confident look that with pride will carry the FlexiGrid brand name for many years to come.

The name of the project is always written FlexiGrid.

11.3 Website

FlexiGrid's website is found at FlexiGrid.org. This appealing and accessible website is the main platform for dissemination of, integration and engagement with project activities. Here all news and calendar activities will be found. News mainly focus on FlexiGrid's achievements, and the calendar is used to show the events that are relevant for FlexiGrid. The website is connected to the digital channels LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. Posts are to be shared/liked/commented on by partners to further disseminate benefits and results making an impact on the market. Tagging partners in posts will enhance the power of the posts.

Monitoring indicators:

- 600 visits on website first year, thereafter 30% yearly growth of visits;
- Each partner to contribute with content to at least 3 articles/year.

11.4 Social media strategy

FlexiGrid uses LinkedIn, YouTube and Twitter. Through these fora, we network, boost FlexiGrid's and friends' achievements, and also aim at creating an interest for FlexiGrid and for the need for a change in the energy system for RES to fully flourish. All partner organizations are responsible to follow FlexiGrid and participate in spreading and sharing posts from FlexiGrid's channels, as well as linking FlexiGrid to issues that the target groups should relate to it. Participants should also follow and tag each other on these channels to give a better impact on FlexiGrid's posts. They should also follow the hashtag #FlexiGridHorizon2020.

LinkedIn is used for establishing FlexiGrid and its results in all partner organizations, other DSOs, financial instruments, regulatory bodies and end-users, thus all target groups.

Twitter is mainly used to create support for the project's overall cause and goal, and to raise awareness of what is going on in the project. The aim is to establish a dialogue with other similar projects, with politicians, EU-officials, DSOs and other stakeholders.

YouTube is used as a source for the project's videos and will not be maintained as a forum for interactions other than replying to comments on videos.

All partners have the right and are encouraged to use the content that is produced for FlexiGrid. To get maximum coverage, partners are also encouraged to rewrite, reshape or translate the content to suit their organizations and purposes, as long as it is not in conflict with FlexiGrid's objectives and FlexiGrid's role must be obvious.

FlexiGrid's digital platforms are the foundation of the project's communication activities. These platforms are crosslinked and support each other by inviting viewers to take part in different platforms.

The project's hashtag that is to be used in all social media posts is #FlexiGridHorizon2020. Other relevant hashtags that may be of use are: #EnergyTransition; #energyefficiency; #GD4S; #CleanEnergyEU; #Energy; #Clean; #Innovative; #DSOs; #EUGreenDeal;

All partners to contribute with a list of "most wanted project followers"

Monitoring indicators:

- 60% of the "most wanted project followers" will follow (or actively share/like) FlexiGrid on social media;
- All partners have been actively promoted FlexiGrid material on LinkedIn and/or Twitter every month;
- Each partner expected to promote the project in their channels, according activity plans.

11.5 Newsletters

FlexiGrid will use the EU networks to which the project is connected. Both BRIDGE and Celsius Initiative have newsletters that reach out all over Europe with a trustworthy voice. The communication group of WP10 will establish a good relation to the networks and provide them with news items that are shaped to fit their newsletters and websites.

BRIDGE is a European Commission initiative that unites Horizon 2020 Smart Grid and Energy Storage Projects to create a structured view of cross-cutting issues that are encountered in the demonstration projects and may constitute an obstacle to innovation.

CELSIUS is funded under the 7th Framework Programme and is a network of 72 cities, and 68 City Supporters and 20 organizations from public, private and research institutions that help cities plan, develop and optimize their district heating and cooling networks.

11.6 Press activities

The FlexiGrid communication activities include creating interest for both the project and mainly the issues the project aims to solve. By being present in the right newspapers means reaching out to early adopters creating an understanding and a group of supporters that can formulate demands on their DSOs as well as regulatory bodies in their home countries and municipalities. It also means reaching the officials and politicians interested in these issues, making it easier to conduct dialogues with governments and authorities.

Monitoring indicators:

- >5 articles about the project/demonstrations, on a professionals-oriented magazine;
- > 5 articles about the project/demonstrations, in public media;
- >5 times been part of relevant newsletters, (such as BRIDGE);
- >10 video productions, all partners responsible for reaching "the most wanted list".

11.7 Content production

The communication content of FlexiGrid is to be customized for the channels defined by this document and the target group analysis of D10.1. What the content consists of depends on the purpose of the action and is decided by the communicator with the approval of the WP10 leader. The content must also be approved by any participant that is used as a source, is quoted or owns the information.

