

TECHNICAL GUIDE AND STRATEGIES FOR NAVIGATING THE ENERGY MARKET

PROJECT "TUTTI IN BOLLETTA"

GUIDE

FOR BENEFICIARY FAMILIES

FOR VOLUNTEERS AT COUNSELING CENTERS

FOR CARITAS SYSTEM WORKERS

Caritas Ambrosiana



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Direttori Caritas Ambrosiana

Caritas Ambrosiana is a pastoral organization dedicated to promoting the witness of charity. Caritas' work extends across a variety of fields: from pastoral outreach to training, from advocacy to charitable and welfare services, both in the Diocese of Milan and in developing countries. Numerous social phenomena and diverse forms of hardship, poverty, and exclusion are addressed through specific interventions promoted by various offices, building community bonds and promoting a comprehensive approach to caring for people and creation.

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Bills and contracts



WHAT DOCUMENTS SHOULD YOU BRING TO THE COUNSELLING CENTRE TO UNDERSTAND YOUR BILLS AND CONTRACTS?

Here's what you should look for and bring with you to the Counselling Centre to allow us to understand your electricity and gas supply situation:

- Your most recent bills (preferably at least two) with all the pages you have received;
- the payment slip you use to make the payment;
- the contract you have signed with your electricity and gas supplier that sets out the terms and conditions you have agreed to;
- your ISEE (Equivalent Economic Situation Indicator) form, if you have submitted one, to check if you are eligible for the Social Bonus;
- ASL (Local Health Authority) certification to check if you are eligible for a "physical hardship" allowance.

Electricity and gas bills were given a new look on 1 July 2025 to make it easier to understand them and compare the costs.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES THE BILL CONTAIN?

WHAT TYPE OF CONTRACT DO YOU HAVE?

YOU'LL FIND THIS INFORMATION ON THE FIRST PAGE.

Contracts can be:

- **FREE MARKET CONTRACT:** a contract in which the supplier sets all the economic conditions (which can range from very cheap to very expensive); free market contracts vary greatly, so there is a risk of ending up with extremely unfavourable conditions and paying a lot!
- **PROTECTED TARIFF CONTRACTS:** the conditions are the same for everyone and are decided by ARERA (the Italian Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and Environment) to protect “vulnerable” customers; these tariffs usually offer the lowest prices. Please check the factsheet to see if you fall into the “vulnerable” customers category.
- **PLACET:** this is an uncommon type of contract and is not a cheap one; the supplier decides the prices while the Government Agency sets the other conditions.
- **Gradual Protections Service (or STG: Servizio a Tutele Graduali):** these are old types of contracts that will be phased-out from March 2027. No new ones will be issued from that date on, but if you already have one should keep it until it expires because the conditions are excellent.

The first page of the bill often also indicates the expiry date of the contract: this is an important point that we'll talk about later when we explain the **OFFER BOX**.



HOW MUCH IS YOUR BILL?

YOU CAN FIND THIS INFORMATION IN THE ENERGY BREAKDOWN

The total cost of the bill is only partly made up of the cost of the energy itself, because there are other costs involved. However, there are two things that make the difference between a good contract and a bad one and these are what you should look at carefully when deciding which contract to sign: the **CONSUMPTION CHARGE** (which, as the name suggests, varies depending on how much energy you use) and the **MONTHLY FIXED-RATE** of the electricity/natural gas **SUPPLY COST**.

