

The European Commission (EC) will carry out an analysis on the Romanian energy market regulator ANRE's activity to see how it complies with the legislation as an energy regulator. The investigation is related to several issues with full liberalization of Romania's electricity market as of 1 January 2021. Due to the lack of information, many consumers received increased electricity bills for January. Households that previously were under a regulated regime are automatically switched to the universal service at one of the suppliers of last resort (Enel, Electrica, CEZ, E.ON) received much higher bills than in December. The bills were also higher compared to those received by residential consumers who managed to sign new contracts with suppliers under free market conditions.

The letter sent by the EC states that energy consumers must be informed as clearly as possible that they can change their suppliers, following market liberalization, and the authorities must take action in this regard. About 90 % of residential consumers did not know in December that electricity market would be fully liberalized from 1 January 2021. January inflation data show that the retail electricity prices rose by 18 % on average in January compared to December, on average. This added 0.8 % to the annual inflation, which rose by 3 % year-on-year compared to 2.1-2.5 % expected by the central bank before the issues with electricity market liberalization.