

## 13th Citizens Energy Forum

8-9 December 2021

### DRAFT AGENDA

#### **Day 1 – 8 December (hybrid - both virtual and a meeting room)**

*Chaired by Director Paula Pinho*

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Citizens Energy Forum will take place in a hybrid setting in Brussels. We expect citizens, citizens' interest groups, businesses and regulators to be present.*

*The structure of this year's forum will be slightly different. Day one will open with a plenary session followed by four parallel sessions which provide citizens the possibility to opt their favourite topic. This will allow for more room for citizen participation using Sli.do. During the breaks, we will play videos from different citizen centred projects under Horizon2020 and Local Initiatives to serve as a source of inspiration to the audience. Day two will be a full plenary in three sessions using a "TED Talk" like format. The Forum Conclusions will as usual close the event.*

#### **Brussels' time**

**10:20 - 10:30**

*Chair's opening remarks - Director Paula Pinho, European Commission*

**10:30 – 11:00**

#### **Opening session**

*Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy, European Commission  
Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications in Ireland*

**11:00 – 12:30**

#### **Plenary Session – Empowering citizens and managing the clean energy transition in a high energy price environment**

*The European Green Deal sets a clear path to decarbonisation and consumer empowerment. However, energy is also a basic right and hence affordability of energy needs to be ensured. The session will particularly look at immediate and structural measures to protect vulnerable customers against price hikes and to empower them to become actors in the increasingly decarbonised, digitalised and integrated energy system. The session will also look at how the existing legislation and the Fit-For-55 package help to protect and empower consumers across energy vectors and sectors. In addition, it will attempt to identify key consumer issues which require further attention in order for the energy transition to work, including building consumer*

*trust, engagement of energy poor and vulnerable households, protection of decarbonised heat and gas consumers, and digitalisation.*

*[The session will be interactive with Q&A from the moderator and the audience. The use of live poll via Sli.do is also foreseen].*

**12:30 – 14:00**

**Lunch break**

**Afternoon sessions**

*In the afternoon, four parallel sessions will allow to delve into some of the main themes dealt with in the Working Groups established as a follow-up to the 12<sup>th</sup> Forum in 2020. Participants will have the opportunity to opt for a session in advance or ad hoc. Parallel session 1, 2 and 3 will be structured around the main findings from the Working Groups' roundtables that took place during 2021 and were meant to feed into the 2021 Dublin Forum, followed by an interactive and in depth debate on key issues.*

*[The parallel and closing session(s) will be interactive with Q&A from the moderator and the audience to retrieve feedback on the effectiveness of existing and proposed consumer related EU policy as well as on the way forward. The use of live poll via Sli.do is also foreseen]*

**14:00 – 15:30**

**Parallel session 1 – How to strengthen consumer rights and protection in gas and district heating sectors?**

*This session will discuss how consumers can be protected in the gas, electricity and district heating sector. In the context of heating & cooling, it aims to identify good practices across Member States in terms of price transparency, consumer information, alternative dispute mechanisms, single points of contact and system planning. In this regard the discussion shall differentiate between protection needs of final users and final customers as well as highlight the technical specificities that limit the one on one mirroring of consumer rights for electricity consumers. For the gas sector, the discussion also attempts to identify good practices in terms of consumer protection and empowerment. In particular, the focus will be put on the challenges and opportunities the digitalisation and decarbonisation of gas retail markets will bring to consumers.*

**14:00 – 15:30**

**Parallel session 2 – How to engage energy poor and vulnerable consumers in the energy transition?**

*This session will focus on structural solutions to ensure access to affordable energy for energy poor and vulnerable customers, including*

*in the present high energy price environment. It will look into good practices that show how collective prosumer schemes and energy communities can help alleviate energy poverty by facilitating access to renewable energy and energy efficient appliances. Furthermore, it will look at how public authorities can steer building renovation schemes, energy efficiency measures, as well as the decarbonisation of heating and cooling systems in order to successfully target vulnerable households. In this regard, it will look at the pre-conditions, incentives and potential challenges to engaging energy poor and vulnerable households in sustainable energy action.*

