



collective energy switch

Totals:

€173.9m

Direct savings for consumers

More than

4,000,000

consumers signed up

More than

800,000

consumers switched

NETHERLANDS

Consumentenbond

2011 / 2012 / 2013 / 2014

58,294 / 110,186 / 60,547 / 53,059

€14.1m / €34.7m / €16.1m / €16.0m

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

BELGIUM

Test-Achats

2012 / 2013 / 2014

46,753 / 32,995 / 33,883

€16.9m / €6.8m / €6.9m

AUSTRIA

VKI

2013-2014 / 2015

70,000 / 12,500

€12.6m / €2.8m

FRANCE

UFC-Que Choisir

2013-2014 / 2015

71,000 / 60,000

€13.7m / €5.0m

SLOVENIA

ZPS

2014-2015

12,300

€1.0m

PORTUGAL

DECO

2013 / 2014

40,433 / 28,160

€0.7m / €1.8m

SPAIN

OCU

2013 / 2014

27,300 / 15,000

€1.4m / €0.4m

ITALY

Altroconsumo

2013 / 2014

40,000 / 13,229

€9.1m / €2.1m

INITIATIVE ORGANISED BY

DATE

NUMBER OF CONSUMERS THAT SWITCHED

TOTAL SAVINGS

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.

What do we ask the EU for?

- To facilitate the exchange of best practices for collective energy switching campaigns and provide the necessary support.
- To complete the implementation of relevant EU legislation, particularly the Third Energy Package in order to make the market more competitive and be more consumer-friendly.
- 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 4 million consumers have signed up and around 830,000 households have switched.

The total savings made by those who switched are estimated at €173 million. However, these campaigns prompted some energy companies to adjust their offers. Overall savings can be reasonably expected to be even higher.