

Energy regulators strengthen regulatory collaboration across sectors to better protect consumers

- **CEER continues to prioritise consumer issues for the years ahead**
- **CEER consults on a draft Guide to protect consumers who buy bundled products**

At the [10th Citizens' Energy Forum](#)¹, which opened today in Dublin, Europe's energy regulators underlined the importance of energy markets delivering benefits for citizens. The Forum, held for the past 9 years in London, has moved to Dublin and is now dubbed the "Dublin Forum".

CEER continues to prioritise consumer issues for the years ahead

Reflecting the wide-range of consumer topics that CEER² works upon, regulators have a strong presence in the Forum sessions which cover issues such as the role of consumers, future-proofed retail energy markets for consumers, and new business models.

President of the Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER), Garrett Blaney, said:

"CEER is pleased to contribute to the Forum and be at the forefront of efforts to develop competitive retail energy markets in which consumers can engage and exert their choice. Some of our latest consumer-focused work includes our new public consultation paper on a draft Guide on Bundled Products, our work on distribution system issues and our ongoing work on making sure retail markets function well for consumers. Moreover, CEER's draft 3D strategy and 2019 work programme shows our commitment to prioritise consumer issues in the next 3 years."

CEER consults on a draft Guide to protect consumers who buy bundled products

Ahead of the 10th Citizens' Energy Forum, CEER launched a [public consultation on a new Draft Guide on Bundled Products](#)³ which seeks to protect consumers (across sectors) who buy bundled products (see the [CEER Press Release on bundles products](#)). Mr Blaney explained that CEER's hope is to work with sectoral regulators, consumer protection authorities, competition authorities and others through a CEER-led Partnership for the Enforcement of European Rights⁴ (PEER) on cross-sectoral issues such as bundled products and cyber security.

Dublin, 20 September 2018

Ends - see Notes for Editors

Notes for Editors:

1. The Citizens Energy Forum, an annual event organised by the European Commission's DG JUST and DG ENER, brings together consumer bodies, regulators, ministries, members of the EU institutions and industry market actors better energy market developments in the interest of Europe's citizens.
2. The Council of European Energy Regulatory (CEER) is the voice of Europe's national energy regulators. Its members and observers are the independent statutory bodies responsible for energy regulation in 36 European countries. CEER, based in Brussels, deals with a broad range of energy issues including retail markets and consumers; distribution networks; smart grids; sustainability; and international cooperation.
3. The [CEER draft Guide on Bundled Products](#) aims to better protect consumers who choose bundled products. It makes **10 recommendations for companies** involved in bundled products:

1. Simplicity for informed customer choices - getting it right.
2. Clear liability principles where there are multiple parties/contracts involved in the bundled product.
3. Signposting of the responsible (in-house or external) complaint handler in case something goes wrong.
4. Transparency is key.
5. On billing, the provider who sends the bill should be subject to appropriate consumer protection legislation and directly linked to the bundled services contracted.
6. On payments for bundled-only products, it must be clear in advance of signing the contract whom the customer pays and what payment method(s) may be used
7. Respecting good guidance principles for price comparison tools.
8. The right to information about the contract conditions.
9. No disconnection of essential services (e.g. energy) in the event of non-payment of another element (e.g. maintenance contract or insurance) of the bill of a bundled product.
10. No (or nominal) dispute resolution fee.

In addition, the Guide proposes **5 principles for regulators** overseeing sectors with bundled products

1. Establish rules in general consumer law governing bundled products across all sectors.
 2. Protect essential services.
 3. Strengthen the right to exit bundle products.
 4. Monitor bundles.
 5. Cooperate across sectors with relevant authorities.
4. The Partnership for the Enforcement of European Rights (PEER) is an initiative of CEER to enhance cross-sectoral and cross-authority cooperation at EU level to benefit consumers. PEER aims to bring together different regulators (telecoms, energy, water, financial etc.) and other authorities (e.g. Ombudsmen, Consumer Protection Authorities, Competition Authorities, Data Protection Authorities) to strengthen the enforcement of European consumer rights.



See the [PEER platform](#) (for case studies, guidelines etc.) on the CEER website www.ceer.eu

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