

CEER

**Council of European
Energy Regulators**



Citizens' Energy Forum
Collaborative enforcement

Fostering energy markets,
empowering **consumers**.

Dirk Van Evercooren – Chair of the Customer Empowerment TF
London, 17 December 2013



CEER-BEUC 2020 Energy Customer Vision

- CEER and BEUC want to put **customers 1st** in the energy market
- This means giving consumers a **voice**
- Consumer organisations* can play a very positive role, **defending** consumer rights and **detecting flaws** in market functioning
- Regulators should try to **use this** to improve the regulatory process



* Broadly defined as any organisation or other body (e.g. interest group, trade union, charity, independent ombudsman, etc.) representing energy consumers or advocating energy consumers' rights



A well-functioning retail market for electricity and gas requires:

- A clear and effective **regulatory framework**
- An independent, competent and (if need be) powerful **regulator**
- **Active customers:**
 - ▶ both on an **individual** and a **collective** level



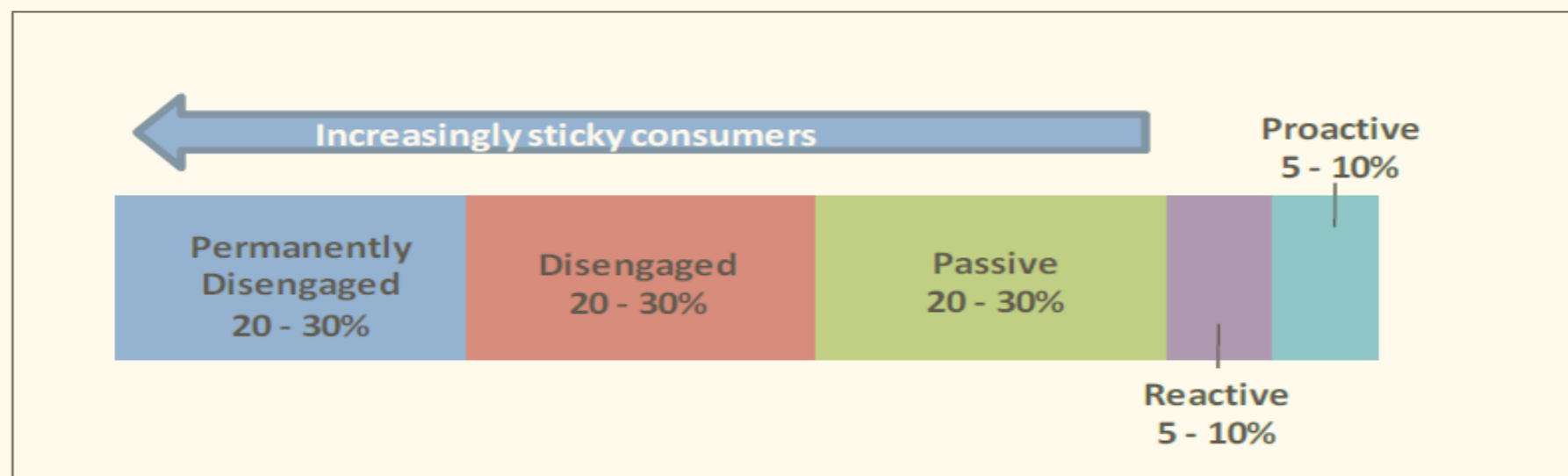
OFGEM's research on "Why don't consumers engage?"

Willingness to engage

- Sense of powerlessness as prices rise
- Dissatisfaction with suppliers
- Lack of trust
- Don't have time or inclination
- 'Status quo bias'
- 'Loss aversion'

Ability to engage

- Complexity
- Inaccessible language
- Low literacy and numeracy skills
- No access to internet
- In debt
- 'Limited consumer capacity'



Dare to compare!

In 2012, the Belgian government organised the “**Dare to compare**”-campaign, to help people find their way through the energy market by using a price comparison tool provided by the energy regulator.

In each municipality, people were assisted by civil servants to compare the offers of the electricity and gas suppliers during the month of September



Customer involvement

A well-functioning retail market for electricity and gas requires:

- That individual customers are **empowered** and **protected**



Spain: a PCT operated by the NRA



Comisión
Nacional
de Energía

COMPARADOR DE OFERTAS DE ENERGÍA

Encuentre la oferta
que mejor se adapte
a sus necesidades

A través de este comparador
podrá conocer las ofertas de
suministro de energía
disponibles en el mercado.

Por favor, indique el tipo
de suministro que desea
contratar:

- Electricidad
- Gas Natural
- Ofertas conjuntas



INICIAR

2011 Comisión Nacional de la Energía | Aviso Legal



Provide relevant information to customers

énergie-info particuliers
le site d'information pour les consommateurs d'électricité et/ou de gaz naturel

Dans mes favoris | Créer un lien vers ce site

particuliers professionnels

Notre service d'information consommateurs :
N°Azur 0 810 112 212
PRIX APPEL LOCAL

ACCUEIL | PRATIQUE | QUESTIONS/RÉPONSES | MES DROITS | EN SAVOIR PLUS

Rechercher OK

mes démarches

- Je déménage, j'emménage
- Je fais construire une maison
- Je résilie mon contrat
- Je souhaite changer de fournisseur d'électricité et/ou de gaz naturel

> Toute la rubrique Pratique

les offres

- Comparateur d'offres
Je compare les différentes offres d'électricité et/ou de gaz naturel
- Les fournisseurs d'électricité et/ou de gaz naturel
- Puis-je souscrire une offre au tarif réglementé après une offre de marché ?