By every deliverable, the lead beneficiary will also provide WP10 leader with the three most important results of the deliverable. This will then be used for content for FlexiGrid. Depending on the purpose it can be a production of news, videos, editorials, etc.

11.8 Scientific communication

University and research institute partners are responsible for fulfilling the strategy for scientific publications that are set in the Grant Agreement:

- 3 papers accepted the first year and 5 each subsequent year;
- More than 40% of the papers authored by at least two collaborating partners;
- An average of 2 collaborating partners per paper;
- At least 10 citations per publication.

11.9 Policy & regulation activities

As mentioned above, FlexiGrid will form a group dedicated to monitoring the progress of the project and lift results to a higher level through collaboration in organizations like Bridge and Celsius.

- >2 annually Innovation development activities ;
- >10 Thematic & scientific events;

- >2 annually KT activities with partner projects.

Monitoring indicators:

Acknowledged of regulatory and policy bodies; review and support:

- >2 policies Key-note/main-speaker;
- >4 scientific conferences.

11.10 Delegation visits to demo sites

When planning visits to demo sites, the project's communication staff shall be informed to be able to plan communication activities connected to the visit. Visits provide good opportunities to highlight the project internally and in social media channels. Visits also provide good opportunities for interviews and photo/video ops.

When visiting demo sites, participants, partners, and followers will share videos and pictures from visits to be disseminated in digital channels and/or in newsletters (of for example BRIDGE). Participants will also create and share posts on social media with the hashtag #FlexiGridHorizon2020.

11.11 External events

Regarding external events, FlexiGrid will mainly focus on participating in other organizations' events, rather than arranging events. All partners are responsible for contributing to suggestions for events to participate in as FlexiGrid representatives. Organizations that are interesting for FlexiGrid to network with are e.g. InnoEnergy¹², ISGAN¹³, Smart Grid taskforce¹⁴, Interflex¹⁵, FED (Urban Innovative Actions initiatives)¹⁶ and m2M (ERANET-Smart Grid Plus)¹⁷. The task groups with focus on regulatory bodies and financial instruments will have the responsibility to create strategies to reach the right people at relevant events.

11.12 Internal events

By participating at internal events, like delegation visits to demo sites, workshops, etc. partners are encouraged to share videos, pictures, and thoughts about the events, for the project's followers to react on and to raise awareness of the project and its issues.

12. Roles, management and procedures

The work package leader will manage the synchronization with other work packages to make sure the communication activities are correct, on time and in line with other project activities.

¹² <https://www.innoenergy.com>

¹³ <https://www.iea-isgan.org>

¹⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/markets-and-consumers/smart-grids-and-meters/smart-grids-task-force>

¹⁵ <https://interflex-h2020.com>

¹⁶ <https://www.johannebergsciencepark.com/projekt/fed-fossil-free-energy-districts>

¹⁷ <https://m2m-grid.eu>

IMCG is in charge of all communication and dissemination activities of the project, the tracking, monitoring, and adjustment of the dissemination and communication strategy. All other partners will support the communication and dissemination activities.

The project's partners can be divided into three main categories: DSOs, Universities and solution providers. Their communication activities are therefore slightly different. While the Universities mainly are engaged in producing publications and promote the knowledge of the project through established scientific forums, the DSOs are to promote the project and its findings internally and through DSO associations by e.g. collaborate with the solution providers in promoting the solutions that are developed within the project. All communications shall be based on the communication strategy.

All communication will duly consider potential IP issues. Communicators, as well as information providers, must make sure the IP-policy, that is found in D9.1 (IP Policy, assessment and operations), is followed.

13. Building and maintaining internal communication

To avoid working in silos, the internal communication of the project will encourage collaboration by keeping all partners updated on what is happening in the different work packages and in the activity groups, which are partners crosslinked over different work packages.

14. Evaluation and monitoring

The communication strategy will be evaluated and updated every 6 months to maintain the communication activities contemporary. By that time the monitoring indicators will be audited.

15. Conclusion

The purpose of FlexiGrid's communication activities is to reach the target groups and to increase the chance to make an impact from the project's results.

The communication activities are mainly directed at DSOs and EU authorities as well as other authorities to facilitate FlexiGrid's results to make an impact on the way DSOs work and on regulations and funding.

FlexiGrid will mainly use the following communication channels:

- The website: for centralizing all information reachable on www.FlexiGrid.org;
- Social Media: for exchanging and engaging with the determined target groups
- BRIDGE and Celsius newsletters: for reaching out to the target groups with the latest results of the project;
- Workgroups: such as relevant groups within BRIDGE;
- Events: participating in events related to FlexiGrid's issues for networking and knowledge sharing.