Scontrino dell'energia			
POD: IT001E15119271	POTENZA IMPEGNATA: 3,0 kW	INDIRIZZO DI FORNITURA: Via [REDACTED]	
	QUANTITÀ	PREZZO MEDIO	IMPORTO
QUOTA CONSUMI			133,25 €
Quota consumi	541 kWh	0,246303 €/kWh	133,25 €
di cui spesa per la vendita di energia elettrica		0,201479 €/kWh	109,00 €
di cui spesa per la rete e gli oneri generali di sistema		0,044824 €/kWh	24,25 €
QUOTA FISSA E QUOTA POTENZA			40,64 €
Quota fissa	2 mesi	14,000000 €/mese	28,00 €
di cui spesa per la vendita di energia elettrica		12,100000 €/mese	24,20 €
di cui spesa per la rete e gli oneri generali di sistema		1,900000 €/mese	3,80 €
Quota potenza	3,0 kW x 2 mesi	2,106667 €/kW/mese	12,64 €
di cui spesa per la rete e gli oneri generali di sistema		2,106667 €/kW/mese	12,64 €
ALTRE PARTITE			23,00 €
Addebito maggiori spese per riscossione			23,00 €
ACCISE E IVA			27,88 €
TOTALE BOLLETTA			224,77 €

SCONTRINO DELL'ENERGIA		Indirizzo di fornitura: VIA ADRIATICA, 206 33030 CAMPOFORMIDO UD	
		PDR: 10952802012901	
	QUANTITÀ	PREZZO MEDIO	IMPORTI
Quota per consumi			
	93,516384 SMC x	0,584069 €/SMC	54,62 €
di cui spesa per la vendita di gas naturale		0,564500 €/SMC	52,79 €
di cui spesa per la rete e gli oneri generali di sistema		0,019569 €/SMC	1,83 €
Quota fissa			
	1 mese x	10,500000 €/mese	10,50 €
di cui spesa per la vendita di gas naturale		5,720000 €/mese	5,72 €
di cui spesa per la rete e gli oneri generali di sistema		4,780000 €/mese	4,78 €
Bonus sociale			0,00 €
Altre partite - Ind. Autom. Mancato Rispetto Tempi Fatt. Del. 463/16			-14,00 €
Accise e IVA			9,73 €
Totale bolletta			60,85 €
Totale da pagare			60,85 €

The energy breakdown is the section of the bill that shows you all the costs you are paying. **Only the parts highlighted in yellow**, namely the “supply cost” under the Consumption Charge and the Fixed Rate, **vary from contract to contract**. The other costs are the same for all contracts and are set by the Authority; they are used to cover the costs of operating the electricity and gas distribution networks and activities in the public interest (e.g. support for renewable energy).

So, to work out whether the contract is a good one or not, you need to focus on the highlighted items.

The Consumption Charge varies depending on the amount of energy used; for gas, the unit of measurement is the cubic metre (m³), while for electricity it is the kilowatt-hour (kWh).

The price per 1 cubic metre or 1 kilowatt-hour used may be:

- **VARIABLE-RATE** (also called INDEXED): this changes every month because it is based on the wholesale price;
- **FIXED-RATE**: this is fixed for the period specified in the contract (e.g. 12 months).

PROTECTED REGIME CONTRACTS only have variable rates (updated every three months for electricity and monthly for gas), whereas the FREE MARKET and PLACET contracts offer both variable and fixed rates. The fixed rate, as the name suggests, remains the same for every month of the year, regardless of actual consumption.

There are two special cases: fixed-rate and mixed-rate; see the two information sheets.

The **OTHER COSTS** are:

- **VAT and EXCISE DUTIES**: these are the taxes that you have to pay the State for the energy and are set by the Government;
- **OTHER CHARGES**: if the amount of this item is high, you should find out which costs are being charged: your electricity bill may include the TV licence fee (€9 per month, for residents only), or there may be other charges (e.g. late payment penalties, reminder fees, etc.). In some cases, it is a good idea to contact the supplier’s customer service team for clarification.

Your first bill will also include a “security deposit”: this is an advance payment that is normally charged if bills are paid using a postal payment slip or by bank transfer for each individual bill rather than by “direct debit” with a bank or the Post Office. “Direct debit” means that you have asked your bank or the Post Office to pay your bills automatically.

This section also includes the **SOCIAL BONUS**; this is a reimbursement of costs that some users on low incomes, as specified in the relevant section, may be eligible for. It’s always worth checking whether you are entitled to this bonus.

VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS FACTSHEET

Customers can apply for the **major protection scheme** for electricity and the **vulnerable customers protection scheme** for gas. You can switch back to the free market at any time although “major protection” is usually better value than most other offers.

The most common situations in which you can apply for major protection, for both electricity and gas, are:

- over 75 years of age;
- people in financial difficulty (for example, people eligible for the social bonus based on their ISEE – see the SOCIAL BONUS factsheet);
- people with disabilities as of Article 3 of Italian Law 104/92.

There are also some specific situations (for electricity: the use of life support medical equipment, emergency accommodation following natural disasters and off-grid islands; for gas: emergency accommodation).

You can request the protection scheme for vulnerable customers from all gas suppliers. However, for electricity there is only one supplier in each area that can offer “major protection”. For example, in the city of Milan, “major protection” is offered by A2A.

SOCIAL BONUS FACTSHEET

The supplier applies the social bonus due to “financial hardship” directly to your bill if you have submitted a DSU (Single Substitute Declaration) - usually prepared by a CAF (Tax Assistance Centre) - to obtain your ISEE; your ISEE must be below the specified thresholds and the bill must be in the name of one of the people listed on the ISEE. You do not need to apply for the bonus; all you have to do is renew your ISEE every year (the bill indicates the deadline for the social bonus).

ISEE thresholds for 2026:

€9,796 for households with up to three dependent children;

€20,000 for four dependent children or more.

HOW MUCH IS THE BONUS WORTH?

For electricity, the amount depends on the number of members in the ISEE household.

Example: 3–4 people, €219 per year per household.

For 2026, people with an ISEE under €9,796 are eligible for an additional one-off bonus of €115. Suppliers may, at their discretion, offer a further €60 discount to people with an ISEE under €25,000.

For gas, the amount of the bonus changes every three months; it is higher in winter and depends on where you live.

Bonuses are also available for water and waste collection, again linked to your ISEE.

SPECIAL CASES

When a member of the household uses life support medical equipment, they are entitled to an electricity discount known as the “physical hardship” allowance. This can be claimed in addition to the financial hardship allowance.

However, to receive this bonus, you must present the application at the town hall or at a CAF, providing medical documentation (there are no income restrictions).

For gas, you can still claim the bonus even if the bill is in the name of the block of flats you live in but, in this case, it is not automatic and you will have to follow a special procedure explained on the Authority’s website.

What you must remember

- Submit your DSU as soon as possible each year to activate the bonus and continue to receive it;
- Please check that your bills are in the name of a member of the ISEE household;
- Check your bills to see if the discount has been applied.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE OFFER

You can find other useful information in the section of the bill called “**OFFER BOX**”.

Box dell'Offerta		
spesa per la vendita di energia elettrica		
Nome dell'offerta commerciale: Smart Casa+ Luce	Codice offerta: 000294ESVFL01XXSmartCas240719661	Tipologia di offerta: Prezzo variabile
Data di decorrenza delle condizioni economiche: 18.07.2024	Data di scadenza delle condizioni economiche: 31.07.2026	Data di scadenza del contratto: A tempo indeterminato
Totale spesa dovuta per l'offerta: 59,96 € di cui spesa per la quota consumi: 35,74 € di cui spesa per la quota fissa: 24,22 €		
Tipologia di prezzo: A fasce orarie		
Presenza di penali di recesso: NO		
Si ricorda che, come previsto dal contratto sottoscritto, in caso di cessazione anticipata della fornitura rispetto alla durata del servizio aggiuntivo, al cliente sarà addebitato un importo per la fruizione del servizio stesso.		
Formula calcolo quota consumi: $(\text{PUN Index GME} + \text{Spread}) \cdot (1 + \text{Perdite}) + \text{Dispacciamento} + \text{Corrispettivo capacità (Cap)}$		
Valori assunti dalle componenti della formula: Spread(Ago.25)=0,02636 €/kWh; Perdite=10,00%; Disp(Ago.25)=0,0098 €/kWh; Cap(Lug.25)=0,021655 €/kWh; Cap(Ago.25)=0,006258 €/kWh.		
Indice di riferimento: PUN Index GME	Valori assunti dall'indice nel periodo di riferimento : Lug.25: F1=0,10896 €/kWh; F2=0,1271 €/kWh; F3=0,10849 €/kWh; Ago.25: F1=0,10558 €/kWh; F2=0,11797 €/kWh; F3=0,10604 €/kWh;	
Periodicità di aggiornamento dell'indice: MENSILE		

