



INFORSE-EUROPE

International Network for Sustainable Energy



Energy Poverty

by

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http://www.inforse.org/europe/seminar2010_CAT.htm

Energy Poverty



Energy Poverty in EU

- Established political issue in the UK
- A problem in many countries that poor consumers cannot pay energy bills, get disconnected or get the energy companies in trouble
- Energy market directives require protection of vulnerable consumers
- Belgium presidency want guideline this year

EU Market Directive Text

- “Member States shall define a concept of vulnerable customers which may refer to energy poverty and, inter alia, to the prohibition of disconnection of such customers in critical times”
- allow regulated prices to protect consumers

(adopted 2009, implemented by countries till March 2011)

It leaves much to countries: define concept of vulnerable costumers, define “critical times”.

INFORSE Proposals (2009)

Combine non-disconnection with

- programs with support to increase energy efficiency,
- social support, for the most vulnerable, so they can pay bills
- Other measures, e.g. "lifeline-tariffs" by which a basic level of consumption is charged a lower price.
- The energy price increases can be limited, to get heat prices below gas prices (issue in Central Europe mainly)
- Use EU funds (mainly structural funds)

Belgium Presidency

- Want to increase energy consumer protection, for households
- Recommendation for EU Commission at energy ministers meeting
- Little open discussion
- “London forum” of consumers and energy is central

Presidency Considerations

- Consumer issues in new EU energy strategy, infrastructure plans, energy efficiency plans
- EU framework definition of “vulnerable consumers” for internal market
- framework definition of “energy poverty”
- use London Forum and roundtable of energy mediators
- consider impact (costs) of switch to low-carbon economy