August 2015 omnibus survey of micro-businesses: summary report

Introduction

The CMA's updated issues statement identified issues with transparency and pricing and margin on certain (non-fixed term) contracts[1]. Their findings reflected our own research and analysis of this market.[2]

Citizens Advice decided to investigate whether micro-businesses would be interested in greater access to pricing information, using price comparison websites and stronger controls on brokers. We wanted to understand whether the CMA's proposed remedies would promote market engagement and enable consumers to obtain the most suitable contracts at reasonable prices.

The research also aimed to establish how the smallest non-domestic consumers were currently engaging with the market, and in what ways. In particular we were interested in understanding how confident micro-businesses felt when engaging with the market and how strongly or otherwise they believed greater transparency and new ways of obtaining price and contract information would improve their interactions.

We commissioned Populus to speak to 1,000 micro-businesses[3] (via an online survey) on our behalf and the key results from this Omnibus survey are summarised here.[4]

Key findings

- Most (57 per cent) micro-businesses in our survey are on (generally the best value) fixed-term contracts and most (74 per cent) felt reasonably high confidence in their ability to negotiate a new contract when the time comes;
- A negotiated fixed-term contract is also considered the best course of market engagement by the majority (80 per cent), and the larger the consumer (in terms of turnover) the less likely they will be "rolled over" onto a more expensive offer;
- There is no clear view on whether comparing different suppliers' prices is easy, though more find it hard than do not (39 v. 29 per cent);

[1] Our response at http://tinyurl.com/q735amx
[2] http://tinyurl.com/9vy8prx; http://tinyurl.com/3nh3mkz; http://tinyurl.com/pj7jr35
[3] As per Ofgem's definition, i.e. employs fewer than 10 employees (or their full time equivalent) and has an annual turnover or balance sheet no greater than €2 million, or consumes not more than 100,000 kWh of electricity per year, or consumes not more than 293,000 kWh of gas per year.
[4] Questions 1-4 aimed to establish that the respondent was indeed an Ofgem-definition micro-business and that they had a non-domestic supply contract; also so that we could track differential answers in relation to the size of the respondent

- Micro-businesses choose to engage with the market in a variety of different ways, with large numbers of consumers using different tools like TPIs and price comparison websites (PCW) (35 per cent) and same-supplier renewals (15 per cent), but their perception as to the relative ease of their chosen process was key to their decision;

- The majority (56 per cent) of micro-businesses believed that there was "some" degree of choice in the market;

- There was very high (83 per cent) support from micro-businesses for the CMA proposal that suppliers list their prices on their websites to assist with engagement;

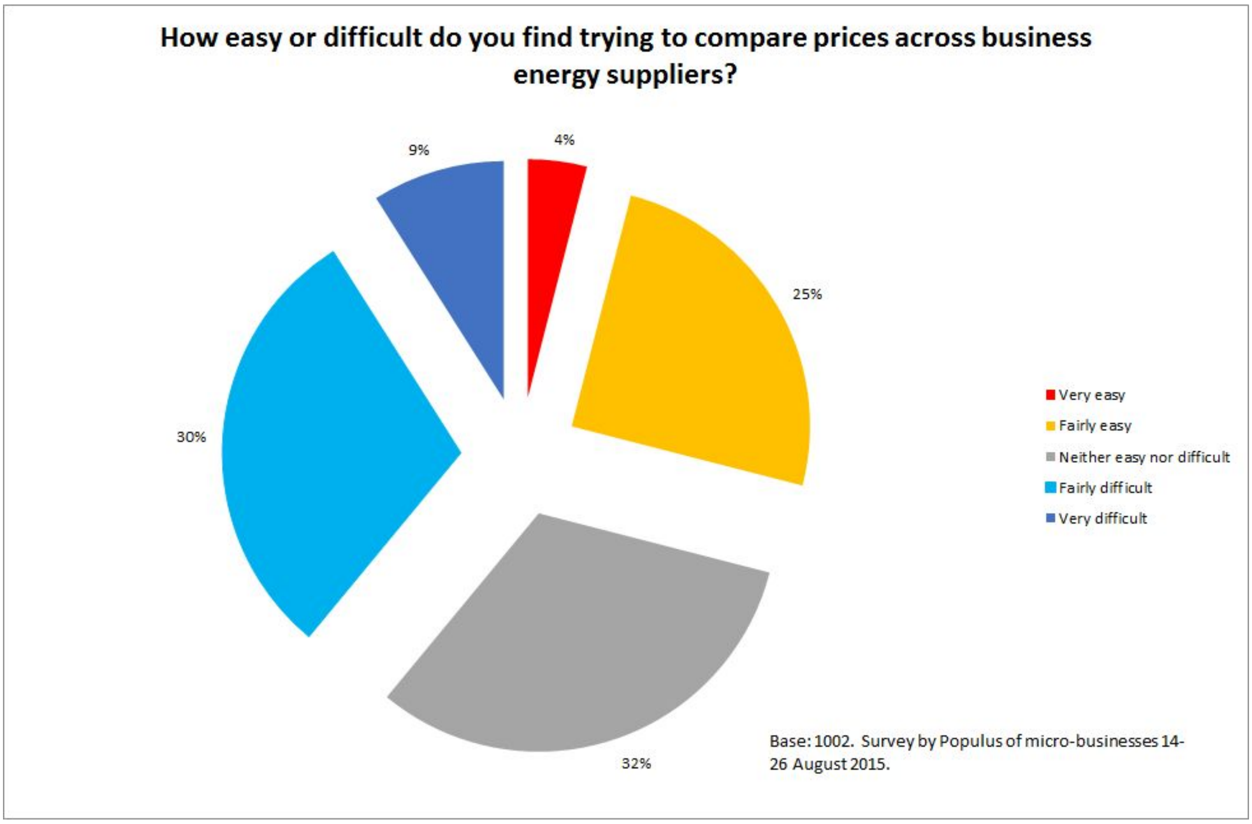
- TPIs would, the majority agreed, be more popular as a tool if they were required to disclose any preferential relationships they had with suppliers (54 per cent) and if they disclosed cheaper deals than they could offer (92 per cent);

- The majority of micro-businesses would prefer to look at suppliers' listed prices directly (if available) than use a TPI (58 v. 29 per cent);

- There was no overwhelmingly clear preference for who should run a non-domestic PCW (another CMA proposal) but the energy regulator was the choice of a small majority (52 per cent);

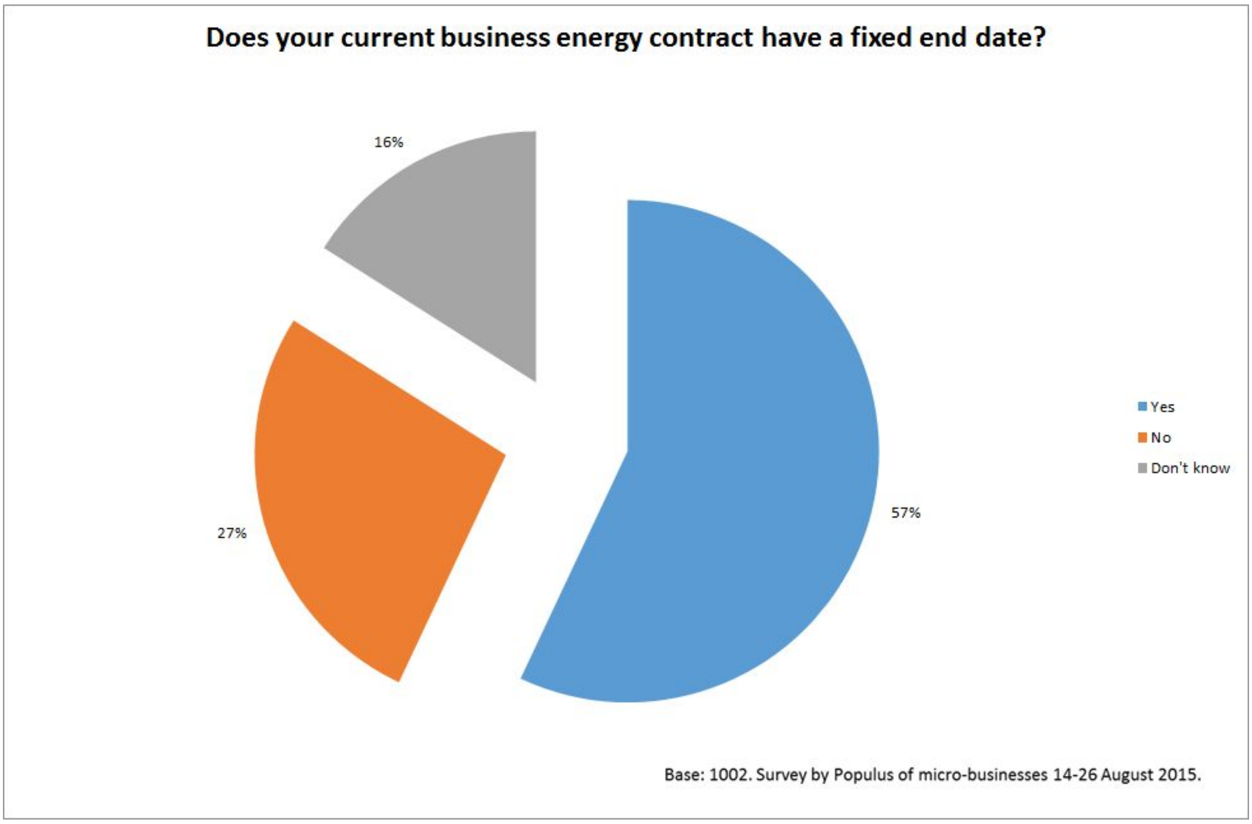
- Those micro-businesses who felt they there was a high level of choice available also found engagement relatively easy (52 per cent); the majority of them used methods like PCWs and brokers (54 per cent). Those who felt they had little choice seemingly did little research.