The offer's commercial name and code are used to distinguish it from the many other offers promoted by the supplier.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE DUE BY DATES!

Like this example, the contract often does not have an expiry date (it is “open-ended”).

However, there is always an expiry date for the economic conditions: this means that the supplier may change them from that date onwards, even if the contract continues.

The supplier must inform the customer in writing of the new terms and conditions at least three months before the contract expires but, sometimes, this notification is not sent or is ignored, and the customer may only realise from their next bill that the conditions have changed, perhaps for the worse. The terms and conditions may also remain unchanged for a certain period of time after the expiry date, in which case the bill will show the term “extended”.

PLEASE NOTE: you might have a good contract at the moment but the economic conditions will eventually expire, and the new conditions might not be quite as favourable. It is therefore a good idea to make a note of when the terms and conditions expire and, if necessary, contact the supplier to avoid unpleasant surprises.

The terms and conditions of fixed-rate offers always have an expiry date. The rate is fixed for a limited time only. Variable-rate offers often have no expiry date (they are “open-ended”), but the supplier always has the right to change them, giving the customer notice.

The expiry date of the terms and conditions is sometimes also shown on the first page.

The “rate type” may be “flat-rate” (meaning that the price is the same at any time of day) or – for electricity only – “time bands”. The “time band” rate varies depending on the time of day and the day of the week.

If there are “**early termination fees**” this means that you will incur a cost if you change your contract before it expires. These charges usually apply in the case of a fixed-rate offer or when there are additional services (which you have to pay for throughout the contract period even if you no longer use them), or when discounts are offered subject to specific conditions (for example, not withdrawing from the contract for a set minimum period).

WHERE CAN YOU FIND INFORMATION ABOUT CONSUMPTION?

The MAIN INFORMATION section of the bill gives useful information about your consumption in the billing period and your consumption over the last 12 months.

ELEMENTI INFORMATIVI ESSENZIALI

CARATTERISTICHE TECNICHE DELLA FORNITURA

Tipologia Cliente	DOMESTICO
Tipologia uso	Uso cottura cibi e/o produzione di acqua calda sanitaria e riscaldamento
Potere calorifero superiore convenzione (P)	0,0394553 GJ/Smc
Coeff. Correttivo (C)	0,974129
Classe del misuratore	G6

LETTURE E CONSUMI

Data Lettura	Tipo Lettura	Letture	Tipo Consumo	Consumo	Consumo Fatturato
31/12/24	Rilevate	13.145			
31/01/25	Rilevate	13.241	Effettivi	96	93,516384

For example, your meter readings. These can be either “read” (in this case consumption is referred to as “actual” or “real”) or “estimated” by the supplier.

New meters now automatically read electricity consumption, whereas gas consumption is still often estimated.

If you are being billed based on estimated readings, you should also check the meter yourself (“self-reading”) and inform the supplier if the reading differs significantly from the estimate: this will prevent the estimates from being too high or too low compared to the actual figure; this could mean you have to pay a difference (“adjustment”) after a few months or end up with a credit balance with the supplier for energy that was not actually used.

Your bill also allows you to see how your consumption has changed over time: if you notice changes that you cannot understand (for example, in the case of gas: it has been colder, so you have used more gas for heating), you should look into the matter further (for example, in the case of electricity, there may be current leakages in the system or the meter may be faulty).

