

CEER
Council of European
Energy Regulators



Consumer Focus Event 2026

Fostering Consumer Engagement: Transparency, Trust and Information

20 May 2026 | 14:00 - 17:30 CEST | Brussels & Online

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How well-informed do you feel about the current energy situation (e.g. energy prices and geopolitical context)?

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Opening Remarks

BRAM CLAEYS Secretary General, CEER



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Keynote Speech

ALEJANDRO ULZURRUN Head of Unit B1,
DG ENER, European Commission



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Session I: Panel Discussion

Information: Affordability, Flexibility & Consumer Awareness



MODERATOR

Natalie McCoy

Co-Chair of the Customers and Retail Market Working Group, **CEER**



Irene Iacovides

Director for Retail and Consumer Markets Regulation, **RAAEY**



Frederico Oliviera da Silva

Head of Energy, **BEUC**



Massimo Serpieri

Team Leader for Consumer Issues, DG ENER (Unit B1), **European Commission**

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15 minute break



Please come back at **15:30**

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Session II: Interview

Trust: Distance Selling



MODERATOR

Raphael Hanoteaux

Deputy Secretary General,
CEER



Lucila De Almeida

Professor at the European
University, FSR



Javier Rincón

Distance selling experience
in Spain, CNMC



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Distant selling and unfair commercial practices

20 May 2026

Javier Rincón García

Subdirectorato for Economic-Financial Regulation and Regulated Prices
Energy Directorate – CNMC

1. CNMC role regarding unfair commercial practices

- Monitors switching procedures and switching regulation: monitors consumers consent to supplier switching
- Monitors compliance by suppliers with sector-specific consumer protection regulations.

In case of breaches/deficiencies CNMC:

- Sanctions.
- Normative proposals.
- Legally binding decisions.

