

PRESS RELEASE

“CUSTOMER SWITCHING PROCESSES IN THE DOMESTIC GAS MARKET”

A REVIEW BY THE GAS SUPPLIERS GROUP OF EUROGAS

Eurogas has published the “Customer Switching Processes Report in the Domestic Gas Market”, which identifies certain key principles that should be observed in the design and operation of customer switching processes and which offers an overview of national approaches. It brings together the work of the members of Eurogas’ Gas Suppliers Group on this matter over the past two years and covers Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Eurogas considers that the success of a competitive internal gas market depends, among other factors, on the *customer’s free* choice of different gas suppliers. An effective customer switching process is therefore considered as a pre-requisite to an effective gas market, and it is important that the design of a switching model recognizes and ensures that the switching operation should be as simple and as transparent as possible.

The “Customer Switching Processes in the Domestic Gas Market” report outlines across different countries the different customer transfer processes and the various stages in the process. It identifies a number of key principles that should be observed in the design and operation of customer switching processes:

- Maximizing customer satisfaction and minimizing confusion
- Effective mechanisms for controlling poor sales practices
- Minimizing rejections, errors and process problems
- Fair and transparent processes for introducing changes and improvements
- The switching processes have to be non-discriminatory and pro-competitive

Eurogas considers that provided any switching process meets these principles, there should be no reason to impose harmonization on systems already developed or about to be developed.

Eurogas affirms however that at the same time as focusing on providing customer satisfaction, the switching process should recognize the interests of *the suppliers*. Systems should be reviewed in the light of experience in order to understand how any issues can best be addressed and switching processes should be as cost-efficient as possible.

Eurogas will continue to monitor customer switching processes as markets become fully open and hopes this review can be the basis of discussions with the European Commission, ERGEG and other groups with interest in customer switching process.

Eurogas is the European Union of the Natural Gas Industry representing the European natural gas companies and national federations of 21 countries towards the EU, all other relevant international institutions and stakeholders.

For more information, please contact Simona Basiu at:
Avenue Palmerston 4, B-1000 Brussels
Tel: +32.(02).237.11.21
E-mail: simona.basiu@eurogas.org - Website: www.eurogas.org