Understanding micro-business engagement



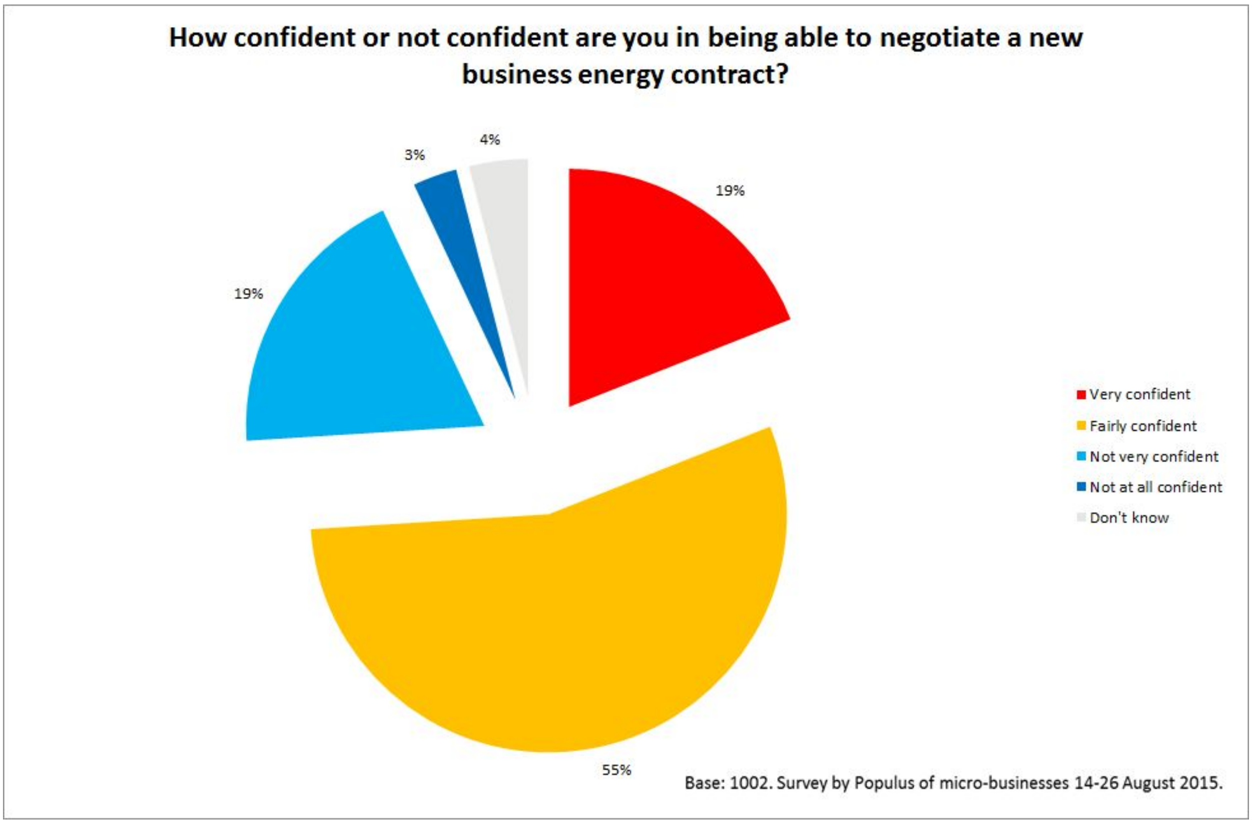
Micro-businesses are divided as to whether they can currently compare prices easily or not, with 29 per cent saying it was either fairly or very easy and 39 per cent per cent fairly or very difficult. "Very easy" was cited less than half (four per cent) as many times as "very hard" (nine per cent). Around one in three considered it neither easy nor difficult.

Size of business did not significantly affect responses. For example, 27 per cent of sole traders found it easy and 41 per cent found it difficult; for a business with ten employees the equivalent figures were 33 per cent and 39 per cent respectively.



The current market is designed around the (price) appeal of formal fixed-term contracts so we were interested in how many micro-businesses were on such arrangements. Just over half (57 per cent) were aware that they were on fixed end date tariffs. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) were not on fixed end date contracts, meaning they must be on (generally more expensive) evergreen, deemed or out-of-contract rates.[5] Around one-in-six customers were unaware whether they were on a fixed term contract or not.

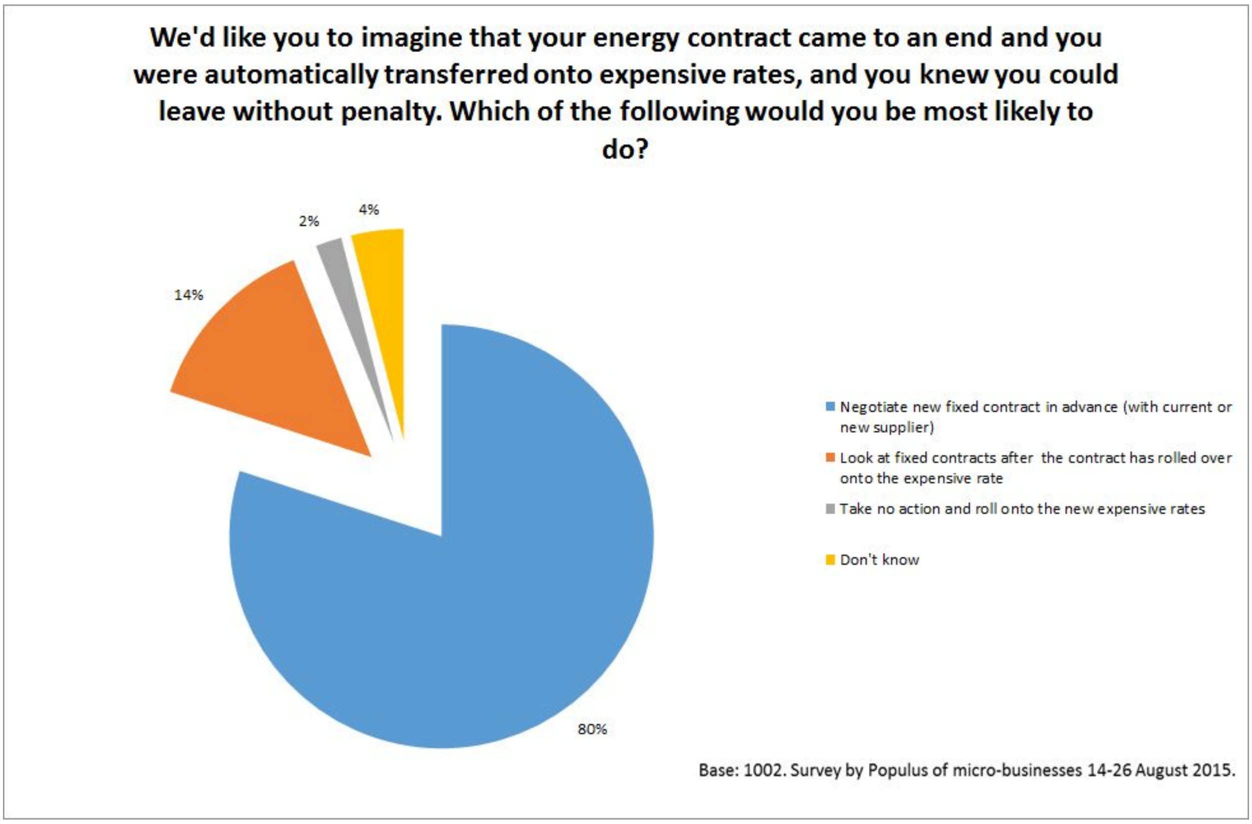
[5] The CMA (using Ofgem data from 2013) found an 80:20 split but did not allow for "don't knows"; in this piece of research many of the "don't knows" may have been on fixed-end date contracts but the fact they did not know is itself of interest given the consequent effects on engagement.



In answer to a question on general confidence in negotiation, 55 per cent said they were "fairly" confident and, in aggregate, 74 per cent confident to some degree in doing so. Just 1 in 5 (22 per cent) said they were not confident to some degree.

When we look at the size of business and their answers to this question there is once again no consistent and discernible correlation between scale of operation and market confidence. For businesses with turnover of less than £10,000 the net confident/not-confident split is 72:21 per cent; for businesses with turnover of at least £1.4mn it is 79:14 per cent.

The differential between the 74 per cent who say they are very or fairly confident they could negotiate a new contract and the 57 per cent who are sure they are on a fixed-term contract between these two questions is of interest. It suggests that there could be an active 1 in 5 of consumers, who are confident, but do not actively choose to engage and obtain the cheapest deal, for whatever reason. They may choose to not to have a fixed contract for another reason that only further detailed research can uncover.



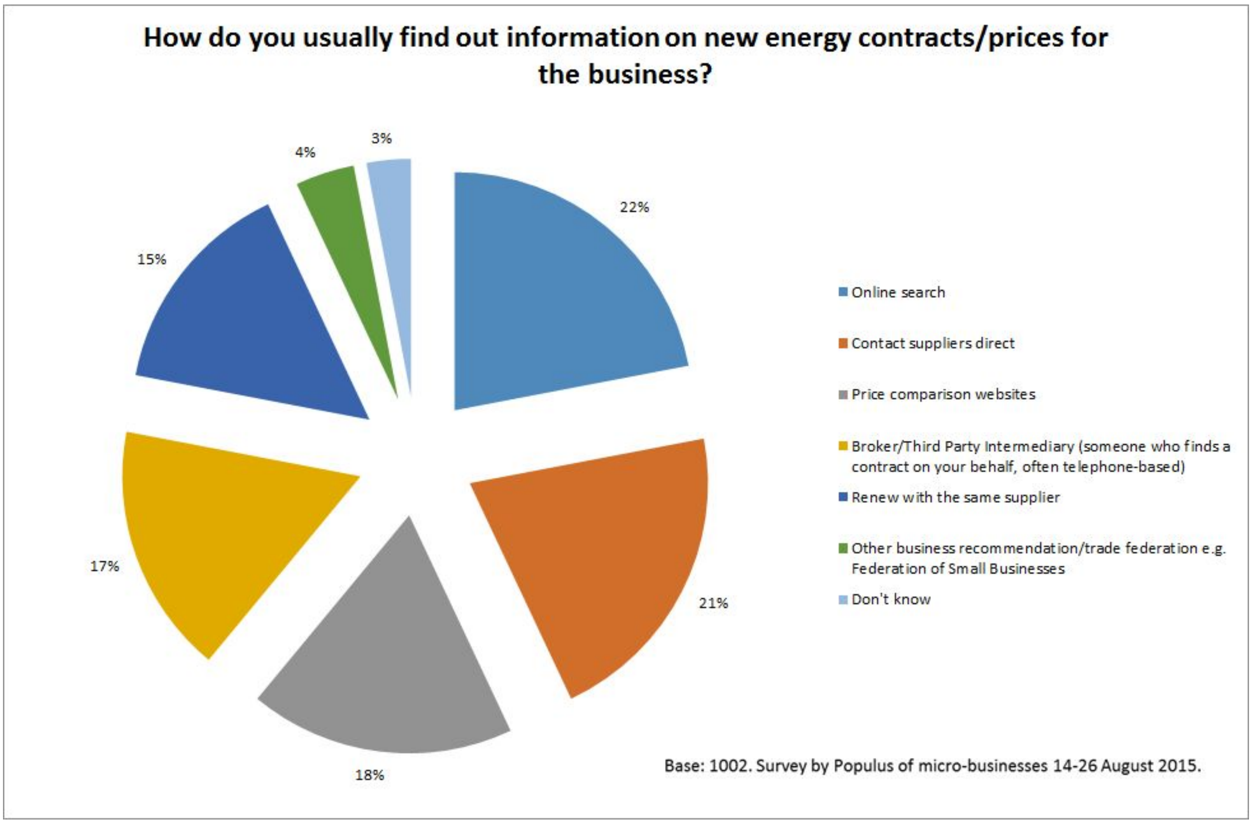
Furthermore, respondents[6] were overwhelmingly (80 per cent) of the opinion that they would negotiate a new fixed contract before their current one came to an end and avoid being rolled onto more expensive rates (at least in theory). However 14 per cent admitted they would look at new rates after having been rolled-over, suggesting that some consumers need this nudge factor to push them into engaging.

