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German PV producers: you will pay more for self-used solar electricity!

The Bundesnetzagentur (BNA) has published a guide to explain the future taxes that must be paid by individual producers and consumers of electrical energy. This provisional “[Leitfaden zur Eigenversorgung](#)” is devilishly complicated, as many combinations of producing/consumption and storage are possibly.

1. The big principle

In the future every consumer will have to pay an EEG tax, even if he consumes the electricity that he produces with his roof-mounted panels. Until now he paid for his own electricity about 20 (Euro per kWh, to be compared with about 30 cents that the ordinary consumer has to pay. This will change in the future (in three increasing steps: up to end of 2015, 2016 and from 2017 on). The following diagram gives this situation:

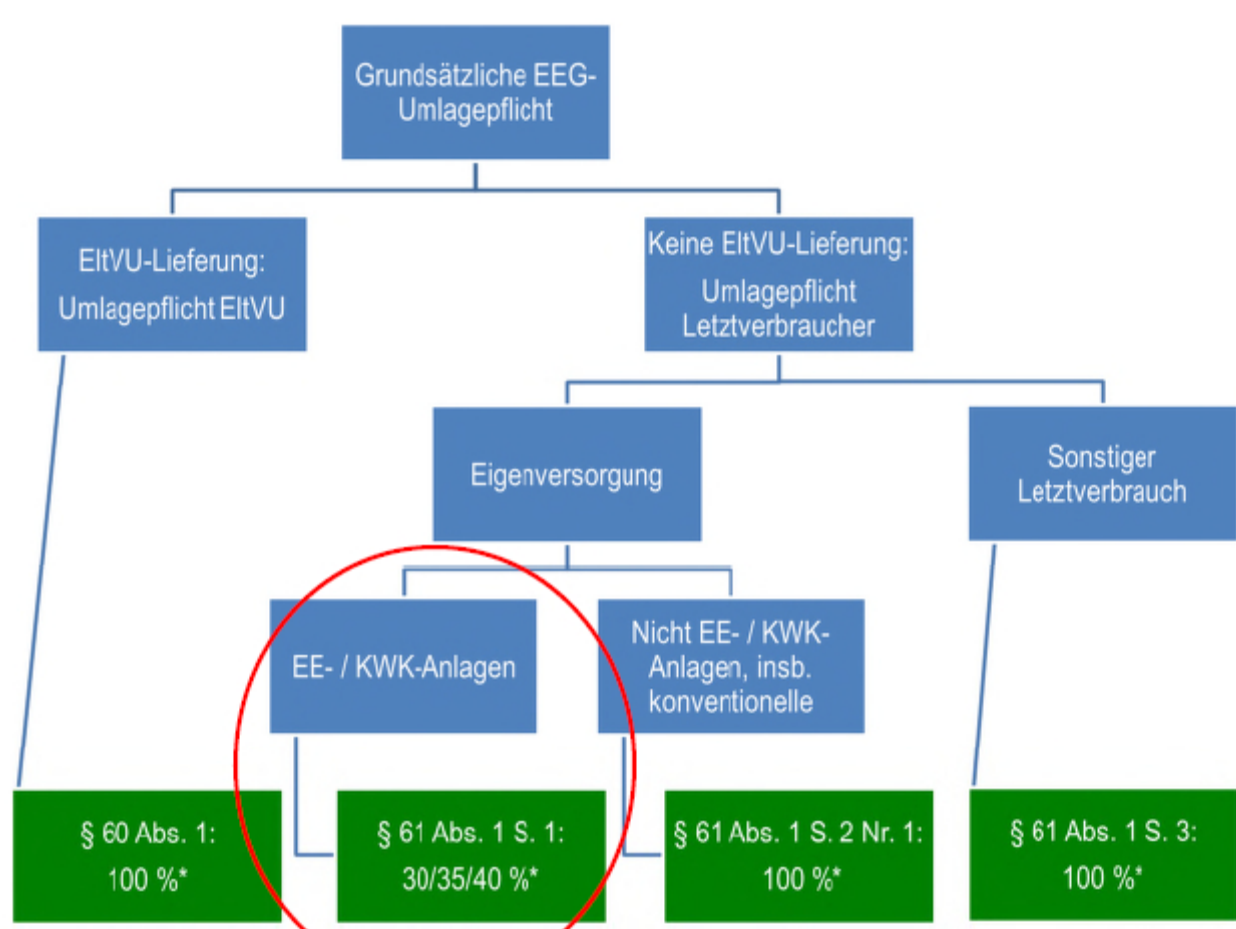


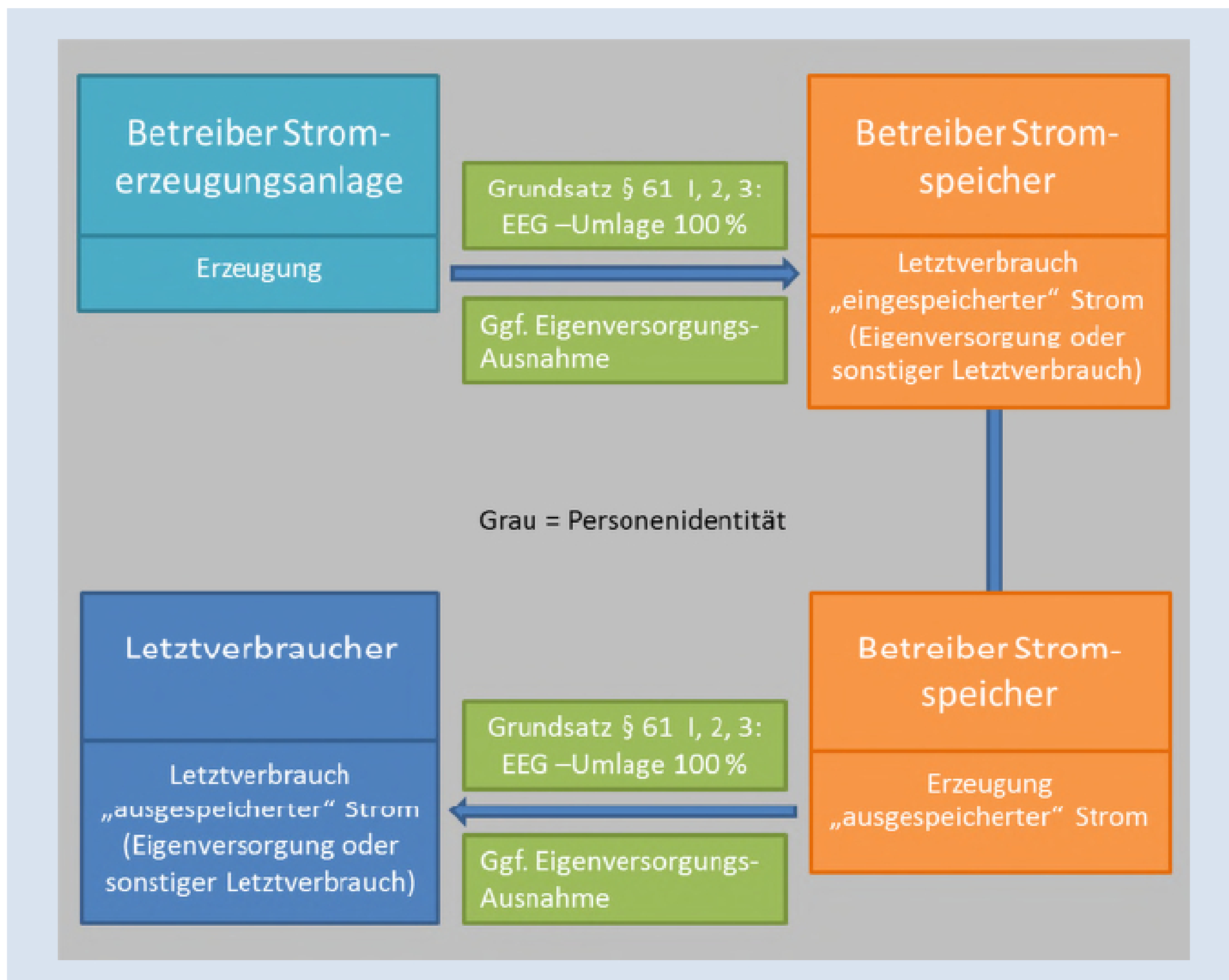
Abbildung 1: Grundsätzliche EEG-Umlagepflichten (* diese grundsätzlichen Pflichten können aufgrund der in der folgenden Abbildung aufgeführten Ausnahmen im Einzelfall vollständig oder anteilig entfallen)

The red circle shows that (starting 2017) the producers of solar, wind or biomass electricity (EE) and those of high efficient combined heat and power installations (KWK) will only have to pay 40% of the EEG tax, all others the full amount (100%)

2. The difficult problem of electricity storage

The new “Leitfaden” considers electricity storage installations as consumers and producers; as a consumer they must pay the tax, and as producers they must ask their clients to do it.