When and if you decide to change contract or supplier, it is IMPORTANT to find and understand the ANNUAL CONSUMPTION shown in this section of your bill.

Pay special attention to consumption in the case of the MONTHLY FIXED-RATE and, in the less common case, the MIXED-RATE.

MONTHLY FIXED-RATE FACTSHEET

Some offers offer a monthly fixed-rate payment, usually for 12 months, regardless of your actual monthly consumption. The fixed rate is calculated based on an estimate.

Some customers like to pay the same amount every month, especially for heating costs, which vary greatly depending on the season; however, a monthly fixed-rate payment only works well if the consumption estimate is accurate.

In fact, at the end of the billing period, the supplier checks the actual consumption; if this is higher than the estimate, the customer will have to pay the difference (“adjustment”); if it is lower, the customer receives a refund from the supplier (because the customer has paid more than the amount due in the meantime).

It is also important that this type of offer is always fixed rate, meaning that any adjustment is based solely on consumption and not on the price.

MIXED-RATE FACTSHEET

“Mixed-rate” means that the “fixed-rate” during the contract period applies only up to a certain level of consumption (for example, 100 kWh per month), while the “variable rate” applies to consumption exceeding this amount.

Again in this case, the final price isn’t known until the end, and there are bound to be surprises if consumption has been higher than expected.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T PAY YOUR BILL BY THE DUE DATE?

The payment due date and method of payment are shown on the first page of the bill.

If a bill is not paid by the due date, the supplier will indicate on the next bill: "Your payments are not up to date" or "There are outstanding bills from previous periods", etc. The **INFORMATION ABOUT PAYMENTS AND INSTALMENT PLANS** section contains details of unpaid bills: number, amount and due date. As well as including this information on the bill, the supplier will usually send a separate "reminder" by post, email or text message after a certain period of time. To collect the debt in accordance with law, it is not enough for the supplier to send just any type of notice; they must send a registered letter with acknowledgement of receipt, which must state at least:

- the payment due date and how it was calculated;
- the additional period at the end of which the supplier will ask the distributor to **disconnect the supply** (i.e. the electricity or gas will be "cut off") if the debt remains unpaid;
- how the customer should inform the supplier that they have paid.

In the case of electricity, depending on the type of meter installed, the power supply can be reduced to 15% of the available capacity before the supply is cut off. This means that the electricity is not completely cut off, but very little of it remains available.

Please note: non-payment of a bill will always result in the additional costs specified in the contract, including the cost of sending a reminder, as well as interest or penalties. In the case of disconnection, the supply will only be reconnected after the outstanding amount has been paid. The cost of suspending and reconnecting the supply will be charged on your bill according to the terms and conditions of your contract. After a period of disconnection, the supplier may decide to terminate the contract permanently ("termination") while continuing to try to collect the debt, also with the assistance of a lawyer. If you are unable to settle the entire debt immediately, you can **ask to pay in several instalments** ("payment in instalments"). The terms and conditions of payment in instalments are set out in the contract and vary from supplier to supplier, although the Authority lays down some rules that all suppliers must follow. The terms and conditions normally include:

- that payment in instalments must be requested within a certain period after the due date of the bill;
- that certain conditions must be met (specifically, a minimum amount; where applicable, entitlement to the social bonus, meter faults, etc.);
- that interest may be charged.

Once you have been granted a payment plan, it is important to make all your payments on time to ensure that it remains valid.

Please note: in these cases, signing a contract with a different supplier is NOT a solution.

Firstly, suppliers can check if there are any outstanding payments and refuse to accept the customer. But even if the new supplier allows you to sign the contract - and it is often suppliers that offer the worst terms and conditions that are happy to do so - the debt owed to the old supplier will almost certainly reappear in your bill under 'OTHER ITEMS' with the code **CMOR**, which stands for "late payment charge". This item causes further problems because it does not give any details except the total amount; it does not even indicate the name of the supplier you have the debt with. If you want further information, you will have to ask the Authority using its online Consumer Helpdesk service (www.sportelloperilconsumatore.it). The Helpdesk also deals with disputes related to the CMOR; for example, if the customer thinks the amount billed by the new supplier is incorrect, or if the CMOR has not been cancelled despite the fact that the debt with the old supplier has been paid.