Our survey found that there was a positive correlation between turnover and confidence in negotiating a new fixed-term contract at the appropriate time. The incremental increase at thresholds between businesses with under-£10k turnover and above-£1.4mn turnover was significant with 66 per cent of the under-£10k turnover being confident compared to 86 per cent of the above-£1.4m turnover. Between these extremes the correlation is clear, with figures of 77 and 80 per cent for £50-100k and £300-500k turnovers respectively.

The rollover "choice" declined from 10 per cent (if under-£10k) to 3 per cent or less (for all turnovers above £200k) respectively; generally the larger the business the less likely to be rolled over it seems. This suggests that the CMA in its proposal to fully ban such auto-rollovers, as they disproportionately impact the very smallest and therefore least-engaged businesses, is appropriate.

[6] Page 19 of appendix question responses

How micro-businesses search for new deals



There seems to be a fairly even split between the different methods we asked about in terms of how micro-businesses gain information on potential contracts and prices. Online searches (22 per cent) and direct contact with suppliers (21 per cent) was the usual method for just over 1 in 5 micro-businesses respectively.

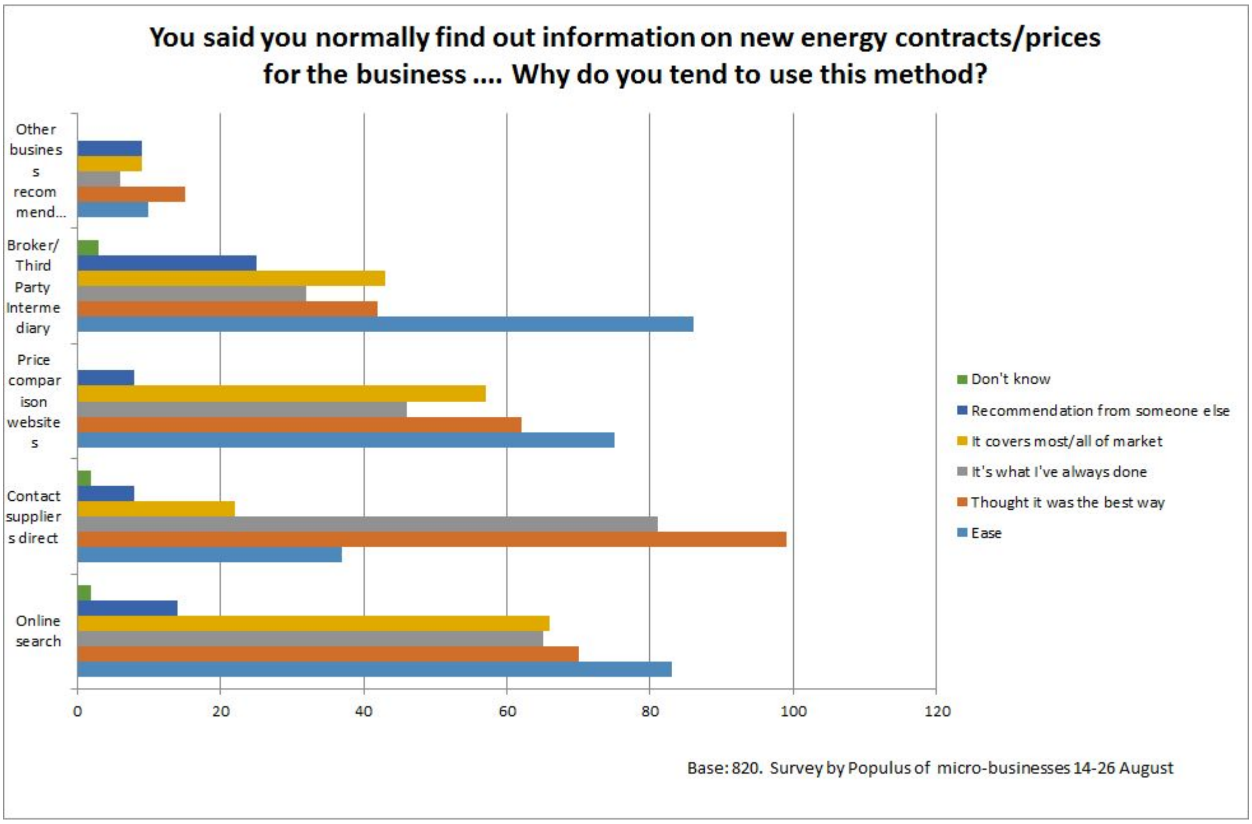
TPIs and PCWs were used in aggregate by 35 per cent of micro-businesses. This corresponds with another piece of research carried out by Citizens Advice[7] which showed that smaller businesses did not use TPIs as often as larger businesses (ones not considered micro-businesses). However in the current research, across the different sizes of micro-business we spoke to there was no consistent correlation between either turnover or number of employees and apparent propensity to use a TPI. There may therefore possibly be a “minimum threshold” above which SMEs’ energy use is such that a TPI is of interest to them; our research did not provide us with sufficient data to be able to draw firmer conclusions.

Overall, 15 per cent of micro-businesses routinely renewed with their current supplier. Only 1 in 25 micro-businesses took recommendations and information from a trade body or similar.

Looking into the sizes of the businesses against their answers more generally, there is limited correlation between turnover and any particular method of contracting aside from renewing with their current supplier. There the numbers between the

[7] http://tinyurl.com/pqqqavp

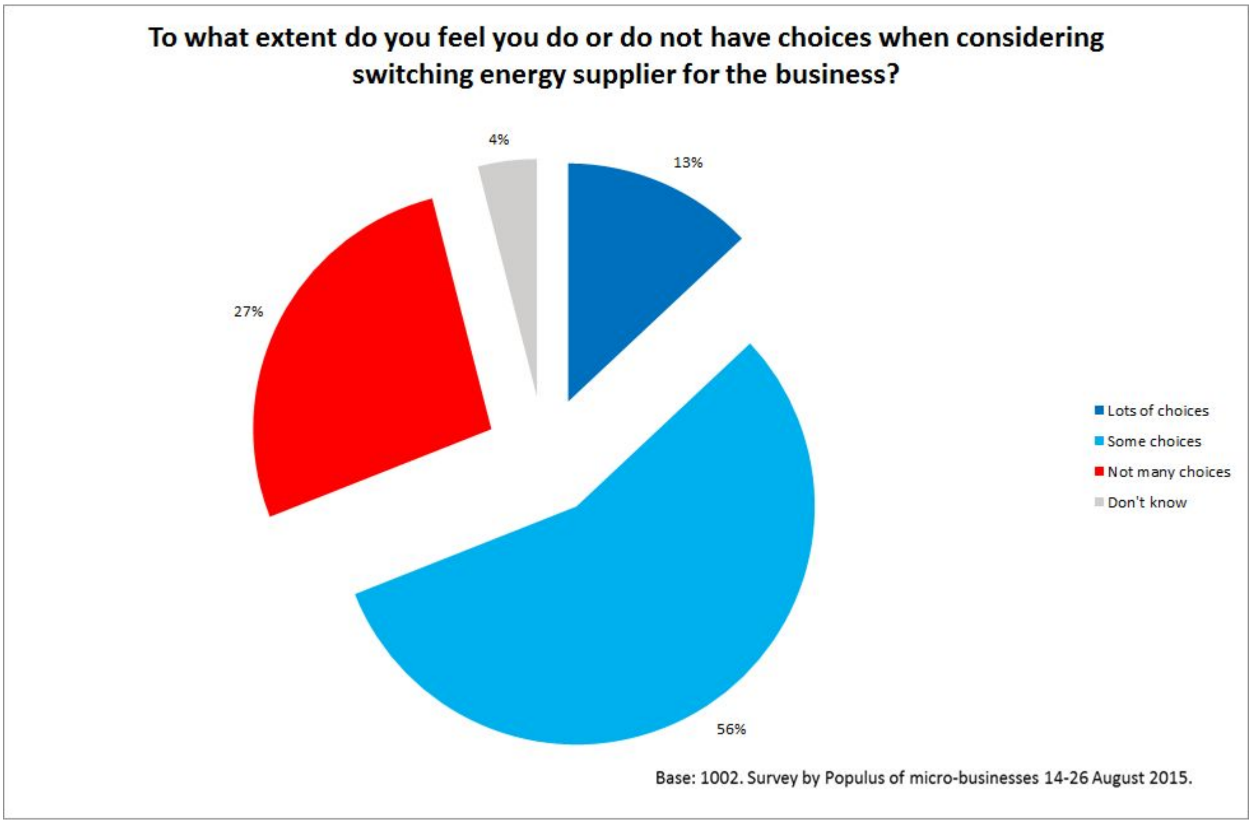
very smallest businesses (less than-£10k turnover) and the larger (£50-100k and more than £200k turnover respectively) is 31 per cent to 17 per cent and then 15 per cent or less, suggesting a greater degree of engagement when we might assume energy spend is higher in nominal terms.



