



***Energy Community Regulatory Board***

**Treatment of vulnerable customers in the  
Energy Community**

**Questionnaire**

Ref:



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## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Background.....	3
1.2	Methodology.....	3
<b>2</b>	<b>QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The ECRB Customer Working Group (CWG) Work Programme 2011<sup>1</sup> foresees the CWG Task Force Customer Protection (TF1) to prepare a Vulnerable customers assessment paper – survey on national definitions and concepts for protection of vulnerable household customers updating the 2008 and 2009 ECRB reports on vulnerable customer protection<sup>2</sup>.

Protection of customers is in the focus of TF1 activities – already in previous years special attention has been drawn to concepts for protection of vulnerable household customers. The topic gained special relevance through the 3<sup>rd</sup> European legislative package on gas and electricity that requires Member States to develop a definition for vulnerable customers on national level and ensure their special protection<sup>3</sup>. In line with the European approach<sup>4</sup>, the ECRB in 2009 concluded that vulnerable customers need to be defined on national, not regional level and their protection needs to be made part of a broader social system. At the time of finalizing the 2009 assessment report relevant concepts were to a large extent not implemented in the Energy Community. An update assessment in 2011 shall illustrate the developments made and vulnerable customer protection models applied.

### 1.2 Methodology

Task Force 1 will:

1. Perform survey of models for protection of vulnerable customers in the Energy Community via this questionnaire;
2. Evaluate the results of the survey and prepare an assessment paper comprising national definitions and concepts for protection of vulnerable customers in the Energy Community.

The focus of the survey is on vulnerable **household** customers.

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<sup>1</sup> Add link to ECRB web page when available

<sup>2</sup> ECRB Report on the Implementation of the Best Practice Guidelines on the Protection of Vulnerable Household Customers, December 2008 ([http://www.ecrb.eu/portal/page/portal/ECRB\\_HOME/ECRB\\_DOCUMENTS/ECRB%20REPORTS%20%20DOCUMENTS/Report%20on%20Implementation%20GPP%20Protection%20of%20Vulnerable%20HH.pdf](http://www.ecrb.eu/portal/page/portal/ECRB_HOME/ECRB_DOCUMENTS/ECRB%20REPORTS%20%20DOCUMENTS/Report%20on%20Implementation%20GPP%20Protection%20of%20Vulnerable%20HH.pdf)) and “Vulnerable Household Customers”- An ECRB Contribution to a Common Understanding, November 2009 ([http://www.ecrb.eu/portal/page/portal/ECRB\\_HOME/ECRB\\_DOCUMENTS/ECRB%20REPORTS%20%20DOCUMENTS/2009\\_ECRB\\_Vulnerable%20HH%20Customers\\_25%2011%202009.pdf](http://www.ecrb.eu/portal/page/portal/ECRB_HOME/ECRB_DOCUMENTS/ECRB%20REPORTS%20%20DOCUMENTS/2009_ECRB_Vulnerable%20HH%20Customers_25%2011%202009.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> Art. 3 (7,8) and Art.36 (h) of 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; OJ L 211 of 14.8.2009, p 55 et seqq. and Art. 3 (3,4) and Art.40 (h) of 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; OJ L 211 of 14.8.2009, p 94 et seqq.

<sup>4</sup> ERGEG Status Review of the Definitions of Vulnerable Customer, Default Supplier and Supplier of Last Resort, July 2009, ([http://www.energy-regulators.eu/portal/page/portal/EER\\_HOME/EER\\_PUBLICATIONS/CEER\\_ERGEG\\_PAPERS/Customers/Tab/E09-CEM-26-04\\_StatusReview\\_16-Jul-09.pdf](http://www.energy-regulators.eu/portal/page/portal/EER_HOME/EER_PUBLICATIONS/CEER_ERGEG_PAPERS/Customers/Tab/E09-CEM-26-04_StatusReview_16-Jul-09.pdf))



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## 2 QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire has been prepared for completion by the regulatory authorities of the Energy Community.

Regulatory authorities are requested to provide electronic answers by Friday, **1 April 2011** the latest to the Leader of CWG TF1, Mr. Gordan Tanic ([gordan.tanic@aers.rs](mailto:gordan.tanic@aers.rs)), copied to ECRB Section in the Energy Community Secretariat, Mrs. Branislava Marsenic Maksimovic ([branislava.marsenic@energy-community.org](mailto:branislava.marsenic@energy-community.org)).

For any related questions please contact TF1 Leader, Mr. Gordan Tanic ([gordan.tanic@aers.rs](mailto:gordan.tanic@aers.rs)).

### Details of the responding person:

Name

Surname

Institution

E-mail

Phone

Country

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**Note: where not explicitly asked, please provide separate answers for electricity and gas, if needed.**

**1. Does a definition of a “vulnerable customer” exist in the legislation?**

- Yes, specifically defined for energy sector (please provide the legal basis )
- Yes, general definition (not specifically defined for energy sector) (please provide the legal basis )
- No

(Comment, if needed )

**2. If there is a definition of a “vulnerable customer” for energy sector, is it:**

- Separately specified for electricity usage
- Separately specified for gas usage
- Separately specified for other energy usage (please specify )
- General definition

**3. Please provide the definition of i.e. the criteria for obtaining the status of a “vulnerable customer” (if applicable)**

**4. Does a specific support scheme for vulnerable customers exist within the energy sector?**

*Electricity*

- Yes, economic support
- Yes, non- economic support
- Yes, economic and non- economic support
- No

*Gas*

- Yes, economic support
- Yes, non- economic support
- Yes, economic and non- economic support



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No

**5. If specific support scheme for vulnerable customers does not exist within the energy sector, does the general social welfare system protect them?**

*With respect to energy:*

Yes

No

*In general:*

Yes

No

**6. Which customer categories receive the economic support within energy sector?**

*For electricity:*

*For gas:*

**7. What does economic support system within the energy sector consist of?**

*Electricity*

Specific regulated prices for certain customer groups (please explain )

Specific non- regulated prices for certain customer groups (please explain )

Specific tariff for certain customer groups (please explain )

Other (please specify )

*Gas*

Specific regulated prices for certain customer groups (please explain )

Specific non- regulated prices for certain customer groups (please explain )

Specific tariff for certain customer groups (please explain )

Other (please specify )



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**8. How are the costs of providing economic support to vulnerable customers covered?**

*Electricity:*

- Special Governmental fond (state budget)
- Other customers
- Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

*Gas:*

- Special Governmental fond (state budget)
- Other customers
- Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

**9. Percentage of households qualifying for/receiving economic support (please specify both qualifying and receiving, if possible):**

*For electricity qualifying/receiving:*

*For gas qualifying/receiving:*

**10. Which customer categories receive non- economic support within energy sector?**

*Electricity:*

*Gas:*

**11. What does non- economic support system within the energy sector consist of?**

- Protection against disconnection
- Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_ )

**12. Is the support scheme for vulnerable customers based on a season (e.g. support during winter for heating purposes)?**

- Yes (please explain \_\_\_\_\_ )
- No



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**13. Is the economic support scheme for vulnerable customers based on a quantity threshold (amount of energy)?**

Yes (please explain )

No