



User-Centred  
Energy Systems

# Energy Sector Behavioural Insights Platform

## Status Report

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## Contents

<b>1. Progress over past 6 months.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Deliverable 1.1: Summary briefing note .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Deliverable 1.2: Environment scanning full report .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Emerging key findings from the report <i>Behavioural insights for demand side energy policy and programmes. An environment scan</i> .....	2
<b>Deliverable 1.3: Environment scan workshop.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Other .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Objectives for the next 6 months .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Ideas for new work in Phase 2 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Issues.....	3
Approaches .....	4
<b>4. Finance.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Matters for the ExCo.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Participating countries.....</b>	<b>6</b>

## 1.Task summary

The Energy Sector Behavioural Insights Platform brings together government policy makers and other experts to share knowledge and experiences applying Behavioural Insights to energy policy.

The overall aim of the Platform is to improve the efficacy of demand-side energy policies by ensuring that human behaviour is accounted for at all stages of the policy cycle. Other objectives include to:

- Build an international network of energy policy makers that use or are interested in using BI for energy policy.
- Identify benefits and drawbacks of different institutional governance models for incorporating BI into policy: From in-house models (including both centralised models placing BI teams within a central agency and decentralised models which embed BI teams in line agencies), to outsourced models.
- Share lessons learned and identify best practices, from inside and outside the energy sector, in applying BI throughout the policy cycle and in both advanced and emerging economies.

## 2.Progress over past 6 months

### Deliverables: Environment scan full report and policy brief

- The Platform published its first report “Behavioural insights for demand-side energy policy and programmes”. The report discusses the behavioural factors acting as barriers to energy saving behaviours, to the uptake of energy efficient, clean energy technologies and of sustainable mobility options. Analysing over 40 case studies, it provides a snapshot of how energy ministries, regulatory agencies and utilities can leverage behavioural insights to design and implement more effective energy policies and programmes.
- The first UsersTCP policy brief, distilling lessons from the report, was published in March 2021.

### Outreach

- In October 2020, the Platform contributed to the UsersTCP Academy webinar series by presenting key insights from the environment scan.
- In December 2020, Platform members contributed to discussions involving behavioural insights practitioners, energy policy makers and utility professionals through a panel session titled “Applying Behavioural Insights to Energy Efficiency Policies and Programs: Where Do We Stand?” at the Behavior, Energy and Climate Change conference.
- For the time being, an in-person workshop has not been planned due to the public health context.

## Membership

- New Zealand joined the BI Platform and already joined a meeting with national experts.
- Japan's METI has signalled interest in joining the UsersTCP and specifically the BI platform. Discussions are ongoing.

## Covid-19 impacts

Covid-19 has not had a major impact on the timing of Phase 1 deliverables. However, the need to maintain social distancing has prevented the holding of an in-person workshop on the results of Phase 1 and to gather ideas for phase 2. National Experts have provided ideas for Phase 2 electronically and through online meetings. The team also plans on gathering inputs on Phase 2 from the broader community through the upcoming session at the BEHAVE conference in April.

The absence of an in-person workshop has contributed to a budget surplus, which the IEA is putting towards a Phase 2 (See Finance section below).

## 3. Plan for Phase 2

In consultation with the group of National Experts, the following deliverables have been set for Phase 2:

### **Deliverable 1: Toolkit for applying BIs to demand-side energy policy**

A toolkit will be developed for policymakers to encourage a mainstreaming of BIs throughout all stages of the energy policy process rather than their sporadic application as an “exceptional” approach.

By end 2021, the toolkit will be delivered through the publication of report (or series of articles - exact format to be determined) comprising a set of **guidelines for policy makers to apply behavioural insights** to demand-side energy policy, which:

- Identifies the **potential entry points for applying BIs at all stages of the policy cycle**: (design, implementation and communications, monitoring and compliance). For example:
  - At the design stage: what behavioural changes are required to achieve the specific policy objective? What are the behavioural barriers that impede widespread change? What policy interventions could be most effective to overcome behavioural and other barriers to change (i.e. considering country context, sectoral characteristics, policy objective, etc.)?
  - On communications: how to better engage the public in the clean energy transition? How to increase understanding, awareness, participation and support of policy initiatives?
- Includes a **“Behavioural Diagnostics Checklist”** (Checklist), a tool for identifying and understanding the relative importance of behavioural barriers preventing energy

consumers from taking up energy-saving behaviours or investment alongside structural and financial barriers, when planning and designing demand-side energy policy.

