

CEER Citizens' Q&A

Guidelines of Good Practice for Trustworthy Green Offers and Consumer Protection Against Misleading Marketing (“Greenwashing”)

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1 What is the relevance for energy customers?

In light of the climate crisis, consumers have become more aware and mindful of the need for increased use of sustainable and climate-friendly energy sources, and a growing number of energy companies are including green claims (i.e. claiming that the energy is produced using renewable energy sources) when advertising their services.

In this new market environment, customers must be empowered to make well-informed choices about their electricity supply based on reliable and consistent information they can trust. To this end, green energy disclosure systems can enhance competition in the market by providing reliable information. Thus, electricity disclosure and its main instrument – Guarantees of Origin - are essential for creating a voluntary, consumer-driven market for renewables.

Following the publication of the Renewable Energy Directive and the proposal for a Directive on "Empowering the consumer for the green transition" by the European Commission, CEER has updated its advice on customer information on sources of electricity, first published in 2015.

2 How Does it Work?

The document puts forward a set of 11 recommendations for better marketing practices related to green energy contracts, also considering the relationship between the primary green disclosure system used in the industry (Guarantees of Origin) and renewable support schemes. These recommendations tackle the role and scope of consumer information, including comparison tools, energy bills, and various energy disclosure systems, including a labelling system and green claim verification schemes. It also considers the role of National Energy Regulators (NRAs) in energy disclosure, guaranteeing reliable information to end-customers.