ACER consults on the future of gas regulation in the EU

23/07/2019

TwitterFacebookLinkedInE-mail

​The EU Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER) launches today a public consultation on possible actions and legislative proposals for the European energy sector – and, in particular, the gas sector – beyond 2025.

The consultation explores policy issues linked to market design and targeted regulatory measures. The energy transition and decarbonisation policies that lead to a substitution of natural gas with other energy vectors may have consequences for consumers who currently use natural gas to meet their energy needs, and these need to be addressed. It is important to ensure that the transition is based on sound economic principles and leads to the selection of the best-value technologies for decarbonisation. The consultation document takes into account the reflections presented in the Consultation Paper on Regulatory Challenges for a Sustainable Gas Sector produced by the Council of European Energy Regulators (CEER) in March this year and the responses to it provided by stakeholders.

The consultation document focuses on two strategic areas for regulatory action. They include issues relating to electricity and gas sector coupling, going beyond the regulatory alignment of the gas and electricity sectors:

Targeted regulation and market functioning: in the near term, while the European Gas Target Model ​is generally working well, there are some markets where competition is still not effective and consumers' interests are threatened, or where the current system of gas regulation may need review.

Enabling new products and enhancing infrastructure governance: a sustainable future needs decarbonised gases and new technologies (such as power to gas), but the current regulatory framework was not designed with these activities in mind and the lack of regulation for these areas may have unintended consequences, acting as a barrier or hindrance to their development. In this sustainable future, the old roles and responsibilities may no longer be appropriate. The existing unbundling rules may need to be applied to new circumstances. And, in particular, what was a natural monopoly may now be competing with other services.

The consultation document has been developed in cooperation with the European energy regulators. You can find the consultation document and additional information here.