

## Moldova smart grid

Part of the meters are installed by Premier Energy Distribution in the municipality of Chişinău and six suburbs and another part - by RED Nord, in the northern region, including the suburb of Bălţi. The meters are installed in households selected according to criteria of geographical location, population density, energy vulnerability, socio-economic status, availability of infrastructure, etc.

The smart meters will measure consumption at short intervals, energy quality parameters and transmit data automatically, securely and without errors to the energy supplier, without the need for employees of distribution companies to physically read the meters. At the same time, the supplier will bill actual energy consumption, not estimated one and the distributor will be able to identify accidents more quickly and reduce response time.

"This pilot programme will contribute to the digitalization of the energy sector, with smart meters being a necessary step towards the introduction of time-of-use differentiated electricity tariffs. Smart grids will enable better management of consumption and the integration of more locally produced renewable energy and ultimately reduce energy dependency and greenhouse gas emissions," said Cristina Pereteatcu, State Secretary at the Ministry of Energy.

The smart metering system will use PLC (Power Line Communication) technology, which uses power lines and the services of electronic communication operators, to transmit data to the central unit. The centralized data will be transmitted to a control system where it will be possible to analyze the evolution of consumer behaviour in relation to energy prices and develop informed policies.

According to Sergiu Petrea, Director of Premier Energy Distribution, "these meters provide the distribution operator with technical information that will allow better monitoring of energy flows, identification of commercial losses, improvement of the quality of distribution services provided, reduction of operational costs with an impact on electricity distribution tariffs".

The intelligent data logging system involves not only access to accurate data, but also monitoring of power quality parameters such as voltage, current, other necessary data that the customer can see through an application at any time, explains Viorel Corbu, technical director of RED Nord.

In the Bălţiul Nou neighborhood, RED Nord has combined the installation of smart meters with work to replace overhead power lines with underground networks, which contributes to increased safety and consumer protection.

The data collected under the programme will be used to develop new policies for more efficient consumption. The UNDP and EU are testing several technical solutions that can be extended to the whole country, including

the pilot programme for the installation of smart meters, and the "Rabla for household appliances" programme to replace energy-guzzling appliances with energy-efficient ones.

More than 50% of meters in the EU are smart, which has reduced commercial consumption by up to 15% and technical consumption by 5%. Smart grids are driven by the need to minimize consumption worldwide to curb resource waste and global warming.

The Ministry of Energy launched on June 13, 2023 a pilot program for the installation of smart meters for electricity. The pilot programme is part of the national plan for digitalization of the energy sector and is being implemented with the support of the United Nations Development Programme in Moldova and other development partners.

"With this pilot program, we are starting a broad process of digitization of the energy sector, smart meters are also a necessary step for the introduction of differentiated electricity tariffs according to the time of consumption. The time of low energy prices is over, so in order to reduce costs, we need to consume energy intelligently," said Victor Parlicov, Minister of Energy.

The data gathered under the program will be used to develop new energy efficiency policies. The UNDP is testing several technical solutions that could later be scaled up across the country, including a pilot program to install smart meters and the EU-funded "Rabla Appliances" program to replace energy-guzzling appliances with energy-efficient ones.

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