



STATE ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION



CONSUMERS EDUCATION TRAINING EFFORTS / CAMPAIGNS SERC STRATEGY AND POLICY

Sept. 27 – 30, 2004, Sofia



LEGISLATIVE BASE

- Energy Act
- Ordinance on Licensing the Activities in the Energy Sector
- Ordinances on the Terms and Procedures for Energy Supply Network Connection
- Ordinance on Restrictive Regime Introduction to Energy Supply



- Rules for access to the energy supply networks /SERC/
- Service quality indicators in the energy supply sector /SERC/
- License terms
- General terms of the contracts for energy supply to the consumers
- Rules of the Licensees for work with the consumers, approved by SERC
- SERC guidelines, related to disputes and complaints resolving



- Protection of Competition Act
- Protection of Consumers and Trade Rules Act
- Proposals, Signals, Complaints and Petitions Act



Relations and active cooperation with:

- Protection of Competition Commission
- Commerce and Consumers Protection Commission
- Bulgarian National Consumers Association
- Federation of the Consumers in Bulgaria



Consumers of energy services in the Republic of Bulgaria (household consumers)

- of electricity – 4 012 671
- of heat energy – > 575 000
- of natural gas – 3 283 (4700 total)



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ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES OF BULGARIA

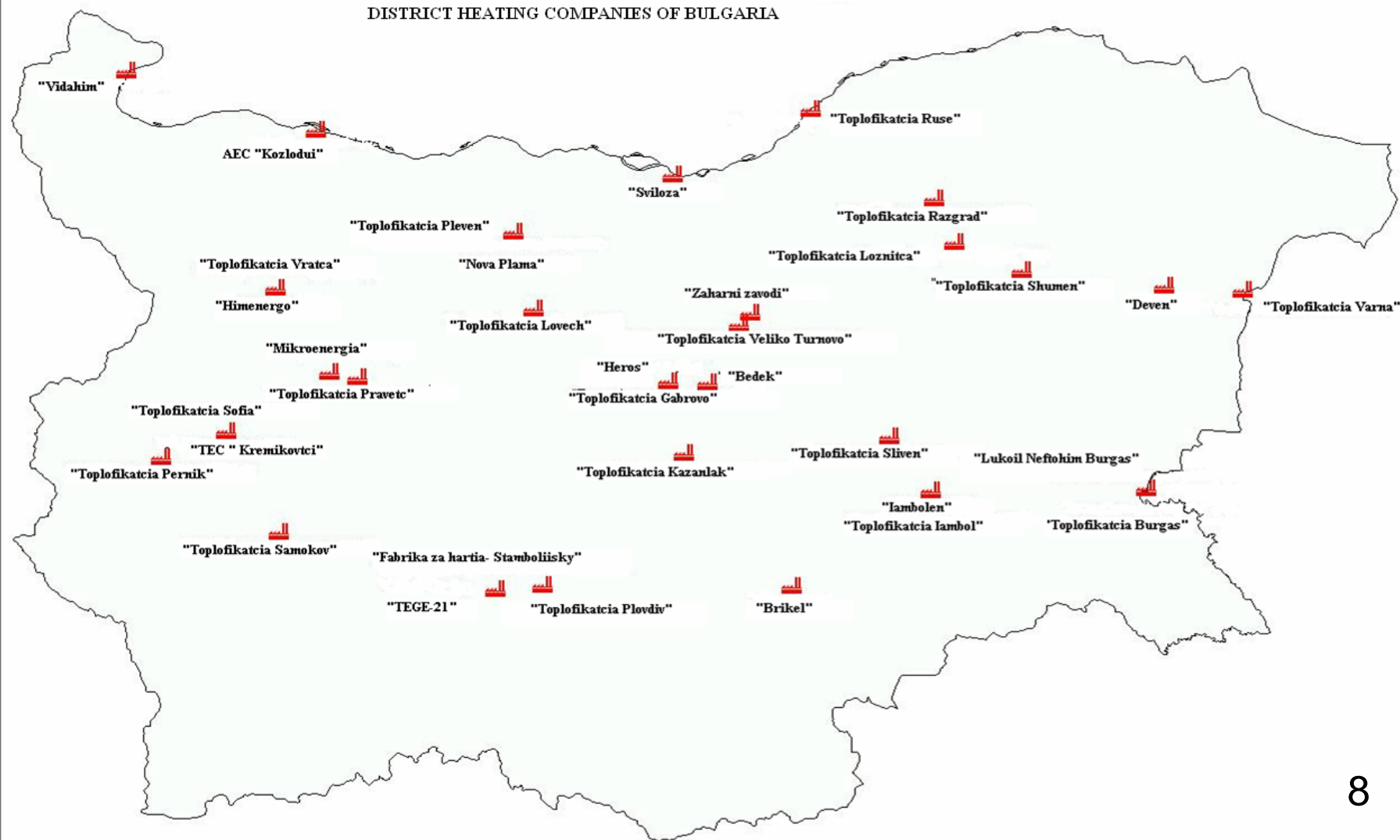




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DISTRICT HEATING COMPANIES OF BULGARIA

