



# Customer protection and empowerment on energy market

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### **Agenda**

- 1. Protection of vulnerable customers
- 2. Corporate Social Responsibility
  - 3. Education and Information







### Legal obligation for protecting vulnerable customers and tackle fuel poverty in EU

The Second Market Directives (electricity 2003/54/EC and gas 2003/55/EC)

The Third Energy Package (electricity and gas directives)\*:

#### **Member States should:**

- ensure the necessary energy supply for vulnerable customers,
- ensure that there are adequate safeguards to protect vulnerable customers,
- define the concept of vulnerable customers which may refer to energy poverty
- introduce prohibition of disconnection of electricity to such customers in critical times
- ensure that rights and obligations linked to vulnerable customers are applied.
- take measures to protect final customers in remote areas.
- develop national action plans or other appropriate frameworks to tackle energy poverty in the framework of social policy or energy efficiency improvements for housing.
- provide benefits in social security systems to ensure the necessary electricity supply to vulnerable customers.



<sup>\*</sup>Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC

<sup>\*</sup>Directive 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in natural gas and repealing Directive 2003/55/EC





# Who is a vulnerable customer – problems with definition in UE including Poland

- There is a lack of definition of vulnerable customer in UE, also in Poland
- Freedom for establishing definition in national legislation.
- Customers who are protected in relations to suppliers on the basis of national law.
- Household customers, possibly small enterprises.
- Customers who can not settle the bill for energy because of many troubles
  - But not customers
  - who do not want to settle bills or forget about the required payments.





### INOGATE

### 1. Protection of vulnerable customers



### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

Dokument ERGEG – "Status review of definitions of vulnerable customer, default supplier and supplier of last resort"

Ref: E09-CEM-26-04, 16 July 2009\*

- 1. the term "vulnerable customer" is not commonly known in Europe
- 2. Support systems: economic and non-economic support system

### economic support system

	ELECTRICITY		G	AS
	Yes	No	Yes	No
AUSTRIA		X	X	
BELGIUM	X		X	
BULGARIA	X		X	
CROATIA		X	-	-
CZECH REPUBLIC		X		X
DENMARK		X		X
ESTONIA		X		X
FINLAND		X		X
FRANCE	X		X	
GERMANY		X		X
GREAT BRITAIN	X		X	
GREECE	X			X
HUNGARY		X	X	
IRELAND	X		X	
ITALY	X		X	
LATVIA		X		X
LITHUANIA		X		X
LUXEMBOURG		X		X
NORWAY		X	-	-
POLAND		X		X
PORTUGAL		X		X
ROMANIA	X		×	
SLOVAK REPUBLIC		X		X
SLOVENIA	X			X
SPAIN	X			×
SWEDEN		X		X
THE NETHERLANDS		X		X
TOTAL	10	17	9	16

Capacity Building for Sustainable Energy Regulation in Eastern





### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

### customer categories included in economic support system

A. All households with a defined low income
B. Senior citizens with a defined low income
C. All senior citizens
D. Households with children with a defined low income
E. All households with children
F. All households
G. Disabled persons with a defined low income
H. All disabled persons
I. Other

A. All households with a defined low income
B. Senior citizens with a defined low income
C. All senior citizens
D. Households with children with a defined low income
E. Disabled persons with a defined low income
F. All disabled persons
G. Other

ELECTRICITY	Α	В	O	D	Е	E	G	Ξ	
BELGIUM	Х							Χ	X
BULGARIA									X
FRANCE	Х								
GREAT BRITAIN	Х		Χ				X		
GREECE									Х
IRELAND	Х	Х	Χ				X		
ITALY	Х			Х					Х
ROMANIA	Х								
SLOVENIA	Х								
SPAIN		Х		Х	Х	Х	Χ		Х
TOTAL	7	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	5

GAS	Α	В	С	D	Ε	F	G
AUSTRIA	Χ						
BELGIUM	Χ					Χ	Χ
BULGARIA							X
FRANCE	Χ						
GREAT BRITAIN	Χ		Χ		Χ		
HUNGARY	X						
IRELAND	Χ	Χ	X		X		
ITALY	Χ			Χ			
ROMANIA	Χ						
TOTAL	8	1	2	1	2	1	2







### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

### Types of economic support system in EU countries

	Supply: specific regulated prices for certain consumer groups	Supply: specific prices for certain consumer groups	Network: a specific tariff for certain consumer groups	Other
ELECTRICITY	Belgium, France, Romania, Slovenia, Spain	Great Britain	Italy, Spain	Bulgaria, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland
GAS	Belgium, Estonia	France, Great Britain		Austria, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Romania

Spain/Italy

discount on the electricity network tariff;

Austria Great Britain Federal States' Heating Aid – special payments in winter times;
 suppliers offer a range of support incl. social tariffs, rebates, trust fund;

reat Britain – suppliers offer a range of support incl. social tariffs, rebates, trust fund; Government benefits winter payments;

Greece

- all prices are regulated including extra lower prices for vulnerable customers;

Ireland

- government subsidies to cover up to 2400 kWh units of electricity prices;

Romania

- financial benefits for heating (gas) for customers who have a defined low income;







### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

Non economic support system – protection against disconnection

In a majority of the countries there is a system protecting vulnerable customers against disconnection for both electricity and gas

	ELECT	RICITY	1	GA	S	
	Yes, protection against disconnection	No	Other	Yes, protection against disconnection	No	Other
AUSTRIA		X			Х	
BELGIUM	X			X		
BULGARIA		X			X	
CROATIA		Х		-	-	ı
CZECH REPUBLIC	X			X		
DENMARK		Х			Х	
ESTONIA	X			X		
FINLAND	X			X		
FRANCE	X			X		
GERMANY		X			X	
GREAT BRITAIN	X		X	X		X
GREECE		Х		X		X
HUNGARY	X			X		
IRELAND	X			X		
ITALY	X				X	
LATVIA		X			X	
LITHUANIA		X			X	
LUXEMBOURG	X			-	-	-
NORWAY	X			X		
POLAND		X			X	
PORTUGAL			X			X
ROMANIA	X			X		
SLOVAK REPUBLIC		Х			X	
SLOVENIA	X			X		
SPAIN	X				X	
SWEDEN	X			X		
THE NETHERLANDS	X		X	X		X
TOTAL	16	10	3	14	10	4

A. All households with a defined low income	E. All disabled persons
B. All senior citizens	F. Small businesses with a defined low income
C. All households with children	G. All small businesses
D. All households	H. Other

ELECTRICITY	Α	В	C	D	Ε	F	G	Н
BELGIUM				X				
CZECH REPUBLIC				Χ		Χ		
ESTONIA				Χ				
FINLAND								X
FRANCE				X				
GREAT BRITAIN		X	X		X			
HUNGARY								X
IRELAND		Χ						
ITALY								X
LUXEMBOURG				X				
PORTUGAL								X
ROMANIA					Χ			
SLOVENIA	X							
SPAIN								X
SWEDEN	X							
THE NETHERLANDS				X			X	
TOTAL	2	2	1	6	2	1	1	5

GAS	Α	В	С	D	Ε	F	G	Н
BELGIUM				Χ				Г
CZECH REPUBLIC				Χ		Χ		
ESTONIA				Χ				
FINLAND								X
FRANCE	X							
GREAT BRITAIN		Χ	X		Χ			
GREECE					X			X
HUNGARY								X
IRELAND		Χ						
LUXEMBOURG				Χ				
PORTUGAL								X
ROMANIA				Χ				
SLOVENIA								Χ
SWEDEN	Χ							
THE NETHERLANDS				Χ			Χ	
TOTAL	2	2	1	6	2	1	1	5



Finland - serious illness or unemployment

Italy - disabled persons with health safety equipments

Greece – senior citizens over 65 (gas), special telephone line for blind people

Hungary – customers in social needs

Portugal – medical equipment

Slovenia – possibility not to interrupt the supply of energy because of endanger life of health







### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

### customer categories included in non economic support system

A. All households with a defined low income	E. All disabled persons
B. All senior citizens	F. Small businesses with a defined low income
C. All households with children	G. All small businesses
D. All households	H. Other

ELECTRICITY	Α	В	C	D	Е	Е	G	Н
BELGIUM				X				
CZECH REPUBLIC				X		X		
ESTONIA				X				
FINLAND								X
FRANCE				X				
GREAT BRITAIN		X	X		X			
HUNGARY								X
IRELAND		X						
ITALY								X
LUXEMBOURG				X				
PORTUGAL								Χ
ROMANIA					X			
SLOVENIA	Х							
SPAIN								X
SWEDEN	Χ							
THE NETHERLANDS				X			X	
TOTAL	2	2	1	6	2	1	1	5

