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10 years on from the first inefficient light bulb ban, consumers have saved up to €1,330

In the decade after EU rules on energy-efficient lighting kicked in, the average European household has saved up to €1,330 – the equivalent combined price of a mid-range washing machine, fridge and dishwasher. The figure comes from a [new study](#) commissioned by ANEC, the European consumer voice in standardisation, and BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation.¹

Thanks to the EU Ecodesign lighting [regulation](#), inefficient incandescent and halogen light bulbs have been phased out progressively since 1st September 2009, paving the way to more efficient LEDs. According to Spanish consumer association [OCU](#), LEDs are up to 10 times more efficient than incandescent bulbs. ANEC and BEUC had long called for the progressive phasing out of incandescent light bulbs, proven to disadvantage both the consumer's pocket and the environment.

The successive bans have boosted sales of LEDs and helped consumers save money in the long term. British consumer group [Which? found](#) that, in comparison to halogen light bulbs, LEDs last much longer and are cheaper to run.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

“Everyone agrees that energy-efficient light bulbs help consumers save money. Now we know how much. It is good news that just replacing our light bulbs when needed can help consumers save a nice sum of money. With prices of energy-efficient LEDs going down, greening definitely helps consumers save.”

Stephen Russell, Secretary General of ANEC, commented:

“Not only have LEDs become more energy-efficient, but their quality has also improved over time. For example, colour rendering and brightness are both better. Lights have become nicer to the eye and less troubling for people prone to migraines, thanks to reduced flickering.”

Study details:

We have identified three saving scenarios (savings per household from 2009 to 2019):

- **€1,330 for “progressive” adopters**, i.e. those who switched from incandescent lights to halogens between 2009 and 2013, and from halogens to LEDs the following

years. Consumers saved most in this scenario because they switched to LEDs when they became cheaper.

- **€1,259 for the “early” adopters**, i.e. those (mostly tech-savvy) consumers who quickly switched to LEDs from 2009 on.
- **€745 for households that have replaced incandescent lights (banned progressively since 2009) with halogens** but have not switched to LEDs yet.

Timeline:

- **1st September 2009**: the most inefficient incandescent and halogen light bulbs progressively phased out between 2009 and 2012.
- **1st September 2016**: halogen spotlights no longer allowed to be put on the market (but sold until stocks depleted).
- **1st September 2018**: inefficient halogen bulbs no longer allowed to be put on the market (but on sale until stocks depleted). The European Commission [highlights](#) that the switch will bring about “yearly energy savings equal to the annual electricity consumption of Portugal”.

More information:

- Technical report '[10 years anniversary - phase out of incandescent lightbulbs: How has the Ecodesign lighting regulation helped consumers save money over time?](#)', Öko-Institut, 2019.
- BEUC news piece [Phase out of halogen bulbs: Switch on your energy efficient LEDs](#), August 2018.
- BEUC news piece [Goodbye halogen spotlights, hello more efficient LEDs](#), September 2016.

1. This study, carried out by Öko-Institut, considers the average household to be 3 persons (a couple with one child), equipped with 45 lamps. The average yearly use is 450 hours for halogens and 500 hours for LED lamps.

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