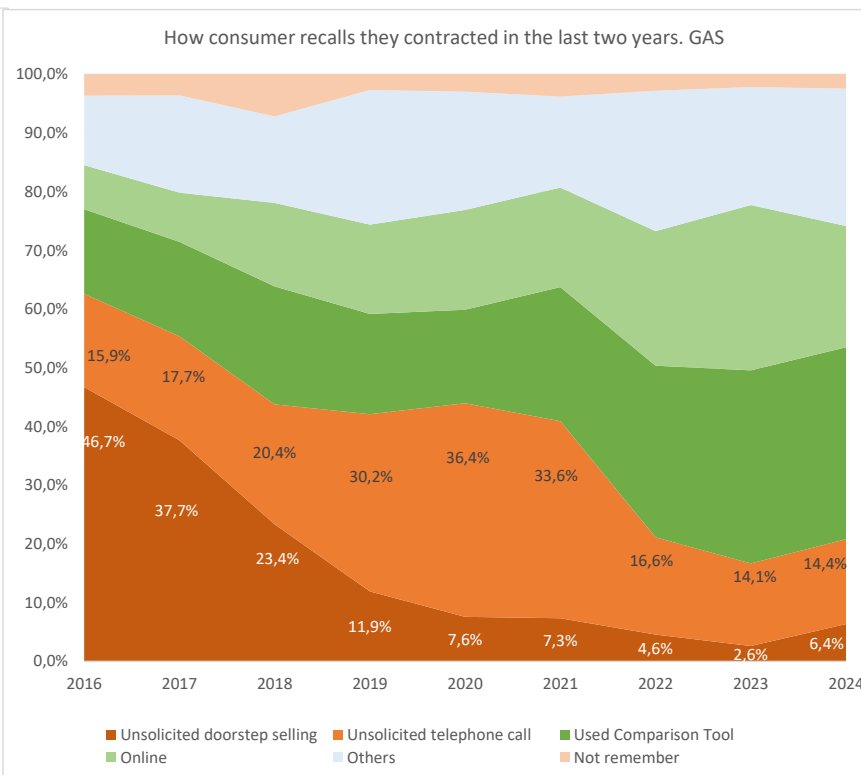
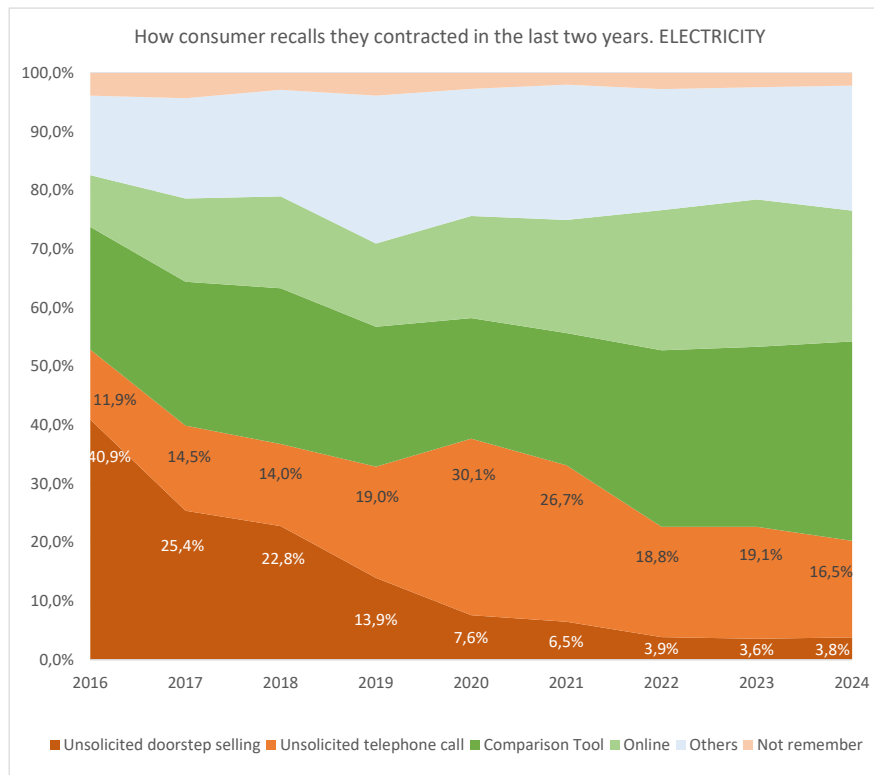
2. Distant selling issues and challenges

- **General structural challenge in energy markets:** significant share domestic consumers limited knowledge/market understanding.
- **Distance** customer acquisition channels may facilitate the use practices that **exploits** it.
- Difficult to find evidence of these practices.
- Design and enunciate measures that limit effectively unfair commercial practices and not impact negatively in competition.
- Most common elements unfair commercial practices:
 - Misleading information to convey an artificial sense of necessity to carry out the switch
 - Misleading information regarding switching implications/identity of the company or insufficiently transparent communication of the agreed contractual conditions.

3.1. Measures/actions taken: Door-to-door channel

Historically, most complaints received by the CNMC regarding unfair commercial practices were linked to **unsolicited door-to-door sales**.

In October 2018, **new legislation**: suppliers must demonstrate that a **customer has explicitly requested a visit**.



After sanctions and the COVID restrictions, the weight in switching channels shifted towards telephone, online and others.

3.2. Measures/actions taken: Telephone channel

Weight over total switching complaints in CNMC	2022	2023	2024	2025
Unfair commercial practices	25,4%	14,8%	23,5%	40,0%
Unfair commercial practices excluding one agent		9,7%	8,0%	19,6%
Nº complaints for unfair commercial practices	105	35	56	102

In June 2023, Telecommunication Law introduced a **general ban on unsolicited commercial calls**, including the energy sector. Suppliers must obtain consumers' consent before making such calls, except under certain conditions.

New Electricity Regulation. Main measures (June 2026) :

- Consumer's request to be contacted must be clear, unambiguous, and for a specific purpose. Consumers must be properly informed of the nature of their request.
- A complete recording of the contracting call must be made, including proper identification of the supplier, the purpose of the commercial call, and a clear, comprehensive presentation of the offer's content and details.
- The supplier must provide a summary of the key contractual conditions, prior to the conclusion of the contract.