GAS	Α	В	С	D	Ε	F	G	Н
BELGIUM				Х				
CZECH REPUBLIC				X		X		
ESTONIA				Χ				
FINLAND								X
FRANCE	Х							
GREAT BRITAIN		Χ	Χ		Х			
GREECE					X			X
HUNGARY								X
IRELAND		Χ						
LUXEMBOURG				Χ				
PORTUGAL								Χ
ROMANIA				Χ				
SLOVENIA								Χ
SWEDEN	Х							
THE NETHERLANDS				Х			X	
TOTAL	2	2	1	6	2	1	1	5







### **European Energy Regulators CEER&ERGEG**

Document ERGEG – "Status review of definitions of vulnerable customer, default supplier and supplier of last resort"

Ref: E09-CEM-26-04, 16 July 2009

#### Main conclusions:

- EU countries different ways of supporting weak customers
- Majority of the EU countries do not have economic support systems for vulnerable customers, if there are such systems connected to low incomes
- There is no knowledge on the share of households receiving support (very often it is no Regulator competence)
- All countries have support system not specific to energy sector (social allowances)
- Some countries have regulated prices for vulnerable customers what is not recommended in terms of distortion of the market
- A majority of the EU countries have non-economic support system as a protection against disconnection

**COMPETITION IS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE FOR LOW INCOME CUSTOMERS** 







## Protection of customerspresent legal solutions

#### Regulation in Energy Law, secondary legislation and other documents:

- -- the process of supply tariffs' approval for household customers (the group G);
- -- special reasons and procedures to suspend supplies;
- -- possibility prepayment meters' installation;
- -- disputes resolving;
- -- controlling the quality of supply and customers' service standards;
- -- activities of the Spokesman for Energy Customers, who deals with complaints concerning irregularities in continuity and quality of supplied energy or requests for information constitute a reliable source of information concerning the condition of retail market.;
- -- free of charge switching suppliers grid codes,

### **BUT**

Poland does not meet criteria of the Second Electricity and Gas Directives (2003/54/WE, 2003/55/WE) in respect of regulation for vulnerable customers

Now we are facing the Third Electricity and Gas Directives (2009/72/WE, 2009/73/WE)







## Protection of customers – present solutions in Poland

### Regulation in Energy Law, secondary legislation and other documents:

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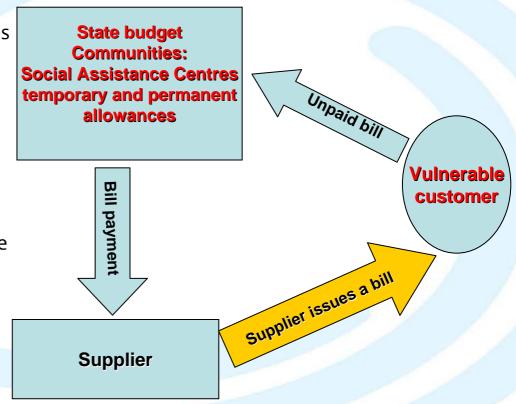


## Scheme for protection of vulnerable customers in Poland – ERO proposal

Special initiative of The President of ERO workgroup in the framework of activities of ERO was set up in order to deal with vulnerable customer problems and fuel poverty issues

The main aims of this workgroup were:

- to prepare a special programme for vulnerable customers' protection
- to prepare proposal of law changes for implementation the programme
- to indicate sources for financing vulnerable customers' protection system
- 31 March 2008 The final Report





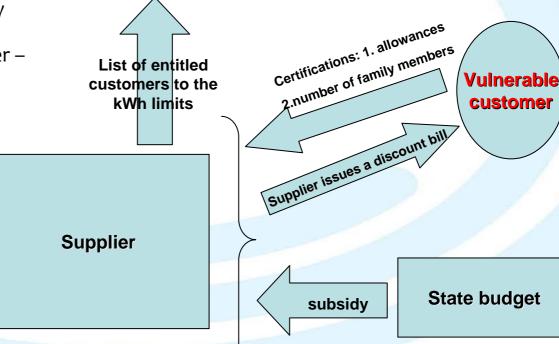




## Scheme for protection of vulnerable customers in Poland – The government draft proposal

- 1. According to the assumptions to Polish Energy Policy to 2030 the Ministry of Economy with cooperation to the Ministry of Social Policy is responsible for implementation the scheme for supporting vulnerable customers in Poland.
- 2. The draft amendment in the Energy Law is being proceeded.
- 3. Draft proposal vulnerable customer household customer entitled to get temporary/permanent allowance
- 4. 30% discount on energy price
- 5. 3 types of kWh limits:
- 900 kWh one person in household 1250 kWh – 2-4 person in household
- 1500 kWh above 5 person

