

786 / To What Extent the Grand Lyon Metropole can harness the Smart Meter Project towards the Governance of Territorial Climate Energy Plan (PCET) Study case: Smart Electric Lyon project initiated by EDF [French Electric Utility Company]

Panel : The Data/Sensor Revolution and Public Policy

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ABSTRACT

In 2012, EDF officially launched smart meter experimentation project in Lyon Metropole area. The project established a consortium named Smart Electric Lyon (SEL) brought in around twenty industrials in energy sector, electrical home automation, information and communication, and supported financially by ADEME (the French environment and energy agency).

Technically, the main purpose of SEL is to bring the solutions that are being tested using a new smart meter equipment sensor named “Linky” installed in 25,000 homes and 100 businesses. SEL offers information services, technical solutions, and new tariffs to help the consumers to better manage their daily electricity consumption, which are associated with Linky.

These new advanced features involve the emergence of a new type fine-grained data of customers’ energy consumptions at the level of households or industrial units which is captured automatically by sensor Linky in a real time basis. The data is bi-directionally unfolded and communicated in order to be available for public and private urban managers and also for the customers themselves. In doing so, sensor Linky establishes new data sources beyond traditional methods, censuses, questionnaires, and registries [Desroisiers, 1993], frames what many authors called “data revolution” [Kitchin 2014, Townsend 2013, Cukier and Mayer-Schoenberger 2013] which allows both the traceability and the interoperability of the very fine-grained data of people pattern behaviors [Boullier 2015, Lupton 2014].

Thus, this paper aims principally to determine the consequence of the Big Data Revolution in the daily practice of political and administrative systems. But, first and foremost we tend to apply this leading question within the urban governance issues, whether such big data revolution promotor like SEL could possibly employed as an instrument for the urban managers (notably in the PCET program of Grand Lyon) as enlightened by Margetts and Hood as “detector and effector” of urban governance in the digital era [Margetts & Hood, 2013].

A profound and intense observations, which are empirically conducted closely within the Grand Lyon authority, SEL consortium, its instigators, and its first enforcers, had been constituted as our primary source to construct this paper. A cross-actors investigation allow us to grasp the dynamic of SEL involvement in the industrial and also public governance. It is completed by documentary analysis, and ethnographic sequences of observations notably realized within the showroom of SEL.

The results of our research shows that Grand Lyon possesses an auspicious ecosystem for the private sectors like EDF to promote smart meter project. SEL has been seen as a successful achievement bearing in mind that SEL has currently become a national standard reference of smart meter. It is a powerful instrument for EDF in respect of market electricity liberalization and a means to readjust the company’s market strategy. For the Grand Lyon, the impact of big data revolution to their political practices is still vague, as incorporating the systems to PCET policy remains the subject of power struggle between Grand Lyon and the existence of multi-layers’ stakeholders, public, private, and intra-national agencies.

Keywords: Lyon ecosystem, SEL, Linky, PCET, Data Revolution, Urban governance