



# INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON **Consumer protection law and policy**

5 - 6 July 2021, Palais des Nations

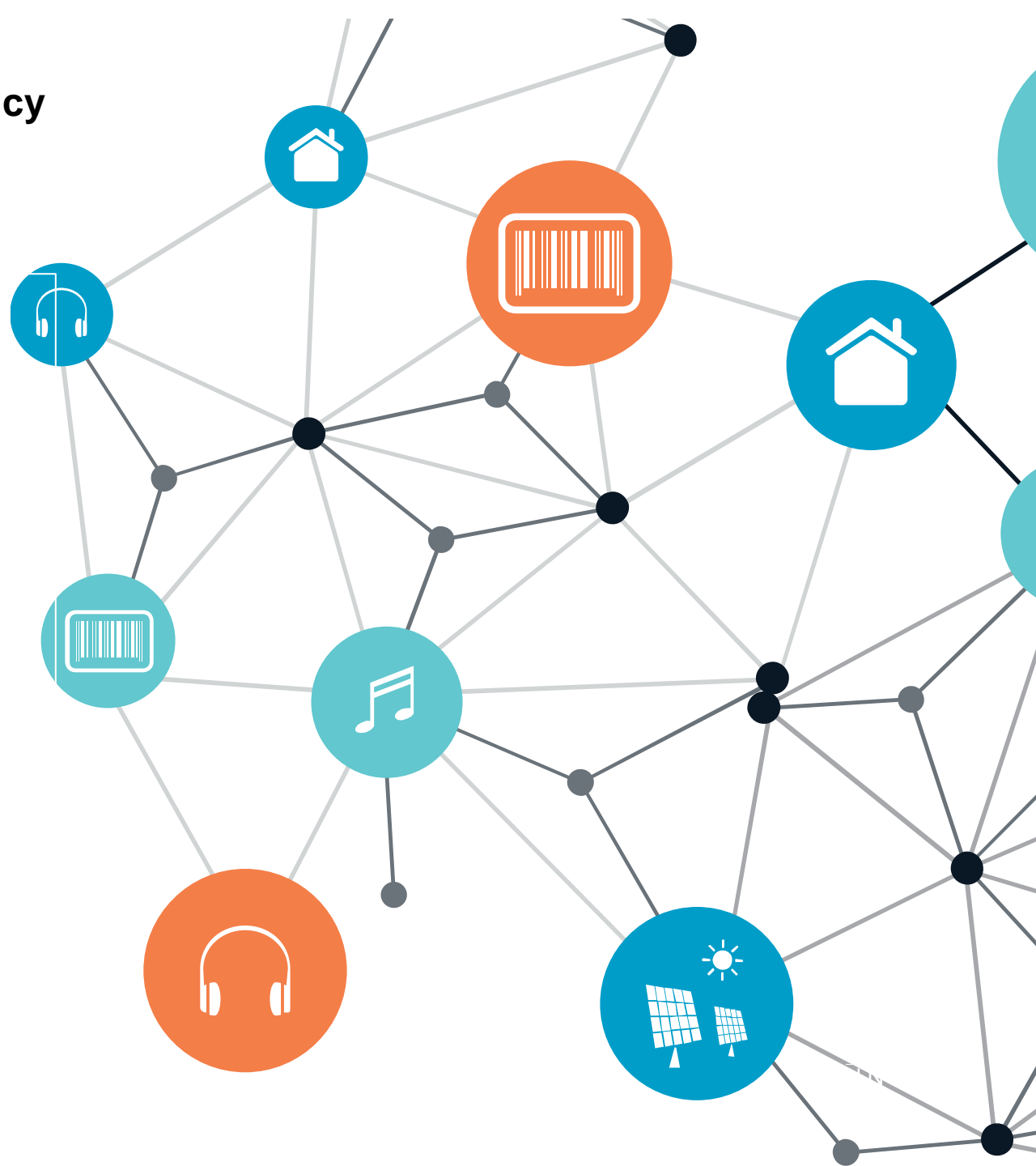




INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
**Consumer protection law and policy**

# **Consumer protection needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers in connection with public utilities**

**Monday, 5 July 2021  
11:00-12:00, Room XVIII**





# Identifying the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers

- UN Guidelines for consumer protection (5, 11a, 37, 42, 66h, 77)
- [UNCTAD Working Group on vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers](#)
  - Context-specific: belonging to certain groups or circumstantial considerations
  - In accordance with the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the country and the needs of its population, and bearing in mind the costs and benefits of proposed measures



# Consumer protection and public utilities

- Access
- Special protection measures
- Information and education
- Dispute resolution and redress



# Principles for the provision of public utilities

- Regularity
- Quality of service
- Affordability
- Good business practices



# Specific measures in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Disconnection bans
- Energy bills deferral and payment extension plans
- Enhanced assistance programmes
- Energy bills reduction or cancellation
- Other measures



# Policy recommendations

- Engage in public policy discussions with all relevant stakeholders
- Enact substantive legislation containing the rights of consumers of public utilities and the obligations of public utilities service providers
- Consider, review and evaluate supportive, protective and preventive measures with respect to public utilities, in light of the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers
- Coordinate policies across institutions and engage in dialogues with public authorities
- Engage with consumer groups and organizations, business and research institutions
- Regularly review and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of policy programmes



INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
**Consumer protection law and policy**

# Thank you

[Ying.Yu@unctad.org](mailto:Ying.Yu@unctad.org)

[Arnau.Izaguerra@unctad.org](mailto:Arnau.Izaguerra@unctad.org)