All of the respondents, who did not renew with their incumbent supplier, were then asked why they used a different method[8]. For three of the five separate reasons the ease of the method was the top reason; 35 per cent across all of those mentioned it. However those contacting suppliers directly thought that that was the "best" way of working (46 per cent), with ease coming in as the third reason. Respondents were also generally keen to use a method that covered most or all of the market (24 per cent cited it).

We were also interested in how much choice people felt they had when engaging with the market.

[8] With multiple answers possible, so totals do not add to 100%

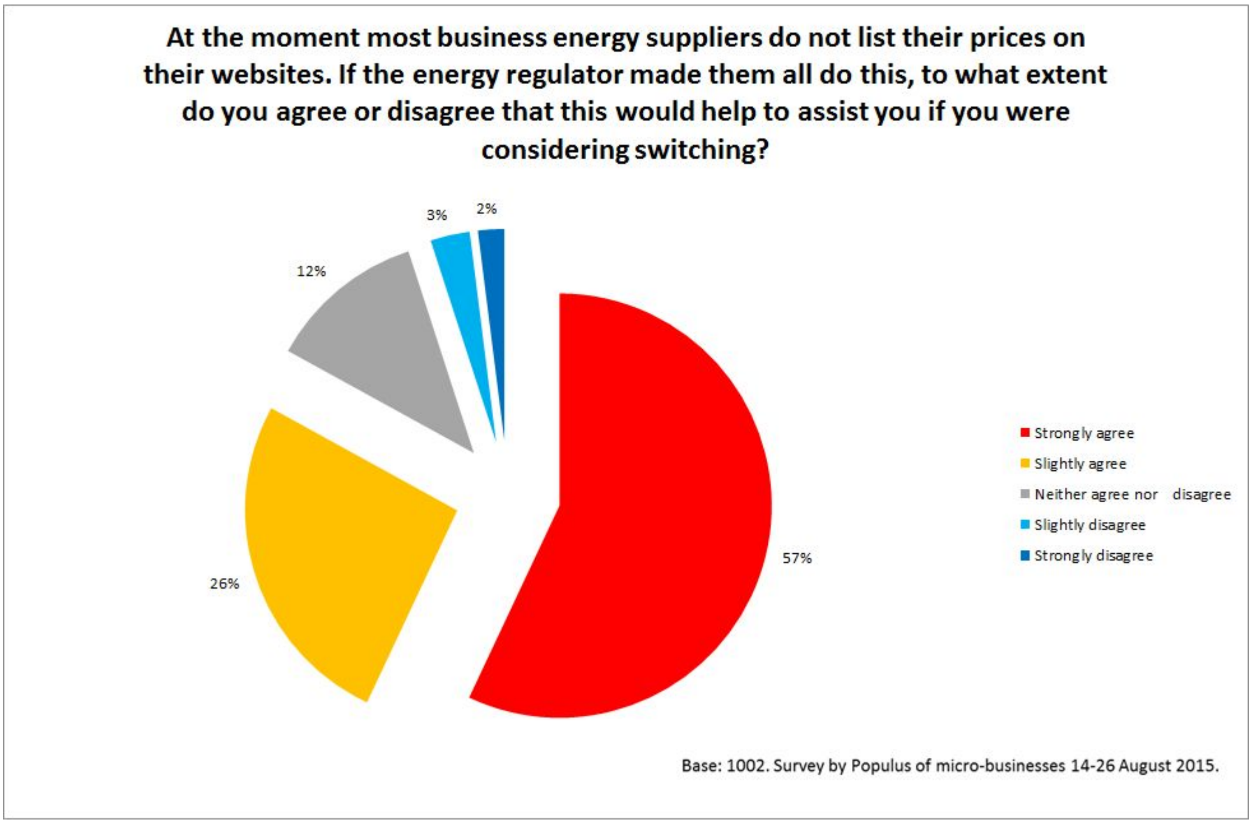


A majority of respondents felt they had “some” choice (56 per cent) but only 13 per cent felt there was “lots” of choice - perhaps odd in an market with ostensibly many tariff offerings from many different suppliers. More than 1 in 4 (27 per cent) felt they had “not many” choices at all.

When we cross-tabulate the answers[9] to the choice question with those regarding the ease of comparing prices there is a correlation. 52 per cent of those saying they had found it “easy” (to compare prices) also said they had “lots” of choices; 62 per cent of those who found it “difficult” (to compare prices) had “not many” choices. Those consumers who find it harder to engage, for whatever reason, also consider they have fewer choices - or perhaps the causality is the other way around. In that case an assumption of limited choice would lead to a perceived high cost of engagement and hence little of it.

[9] Page 6 of appendix response tables

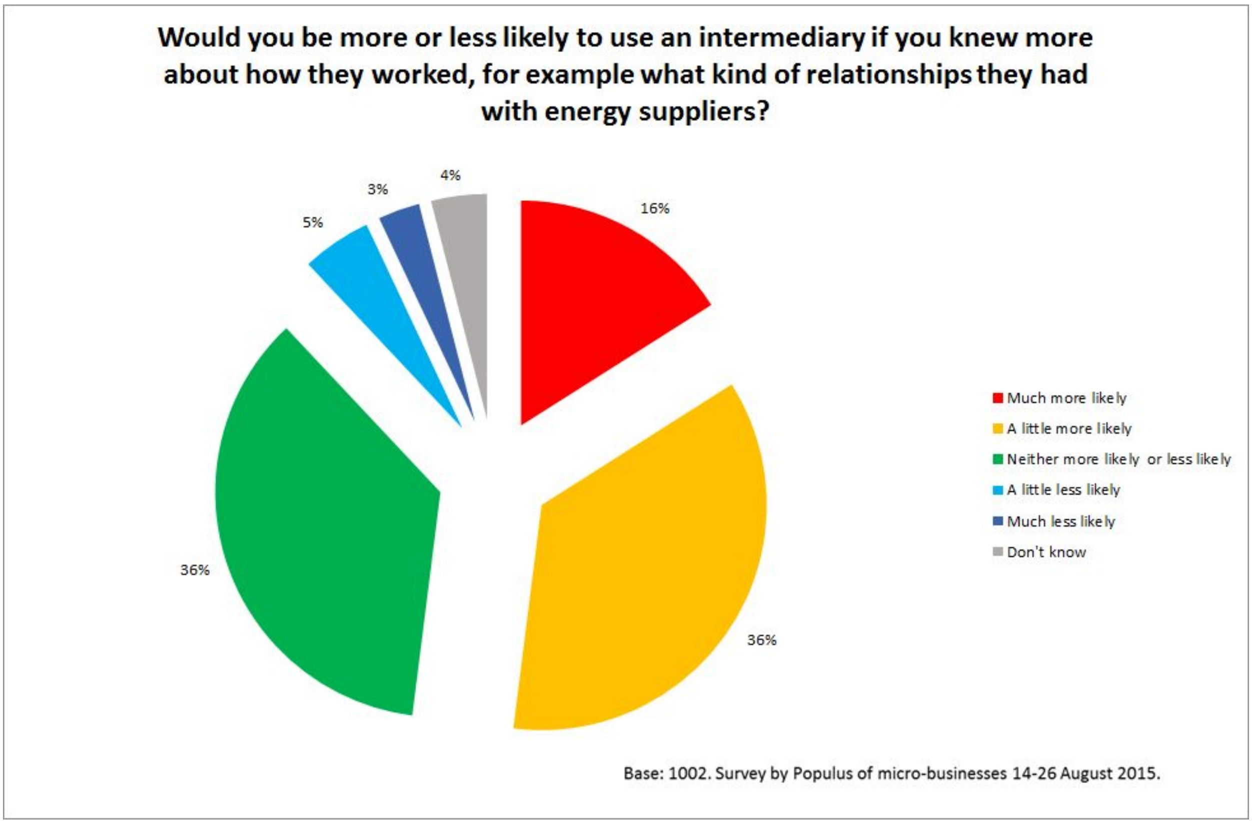
Price transparency



The vast majority (83 per cent) of respondents agreed that requiring suppliers to list their prices online would assist with switching supplier. Over half (57 per cent) strongly agreed. It suggests that the CMA's proposed remedy to require this level of price transparency would be popular with micro-businesses.

Citizens Advice is in favour of increased price transparency. Whilst some suppliers do publish some prices, there is no consistency or comparability and so the gains for consumers are very limited: all suppliers must publish prices in a consistent format for any potential benefits to be realised.

