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## **“New Deal for Europe's Energy Consumers” sees light of day BEUC welcomes EU spotlight on consumers in changing energy market**

Helping consumers to get a better energy deal is the core of a number of initiatives announced by the European Commission today. This New Deal outlines the way forward by making it easier for consumers to compare offers, switch suppliers and find their way around a digitalised energy market. The Commission deal also supports consumers who generate and consume their own energy.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) welcomes this attention to energy consumers, and urges the Commission to match its words with deeds by ensuring that today's announcements are followed up with concrete proposals that upgrade consumer rights.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

“EU energy markets still do not function in the best interests of consumers. Our members report that offers are unnecessarily complex, suppressing the rate at which customers switch providers. At the same time, EU households spend 6.4% of their disposable income on home-related energy use<sup>1</sup>. Simplified offers would allow consumers to compare prices and switch providers if they find a better deal elsewhere. Independent price comparison websites are a good tool to this end, and we support the Commission's proposal that each EU country have such a website.

“The Commission has recognised what is needed in order to make the energy market work for consumers. Now it needs to put its money where its mouth is by following up with concrete legislative actions.

“For 80% of EU households, consuming self-generated solar energy would be cheaper than buying electricity.<sup>2</sup> Consumers should be able to easily feed excess energy into the electricity grid; too often this is complicated and financially not attractive. If the EU is serious about diversifying its energy supply, it needs to remove obstacles to self-generation. Charging consumers for electricity generated by rooftop solar panels is outdated.”

END

<sup>1</sup> Energy Efficiency and its contribution to energy security and the 2030 Framework for climate and energy policy, Brussels, 23.7.2014, COM (2014) 520 final.

<sup>2</sup> Cost Maps for Unsubsidised Photovoltaic Electricity, European Commission Joint Research Centre, Institute for Energy and Transport, September 2014.

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