

Engaging in retail markets is well worth the effort for electricity customers, EURELECTRIC tells Citizens' Energy Forum

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Competition in retail markets is progressively transforming the energy landscape, turning passive electricity consumers into active deal-seekers on a marketplace of offers that better match their lifestyles and needs. This is EURELECTRIC's core message to the Citizens' Energy Forum, held in London today and tomorrow.

*'Retail markets are changing: on the one hand they are becoming more complex, but on the other hand they offer more opportunities for customers to find their perfect deal. Power companies are interested in giving customers a positive retail experience. They are therefore increasingly offering new, innovative products and services that go far beyond the simple sale of electricity,'*said Marco Margheri, Chair of the EURELECTRIC Retail Customers Committee.

Mr Margheri was commenting on a new EURELECTRIC **report** on the fundamentals of the emerging smart energy system, to be presented at the Forum later today.

In particular, this smart system will allow end customers to make financial and energy savings by playing a more active role through demand response. Yet getting customers involved in demand response will require policymakers and regulators at both EU and national levels to step up and create an empowering framework. This includes phasing out regulated prices to show customers the value of becoming more active, setting up a secure, efficient, and transparent framework for data exchange, and unblocking market access for demand response.

*'Customers are the essence of our business. EURELECTRIC believes that retail markets that serve customers well must be based on three things: awareness, trust and choice. Power companies, policymakers, regulators and consumer organisations need to work together to ensure that these fundamental standards are met. In particular, customers should benefit from transparent bills that include a full breakdown of cost components, including those derived from renewables support schemes,'*Mr Margheri continued.

EURELECTRIC will also use the opportunity to underline the European power sector's commitment to the so-called RASP principles, a set of four principles developed by European regulators and consumer representatives that should shape the customer experience in electricity markets. They are: reliability, affordability, simplicity, and protection & empowerment. A second **paper** to be presented by EURELECTRIC lists numerous examples of how power companies and trade associations around Europe have already been implementing these principles in practice.

The Citizens' Energy Forum was established by the European Commission in 2007 with the aim of implementing, energy-efficient and fair retail markets for consumers.

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