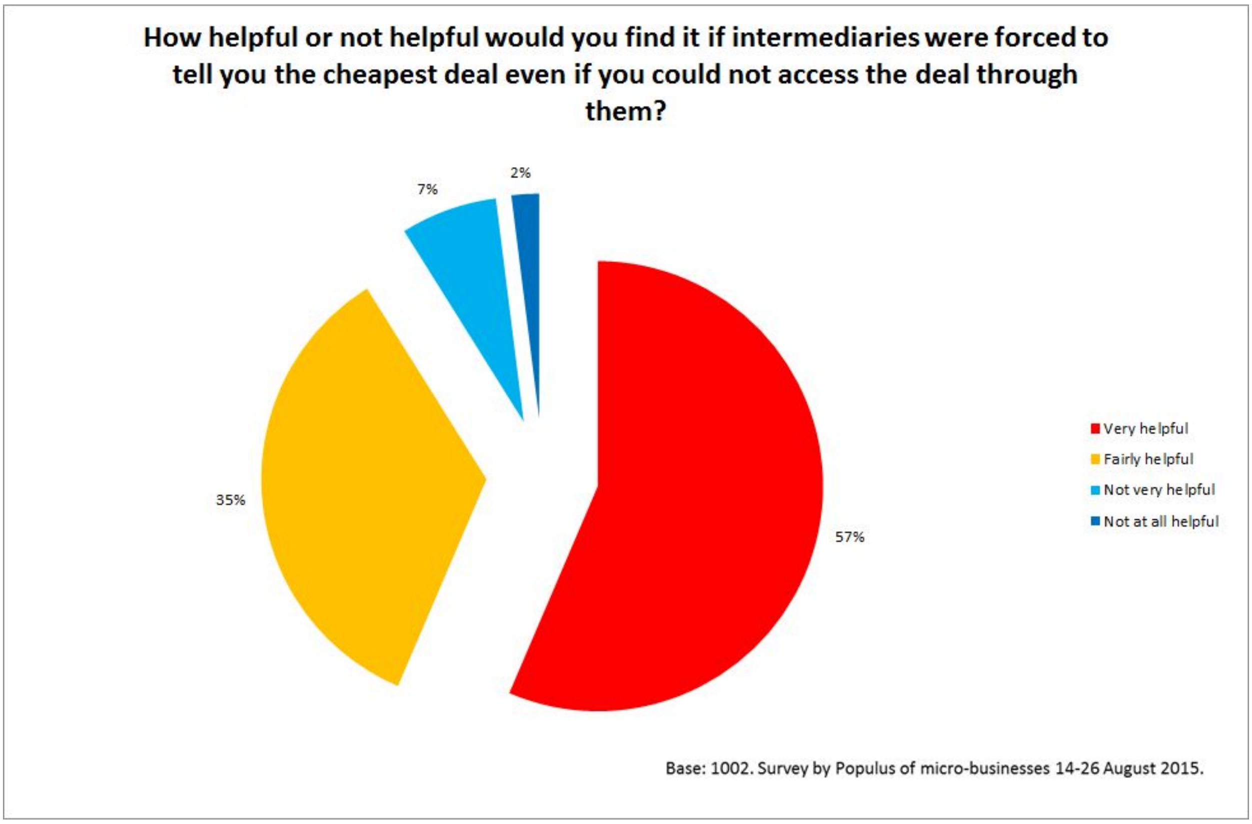
Intermediary transparency



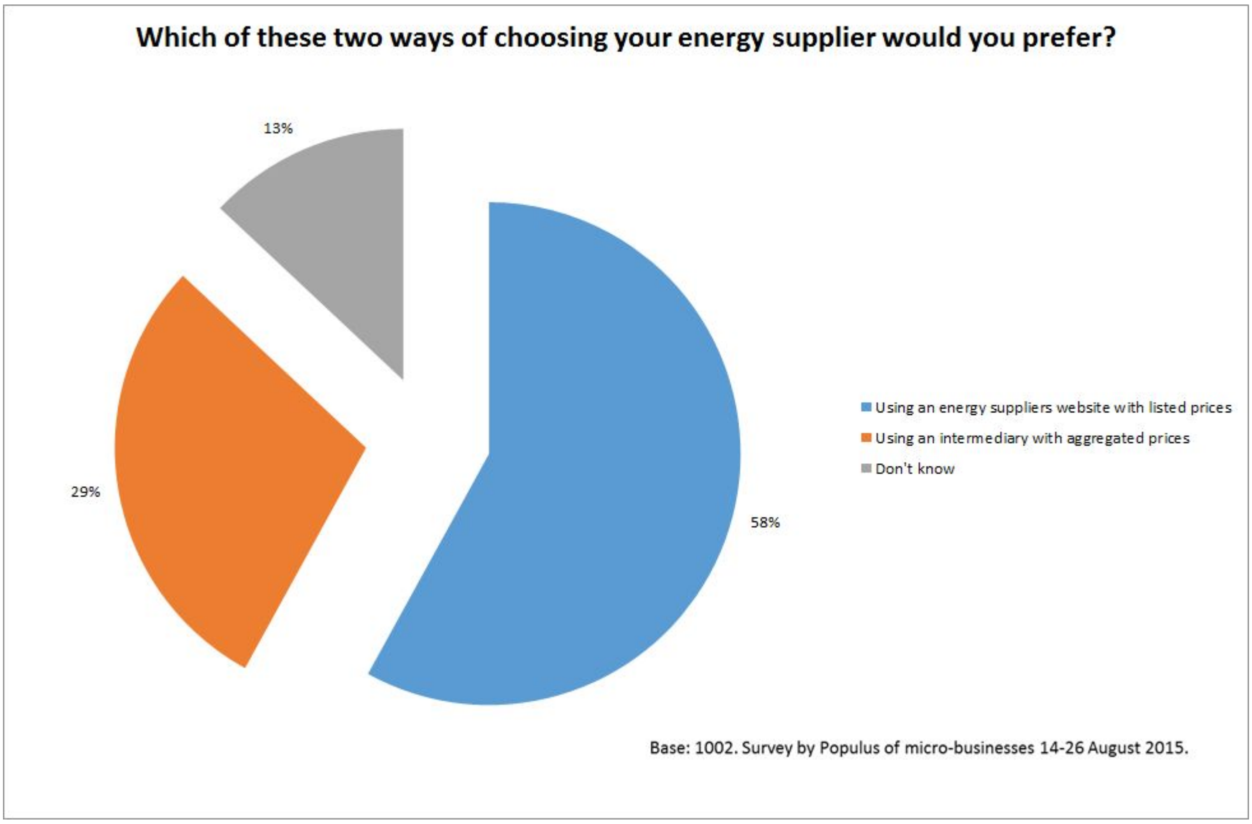
Brokers currently do not have to disclose any preferential relationships they might have with specific suppliers. A majority of respondents (54 per cent) told us they would be more likely to use a TPI if they knew more about such relationships. 36 per cent of consumers said it would make them neither more or less likely to use one. A small number (8 per cent) said it would make them less likely to use them to obtain a contract.

We also asked what impact a new requirement on TPIs to disclose cheaper market deals than ones they themselves could offer would have. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this received overwhelming support, with 92 per cent agreeing it would be helpful and a majority (57 per cent) saying it would be very helpful. Just 8 per cent of consumers did not agree.[10]

[10] Assuming that they understood the implications behind the question i.e. at the moment a TPI faces no requirement to inform consumers of commercial relationships they have with suppliers, if these exist.



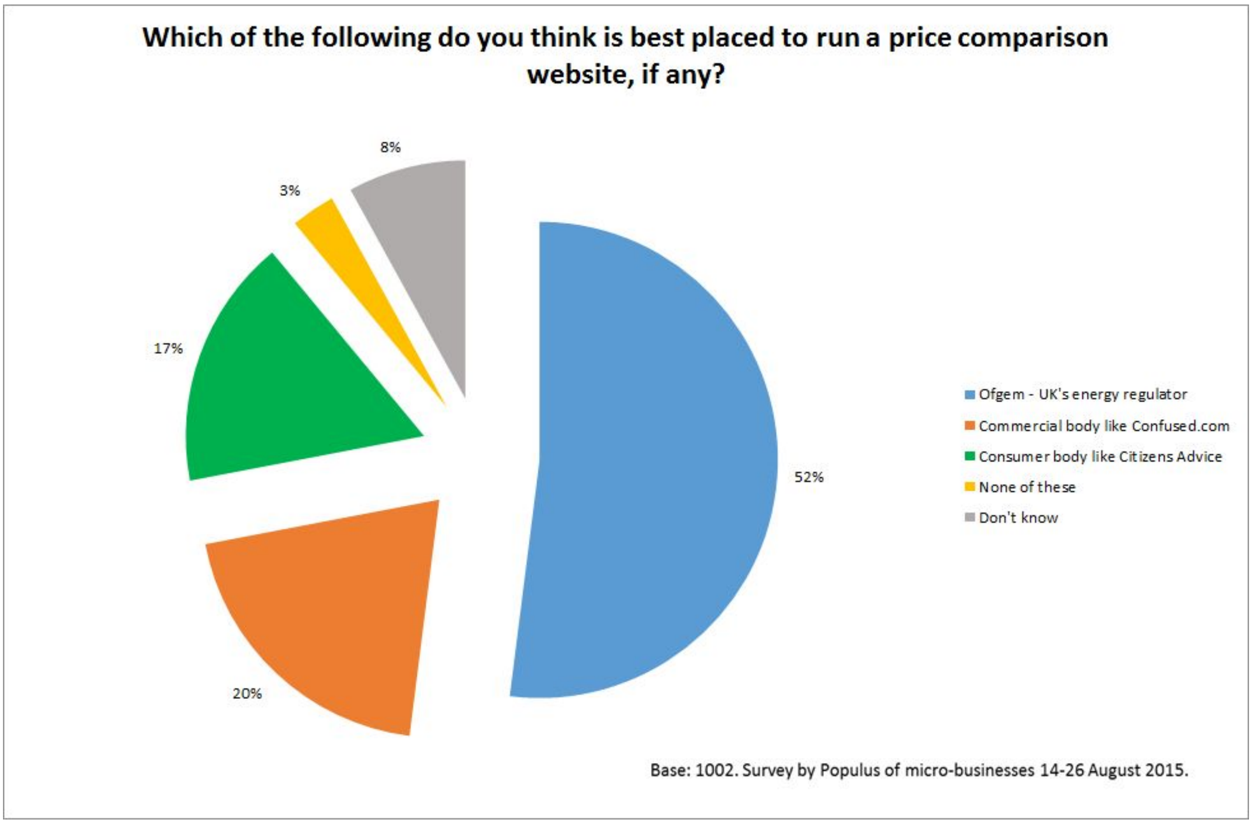
Citizens Advice believes that TPIs should be required to provide businesses with this level of information, as this will help build trust in their services. Ofgem's proposed code of practice should therefore include a clause regarding full disclosure on both commercial relationships and market search breadth as suggested via the CMA's remedies in this area.



We also asked whether using a TPI would be preferable to searching suppliers' websites (with listed prices) whilst looking for a new contract. 58 per cent of respondents preferred the latter option, suggesting a TPI's worth to micro-businesses may become more limited if suppliers are required to list their prices. Over 1 in 4 (29 per cent) would still prefer to use a TPI (with cross-market coverage) however. Due to the wording of the question however, we might want to allow for the fact that some respondents may not have considered that they would be checking multiple supplier websites.

Turnover positively correlated with consumer favourability and TPIs, with 14 per cent of sub-£10k micro-businesses preferring a TPI but a figure of 30 per cent of for those on £50-200k and then 38 per cent for those who turned over more than-£1.4mn.

