

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1697/09
by András Gyürk (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Possibility of legal redress in the event of power cuts

A recent snowstorm in Hungary caused a power cut which affected dozens of settlements, and some villages had electricity only intermittently for four days. As a result, schools had to be closed, problems arose with water supply, people's homes grew cold and food kept in refrigerators in many households was spoilt.

Invoking the principle of force majeure, the electricity provider for the two worst affected counties believes consumers have no right to compensation. The Hungarian Energy Agency, which is the national regulator, began an enquiry into the matter which may prove lengthy. Consumer protection organisations have, before the enquiry finishes, instituted legal proceedings aimed at securing compensation for individual and business consumers.

In view of the above, we ask the Commission to express its opinion on whether it considers the Community legislation on the energy market currently in force to be adequate from the standpoint of the consumer, with particular regard to damage caused by power cuts.

In addition, we call on the Commission to provide information on the measures it plans to take, following adoption of the legislation on the internal market in electricity, in order to reinforce consumer protection provisions?