IS YOUR CONTRACT A GOOD ONE?

We are inundated with electricity and gas offers and we often receive phone calls offering deals that are described as extraordinary and so good that you shouldn't let them pass you by or, at the very least, better than the contract you already have. Is it true? You need to be very careful!

To assess the contract you already have, you could use the website set up by Caritas Ambrosiana:

<https://povertanergetica.caritasambrosiana.it>

And click on “vai al **CONTROLLORE** della **BOLLETTA**”



The portal only asks for a few pieces of information that you've already learnt how to find on your electricity or gas bills: fixed or variable rate, annual consumption, Qvar (consumption charge), Qfix (fixed-rate) and whether you're a resident or not.

The image shows a screenshot of the 'Controllore della Bolletta 2.0' form. The title 'Controllore della Bolletta 2.0' is in red. Below it, a subtitle reads 'Il controllore della bolletta di Luce e Gas ti dice se puoi risparmiare e quanto.' The form is divided into sections. The first section, 'Descrivi la tua FORNITURA:', has radio buttons for 'LUCE' and 'GAS', and checkboxes for 'Prezzo Fisso' and 'Prezzo Variabile'. It also has a dropdown menu for 'Consumi relativi a (ultimo mese riportato in bolletta):' with 'marzo 2026' selected. The second section has input fields for 'Inserisci il consumo ANNUO (ultimi 12 mesi) reperibile in bolletta:' (value: 2000), 'Inserisci Qvar:' (value: 0.15), and 'Inserisci Qfix (quota mensile):' (value: 10). There is a checkbox for 'Residente' which is checked. A green button labeled 'Click qui per verificare' is next to the 'Residente' checkbox. At the bottom, a note in parentheses says: '(*) trovi questi dati nella sezione "Scontrino dell'Energia" della Bolletta 2.0 inviata dal tuo fornitore'.

The “Click here to check” button compares your bill with current rates on the free market and the protected market, for example:

La VALUTAZIONE del tuo contratto LUCE sulla base delle condizioni di mercato (Aprile 2026) e delle informazioni inserite:

Consumi relativi a: marzo 2026 - Prezzo **VARIABILE** - utente **Residente**

Il consumo annuo dichiarato è: **2000 kWh. Potenza contrattuale 3 kW**

La tua spesa attuale per 12 mesi da Aprile 2026 : **925 euro/anno [0.46 €/kWh]**

Il miglior contratto in Mercato Libero costerebbe in un anno: **657 euro/anno [0.33 €/kWh]**



Stimo tu possa risparmiare fino al 29% (268 euro/anno).
Ti suggerisco di cercare sul Portale Offerte di ARERA un nuovo contratto e determinare il reale risparmio legato alla tua situazione.

RIASSUNTO:
 Il tuo fornitore chiede: **925 euro all'anno**
 Il fornitore più economico chiede: **657 euro all'anno**
 Puoi risparmiare **268 euro in un anno [29%]**

	TOTALE	Differenza	Materia & Vendita	Rete & Oneri S.	Accise	IVA	Q.consumo [€/unit]	Q.annua [€/anno]
Il tuo contratto	925	-	652	184	5	84	0.240	180.00
Il miglior contratto su Portale Offerte	657	-268 [-29%]	409	184	5	60	0.179	58.23
Servizi Tutela	582	-343 [-37%]	340	184	5	58	0.158	44.73

elaborato 24/04/2026, 14:31:34

It gives you an idea of how your current terms and conditions can be improved.

As regards the protection scheme, reserved for vulnerable customers, we have already explained that the contractual terms are those set by the Authority; they are the same for all customers and have no expiry date although the Authority may make changes in the future, which will apply to everyone.