Price comparison websites



The CMA's proposed remedies include introducing new (domestic-style) PCWs as a way of increasing engagement, possibly alongside suppliers listing their own prices. When asked who respondents thought should run such (theoretical) sites a majority (52 per cent) said Ofgem and only around 1 in 5 preferred a consumer or commercial body respectively. This suggests micro-businesses consider that the regulator is considered best placed to run any new PCW.

In our recent response to the CMA, Citizens Advice said that because comparability of published prices is key, there is a large role for Ofgem in this process. The regulator already manages the Confidence Code that audits domestic price comparison sites. Ofgem could play a key role in constructing metrics and standards for prices in the non-domestic market.

Of perhaps more significance is the cross-tabulation between the perception of having many choices and what method micro-businesses used to obtain price and contract information. PCW users reported by some degree the highest figure for "lots" of choices on 30 per cent; the figure for brokers was 24 per cent. Conversely, for "not many" choices both same-supplier renewal and direct contact were on the highest figure of 24 per cent. This suggests that both PCWs and TPIs are potentially more likely to make micro-businesses feel they are able to make full and confident choices in the energy market.

In addition, same-supplier renewal could be prompted by a feeling of relative powerlessness, in that consumers feel there is very little reason to look elsewhere -

or at best contact just a few suppliers and so reinforce their “limited choice” outlook. This may be worthy of further research to improve understanding of consumer views.

Conclusions and policy suggestions

Citizens Advice has long had concerns about low engagement levels and the lack of comprehensive price transparency in the micro-business market - and the connections between the two.

The CMA's proposed remedies to require non-domestic suppliers to publish prices as well as the enhancements to the draft TPI code of practice appear to fit with the consumer preferences found in our survey.

More broadly, the fact that it seems to be the very smallest micro-businesses (sole traders, those with sub-£10k turnover) who experience the greatest confusion and the lowest engagement gives succour to the CMA's emphasis on this part of the market generally. In particular the CMA's proposal to ban auto-rollovers for all micro-businesses, but with these consumers most likely to be put on them. These businesses also suffer from a comparative reluctance to use TPIs.

The results also suggest that PCWs may prove useful for non-domestic consumers, and that this in and of itself could give a boost to the choice perception issue we identified in analysing the results. It would not need to be mutually exclusive with price transparency generally either. Taken together they may help to counter the powerlessness the very smallest micro-businesses seem to feel which may cause a feedback loop of low choice and low engagement. For all levels of consumer we looked at, the ease of whatever method they use was key and this should be considered thoughtfully if going down the PCW route. Ideally Ofgem would play a role in defining how published prices appear and then the market will develop its own "solution".

The responses analysed means that Citizens Advice believes that the CMA should introduce its proposed remedies on transparency, TPIs and auto-rollovers. We believe that the most efficient way to ensure that non-domestic energy services for micro-businesses are affordable, accessible, safe and fair is to;

- Mandate full price publishing on the websites of all suppliers who supply micro-businesses, with Ofgem playing a significant role in facilitating how this looks;
- Strengthen the TPI code to ensure all brokers disclose all relevant information;
- Ban auto-rollovers.

Appendix - raw data tables and cross-tabulation results

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 1

Q1. Looking at the above definition, would you describe yourself as a micro-business?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: Yes	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Yes, definitely	830	87	46	74	88	76	80	55	52	44	94	134	26	32	53	113	105	98	104	135	64	45
	83%	94%	92%	91%	92%	89%	88%	93%	95%	83%	82%	60%	90%	78%	93%	90%	91%	91%	84%	79%	74%	63%
Yes, maybe	172	6	4	7	8	9	11	4	3	9	21	90	3	9	4	13	10	10	20	35	23	26
	17%	6%	8%	9%	8%	11%	12%	7%	5%	17%	18%	40%	10%	22%	7%	10%	9%	9%	16%	21%	26%	37%
No	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 2

Q2. There are two different contracts for your non-domestic gas/electricity that you may be on. You may be on a domestic contract (i.e. where your business energy use is billed as part of your home/domestic supply contract) or non-domestic (where you have a specific non-domestic supply contract for your business). Can we check the type of contract you have for paying your gas/electricity?

Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Domestic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-domestic	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 3

Q3. How many employees (or full time equivalent) are there in your business/ the business you work for?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
0 - only myself / self-employed	93	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	17	22	24	3	2	2	1	1	1
	9%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45%	41%	39%	19%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
1 employee	50	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	5	11	12	6	4	2	1	1	-
	5%	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10%	12%	19%	10%	5%	4%	2%	1%	1%	-
2 employees	81	-	-	81	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	7	6	27	16	6	5	4	1	1
	8%	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14%	17%	11%	21%	14%	6%	4%	2%	1%	1%
3 employees	96	-	-	-	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5	18	18	21	8	10	4	1
	10%	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3%	-	9%	14%	16%	19%	6%	6%	5%	1%
4 employees	85	-	-	-	-	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	13	18	15	8	14	4	2
	8%	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5%	7%	10%	16%	14%	6%	8%	5%	3%
5 employees	91	-	-	-	-	-	91	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	13	18	14	15	11	4	1
	9%	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	7%	-	9%	10%	16%	13%	12%	6%	5%	1%
6 employees	59	-	-	-	-	-	-	59	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	4	9	9	14	8	5	2
	6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	3%	5%	-	3%	8%	8%	11%	5%	6%	3%
7 employees	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	6	5	14	13	6	1
	5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	2%	4%	2%	5%	5%	11%	8%	7%	1%
8 employees	53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	13	13	8	8	3
	5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	2%	2%	3%	12%	10%	5%	9%	4%
9 employees	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	115	-	1	4	1	3	9	13	14	39	16	8
	11%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	3%	10%	2%	2%	8%	12%	11%	23%	18%	11%
More than 9 employees (15)	224	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	224	4	3	-	7	8	6	29	61	37	51
	22%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	14%	7%	-	6%	7%	6%	23%	36%	43%	72%
Mean	6.84	0.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	15.00	3.41	3.10	1.93	3.41	5.07	5.64	7.98	9.52	10.18	12.65
Standard deviation	5.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.20	4.45	2.31	3.56	3.53	3.32	4.39	4.56	4.56	4.05
Standard error	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.97	0.69	0.31	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.39	0.35	0.49	0.48

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 4

Q4. Please indicate the level of turnover for the business for the last financial year.
Base: All respondents

			Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Less than	(6)	29	13	3	4	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	4	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£10,000		3%	14%	6%	5%	1%	-	2%	2%	-	-	1%	2%	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£10,001 to	(17.5)	41	17	5	7	-	2	-	2	1	-	4	3	-	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,000		4%	18%	10%	9%	-	2%	-	3%	2%	-	3%	1%	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,001 to	(37.5)	57	22	11	6	5	4	5	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,000		6%	24%	22%	7%	5%	5%	5%	-	4%	2%	1%	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,001 to	(75)	126	24	12	27	18	13	13	4	3	2	3	7	-	-	-	126	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,000		13%	26%	24%	33%	19%	15%	14%	7%	5%	4%	3%	3%	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,001 to	(150)	115	3	6	16	18	18	18	9	6	4	9	8	-	-	-	-	115	-	-	-	-	-
£200,000		11%	3%	12%	20%	19%	21%	20%	15%	11%	8%	8%	4%	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-	-
£200,001 to	(250)	108	2	4	6	21	15	14	9	5	13	13	6	-	-	-	-	-	108	-	-	-	-
£300,000		11%	2%	8%	7%	22%	18%	15%	15%	9%	25%	11%	3%	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-	-
£300,001 to	(400)	124	2	2	5	8	8	15	14	14	13	14	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	124	-	-	-
£500,000		12%	2%	4%	6%	8%	9%	16%	24%	25%	25%	12%	13%	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-
£500,001 to	(750)	170	1	1	4	10	14	11	8	13	8	39	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	170	-	-
£1,000,000		17%	1%	2%	5%	10%	16%	12%	14%	24%	15%	34%	27%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-	-
£1,000,001 to	(1200)	87	1	1	1	4	4	4	5	6	8	16	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	87	-
£1,400,000		9%	1%	2%	1%	4%	5%	4%	8%	11%	15%	14%	17%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%	-
More than	(1800)	71	1	-	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	8	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71
£1,400,000		7%	1%	-	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	6%	7%	23%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%
Prefer not to say		41	4	3	2	8	3	4	2	3	1	2	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		4%	4%	6%	2%	8%	4%	4%	3%	5%	2%	2%	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know		33	3	2	2	2	2	4	3	1	-	5	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	4%	5%	2%	-	4%	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mean (000s)		502	99	135	186	312	371	340	466	526	581	680	956	6	18	38	75	150	250	400	750	1200	1800
Standard deviation		516	245	212	280	332	386	338	423	395	468	477	584	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Standard error		17	26	32	32	36	43	37	58	55	65	46	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 5

Q5. How easy or difficult do you find trying to compare prices across business energy suppliers?
Base: All respondents

			Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: Easy		296	25	14	23	27	26	22	17	18	14	35	75	8	6	19	31	30	25	37	56	33	27
		30%	27%	28%	28%	28%	31%	24%	29%	33%	26%	30%	33%	28%	15%	33%	25%	26%	23%	30%	33%	38%	38%
Very easy	(5)	43	4	3	4	6	4	3	2	2	2	7	6	1	2	3	6	6	2	3	11	3	4
		4%	4%	6%	5%	6%	5%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	3%	3%	5%	5%	5%	5%	2%	2%	6%	3%	6%
Fairly easy	(4)	253	21	11	19	21	22	19	15	16	12	28	69	7	4	16	25	24	23	34	45	30	23
		25%	23%	22%	23%	22%	26%	21%	25%	29%	23%	24%	31%	24%	10%	28%	20%	21%	21%	27%	26%	34%	32%
Neither easy nor difficult	(3)	317	30	21	33	27	22	33	17	16	15	41	62	10	15	20	48	46	27	43	42	17	23
		32%	32%	42%	41%	28%	26%	36%	29%	29%	28%	36%	28%	34%	37%	35%	38%	40%	25%	35%	25%	20%	32%
Fairly difficult	(2)	299	30	10	19	33	31	23	20	16	17	33	67	10	17	14	36	23	44	32	58	27	18
		30%	32%	20%	23%	34%	36%	25%	34%	29%	32%	29%	30%	34%	41%	25%	29%	20%	41%	26%	34%	31%	25%
Very difficult	(1)	90	8	5	6	9	6	13	5	5	7	6	20	1	3	4	11	16	12	12	14	10	3
		9%	9%	10%	7%	9%	7%	14%	8%	9%	13%	5%	9%	3%	7%	7%	9%	14%	11%	10%	8%	11%	4%
NET: Difficult		389	38	15	25	42	37	36	25	21	24	39	87	11	20	18	47	39	56	44	72	37	21
		39%	41%	30%	31%	44%	44%	40%	42%	38%	45%	34%	39%	38%	49%	32%	37%	34%	52%	35%	42%	43%	30%
Mean		2.86	2.82	2.94	2.95	2.81	2.85	2.74	2.81	2.89	2.72	2.97	2.88	2.90	2.63	3.00	2.83	2.83	2.62	2.87	2.89	2.87	3.10
Standard deviation		1.03	1.02	1.04	0.99	1.08	1.04	1.05	1.03	1.05	1.08	1.00	1.03	0.94	0.94	1.02	1.00	1.08	1.00	1.00	1.09	1.12	0.99
Standard error		0.03	0.11	0.15	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.09	0.07	0.17	0.15	0.13	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.12	0.12

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 5

Q5. How easy or difficult do you find trying to compare prices across business energy suppliers?
Base: All respondents

			Q9. To what extent do you feel you do or do not have choices when considering switching energy supplier for the business?			
		Total	Lots of choices	Some choices	Not many choices	Don't know
Base		1002	134	563	266	39
NET: Easy		296 30%	70 52%	187 33%	33 12%	6 15%
Very easy	(5)	43 4%	22 16%	16 3%	4 2%	1 3%
Fairly easy	(4)	253 25%	48 36%	171 30%	29 11%	5 13%
Neither easy nor difficult	(3)	317 32%	32 24%	194 34%	68 26%	23 59%
Fairly difficult	(2)	299 30%	27 20%	153 27%	112 42%	7 18%
Very difficult	(1)	90 9%	5 4%	29 5%	53 20%	3 8%
NET: Difficult		389 39%	32 24%	182 32%	165 62%	10 26%
Mean		2.86	3.41	2.99	2.32	2.85
Standard deviation		1.03	1.10	0.95	0.96	0.84
Standard error		0.03	0.09	0.04	0.06	0.14

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 6

Q6. At the moment most business energy suppliers do not list their prices on their websites. If the energy regulator made them all do this, to what extent do you agree or disagree that this would help to assist you if you were considering switching?

Base: All respondents

		Total	Q3. Employees in business: None	Q3: 1	Q3: 2	Q3: 3	Q3: 4	Q3: 5	Q3: 6	Q3: 7	Q3: 8	Q3: 9	Q3: More than 9	Q4. Turnover: Less than £10,000	Q4: £10,001 to £25,000	Q4: £25,001 to £50,000	Q4: £50,001 to £100,000	Q4: £100,001 to £200,000	Q4: £200,001 to £300,000	Q4: £300,001 to £500,000	Q4: £500,001 to £1,000,000	Q4: £1,000,001 to £1,400,000	Q4: More than £1,400,000
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: Agree		832	76	41	71	81	71	78	49	44	42	90	189	23	33	49	99	94	87	104	149	78	57
		83%	82%	82%	88%	84%	84%	86%	83%	80%	79%	78%	84%	79%	80%	86%	79%	82%	81%	84%	88%	90%	80%
Strongly agree	(5)	569	61	27	50	55	51	59	33	29	29	57	118	17	22	36	77	59	62	67	102	55	32
		57%	66%	54%	62%	57%	60%	65%	56%	53%	55%	50%	53%	59%	54%	63%	61%	51%	57%	54%	60%	63%	45%
Slightly agree	(4)	263	15	14	21	26	20	19	16	15	13	33	71	6	11	13	22	35	25	37	47	23	25
		26%	16%	28%	26%	27%	24%	21%	27%	27%	25%	29%	32%	21%	27%	23%	17%	30%	23%	30%	28%	26%	35%
Neither agree nor disagree	(3)	118	10	7	5	12	11	11	8	9	6	19	20	4	4	6	19	15	12	14	16	5	12
		12%	11%	14%	6%	13%	13%	12%	14%	16%	11%	17%	9%	14%	10%	11%	15%	13%	11%	11%	9%	6%	17%
Slightly disagree	(2)	29	3	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	9	2	2	1	3	4	6	3	3	1	1
		3%	3%	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	7%	5%	2%	2%	3%	6%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Strongly disagree	(1)	23	4	1	2	1	2	1	-	-	3	3	6	-	2	1	5	2	3	3	2	3	1
		2%	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	-	-	6%	3%	3%	-	5%	2%	4%	2%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%
NET: Disagree		52	7	2	5	3	3	2	2	2	5	6	15	2	4	2	8	6	9	6	5	4	2
		5%	8%	4%	6%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	9%	5%	7%	7%	10%	4%	6%	5%	8%	5%	3%	5%	3%
Mean		4.32	4.35	4.30	4.41	4.38	4.38	4.47	4.36	4.29	4.19	4.20	4.28	4.31	4.20	4.44	4.29	4.26	4.27	4.31	4.44	4.45	4.21
Standard deviation		0.95	1.08	0.93	0.95	0.86	0.93	0.83	0.85	0.88	1.14	0.98	0.97	0.97	1.12	0.89	1.07	0.94	1.05	0.94	0.83	0.92	0.88
Standard error		0.03	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.16	0.09	0.06	0.18	0.18	0.12	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.08	0.06	0.10	0.10

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Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 7

Q7. How do you usually find out information on new energy contracts/prices for the business?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Online search	221 22%	20 22%	11 22%	13 16%	20 21%	18 21%	26 29%	11 19%	17 31%	10 19%	28 24%	47 21%	6 21%	11 27%	17 30%	20 16%	20 17%	23 21%	28 23%	37 22%	21 24%	19 27%
Contact suppliers direct	214 21%	13 14%	6 12%	19 23%	20 21%	23 27%	24 26%	11 19%	10 18%	10 19%	29 25%	49 22%	3 10%	7 17%	10 18%	28 22%	22 19%	21 19%	29 23%	45 26%	20 23%	14 20%
Price comparison websites	176 18%	19 20%	6 12%	20 25%	16 17%	11 13%	10 11%	11 19%	13 24%	9 17%	22 19%	39 17%	5 17%	7 17%	12 21%	22 17%	24 21%	18 17%	19 15%	30 18%	15 17%	11 15%
Broker/Third Party Intermediary (someone who finds a contract on your behalf, often telephone-based)	171 17%	8 9%	11 22%	13 16%	22 23%	17 20%	14 15%	14 24%	2 4%	13 25%	17 15%	40 18%	3 10%	4 10%	3 5%	29 23%	27 23%	23 21%	18 15%	29 17%	13 15%	11 15%
Renew with the same supplier	155 15%	27 29%	13 26%	9 11%	15 16%	13 15%	11 12%	3 5%	10 18%	11 21%	14 12%	29 13%	9 31%	10 24%	12 21%	22 17%	14 12%	16 15%	18 15%	22 13%	13 15%	10 14%
Other business recommendation/trade federation e.g. Federation of Small Businesses	38 4%	2 2%	2 4%	5 6%	1 1%	1 1%	5 5%	5 8%	1 2%	- -	2 2%	14 6%	1 3%	1 2%	2 4%	4 3%	6 5%	2 2%	9 7%	6 4%	3 3%	2 3%
Don't know	27 3%	4 4%	1 2%	2 2%	2 2%	2 2%	1 1%	4 7%	2 4%	- -	3 3%	6 3%	2 7%	1 2%	1 2%	1 1%	2 2%	5 5%	3 2%	1 1%	2 2%	4 6%

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 7

Q7. How do you usually find out information on new energy contracts/prices for the business?
Base: All respondents

		Q9. To what extent do you feel you do or do not have choices when considering switching energy supplier for the business?			
	Total	Lots of choices	Some choices	Not many choices	Don't know
Base	1002	134	563	266	39
Online search	221 22%	27 20%	142 25%	48 18%	4 10%
Contact suppliers direct	214 21%	21 16%	128 23%	64 24%	1 3%
Price comparison websites	176 18%	40 30%	105 19%	28 11%	3 8%
Broker/Third Party Intermediary (someone who finds a contract on your behalf, often telephone-based)	171 17%	32 24%	96 17%	38 14%	5 13%
Renew with the same supplier	155 15%	9 7%	70 12%	64 24%	12 31%
Other business recommendation/trade federation e.g. Federation of Small Businesses	38 4%	5 4%	17 3%	16 6%	- -
Don't know	27 3%	- -	5 1%	8 3%	14 36%

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 8

Q8. You said you normally find out information on new energy contracts/prices for the business .... Why do you tend to use this method?
Base: All stating a way they find out information outside of renewing with same supplier

		Q3. Employees in business										
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9
Base	820	62	36	70	79	70	79	52	43	42	98	189
Ease	291	22	16	21	18	22	23	23	18	17	36	75
	35%	35%	44%	30%	23%	31%	29%	44%	42%	40%	37%	40%
Thought it was the best way	288	23	7	25	34	21	33	22	13	16	35	59
	35%	37%	19%	36%	43%	30%	42%	42%	30%	38%	36%	31%
It's what I've always done	230	20	9	21	18	23	21	12	10	13	23	60
	28%	32%	25%	30%	23%	33%	27%	23%	23%	31%	23%	32%
It covers most/all of market	197	14	10	13	17	13	14	17	9	11	28	51
	24%	23%	28%	19%	22%	19%	18%	33%	21%	26%	29%	27%
Recommendation from someone else	64	3	3	6	5	2	5	8	-	7	6	19
	8%	5%	8%	9%	6%	3%	6%	15%	-	17%	6%	10%
Don't know	7	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	1
	1%	-	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	-	-	-	1%	1%