**14:00 – 15:30**

**Parallel session 3 – How to build consumer trust in green energy markets?**

*The session will highlight the importance of transparent and correct information provision to build trust amongst consumers and encourage them to switch to a green market offer. The session will discuss the effectiveness of existing and potential legal and market instruments to provide information to consumers on the origin of energy, including guarantees of origin, green certificates, energy bills, green offers. The session will also identify gaps and measures needed to ensure the effectiveness of these mechanisms as well as the scope and reliability of the information for electricity, district heating and gas consumers. The session will also highlight the importance of energy communities to generate interest in and raise energy consciousness of the energy transition amongst consumers.*

**14:00 – 15:30**

**Parallel session 4 – How digital tools can activate consumers?**

*The session will look into how digital tools help engage and empower consumers in the energy market and explore the role of consumers in the digitalized energy system of the future. The conversation will center around challenges and opportunities of engagement through tools and use cases, to feed into the EU policy framework in order to incentivise the active engagement of consumers in the twin digital and green transition.*

**15:30 – 16:00**

**Break - A citizen's guide to participation in the energy transition, Part II**

*During the break, videos from different H2020 funded projects will play that will inspire energy savings and energy efficient behaviour for consumers in general and youth and energy poor households in particular.*

**16:00 – 17:00**

**Closing session – Bringing consumers to the heart of the energy transition.**

*This session will bring together the main findings from each of the parallel sessions and pour it into a coherent narrative that connects the dots between the different themes. Subsequently, a discussion shall take place between the rapporteurs on the potential synergies and trade-offs between decarbonisation, consumer protection and participation and ensuring no one is left behind. The session will formulate concrete recommendations and highlight best practices to the Commission and link them to policy instruments under the European Green Deal. In addition, the session will lay the ground for future work of the Working Groups by identifying issues worth further exploring.*

## **Day 2 – 9 December**

**10:00 - 10:10**      *Opening remarks – Nils Behrndt, Acting Deputy Director-General, DG JUST*

**10.10 – 10:20**      *Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice, European Commission*

**10:20 – 12:30**      **Plenary: How can I get involved in green transition?**

*This session will look into consumer and citizen engagement in the circular economy and in the green transition. In particular the session will explore how each of us can reduce our CO2 footprint and how we can individually and collectively engage in the circular economy. Personal and collective testimonials in three rounds can help feed creative ideas into designing the EU policy framework that in turn provides incentives for an active engagement of citizens in the transition.*

*[The session will be interactive with Q&A from the moderator and the audience to retrieve feedback on the personal situations and practices of consumers and how this can inform consumer policy-making at EU and national level. The use of live poll via Sli.do is also foreseen.]*

**10:20-10:50**      **Session 1 - What makes it so difficult for me to get started?**

*This session will feature a testimonial on what makes it so difficult to be a green and active consumer, even when you want to; insights in human behaviour to understand what makes us tick. Possibly in a form of interaction/dialogue between speakers.*

**10:50-11:35**      **Session 2 – How to decarbonise my energy lifestyle? This is how we did it**

*This session will feature two Dutch citizens explaining the process they went through to decarbonise their energy lifestyle. The session will*

*cover energy saving tips, collective self-consumption in a multi-apartment building, energy communities, electrical vehicle leasing, and electrification of heating and cooking.*

*This session will also feature how two National Consumer organisations (Test Achats, through “Green Consumer Power: teaming up for better deals”) helps consumers to buy and install solar panels & (VZBV, through “Energy advice by the German consumer associations: information, on-site checks, subsidies”) helps to green their homes, and a representative of the City of Lahti will explain how they give concrete support to consumers to save energy.*

**11:35-11:45**

**Break**

**11:45-12:30**

**Session 3 – How to find the most suitable offer on the energy market? This is how you do it**

*This session will provide hands-on information to consumers on available instruments that can help find the most affordable offer on the energy market. A representative of Spotty Energy (Austria) will present their price comparison tools; and a representative from Abassa la bolletta (Italy) will present their virtual platform that facilitates collective switching.*

*This session will also feature best practices in terms of innovative products and services provided by energy retail suppliers in order to inform consumers about available offers.*

**12:30 – 13:00**

**Conclusions of the Forum** – Paula Pinho, Director, DG ENER, European Commission), Nils Behrndt, Acting Deputy Director-General, DG JUST, European Commission.