To switch to the free market without unpleasant surprises, you need to do your research properly, as the website suggests. The ARERA Offers Portal is a free online service that compares the prices currently available on the market:

<https://www.ilportaleofferte.it>

The Offers Portal asks for a few more details than the Checker but it's not difficult to enter them: for example, your postcode, the power requirement for electricity (usually 3 kWh) and the gas meter class (usually “up to G6”). If you don't enter your consumption data, the portal asks a few more questions (how many people there are in the family, etc.) in order to make an estimate.

You can also enter the offer code indicated on your bill but the portal may not recognise it because it only lists offers that suppliers have confirmed as being currently valid.

The portal lists all the available offers - including protection services - along with their estimated total annual cost.

There are always a huge number of offers and their prices vary considerably. However, **it's not enough to look at the price** alone to work out whether the offer is actually good value for you; you need to look at the fine details. Specifically, you need to pay attention to two symbols that will appear on the screen:

- non-permanent discounts (good value in the first year, but not so much after that) indicated by the piggy bank symbol;
- additional services, such as an insurance policy or the purchase of equipment, indicated by the cogwheel.

It's also always a good idea to use the DETAILS button, where you may find, for example, that the offer:

- only applies if you change supplier (i.e., it doesn't apply to existing customers);
- can only be signed online (and your bill will be digital only);
- can only be paid by direct debit through a bank or the Post Office (see above);
- has specific "Guarantees" or "Terms and Conditions".

There are also other aspects that are always worth checking in the supply contract, in particular the frequency with which the bills are issued and their terms of payment (some people might prefer monthly bills to keep single bills lower, but there must always be sufficient time between the bill being issued and the payment deadline...) and other aspects that we have already covered above:

- the amount of the security deposit (if payment is not made by "direct debit");
- when and how you can pay in instalments;
- what happens if you don't pay;
- whether there are any costs involved in the event of withdrawal;
- how to contact the supplier and its customer service team to report issues or ask for clarifications.

In short, to make the right choice, you need to take the time to check a few things, not just the price.

HOW CAN YOU CHANGE YOUR CONTRACT?

Once you've found an attractive offer and checked all the details - and you now know that this isn't exactly a straightforward or quick process - you can sign the new contract. At the time of signing, the new supplier must always provide a full copy of the contract together with two other documents: the Factsheet and the Comparison Document. The new supplier will start the process to switch supplier and terminate the old contract ("cancellation").

The switch-over to the new supplier usually takes between one and two months.

Please note: remember that the right to the 14-day **RECONSIDERATION** period applies for contracts signed remotely (online or by telephone) or in any case outside business premises (the suppliers' "stores"). Never waive this right, even if you are often asked to do so!

You could discover something in that period that makes you change your mind!

The supplier must always provide a copy of the contract and any other relevant documents, even if the contract is entered into remotely.

PROBLEMS WITH THE SUPPLIER

Consumer protection tools are available if problems arise during the provision of the service that cannot be resolved simply by contacting the supplier's customer service team (for example, if something in the bill is unclear). You can appeal to these directly or appoint a representative or a consumer organisation to do this for you:

- the first step is always to **lodge a complaint**, which involves submitting a form to the supplier (the supplier must provide this form);
- if the complaint goes unanswered or does not solve the problem, you can request mediation; this aims to reach a satisfactory agreement between the customer and the supplier. For this more complex procedure, you can contact the **Energy Consumer and Environment Helpdesk online** (<https://www.sportelloperilconsumatore.it>) or by telephone (hotline number 800 166 654).

Complaints and mediation are ways of solving problems you may have with a supplier without having to involve lawyers or the courts.

If the problem concerns the distribution or metering service - for example, there is a problem with the gas pressure, the new connection is delayed or the meter is not working - you should instead contact the **distributor** responsible for managing the networks and meters in your area (although you should also report this to your supplier).

CREDITS

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