

EUROGAS

CUSTOMER SWITCHING PROCESSES IN THE DOMESTIC GAS MARKET

**A Review by the
Gas Suppliers' Group**



The Review

Focus

- Domestic (household) market
- Customer switching processes

Brings together existing work on

- Key principles
- Main stages of switching process
- Approaches in different Member States
- Experience so far/lessons learned
- Customer protection and the supplier perspective



Key Switching Principles

- Maximising customer satisfaction/minimising confusion
- Effective mechanisms for controlling poor sales practices
- Minimising rejections, errors and process problems
- Fair and transparent procedures for process changes/improvements
- Switching process to be non-discriminatory and pro-competitive



Main Stages in the Switching Process

- Contract
- Verification
- [Objection]
- Processing
- Meter Reading



Switching Models

- Despite these common elements, models vary from country to country
- Variations due to structural differences in industry organisation
- Seeking to impose standardisation where systems are already (being) developed is not justified

But:

- Helpful if customer experience at Member State level is as far as possible similar for gas and electricity



Experience So Far

Experience has shown the importance of:

- Service level agreements, in particular with DSO
- High quality industry data
- Industry dataflows
- Transfer meter readings (use of profiles)



Customer Protection

- Eurogas Position Paper on Direct Selling to Household Customers
 - Clear information regarding services offered, prices, contractual conditions
 - Responsible selling, particularly where vulnerable customers involved
 - Gas suppliers should act promptly when problems arise



The Supplier Perspective

- In general, supplier and customer interests closely aligned
- Switching process to be simple, efficient and as cheap as possible to operate
- Balance between speed of transfer and proper process controls
- Processes to be reviewed in light of experience



Discussions with:

- ERGEG Customer Focus Group
- Eurelectric
- Others with interest in customer switching