> Toute la rubrique Pratique

mes droits

- Les obligations des fournisseurs
- Mes droits en cas de démarchage et de vente à distance
- Réclamations et litiges

> Toute la rubrique Mes droits

Le médiateur national de l'énergie lance une consultation publique et un appel à témoignages sur les modalités de facturation des fournisseurs d'énergie

- Vous êtes un consommateur d'électricité ou de gaz naturel : **Participez à l'appel à témoignages**
- Vous êtes une association, un acteur du secteur de l'énergie ou une autre institution publique ou privée : **Participez à la consultation publique**

Découvrez le **comparateur d'offres** Energie-Info, un nouvel outil pédagogique sur l'ouverture des marchés.

→ JE COMPARE !

fiches pratiques | Comment choisir une offre électricité et/ou une offre gaz naturel ? > Toutes les fiches pratiques

Actualités | Glossaire | Plan du site | Liens utiles | Contact | Mentions légales | Energie-mediateur.fr

Le site internet energie-info.fr est développé par la CRE et le médiateur national de l'énergie, en collaboration avec la DGCCRF et la DGEC.

COMMISSION DE RÉGULATION DE L'ÉNERGIE | Le médiateur national de l'énergie | République Française

Informative charts that can be printed



Customer involvement

A well-functioning retail market for electricity and gas requires:

- That consumer organisations can play an important role in the regulatory process, representing **energy customers' interests**



Regulatory tasks

The 3rd Energy Package assigns the **task of monitoring** the energy market to NRAs

- Market monitoring should be complemented by asking about customers' (and consumer organisations') experiences
- Developing better regulation should also be based upon **customer experiences**
- Need to **consult with consumer organisations** to ensure new regulation is efficient and effective

Ofgem's Consumer First Panel

- 100 consumers from 6 locations across GB
- Meets 3-4 times a year, membership changes annually
- Acts as a useful tracker of consumer attitudes towards industry
- Scope for in-depth deliberation
- Flexible vehicle, can be applied to different parts of policy cycle
- After 5 years – has strong credibility within Ofgem



Trust

Engagement

Awareness

Satisfaction

Confidence

Priorities

Consumer organisations

Consumer organisations are therefore important partners in the **regulatory** process:

- They can **pass on signals** about market functioning (and market failure)
- They **provide guidance** to customers about prices and rights, thus empowering them
- They are involved in **complaint handling** and (in some cases) Alternative Dispute Resolution
- They disseminate information from NRAs

CEER's Work

We explored the interactions between regulators and consumer organisations within the regulatory process:

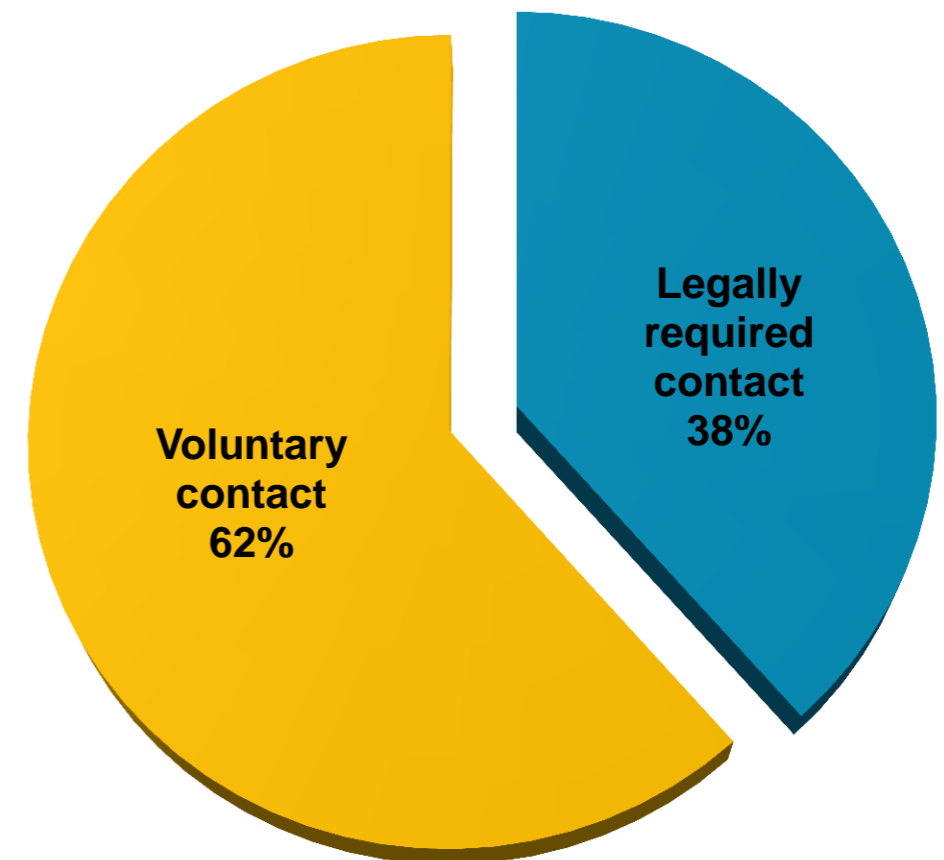
- Status Review on **Roles and Responsibilities** of NRAs in the field of Customer Protection (2012)
- Status Review on the **Involvement** of Consumer Organisations in the **Regulatory Process** (2013) in cooperation with **BEUC**