Alongside the Checklist, the report will provide other **practical tools** to help policymakers apply BIs in the energy policy process, which communicate in a user-friendly format (e.g. flowchart, checklist or a combination) the main questions/actions a policymaker should be asking/taking across the policy lifecycle, specific to designing and implementing an *energy* policy.

The guidelines will also include illustrative examples of concrete BI applications to policies (also building upon case studies gathered through [previous work of the Platform](#)) and will be enriched through workshops and/or interviews with policy makers and BI practitioners working with government.

### **Deliverable 2: Outreach events**

A series of outreach events will be organised throughout Phase 2 with the following aims:

- Disseminating the Guidelines and other Platform work. Possible (complementary) formats:
  - Webinars with presentation + roundtable, also in the context of the [UsersTCP Academy](#) webinar series.
  - Relevant conferences (e.g. conferences on behavioural insights such as BX, BECC, BEHAVE; conferences on energy issues such as the International Energy Workshop).
  - A short online course (MOOC).
- Community building, connecting energy policy makers and BI experts, particularly bringing on board countries that are not yet “front-runners” in BI applications to policy, possible mentorship scheme (experts / beginners).
  - Possible format: interactive workshop, online or in person according to public health conditions.
- In a second phase, discussing successes and challenges in the application of the Guidelines.
  - Possible format: preferably an in-person workshop in the second half of 2022.

### **Deliverable 3: Work programme development**

In consultation with the group of National Experts, proposals of work for the Platform to focus on in 2022 and beyond will be presented in the second half of 2021.

Conversations during Phase 1 have highlighted that while there is clear interest in continuing *community building* (also with an effort on possibly developing trainings), there could be merit in undertaking *primary research* in understudied questions/topics (e.g. long-term impact of behavioural interventions; cross-cultural differences in impacts of behavioural interventions).

## 4. Recruitment of a new Task Leader

The BI Platform has finalised recruiting a new Task Leader (Operating Agent) to replace Elisabetta Cornago and Jeremy Sung of the IEA and deliver on these tasks over the period 2021 – 2022 (with possible extension beyond 2022).

UK-based firm The Behaviouralist, has been selected as the new Task Leader, following a call for proposals held in March. A brief was provided to ExCo members separately from this report, seeking agreement on the new appointment prior to the April ExCo meeting.

The Behaviouralist will commence work as soon as the ExCo confirms their successful appointment, with a transition period during which the IEA will handover key documents, contacts, etc.

## 5. Finance

Australia, Ireland, Switzerland and The Netherlands each committed €20,000 to cover Phase 1, with the United Kingdom contributing €10,000. Total, commitments for Phase 1 were €90,000. Australia, Ireland, Switzerland and the UK have already made their contributions, and the Netherlands recently confirmed it will make a €20,000 contribution.

Of the €90,000 committed by participating countries for Phase 1, the IEA spent €80,000 on staff costs, and has provided staff time pro bono to coordinate the procurement of a new Operating Agent to run Phase 2 of the Annex. This leaves a surplus of €10,000.

As Ireland has provided €10,000 for Phase 2, which has already been paid in full, combined with the surplus funds, there is now €20,000 available for the first down payment to the new Operating Agent. These funds will be held by the UsersTCP Secretariat until payment to the new Operating Agent is required.

Countries will need to discuss how they will co-finance Phase 2, which, based on the quotes provided by the new Task Leader, is likely to cost between €83,000 and €90,000, depending on the exact design of the programme of work.

Additional costs may be needed if the Executive Committee opts to develop an online training course (MOOC), which the Expert Group has suggested could be a possible deliverable to amplify outreach of the Platform.

### Summary of Phase 1 expenditure and budget for Phase 2

Description	Amount
Budget for Phase 1	€90,000
IEA costs	-€80,000

Phase 1 surplus from not holding in-person workshop and providing pro-bono staff time for procuring new Operating Agent	+€10,000
Budget Currently available for Phase 2	€20,000

## 6. Matters for the ExCo

Recommend the ExCo:

- Approve the Task Status Update Report.
- Indicate capacity to contribute financial resources to fund Phase 2.

## 7. Participating countries

Australia, Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Switzerland.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

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