15th Citizens’ Energy Forum

9 November 2023

DRAFT AGENDA

Turning the energy crisis into opportunity: paving the way for a consumer-centric energy system

The 2023 edition of the Citizens Energy Forum will take place in Dublin on 9 November 2023. The event will be web streamed with the possibility for the onsite and online audience to engage through the interactive tool Sli.do.

The Forum will engage a wide range of local stakeholders, including NGOs, cities, communities and businesses, as well as national policy makers on lessons learnt from the energy crisis in terms of consumer issues and solutions, and the opportunity it presents to design a more consumer-centric energy system of the future.

The event will focus on citizens and the solutions they can access or put in place. It will take stock of what has been done during the energy crisis by local actors and citizens to better protect and empower household consumers and explore the building blocks for a more resilient energy system and future where all consumers can reduce and steer their demand, as well as access affordable renewable energy, including energy poor and vulnerable households.

Active participation at the Forum will be facilitated through Sli.do polls, citizen testimonies, hands-on informative and inspiring examples of consumer actions, and lively discussions in break out groups.

Back-to-back with the Forum, there will be two events for specialised audiences at the EU and local level, the day before and the day after. A closed-door Regulatory Roundtable on EU consumer policy on 8 November and the Joint Closing Conference of the Energy Communities Repository and Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub on 10 November.

9 November, Dublin - Ireland (GMT)

09:00 – 09:30  Welcome coffee

09:30 - 09:40  Introductory remarks - Mechthild Wördörfer, Deputy Director General for Energy

09:40 – 10:00  Opening speeches

Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy
Eamon Ryan, Irish Minister for Climate and Energy

10:00 – 11:00  Plenary session – Protecting consumers this winter and beyond

After a keynote speech on the upcoming Commission Recommendation on Energy Poverty and the Joint Declaration with stakeholders on enhanced consumer protection, this session will focus on addressing the issue of energy poverty and take stock of lessons learnt from the energy crisis to help consumers pay their energy bills.

Keynote speech on Recommendation on Energy Poverty and Joint Declaration - Mechthild Wördörfer, Deputy Director General for Energy
Moderator: Louise Sunderland, Managing Principal, Regulatory Assistance Project
Panel: Halina Jagsielska, Policy Analyst at the Young Energy Consumer Task Force of European Youth Energy Network; Monique Goyens, Director-General of BEUC; Annegret Groebel, President, Council of European Energy Regulators; Baiba Miltoviča, President of TEN Section of the European Economic and Social Committee

11:00 – 12:00 Plenary session – Empowering consumers to help manage their energy bills
The session will feature four innovative and replicable solutions that allow for household consumers meet their energy needs, access renewable energy for electricity and heating purposes, and control their energy bills.

Presentations:
- Issy Petrie, Saint Vincent de Paul, Ireland: Supporting people to meet their energy needs
- Benjamin Wilkin, Energy Commune, Belgium: Sharing electricity with energy poor households
- Tudor Drambarean, Alba Iulia Municipality, Romania: Implementing energy efficiency in social apartments
- Thomas Bobinger, VZBV Germany: Finding the best energy deal – variable versus fixed price offers

Moderator: Ruth Buggie, Sustainable Energy Communities and Smart Grid Programme Manager, Sustainable Energy Authority, Ireland

12:00 – 13:15 Lunch break

13:15 – 14:30 Multi-stakeholder breakout sessions

Audience will divide in smaller groups to engage on priority topics of today in a wider moderated discussion. Each workshop will feature 2 teaser presentations by a local stakeholder to kick-start the discussions around different sub-themes. Audience will be asked to provide reflections on the interventions of panellists. Online audience can participate via Sli.do in the most popular break out session.

Breakout session 1 – Unlocking citizen power: Balancing consumer autonomy and grid reliability in household demand-side flexibility
This session will explore the trade-off and complementarity between consumer autonomy over energy use and flexibility needs of the system by looking into the practical implementation, consumer preferences and motivations, as well as risks and rewards of demand-response options available to consumers.

Presentations:
- Ruth Hauber, Project Leader Stromgedacht, TransnetBW GmbH, Germany: Enabling the general public & industry players to participate in grid stabilization
- Peter Klemencic, Head of EU Grants and Projects Office, Slovene Consumers’ Association, Slovenia: Engaging citizens in flexible energy consumption

Moderator: Sarah Jane Jucker, Managing Partner, EPQ, Italy
Rapporteur: Karen Trant, Director of Customer Policy & Protection and Legal, Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Ireland

Breakout session 2 – A hitchhiker’s guide to renewable energy: Disentangling different models of energy sharing
This session will explore the wider variety of renewable energy sharing schemes looking into their differences and similarities, their benefits and risks for consumers, including low-income households, as well as ways to ensure alignment between consumer preference and energy sharing solution.

Presentations:
- José Queirós de Almeida, CEO, Greenvolt Communidades, Portugal: Energy sharing through micro-PPAs
Breakout session 3 – Reducing our dependency on natural gas: Improving energy performance of European homes

This session will explore how and under which conditions citizens can be collectively engaged in renovation and sustainable heating solutions to help increase energy performance of European homes.

Presentations:
- Gerald O’Halloran, Connectingcabra, Ireland: Citizens leading building renovations
- Petra Cakovska, Project Manager, Consumer Protection Society, Slovakia: Collective purchasing of heat pumps

14:30 – 14:50 Break

14:50 – 15:50 Plenary: Building a sustainable energy system of the future that works for consumers

Rapporteurs report back on the discussions in the breakout rooms and engage in a moderated discussion bringing together the building blocks that will shape the consumer-centric energy system of the future.

Moderator: Paula Pinho, Director for Just Transition, Consumers, Energy Security, Efficiency and Innovation
Panel: Karen Trant, Director of Customer Policy & Protection and Legal, Commission for Regulation of Utilities, Ireland; Kęstutis Kupšys, Vice-President of the Lithuanian Consumers Alliance and a Member of the European Economic and Social Committee; Vlasta Krmelj, Director at Podravje Energy Agency and Mayor of Selnica ob Dravi, Slovenia

15:50 – 16:10 Wrap-up and conclusion of the Forum

Aoife MacEvilly, Commissioner of Commission for Regulation of Utilities
Paula Pinho, Director for Just Transition, Consumers, Energy Security, Efficiency and Innovation