3.2. Measures/actions taken: Telephone channel

Enforcement action. CNMC identified one supplier with an unusually high number of complaints relating to its size and commercial activity (between 2022-2025).

CNMC issued a legally binding decision for this supplier in February 2026. This decision sets out several requirements to the supplier, notably:

- Record all commercial contacts, ensuring that information requirements are met.
- Measures to verify the origin of the consumer's consent to the commercial contact. After a contract is agreed, the supplier must conduct and record a verification call.
- Monitor its sales force's activities through a series of indicators, and report to the CNMC. If the sales force exceeds certain thresholds, corrective measures must be implemented.

4. Conclusions

- Tackle **impulsive contracting and diminish urgency** in the decision. Prohibition of unsolicited contact, although not fully effective.
- **Improve enforcement:** Infringement type, documentary requirements.
- **Collaboration** with other competent authorities could contribute to a seamless and stronger enforcement.

To be assessed the impact of the new measures that enter into force during 2026, which focused in:

- Reinforce consent for commercial contact.
- Enhance the transparency of the information.
- Strengthen documentary requirements.

Thanks for your attention

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Session III: Panel Discussion

Transparency: Towards Improved Comparability of Energy Contracts



MODERATOR

Bram Claeys

Secretary General, CEER



Helena Almeida

Co-Chair CEER Customer Empowerment and Protection WS, ERSE



Marie Claerbout

Senior Manager for EU Affairs, ENGIE



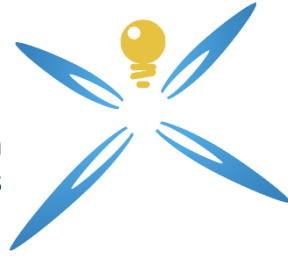
Marine Cornelis

Founder & Executive Director, Next Energy Consumer

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Fostering energy markets
empowering consumers

Transparency and Comparability in the Retail Market

CEMP

Helena Almeida
20.05.2026

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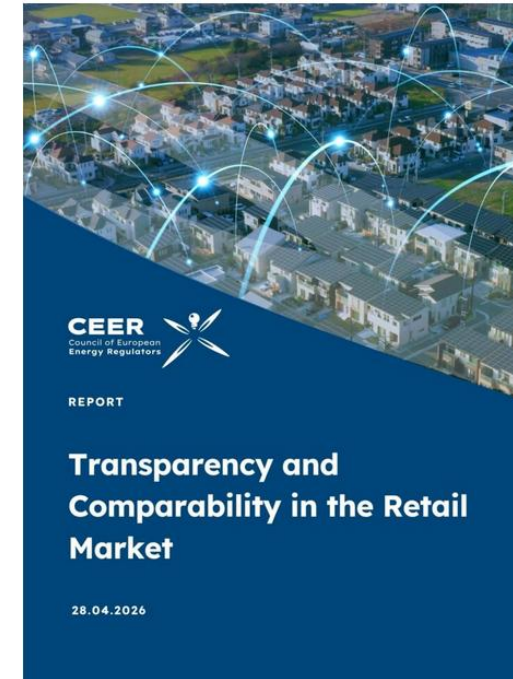
Key Challenges for Contract Comparability

- Price Comparison Challenges
 - *Challenges related to the nature of price structures*
 - *Challenges related to consumption habits*
- Market Uncertainty and Security
- Additional Services and Bundled Offers
- The role of Intermediary platforms

Towards Improved Comparability

- Standardising Consumer Contracts in the EU Energy Sector: Ensuring Transparency and Uniformity
- Comparison tools: Recommendations for improving existing comparison tools or developing new consumer-friendly models

Conclusions



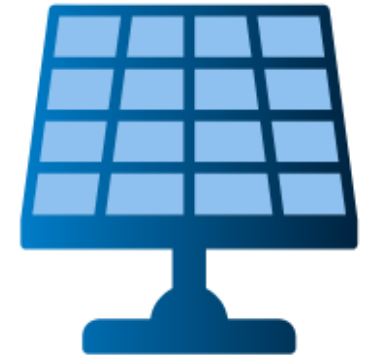
Challenges related to the nature of price structure

