



13th meeting of the Citizens' Energy Forum (Dublin Forum)

Online, 8-9 December 2021

CONCLUSIONS

On Energy prices, fit for 55 package and consumer trends in a decarbonised, digitalised, integrated system.

The Forum:

- Highlights that citizens have the potential to be key drivers of the just energy transition, stimulating governments and legislators in their policy decisions. Consumer centric energy transition should in turn allow all consumers to have access to affordable and sustainable energy. A clean energy transition that is not fair cannot succeed.
- Encourages policy-makers and public authorities to support consumers in investing in energy efficiency measures, renewable energy, electro-mobility, either individually or collectively through energy communities, as well as engaging with the energy market by switching supplier, engaging in collective switching schemes to leverage, and consulting comparison tools to navigate the market to find the most suitable and greener offers.
- Recognises the crucial importance of education, access to simple information and well-designed digital tools to enable consumers to make informed decisions. One-stop shops with dedicated energy advisors can act as facilitators for citizens and communities, providing support and guidance on practical solutions and financing options. Financial barriers should be alleviated for consumers and financial support including green loans, social housing, and partnerships provided to allow them to participate.
- Highlights that energy poor and vulnerable consumers should not only be protected from increased prices, but also supported to manage their energy use and spending through structured and permanent solutions. This includes ensuring access to energy efficiency measures and renewable energy production installations. Measures to improve energy performance of buildings are particularly key in addressing the roots of energy poverty. A ban on disconnection during winter should be adopted as a rule.

- Recognises the importance of the proposed Social Climate Fund to compensate higher costs for heating and transport and help finance such structural solutions and calls on local authorities, social housing companies, energy communities, system operators, suppliers and youth to take action on the ground and develop innovative business models which take into account the interests of energy poor and vulnerable citizens.
- Welcomes the Fit for 55 Package that puts an emphasis on protecting consumers in the district heating sector, deploys measures to facilitate private capital investments in energy efficiency measures and promotes the use of renewable energy in buildings and the integration of electro-mobility in the energy system.
- Recognises that legislation alone will not be enough. Increased insights on behavioural drivers and levers, as well as public dialogue, should inform public policy making, in order to more effectively incentivise consumers to engage in sustainable energy consumption and use.
- Recognises the need for reliable and clear information to boost consumer trust in green offers. A good consumer protection framework goes hand in hand with their trust in energy markets. Electricity bills of consumers already contain information on energy mix and CO₂ emissions. Similar rights should also be provided for gas and district heating and cooling consumers. A robust system of guarantees of origin should also be rolled out for renewable gases, underpinned by an ambitious taxonomy.
- Acknowledges that consumers need transparent and reliable information also beyond the greening of their buildings and other energy efficiency solutions, while avoiding information overload. The lack of reliable and relevant information at the point of sale is one of the main factors preventing consumers making green choices. Certain commercial practices are also leading to consumers mistrust and confusion.
- Acknowledges that differentiated approaches supported by fit-for-purpose digital tools, are required to match the desired levels of engagement of consumers in the energy market and offer flexibility to the market. This calls for inter-operation, as well as safe and secure information flows, along trusted value chains and among all relevant market participants and their assets. Accordingly, the Forum welcomes the development of the data interoperability implementing acts mandated by the Electricity Directive as well as the Digitalisation of Energy Action Plan as a way to take action to ensure that digital tools empower consumers in the transition.
- Acknowledges the importance of best practice and experience sharing, in order to disseminate and replicate consumer-centred sustainable actions across the EU. In this regard, the forum recognises the important role of local initiatives.

- Recognises the importance of acting at the local level against energy poverty with the actors who know best the realities on the ground and the various contexts; while ensuring that there is an enabling European and national framework to support and guide them.
- Stresses the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders, in particular consumer organisations, energy regulators, governments, ombudsmen, retail suppliers and distribution system operators to adequately inform and advise consumers about their rights. Calls on regulators to enforce those rights.
- Calls on citizens of all ages, social housing organisations, cities, towns and villages, and communities and businesses to take action and decarbonise their energy lifestyle.

Brussels, 9 December 2021