PRESS RELEASE

16/11/2015

ene.field points to stronger services market to draw low carbon solutions onto the grid

Fuel cell based micro CHP units in homes and commercial buildings could provide vital network services to the electricity grid. These services can help the electricity grid assimilate more renewables according to the latest ene.field project report published 10/11/2015. The report stresses the need to create a market for electricity services to draw new technologies such as micro CHP into wider use and accelerate the cost reduction needed for general consumer uptake.

The report produced by the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) along with other partners of the ene.field project highlights how, as the European electricity mix moves towards a higher share of intermittently generated electricity, the generated energy increasingly does not correspond to patterns of consumption. This creates a need for technologies such as fuel cell micro CHP (FC micro-CHP), which produces both heat and electricity simultaneously and can help compensate for the induced electricity fluctuations.

FC micro-CHP is an interesting technology for generating both electricity and heat, right at the consumer, when they are needed. With suitable control, given to an operator, the micro-CHP can balance and help align the grid for renewable energy sources. Decreasing its own generation allows renewable electricity to be absorbed at times of large renewable generation and increasing its own generation can meet demands when the renewables generate less electricity. This balancing capability of the micro-CHPs has already been demonstrated in practice.

In order to reach a commercial position, the report points out both the challenges and opportunities that remain for FC micro-CHP technology. It explains that in order to realise its potential, the technology depends both on having access to a robust electricity services market and on the manufacturers progressively reducing the product costs to make the product accessible to a wider consumer group.

The ene.field project – co-funded by industry and the European Programme Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH-JU) – will place up to 1,000 fuel cell micro-CHPs into homes across eleven European countries. The project (which runs from 2012-2017, featuring 26 partners from across the heating and energy industry and €26 million EU funding) is Europe's largest deployment of this modern energy product to date and allows manufacturers to begin to reduce costs due to the volume of units involved. Over the last six months the installation of units in the context of the ene.field project has really taken off, now reaching more than 300 units installed in total.

To download the report and find more information on the ene.field project and its partners, please visit www.enefield.eu.

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About ene.field

The ene.field project is the largest European demonstration of the latest smart energy solution for private homes, micro-CHP. It will see up to 1,000 households across Europe able to experience the benefits of this new energy solution. The five-year project uses modern fuel cell technology to produce heat and electricity in households and empowers them in their electricity and heat choices.

The ene.field project is co-funded by the European Programme Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking (FCH-JU), and brings together 27 partners, including 9 European manufacturers who will make the products available across 12 EU Member States.

For more information, visit www.enefield.eu or contact Mr Gilles Pittoors via info@enefield.eu

The ene.field partners are: