

Bringing the Internal Energy Market home to consumers

- Time to push the competitiveness of energy sector to deliver EU growth and jobs
- Regulators call for implementation of the 2020 Energy Customer Vision
- What's next? Customers remain at the core of CEER's 2014 work

Today's [2014 annual conference](#) of the Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER)¹, focused on "Bringing the EU Internal Energy Market home to consumers".

Time to push the competitiveness of the energy sector to deliver EU growth and jobs

Mr Borchardt (DG ENER) was joined by MEP Jerzy Buzek, ACER Director, Alberto Pototschnig and Monique Goyens (BEUC) in a high level panel which assessed whether the pieces are in place for the IEM to deliver benefits.

Summing up the High Level Panel debate, CEER President, Lord Mogg said:

"Europe needs reliable and clean energy at competitive prices. Regulators and EU policy makers recognise that it is time to push the competitiveness of the energy sector not only to bring the IEM home to consumers but also so that European firms can regain their global competitiveness and contribute to EU growth and jobs."

Regulators call for implementation of the 2020 Energy Customer Vision

CEER President, Lord Mogg, stressed that the focus now must be on implementing the [2020 Energy Customer Vision](#)², which CEER developed with stakeholders in 2012:

Pointing to the main findings of the ACER/CEER [Annual Report on the Results of Monitoring the Internal Electricity and Natural Gas Markets](#)³, Lord Mogg underlined that:

"Regulators' monitoring shows that Internal Energy Market is not yet delivering full benefits to consumers. Implementing the 2020 Energy Customer Vision can help make it happen."

A dedicated session in the CEER 2014 conference addressed distribution and the changing role of Distribution System Operators (which is an important focus of CEER's work in 2014). In the final session on consumers, demand-side flexibility (see CEER's recent [public consultation on flexibility](#)) and activating demand-side participation were considered key to re-thinking our changing energy markets.

What's next? Customers are at the core of CEER's 2014 work programme.

CEER will work closely with ACER on its post-2014 strategic initiative: "Energy Regulation: a bridge to 2025". The "[2025 Bridge](#)" paper explores the key challenges and regulatory responses between now and 2025 in gas, electricity and consumer issues. Flexibility, smarter demand-side, encouraging competition and empowering consumers so that they can be more active in the market are core parts of CEER's work in the coming period (see the [CEER 2014 Work Programme](#)).

In an effort to promote the visibility of women, CEER has aimed for (and exceeded) a 20% female speaker target for this event. For more on the international Women in Energy initiative⁴, see <http://bit.ly/ICERWomenInEnergy>. The new CEER logo and the [CEER 2013 Annual Report](#) were launched at the conference.

Brussels, 22 January 2014

Ends (see Notes for Editors)

Notes for Editors:

1. The Council of European Energy Regulatory (CEER) is the voice of Europe's national energy regulators. Its members and observers, from 32 European countries, are the independent statutory bodies responsible for energy regulation at national level. Visit www.ceer.eu.
2. CEER took an initiative in 2012 to build (with stakeholders) a 2020 vision that puts energy customers first. BEUC, the European Consumer Body, also backed our initiative from the start. The result was the [CEER-BEUC 2020 Vision for Energy Customers](#) presented to the November 2012 London Forum. The CEER-BEUC 2020 Vision appears as an Annex to the London Forum Conclusions. In addition to the European Commission, 16 key energy stakeholders have declared their support for the Vision (ANEC, CECODHAS, CEDEC, Cooperatives Europe, EDSO for Smart Grids, ENTSO-E, ENTSOG, ESMIG, EURELECTRIC, EuroCoop, Eurogas, GEODE, IGU, NEON, SEDC, UEAPME).
3. The ACER-CEER [Annual Report on the Results of Monitoring the Internal Electricity and Natural Gas Markets](#) presented on 28 November 2013, a 200+ page report, provides a comprehensive picture of the state of EU's IEM. It shows that consumers still have fully to benefit from the IEM. It covers retail prices for electricity and natural gas, access to networks (including network access by electricity produced from renewable energy sources), and compliance with the consumer rights laid down in [Directive 2009/72/EC](#) and [Directive 2009/73/EC](#). By producing a joint report, ACER and CEER aim to provide as complete an assessment as possible of progress towards the implementation of the [Third Energy Legislative Package](#), focusing on the remaining barriers for the completion of well-functioning electricity and gas markets in 2014.

Main findings in the Monitoring Report on consumer protection and empowerment:

- Definitions and conditions for universal service applied vary widely.
- Most countries have designated suppliers of last resort (24 electricity, 21 gas)
- There has been progress in shortening the time it takes for consumers to switch suppliers. The three week period for switching applies in electricity for most (23) Member States, less so for gas (18)
- Most countries have independent dispute settlement mechanisms in place (20 in gas and 25 in electricity)
- Most countries have a single point of contact (23 electricity, 22 gas)
- Measures to protect vulnerable customers also varies widely across European countries

Main findings in the Monitoring Report on retail market monitoring:

- There is almost unchanged electricity demand and a decrease in gas demand. Despite the continuing economic downturn in 2012, household gas prices in the EU rose by 10% and household electricity prices by 4.6%, leading to significant economic loss for consumers.
- Incumbents are still dominant, with most markets showing little competition. Barriers to entry persist in many national retail markets, thus hampering retail competition and consumer choice.
- Regulated retail prices (which can disengage consumers from switching and, if set below costs, can act as a barrier to entry) are still prominent (49% of household electricity customers and 46% in gas were still being supplied under regulated prices).

4. CEER is a member of the International Confederation of Energy Regulators (ICER). Through ICER, energy regulators worldwide launched (in October 2013) an initiative to promote the career advancement of women in energy. Why? Because women are under-represented in the energy sector, at management level and on the conference platform. The ICER Women in Energy Initiative has created a collaborative network for the benefit of women in national energy regulatory authorities, offering them training webinars, a mentoring programme and women networking events. ICER has set a 20% female speaker target for its members' main events. CEER is the first ICER member to take up this challenge. CEER had more than 30% females speakers (5/16 speakers were female) at its 2014 Annual Conference. See <http://bit.ly/ICERWomenInEnergy>

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