State budget
Communities:
Social Assistance Centres
temporary and permanent
allowances

















### Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR):

- company help for vulnerable customers,
- with cooperation to communities

The most common forms of support applied by companies:

- installation of pre-payment meters;
- payment in instalments;
- back interests exemption;
- shifting the terms of payment;
- desistence from the debt collection;
- the special agreements with Social Assistance Centres







The President of ERO understanding for CSR strategy:

Ethical and environmental elements in business activity of energy companies focusing on effectiveness, transparency, honesty in customers contacts (setting tariffs, quality of supply, service), self-regulation, limited predominance

### Long-term benefits for CSR strategy:

- an increase for customer loyalty;
- better relationships with community, society, local authorities;
- development for company;
- an increase of good image;
- an increase of company value



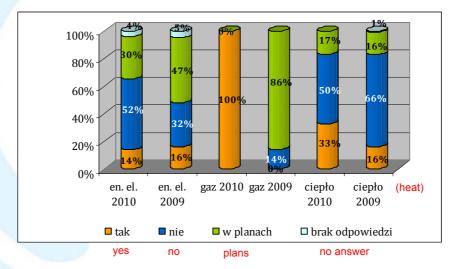




Special initiative of The President of ERO to conduct research on CSR energy companies activities

Final Reports on ERO website: 2009 and 2010

**CSR** strategy



### Conclusions

- 1. Companies interest in CSR moderate
- 2. Companies approach: charity ⊗image ⊗company benefit;
- 3. Big companies, international activities (international capital groups);







### Education and Information – main tools for empowerment customers in Poland

- -Special trainings organised by branches of ERO in all regions in Poland (different market actors, social assistance centres, consumer organisations
- Special website for customers "how to switch supplier" www.maszwybor.pl







### Education and Information – main tools for empowerment customers in Poland

- Special Call-center dedicated "how to switch supplier"
- 2010 ERO campaign Stimulating the demand side of Energy market promotion of consumer rights

Project was financed with Norwegian Financial Mechanism

### The Project consisted of 6 activities:

- 1. Outdoor campaign and "product placement" in tele-novel.
- a) 1000 billboards were displayed for two weeks twice from 16-31July 2010 and 16-30 September 2010)in main cities in Poland









### Education and Information – main tools for empowerment customers in Poland

- b) In TVP2 (polish public television) educational idea placement on switching energy supplier process was broadcasted in two following parts of the very popular series "M jak Miłość.
- 2. Training for senior citizens
  36 educational sessions were organised concerning the subject "how to switch energy supplier". The trainings took place in 16 voivodship cities, the whole number of participants trained was 1344. The participants came from e.g. third age universities, senior clubs, community homes. Each participant got a special



prepared (large print) leaflet.







### Education and Information – main tools for empowerment customers in Poland

- 3. Radio campaign.
  - The radio advertisement (duration time: 30 seconds) was broadcasted 110 times from 23rd August to 10th September 2010. The radio campaign will be continued in March 2011.
- Newspaper campaign.
   Sponsored article were published in newspapers: Gazeta Wyborcza 13 times,
   Polityka 5 times, Forum 6 times.
- 5. Small towns and countryside consumer campaign.
  - a) The two kinds of leaflets informing consumers about the possibility to switch supplier were printed type a) 448 000 of information leaflets for household customer under the title "You also can switch a supplier" and type b) 2000 of special edition leaflets for the senior citizens.
  - b) 40 000 posters were printed. The leaflets (type a)) and posters distribution started on September 2010. The leaflets were sent to 401 places (Marshals, Voivods and Customer Spokesmen). Posters were sent to the all communities in Poland.
- 6. Promotion of the campaign.
  - Over 50 conferences were organized promoting the right customers to switch supplier.





### Thank you for your attention