- **Retail Energy Cost Components:** Energy bills generally combine a fixed charge with a variable unit price (based on consumption), allowing consumers to estimate total expenditure by analyzing both facts
- **Comparability Challenges:** Comparing offers is straightforward for similar structures (e.g., two flat-price plans) but difficult across different types, such as comparing a flat-price contract against time-of-use or indexed pricing
- **Time-of-Use and Indexed Complexity:** Time-of-use contracts vary based on time (day/season), while indexed/dynamic contracts depend on fluctuating wholesale markets, making future unit costs unknown
- **Limitations of Direct Comparison:** Comparing flat-price and time-of-use contracts (e.g., offer A vs. C) is complex, as the best choice depends heavily on individual usage patterns and time-based consumption, often rendering simple unit price comparisons misleading

Risk of Misleading Conclusions

Challenges related to consumption habits

- **Diverse Consumer Preferences:** increasingly diverse consumers - those seeking simple, traditional offers vs. active users demanding flexibility, information, and customized options
- **Segmented Needs:** different "active" profiles - electric vehicle (EV) owners looking for specialized tariffs and participants in energy-sharing schemes - making one-size-fits-all solutions obsolete
- **Unpredictable Consumption:** Individual factors like solar panels (PV), home batteries, and smart home technology make consumption patterns highly variable and difficult to predict compared to traditional standardised profiles
- **Complex Influencing Factors:** Technology, such as energy management systems (EMS) and time-shifting appliances, alongside third-party dependencies (community energy sharing), drastically complicates individual energy usage



Comparison Tool Challenges: shifting dynamics make it nearly impossible for comparison tools to accurately estimate total energy consumption

Market Uncertainty

- High market volatility and the need for constant monitoring create consumer fear and reluctance to switch

Additional Services and Bundled Offers

- Bundled energy contracts and services (solar, HVAC, telco) offer convenience and efficiency, but their growing complexity, lack of transparency, and high costs upon termination create significant barriers to comparison, switching, and market competition

The Role of Intermediary Platforms

- While energy intermediary platforms offer valuable comparison and switching services, they pose challenges regarding transparency, potential conflicts of interest in algorithms, and a lack of regulatory oversight, necessitating clearer rules to protect consumers and ensure trust

- **Standardising Consumer Contracts in the EU Energy Sector: Ensuring Transparency and Uniformity**
- **Setting Minimum Standards for Clarity in Presentation and Marketing**
- **Transparency in Termination Fees**
- **Dynamic Pricing: empowering the flexible consumer**
- **Comparison tools: Recommendations for improving existing comparison tools or developing new consumer-friendly models ([CEER 2022 Recommendations](#); best practices)**

Recommended Actions:

- **Uniform presentation of offers** is key to providing transparent and reliable information. However, achieving full harmonisation can be complex due to differences in national market structures and regulatory frameworks. Therefore, while common principles should be encouraged, the specific implementation of harmonised formats should be left to the discretion of each Member State.
- Regarding intermediary platforms, most NRAs lack the competence to regulate their activity. Therefore, it is important to **guarantee transparency in the platforms' funding models and, at the very least, to monitor their activity.**
- Regarding the various marketing communication channels, it is also crucial to **ensure that information is clear and to oversee market functioning.**
- **Termination fees and dynamic pricing** should also be guided by **transparent principles**, such as a clear **calculation methodology** and **on-demand access to information.**
- To empower flexible consumers, it is essential to provide them with **regular information on their consumption data and improve forecast consumption calculation** through simple, transparent methodologies.

Providing timely, reliable information and user-friendly tools is essential for empowering consumers to make better choices

Thank you



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Closing Remarks

NATALIE MCCOY Co-Chair of the Customers
and Retail Market Working Group, CEER

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Thank you for joining!

Please join us for networking drinks



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