

Bulgarian Minister of Energy Temenizhka Petkova said that Bulgarian households will be able to choose their electricity supplier on the liberalized market in 2020.

Minister Petkova said that the liberalization process was supposed to be completed a year ago, however, it is still ongoing and full market liberalization is expected in 2020. She explained that, possibly in the next regulatory period, market prices for household consumers will be introduced, stressing that it will not result in price hikes.

Bulgaria is one of the last countries in the European Union without a fully liberalized electricity market. There are still two types of electricity prices in use: prices on the liberalized market for large electricity consumers and fixed prices on the regulated market, which are determined by the Commission for Energy and Water Regulation (KEVR) and applicable for households.

In theory, all Bulgarian companies and households have the right to purchase electricity from the liberalized market, but in reality, it is very difficult for consumers to buy electricity on the free market. The incentives to do so are also quite limited, as the prices on the regulated market are always lower. Full market liberalization in Bulgaria remains a social and political issue, as price deregulation would not only increase suppliers' competition and give consumers greater choice but could also lead to greater price volatility, possibly provoking protests and strikes against a price increase.