



Press release - 21-04-2016

Energy

## **Boost consumer power in the energy market, urges Industry and Energy Committee**

Consumers should be given more power in the energy market, said Industry and Energy Committee MEPs on Thursday. They recommend schemes such as collective buying, home power generation by households, better price comparison tools for everyone and making it easier to switch energy providers and tariffs. In a non-binding resolution intended as an input to Energy Union legislation to be tabled by the EU Commission, MEPs also call for EU funds for energy efficiency to better focus on energy poverty.

To enable consumers to play a more active role **on the energy market**, MEPs suggest:

- introducing new business models, such as collective purchasing schemes and innovative financial instruments aiming to help consumers to use more self-generation, self-consumption and energy efficiency tools
- reducing to an absolute minimum the administrative barriers to new energy self-generation, shortening authorisation procedures and promoting community/cooperative energy schemes, and
- setting up favourable and fair conditions for tenants and those living in apartment buildings allowing them to make more use of self-generation and energy efficiency tools.

### **Clear pricing**

MEPs also propose a series of ways to make energy prices more transparent:

- more frequent bills and easier to understand contracts,
- measures enabling consumers to compare different offers, even without internet access or skills, and ascertain whether they could save money by switching providers, such as:
  - independent, up-to-date and understandable comparison tools,
  - notifying consumers, "in or alongside energy bills about the most suitable and advantageous tariff for them based on historic consumption patterns", and
  - ensuring that consumers can change to that tariff, if they so wish, in the simplest way possible, without any termination fee or penalty,
  - developing dynamic pricing, reflecting the peak and off-peak periods of energy consumption, and transparent, comparable and clearly explained tariffs,
  - easy and timely access to the consumption data and related costs, and
  - developing smart grids and appliances that automate energy demand management in response to price signals.

### **Energy poverty**

Energy poverty - cases in which people cannot heat or use electricity in their homes at affordable prices - should be tackled at its roots, say MEPs, who call "for EU funds for energy efficiency and support for self-generation to better focus on energy-poor, low-income consumer."

"Well-targeted social tariffs are vital for low-income, vulnerable citizens, and should therefore be promoted", they add, stipulating "that any such social tariffs should be fully transparent."

### Next steps

The resolution is to be put to a vote by Parliament as a whole at its May II session. The recommendations will feed into upcoming legislative proposals for the future Energy Union.

#### Further information

[Profile of the rapporteur Theresa Griffin \(S&D, UK\)](#)

[Draft resolution](#)

[Amendments](#)

[Procedure file](#)

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