



collective energy switch

Totals:

€271.5m

Direct savings for consumers

More than **5,000,000** consumers signed up

More than **1,200,000** consumers switched

INITIATIVE ORGANISED BY

DATE

NUMBER OF CONSUMERS THAT SWITCHED

TOTAL SAVINGS

NETHERLANDS

Consumentenbond
 2011 / 2012 / 2013 / 2014 / 2015 / 2016
 58,294 / 110,186 / 60,547 / 53,059 / 79,375 / 78,216
 €14.1m / €34.7m / €16.1m / €16.0m / €32.6 m / €27.9 m [*]

UNITED KINGDOM

Which?
 2012
 almost 38,000
 over £8.4m

DENMARK

Forbrugerrådet TÆNK
 2012 / 2013
 (offer confined to Members of the Danish Consumer Council)
 4,000 / 2,000

CZECH REPUBLIC

dTest
 2015-2016
 22,000
 €6.4m

BELGIUM

Test-Achats
 2012 / 2013 / 2014 / 2015
 46,753 / 32,995 / 33,883 / 16,154
 €16.9m / €6.8m / €6.9m / €2.6m

FRANCE

UFC-Que Choisir
 2013-2014 / 2015 / 2016
 71,000 / 60,000 / 106,784
 €13.7m / €5.0m / €15.7m

AUSTRIA

VKI
 2013-2014 / 2015 / 2015-2016 / 2016-2017
 70,000 / 12,500 / 15,200 / 20,000
 €12.6m / €2.8m / €5.3m / €5.9m

PORTUGAL

DECO
 2013 / 2014 / 2016
 40,433 / 28,160 / 5,752
 €0.7m / €1.8m / €0.3m

SPAIN

OCU
 2013 / 2014 / 2016
 27,300 / 15,000 / 12,200
 €1.4m / €0.4m / € 0.8m [>]

SLOVENIA

ZPS
 2014-2015
 12,300
 €1.0m

ITALY

Altroconsumo
 2013 / 2014 / 2015 / 2016
 40,000 / 13,229 / 11,500 / 12,000
 €9.1m / €1.8m / €3.9m / €2.4m

[*] Savings are calculated for 1 year contracts while longer term contracts are also available.

[>] Savings are estimated.

How consumer organisations can help people get a better energy deal.



BEUC members' collective switching campaigns

What is collective switching?

- This is when a large number of consumers join forces to move energy suppliers for better, cheaper offers.

The process is often led or facilitated by a consumer organisation. Usually, the organiser approaches different energy companies asking them for a better deal for the consumers who have signed up to the campaign.

Collective switching campaigns demonstrate that there are ways for European consumers to play a role in rebalancing energy retail markets and thereby be more powerful when bargaining with energy suppliers.

However, these campaigns should be seen to provide consumers with a better deal, but are not a long term solution to market complexity.

Why is it good for consumers?

- It helps consumers get a better deal for energy supply and engage more directly in the energy market.
- It provides clear insight on consumers' perception of the market and their main concerns.
- It improves competition by enabling smaller providers to overcome entry barriers and increase their customer base.
- In many cases, suppliers need to agree to certain rules such as no unfair contract terms or penalties for early termination.

What do we ask the EU for?

- To facilitate the exchange of best practices for collective energy switching campaigns and provide the necessary support.
- Member States and energy regulators should remove regulatory and bureaucratic barriers when implementing the "Clean Energy for All Europeans" package to facilitate collective switching campaigns.
- To provide consumers with objective, reliable information on the available market offers and the possibility to compare them by independent comparison tools.
- To ensure the switching process is smooth and fast and consumers are timely informed and have a continuous service. The switching period should be reduced to less than three weeks.
- Establish specific rules on the renewal and termination of contracts in order to allow consumers to switch providers at no cost if they wish to do so, as 'termination fees' can be used to discourage consumers from switching.

Campaigns organised by BEUC members, all independent national consumer groups, helped strengthen energy customers' interests in many European countries. A number of these consumer organisations organised several campaigns throughout the year. Until today, more than 5 million consumers have signed up and around 1,200,000 households have switched.

The total savings made by those who switched are estimated at €271.5 million. However, these campaigns prompted some energy companies to adjust their offers. Overall savings can be reasonably expected to be even higher.