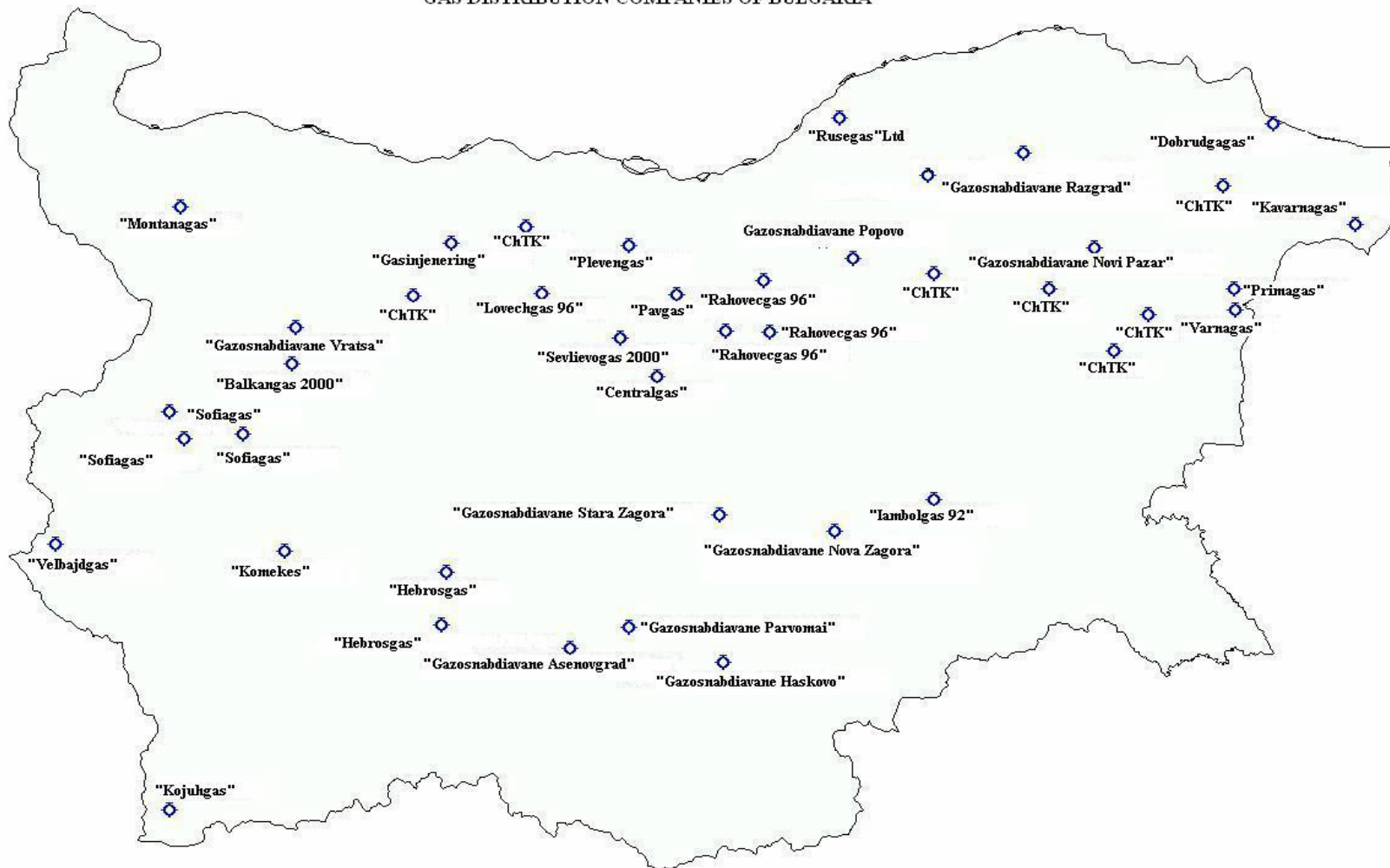




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GAS DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES OF BULGARIA





SERC consumers protection and training policy

- Balance between the interests of the energy enterprises and consumers
- Publicity and public discussion of general administrative acts with stakeholders, including consumers' organizations
- Access to information (informed choice) through SERC web page and bulletin, announcements, publications and press interviews



- Cooperation with consumers organizations and branch organizations of the energy enterprises
- Standing working group on electricity market liberalization
- Encouragement and methodological support for the establishment of Centers for work with the consumers at the energy enterprises.
- Enforcing standards for consumer servicing, related to the access right, supply continuity, energy and trade service quality



The efforts to achieve a balance of interests is expressed in:

- Approval by SERC of the General terms of the contracts between the energy enterprises and the household consumers
- SERC Approval of Rules for work with the consumers
- Control on the implementation of the License terms through periodical planned and extraordinary checks at the energy enterprises



The general terms of contracts are known to public and mandatorily contain:

- rights and obligations of the energy enterprise and of the consumers
- supply quality terms
- information, provided to the consumers
- terms for supply termination or interruption
- procedures for measurement, reading and payment
- responsibility of the energy enterprise in case of non-regulated interruption and poor quality supply



Quality indicators /groups/

- Energy quality/electricity; heat; gas/
- Reliability and uninterruptedness
- Trade service quality:
 - time for answering a complaint and/or request
 - time for checking a measuring device
 - time for adjusting an error



Informed consumers' choice terms and publicity

- Public discussion of SERC general administrative acts with all stakeholders
- Open sessions of the Commission
- Public announcement of the decisions and transparency of the energy market and the Commission activity
- Exchange of information with consumers organizations
- Conducting wide explanatory campaigns and public discussions



Commission considers complaints

- Of consumers vs licensees, related to:
 - consumer's right to be connected
 - licensee's right to terminate the connection and supply
 - supply terms and quality indicators
- Of licensees vs licensees



Dispute resolution

- SERC assists the voluntary dispute resolution upon submission of a written request by the parties to perform a conciliation procedure.
- In case that the Commission finds out that a licensee violates or limits the competition, upon execution of its powers, it shall refer the matter to the Protection of Competition Commission (PCC).



Section “Complaints and Work with the Consumers”