Are NRAs and consumer organisations in direct contact?

YES

- Nearly **all** NRAs* are in direct contact with consumer organisations
- Most NRAs are in contact with **different types** of consumer organisations



**General
consumer
organisations**

**Energy
consumer
organisations**

**Other public
interest groups**

List not exhaustive

* With one exception



Do NRAs and consumer organisations make use of each other's public information?

NRAs

Consumer Organisations

Flow of public information

NRAs and consumer organisations both use each other's public information

Top 3 issues of collaboration:

**Information Campaigns/
Outreach to
Consumers**

**Complaint
Handling**

**Alternative
Dispute
Resolution**



Do consumer organisations participate in NRA decision making?

- Consumer organisations predominantly influence NRA decisions **indirectly**
- Indirect influence on the NRA decision making process is mostly exerted through **continuous dialogue** and/or other joint activities such as hearings or participation in public consultations
- Only in 2 (out of 26) countries, consumer organisations have **direct power** in the decision making process as an officially established party of the process, e.g. through membership on the NRA's Board



Conclusions / next steps

- **Involvement** of consumers and consumer organisations is key to deliver effective regulatory results
- A well-functioning retail market for electricity and gas requires **empowered** and **protected** customers
- NRAs and consumer organisations already cooperate on a variety of issues but **more needs to be done**
- In 2014/2015 CEER will look at how **collaboration between NRAs and consumer organisations** can be intensified and made more effective

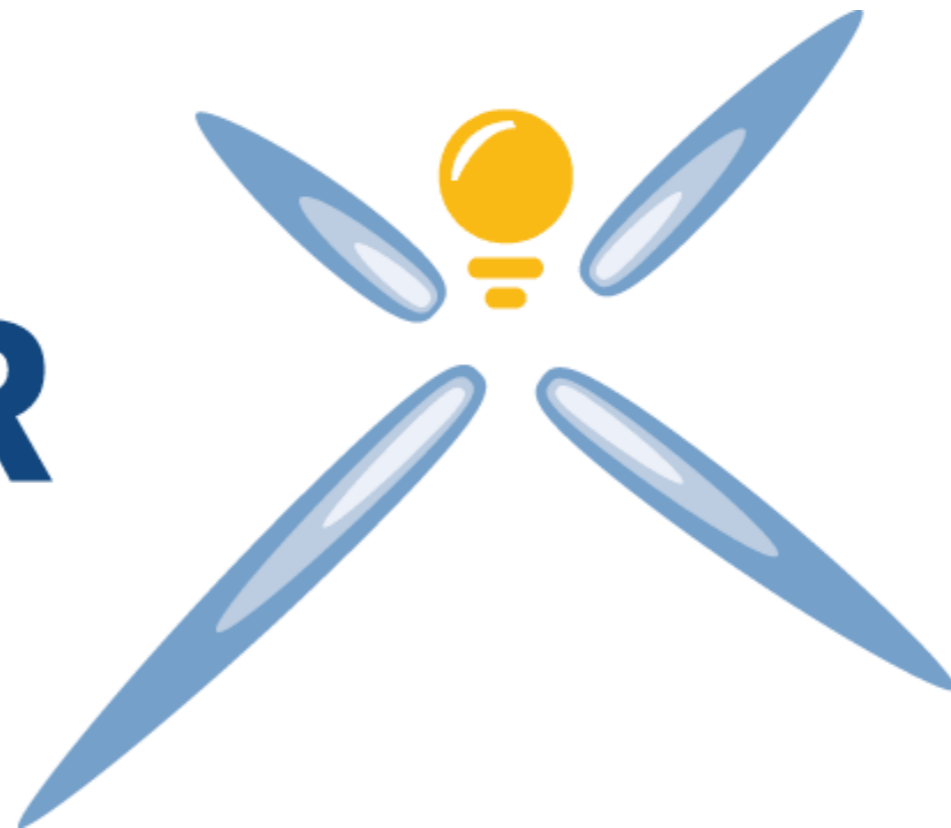


Thank you for your attention!

[Visit: CEER Energy Customers](#)

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www.ceer.eu