

Energy: I-Com, "Too many European companies still unprepared for the digital revolution. Only 40% of EU utilities have a cybersecurity strategy"

- *The I-Com report on the penetration of digital energy in Europe will be presented today in Brussels*
- *Finland, Sweden and Slovenia at the top of the I-Com index on the degree of companies' digital energy readiness*
- *I-Com data proves that only 40% of European utilities pinpointed a corporate strategy for cybersecurity, compared to a cross-the-sectors average of 32% and an average for the ICT sector of 62%*

Brussels, October 18, 2017 - Finland, Sweden and Slovenia are among the European countries where companies show greater readiness to use digital technologies. Italy is fourth in the ranking but the low level of IT skills of Italian citizens does not allow to fully take advantage of the current digital revolution. This is one of the main findings of the I-Com report "Digital Energy. Infrastructure, enabling technologies and the role of consumers", that will be presented today at the European Parliament in Brussels, to the presence of several European stakeholders from the EU institutions representatives and the private sector.

The study has been supported by Acquirente Unico, Enel, E.ON and Terna, and it has been edited by Stefano da Empoli, I-Com President, and Franco D'Amore, I-Com Vice-President and Director of the Energy Area. The think tank analysed the digital energy investments, which are expected to increase across Europe and worldwide, first, and focused also on the use of new technologies by companies and consumers.

I-Com has developed an index as to assess the readiness of the energy sector firms to the digitalization. The index is based on five variables: big data analysis; the use of cloud computing services; automated invoice delivery management; the use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems; the definition of a clear IT security policy.

The study shows that the Finnish energy companies are at the top of the European ranking (with a score of 100), followed by the Slovenian and Swedish ones, both scoring 81. Italy comes fourth (scoring 72), ranking the first among the large EU Member States, ahead of Spain (7th with 57), Germany (8th with 53) and France (9th with 51).

The evidence shows that 58% of the European utilities analyzing Big Data relies on sensors and smart devices as information source. Therefore, the Internet of Things (IoT) emerges as a key component in the company's competitiveness strategy.

Nonetheless, the study highlights two important issues.

First, the uneven access to the cyberspace by EU citizens. Northern Europe countries show indeed a low percentage of individuals who do not use internet (e.g. 2% in Luxembourg and Denmark), while the European average is 14% and some countries, especially Romania and Bulgaria, show peaks up to 30% and 33% respectively.

The second main concern is cybersecurity. I-Com data proves that only 40% of European utilities pinpointed a corporate strategy for cybersecurity, compared to a cross-the-sectors average of 32% and an average for the ICT sector of 62%. In Sweden and Finland, the 68% and 53% of utilities respectively have a cybersecurity policy, followed by Italy, where the percentage falls to 47%, Germany (44%), Spain (43%), France (41%) and United Kingdom (39%). These data stress the need for a European regulatory framework for cybersecurity.

"It would be useful to create a specific working group within the European Network and Information Security Agency (Enisa) focusing on digital energy," **said Stefano da Empoli, President of I-Com.** "Considering the large spread of IoT devices related to the energy sector, it is crucial to safeguard consumers through a European certification that guarantees high performance standards. This could bring greater long-term benefits to the EU companies by improving their competitiveness on the market. Consumers, who play an increasingly key role in the energy market, will be enabled to benefit from the digitalization process only if IT skills and awareness are increased."

"The digital revolution urges for a different decision-making and political approach. This is the reason why the European Commission should take the lead in the convergence process between ICT and energy by proposing integrated provisions and regulatory proposals", **said Franco D'Amore, I-Com Vice-president and Director of the Energy Area.**

"We believe that Europe is central in supporting business innovation and skills upgrade. The creation of a common European digital energy market could generate a strong demand for technologically advanced solutions and enable sustainable growth of a highly competitive "Made in Europe" products and services".

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