

VOTTA WELCOME ADDRESS AND KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

BRUSSELS, 1 FEBRUARY 2017



Good morning and thank you very much for your participation to this event organised by Active Citizenship Network, the EU branch of the Italian NGO Cittadinanzattiva, which I am proud to represent here today. Cittadinanzattiva is a civic organisation with 38 years' experience, which is officially recognised by national and EU Institutions for its commitment to promote the civic point of view in the policy-making process ~~in the framework of public policies~~ with a high level of protection of citizens' rights.

Indeed, we have been realising initiatives, promoting policies and partnerships in the consumerist field for many years now, with the final aim of promoting a new approach to the consumers and users' role, where citizens do not just delegate their own responsibility to consumer organisations, but they are actively involved in the accessibility, quality and protection of services and products. The intent is to provide citizens with the right tools and methods of protection to enforce their rights, because we believe that taking actions is the best way to be a citizen!

Amongst the consumer policies promoted by Cittadinanzattiva, for sure the energy sector stands for a milestone in the organisation background, ~~as the first activities in this field date back to 1996.~~

In particular, our commitment is focused on pursuing European policies and priorities in the field of energy, establishing an effective framework of rules within the energy market, where consumers are perfectly aware of their rights and live in a more innovative and transparent market.

This short presentation was necessary to better explain why we have dedicated this conference to citizen engagement across Europe in the fields of sustainable and renewable energies.

As we all know, last May the European Parliament voted the Resolution on delivering a new deal for energy consumers ~~(2015/2323(INI))~~, which foresees a



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more active role of citizens in getting the goals of the new European energy strategy. Furthermore, in November 2016 the European Commission presented its “Clean Energy for All Europeans” package, a set of policy initiatives and legislative proposals covering - among other topics - energy efficiency, renewable energy, and governance rules, in which consumers are at the heart of the Energy Union. In future, all consumers across the EU will be entitled to generate electricity for either their own consumption, store it, share it, consume it or to sell it back to the market. These changes will make it easier for households and businesses to become more involved in the energy system, to better control their energy consumption and respond to price signals.

So, in a pragmatic way, which role can citizens play to contribute to reaching these EU goals in climate and energy issues in the coming years and decades? Between the development of crowdfunding and the introduction of prosumer concept, how should the European Institutions encourage citizens’ participation in this area? How can citizens, start-up, SMEs and Institutions cooperate together? What are the most significant successful experiences in Europe? What are their limits and potential? How to ensure adequate protection to the different market players?

Today, with the help of relevant panelists, that I thank in advance for their contribution, we will try to answer to these questions, starting from a concrete experience supported by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union.

Before leaving the floor, please let me express my gratitude first of all to the Member of the European Parliament Dario Tamburrano, who is hosting the event today, and who is an active member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy ~~here at the EU Parliament~~.

Apart from the European Parliament, today the EU institutions are represented by the European Commission DG Energy and DG Consumers. I would like to extend my deep gratitude to them too.



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Thanks also to the leaders of civic and consumer organisations who have accepted our invitation, and have come from Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. I appreciate a lot their participation, also because I personally work with some of them at the European Consumer Consultative Group, and I can say that we all hope to debate the emerging topics of this conference there too.

Last but not least, as always, I would like to thank my colleagues and all the staff of my organisation: Eleonora, Giuseppe, Bianca, Sonia, Daniela and Tiziana, who is our Head of Energy policy.

Many thanks for your attention and I wish you a fruitful meeting.

CITIZENERGY

Crowdfunding platforms and cooperatives both enable individuals to directly invest in sustainable energy, but it is difficult to get an overview of the possibilities. Citizenenergy changes all this. Made possible by European Union funding, Citizenenergy is the first platform to encourage cross-border investment in sustainable energy and the first to provide information on sustainable energy opportunities from both crowdfunding platforms and cooperatives. It reinforces the work of such organisations in financing renewable and energy efficiency projects, increasing their reach while promoting transparency. The Tripadvisor of our sustainable energy landscape, Citizenenergy is a valuable resource for individuals looking to get involved in the energy revolution. citizenenergy.eu

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK

Active Citizenship Network is one of the most widespread and flexible European networks, composed of more than 100 civic organizations. Established in 2001, Active Citizenship Network is a European network composed of more than 100 civic organizations. It is coordinated by Cittadinanzattiva, an Italian non-profit organization founded in 1978, with the main objective of promoting civic activism in the political arena and protecting citizens' rights. activecitizenship.net

