Case study of *Albania* on the Consumer information & education

ERJOLA SADUSHI

ERE COMMISSIONER

JULIA GUGA

FRE HEAD OF CUSTOMER PROTECTION



Legal framework



- Law on Consumer Protection
- **♦** Law Nr.119/2014 "On the rights of information"
- ❖ Law on Energy Sector
- Law on Natural Gas Sector
- Other Gov decisions
- Main issues:
 - Obligatory information to be public
 - * How the information is made public



Primary legislation requirements

- *data on the location of offices of the public sector body, working hours, name and contacts of the coordinator for the right to information;
- monitoring and controlling mechanisms operating above the public authority, including the strategic work plans, auditing reports
- ❖any mechanism or procedure, by which the interested persons may submit their opinions or have an impact in any other way on the drafting of laws, public policies or assumption of the functions of the public sector body;
- ❖a simple description of the system used by the public sector body for keeping the documentation, types and formats of the documents, as well as categories of information being made public ex officio;
- any other information deemed useful by the public sector body



Our strategy on Consumer Education and Informacion

- ➤ Open Policy
- ➤ Inclusive Policy
- *Open policy making: This means providing citizens with information and making the regulatory policy process accessible, understandable and accountable;
- The other form is that through inclusive policies, which means the widest inclusion of citizens' voices in the process of drafting policies as much as possible. Engaging with stakeholders early in the process allows for proactive relationship cultivation that can prove essential to the sustainability of regulatory decisions.



Information shared with Consumers



General Information through digitial channels

- Consumers' rights and tariffs
- Energy-saving
- Complaint managment
- Contact information
- Rules on switching, grid conection, quality of service
- Individual information
- Supplier data
- Individual complaint data
- Other



Communication Strategy

ERE official website update on:

- ✓ Announcement of the decisions taken at the ERE board meeting, in summary.
- ✓ Brochures prepared by different Directors of ERE, at the suggestion of the head of each of the latter or directly from the website of ERE.
- ✓ Preparation of Reports and updated weekly data to be published on the website and social networks of ERE
- Notifications, created according to the occasion, for meetings, trainings, workshops or certain activities, adapted from the agenda of the activity or from participation in the latter.

CONSUMER SERVICES

- Contracts
- Complaints Form
- New connections (paperwork/applicable law)
- Economic damage
- ❖ By-laws for the consumer
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Consumer Survey (KPI supplier/regulator)
- Find your supplier in the free market!
- Complaints Registers (complaint procedure adjournment)
- Energy Saving Awareness Campaign





https://www.facebook.com/eregov



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Consumer Education - Channels of Education

□NGOs will be another interest group with significant cooperation and partnership potential of ERE.

☐ They will serve as communication bridges and carriers of information and needs regarding citizens, marginalized groups and other specific audiences.
☐ They will also be an important interlocutor for generating data and receiving feedback from citizens
Universities and academics are also a very interested group for ERE and are invited to be part of policy making and research on strategic policies, and alternative solutions aimed at improving the nature and main objectives of the institution. This group includes lecturers, researchers, academics, and students. As a result, cooperation has been established through Memorandums with several faculties, among which we remember the Faculty of Law, University of Tirana; Albanian University, etc.
□Business organizations have a no less important role both in consumer education and in the content of information and messages they target through the use of audiovisual media. The creation of a cooperation platform with the business representation is a means for more stability in terms of commercial communication in the media.
☐ The Albanian regulator is in the process of signing the MOU with the Energy Efficiency Agency with the aim of, among others, cooperation between the parties in order to undertake joint initiatives of awareness and information campaigns for the consumer.
☐ Establishing the obligation for suppliers to undertake informational campaigns either through their websites or through brochures in order to acquaint consumers with their rights and obligations

ERE consumer education activity

- 4 years of active collaboration with the Albanian Customer Center, sharing information
- Meetings with municipality representative (Dispute Settlement Centers)
- ❖ MoU with different Academic Institutions
- Different information on consumer issues such as on energy saving
- Periodic supervision of the information published for the consumer on the official websites of the Suppliers



Challenges

- Growth and expansion of cooperation with NGOs with a focus on education and information
- Allocation of appropriate costs for the achievement of the objectives of the Communication and Education Strategy
- Investing in human capacities for conveying accurate legal information, in simple language and in accordance with the developments of the sector.
- Transition from a passive consumer to an active consumer