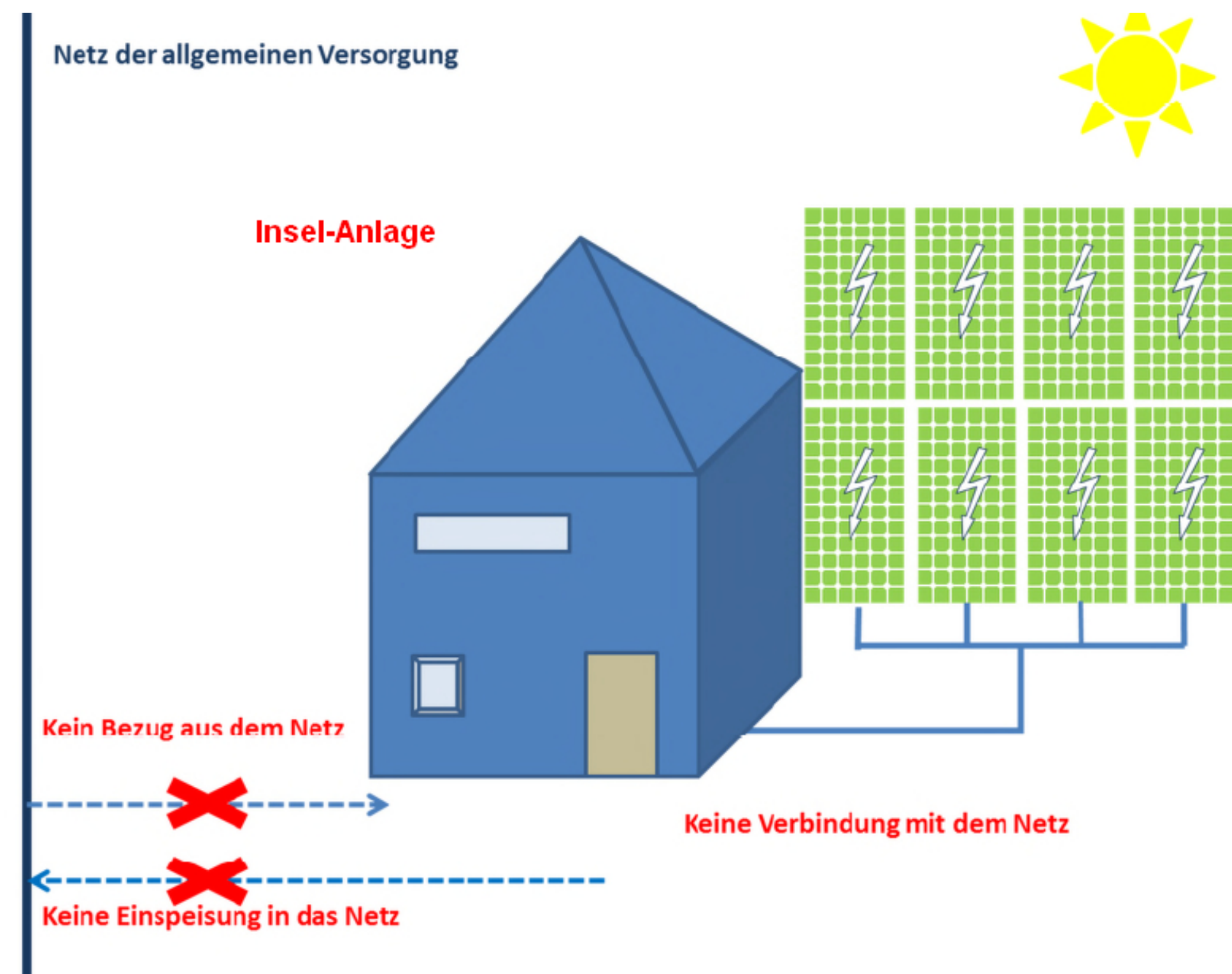
Let us just consider the situation where a PV owner uses his own solar electricity, and adds battery storage to smooth-out the variable production:



Normally, he would have to pay two times: first to store, and then to use! The Leitfaden remarks that this would be rather idiotic, so one of the two taxes vanishes. The 100% amount will change to 40% if the electricity is produced by renewables. This is the minimum amount that must always be payed!

3. The zero-tax exceptions

A couple of exceptions exist: the first is the “island” situation shown in the next figure:



Here you have a consumer whose house is completely cut off from the grid, and must never (even for 15 minutes!) connected back to that grid. His electricity is exclusively renewable, and he may not up it with some other means (as a diesel generator) when the quantity is insufficient. This consumer will pay no tax. But remember: a single kWh coming from outside during the year means he will be put back at the 40% tax level for the full year!

If this user has a one-way connection to the grid, so he might deliver eventual excess renewable electricity to the grid (but never the other way round!) and not asking for the usual renewable subsidy, zero tax also applies.

Very small renewable installations (de-minimis installations), with less than 10 kW capacity and less than 10 MWh annual energy production will also be exempt from the tax.

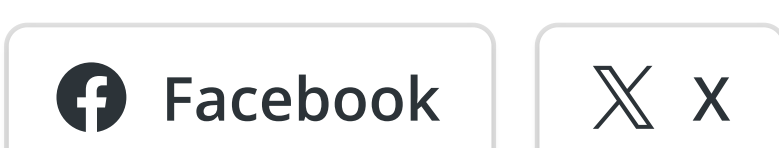
4. Storage

The only system of storage that will be treated lightly is the pass-through storage system: the owner takes electricity from the grid, stores it and delivers the same quantity later on. Actually he puts his storage batteries in the hands of an external provider who manages storage and retrieval. This owner will not have to pay for that electricity that transits through his batteries (difficult to see it otherwise!)

5. Conclusion

As said at the start, the “Leitfaden” shows a devilishly difficult future world, and one where tricks and poor morality will blossom, as control and management also will be far from easy (even with smart meters). I guess many PV owners will not take lightly that they will have to pay higher taxes on their home-grown electricity they consume!

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