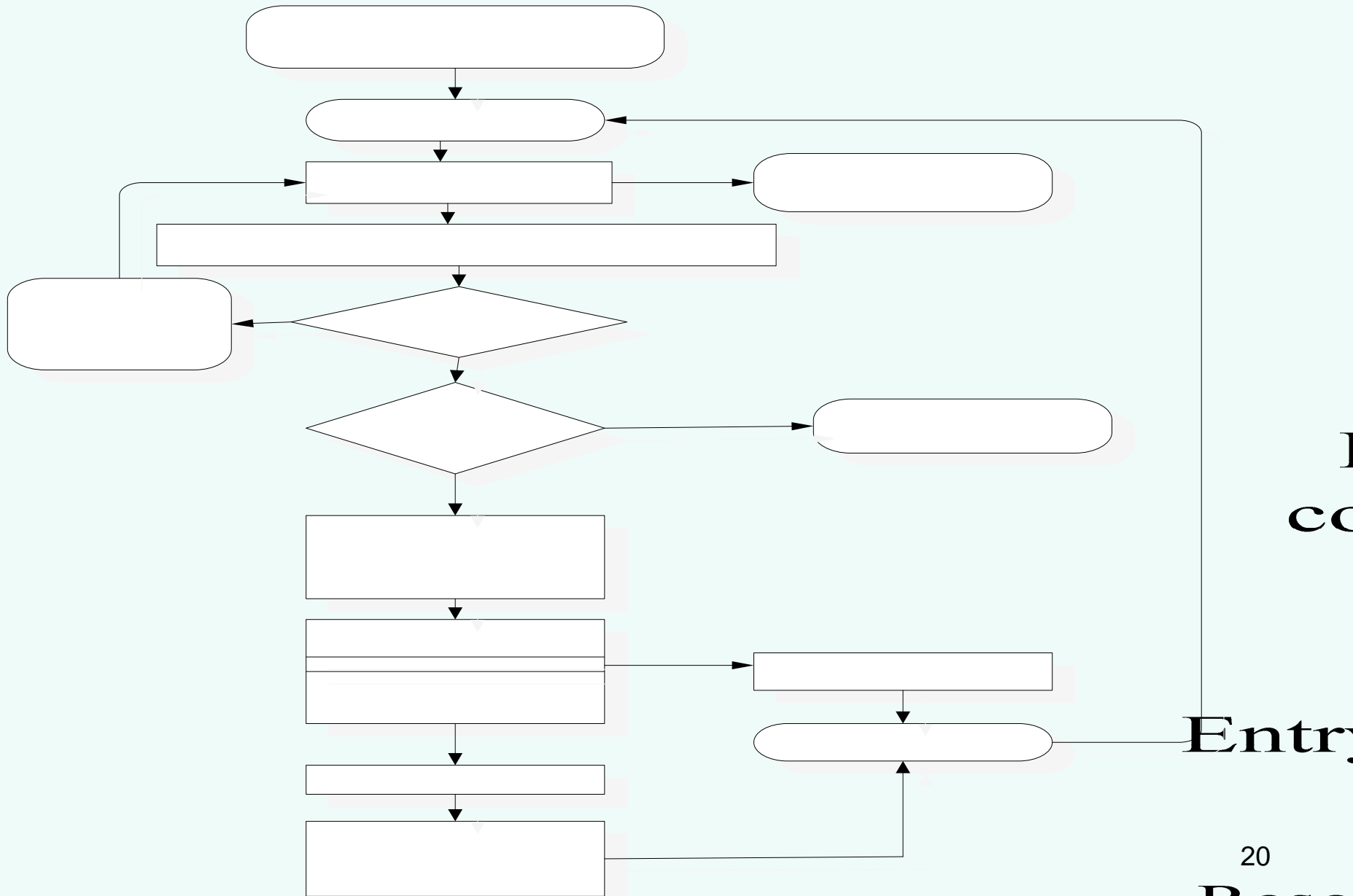
- Prepares “Rules for Work with the Consumers” and offers them for approval by the Commission
- Prepares and organizes the implementation of the procedure for the work with consumers’ complaints and signals, received by SERC.
- Assists and coordinates the Licensees’ activities on the preparation of their Rules for Work with the Consumers drafts.
- Participates in the analysis of the “General Contract Terms”, offered by the Licensees
- Creates and maintains data base for the complaints, signals and disputes of the consumers and licensees



- Together with experts from the specialized directorates conducts checks on consumer complaints and prepares drafts for answers and for mandatory SERC guidelines
- Organizes dispute resolution procedures and participates in them
- Prepares an annual analysis of the consumers' complaints and signals by sectors and companies
- Proposes and participates in studies on the consumers' satisfaction
- Organizes the collection of statistical information and prepares analyses, related to the work with the complaints at the Licensees' sites

**Procedure (Technological scheme) for processing
complaints and requests of consumers and
licensees
(draft)**

(draft)





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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