On Creating Competition and Strategic Restructuring
Regulatory Reform in Public Utilities

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This book examines the ongoing transformation of public utilities, also known as network-based industries, in Western Europe and the United States. Examples are telecommunications, energy, and water distribution. Most of these network-based industries were until recently natural monopolies. Over the last two decades national governments have embarked upon privatization, deregulation and liberalization of their public utilities.

‘The introductory chapter by the editors is extremely wide-ranging and therefore very useful for any reader not yet introduced to the manifold intricacies of this topic. What is remarkable about this chapter is that three aspects are dealt with at the same time: the driving forces of the reform of network industries, the economics of pro-competitive regulation of them, and the political and institutional traps/complexities of this process. If this were not enough, it is done with a view on both the US and Europe. The remainder of the book shows, sometimes with painstaking detail, not only how difficult it is for regulators and their political masters but also for incumbents and not just for new entrants, as is always stressed. It shows the tricky question of extending reforms to the water and sewage sectors, how complex state/company interactions are in the first and later stages of reform and how hard it is to design "regulation" properly in the second generation.’

– Jacques Pellkman, College of Europe, Bruges and Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels, Belgium

2003 256 pp Hardback 978 1 84376 371 0 £95.00 £85.50 $138.00 $124.20

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