	Q4. Turnover									
	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	18	30	44	103	99	87	103	147	72	57
Ease	5	15	15	35	37	25	34	57	23	25
	28%	50%	34%	34%	37%	29%	33%	39%	32%	44%
Thought it was the best way	7	10	11	46	31	34	35	57	30	12
	39%	33%	25%	45%	31%	39%	34%	39%	42%	21%
It's what I've always done	5	5	19	20	25	25	27	44	19	21
	28%	17%	43%	19%	25%	29%	26%	30%	26%	37%
It covers most/all of market	5	8	10	20	23	15	30	39	16	19
	28%	27%	23%	19%	23%	17%	29%	27%	22%	33%
Recommendation from someone else	3	1	3	8	8	8	7	16	2	4
	17%	3%	7%	8%	8%	9%	7%	11%	3%	7%
Don't know	-	1	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	-
	-	3%	-	2%	-	2%	-	1%	-	-

Microbusiness

Online Fieldwork Dates: 14th - 26th August 2015

Absolutes/col percents

Table 9

Q8. You said you normally find out information on new energy contracts/prices for the business .... Why do you tend to use this method?
Base: All stating a way they find out information outside of renewing with same supplier

		Q7. How do you usually find out information on new energy contracts/prices for the business?				
	Total	Online search	Contact suppliers direct	Price comparison websites	Broker/ Third Party Intermediary	Other business recommendation/ trade federation e.g. Federation of Small Businesses
Base	820	221	214	176	171	38
Ease	291 35%	83 38%	37 17%	75 43%	86 50%	10 26%
Thought it was the best way	288 35%	70 32%	99 46%	62 35%	42 25%	15 39%
It's what I've always done	230 28%	65 29%	81 38%	46 26%	32 19%	6 16%
It covers most/all of market	197 24%	66 30%	22 10%	57 32%	43 25%	9 24%
Recommendation from someone else	64 8%	14 6%	8 4%	8 5%	25 15%	9 24%
Don't know	7 1%	2 1%	2 1%	- -	3 2%	- -

Microbusiness

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 10

Q9. To what extent do you feel you do or do not have choices when considering switching energy supplier for the business?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Lots of choices	134	12	5	11	12	14	7	9	9	3	18	34	4	5	7	14	22	10	13	24	11	13
	13%	13%	10%	14%	13%	16%	8%	15%	16%	6%	16%	15%	14%	12%	12%	11%	19%	9%	10%	14%	13%	18%
Some choices	563	44	27	41	49	46	54	32	32	33	71	134	11	19	31	76	57	63	75	96	48	44
	56%	47%	54%	51%	51%	54%	59%	54%	58%	62%	62%	60%	38%	46%	54%	60%	50%	58%	60%	56%	55%	62%
Not many choices	266	29	18	26	32	22	27	14	13	15	19	51	11	11	17	31	32	33	32	47	27	11
	27%	31%	36%	32%	33%	26%	30%	24%	24%	28%	17%	23%	38%	27%	30%	25%	28%	31%	26%	28%	31%	15%
Don't know	39	8	-	3	3	3	3	4	1	2	7	5	3	6	2	5	4	2	4	3	1	3
	4%	9%	-	4%	3%	4%	3%	7%	2%	4%	6%	2%	10%	15%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	4%

Microbusiness

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 11

Q10. Would you be more or less likely to use an intermediary if you knew more about how they worked, for example what kind of relationships they had with energy suppliers?
Base: All respondents

		Total	Q3. Employees in business: None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224
NET: More likely		527	38	23	39	49	43	47	28	34	29	52	145
		53%	41%	46%	48%	51%	51%	52%	47%	62%	55%	45%	65%
Much more likely	(5)	165	8	10	10	15	14	18	10	10	13	16	41
		16%	9%	20%	12%	16%	16%	20%	17%	18%	25%	14%	18%
A little more likely	(4)	362	30	13	29	34	29	29	18	24	16	36	104
		36%	32%	26%	36%	35%	34%	32%	31%	44%	30%	31%	46%
Neither more likely or less likely	(3)	356	43	21	30	36	31	34	21	15	20	42	63
		36%	46%	42%	37%	38%	36%	37%	36%	27%	38%	37%	28%
A little less likely	(2)	47	4	-	7	2	3	3	5	2	2	10	9
		5%	4%	-	9%	2%	4%	3%	8%	4%	4%	9%	4%
Much less likely	(1)	33	3	1	2	6	6	4	3	1	1	3	3
		3%	3%	2%	2%	6%	7%	4%	5%	2%	2%	3%	1%
NET: Less likely		80	7	1	9	8	9	7	8	3	3	13	12
		8%	8%	2%	11%	8%	11%	8%	14%	5%	6%	11%	5%
Don't know		39	5	5	3	3	2	3	2	3	1	8	4
		4%	5%	10%	4%	3%	2%	3%	3%	5%	2%	7%	2%
Mean		3.60	3.41	3.69	3.49	3.54	3.51	3.61	3.47	3.77	3.73	3.49	3.78
Standard deviation		0.94	0.85	0.90	0.92	1.01	1.05	1.00	1.05	0.88	0.95	0.96	0.84
Standard error		0.03	0.09	0.13	0.10	0.10	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.12	0.13	0.09	0.06

		Q4. Turnover: Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base		29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: More likely		14	19	30	59	45	52	68	109	60	34
		48%	46%	53%	47%	39%	48%	55%	64%	69%	48%
Much more likely	(5)	4	4	9	19	22	12	21	38	20	8
		14%	10%	16%	15%	19%	11%	17%	22%	23%	11%
A little more likely	(4)	10	15	21	40	23	40	47	71	40	26
		34%	37%	37%	32%	20%	37%	38%	42%	46%	37%
Neither more likely or less likely	(3)	8	17	23	52	55	45	35	47	21	29
		28%	41%	40%	41%	48%	42%	28%	28%	24%	41%
A little less likely	(2)	4	1	3	3	7	1	13	8	3	2
		14%	2%	5%	2%	6%	1%	10%	5%	3%	3%
Much less likely	(1)	1	-	-	8	6	7	2	3	2	3
		3%	-	-	6%	5%	6%	2%	2%	2%	4%
NET: Less likely		5	1	3	11	13	8	15	11	5	5
		17%	2%	5%	9%	11%	7%	12%	6%	6%	7%
Don't know		2	4	1	4	2	3	6	3	1	3
		7%	10%	2%	3%	2%	3%	5%	2%	1%	4%
Mean		3.44	3.59	3.64	3.48	3.42	3.47	3.61	3.80	3.85	3.50
Standard deviation		1.05	0.72	0.82	1.01	1.04	0.95	0.96	0.91	0.90	0.91
Standard error		0.20	0.12	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.10	0.11

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 12

Q11. How helpful or not helpful would you find it if intermediaries were forced to tell you the cheapest deal even if you could not access the deal through them?
Base: All respondents

			Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: Helpful		918	87	48	77	92	75	80	53	52	48	103	203	24	38	51	119	99	98	115	163	83	63
		92%	94%	96%	95%	96%	88%	88%	90%	95%	91%	90%	91%	83%	93%	89%	94%	86%	91%	93%	96%	95%	89%
Very helpful	(4)	567	48	32	50	52	46	57	32	34	27	55	134	13	25	28	77	58	54	73	103	58	40
		57%	52%	64%	62%	54%	54%	63%	54%	62%	51%	48%	60%	45%	61%	49%	61%	50%	50%	59%	61%	67%	56%
Fairly helpful	(3)	351	39	16	27	40	29	23	21	18	21	48	69	11	13	23	42	41	44	42	60	25	23
		35%	42%	32%	33%	42%	34%	25%	36%	33%	40%	42%	31%	38%	32%	40%	33%	36%	41%	34%	35%	29%	32%
Not very helpful	(2)	68	4	2	3	3	9	10	2	2	5	8	20	4	3	5	7	11	8	7	6	4	6
		7%	4%	4%	4%	3%	11%	11%	3%	4%	9%	7%	9%	14%	7%	9%	6%	10%	7%	6%	4%	5%	8%
Not at all helpful	(1)	16	2	-	1	1	1	1	4	1	-	4	1	1	-	1	-	5	2	2	1	-	2
		2%	2%	-	1%	1%	1%	1%	7%	2%	-	3%	*	3%	-	2%	-	4%	2%	2%	1%	-	3%
NET: Not helpful		84	6	2	4	4	10	11	6	3	5	12	21	5	3	6	7	16	10	9	7	4	8
		8%	6%	4%	5%	4%	12%	12%	10%	5%	9%	10%	9%	17%	7%	11%	6%	14%	9%	7%	4%	5%	11%
Mean		3.47	3.43	3.60	3.56	3.49	3.41	3.49	3.37	3.55	3.42	3.34	3.50	3.24	3.54	3.37	3.56	3.32	3.39	3.50	3.56	3.62	3.42
Standard deviation		0.69	0.68	0.57	0.63	0.62	0.73	0.74	0.85	0.66	0.66	0.76	0.68	0.83	0.64	0.72	0.60	0.82	0.71	0.68	0.60	0.58	0.77
Standard error		0.02	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.11	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.05	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.08	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.09

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 13

Q12. Which of these two ways of choosing your energy supplier would you prefer?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover										
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Using an energy suppliers website with listed prices	586	61	23	44	62	58	53	32	28	30	67	128	19	24	36	72	67	67	72	103	53	36
	58%	66%	46%	54%	65%	68%	58%	54%	51%	57%	58%	57%	66%	59%	63%	57%	58%	62%	58%	61%	61%	51%
Using an intermediary with aggregated prices	290	16	15	28	22	23	26	15	20	19	30	76	4	7	15	38	34	28	36	55	28	27
	29%	17%	30%	35%	23%	27%	29%	25%	36%	36%	26%	34%	14%	17%	26%	30%	30%	26%	29%	32%	32%	38%
Don't know	126	16	12	9	12	4	12	12	7	4	18	20	6	10	6	16	14	13	16	12	6	8
	13%	17%	24%	11%	13%	5%	13%	20%	13%	8%	16%	9%	21%	24%	11%	13%	12%	12%	13%	7%	7%	11%

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 14

Q13. Which of the following do you think is best placed to run a price comparison website, if any?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover										
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Ofgem - UK's energy regulator	521	45	33	45	53	47	53	34	20	25	48	118	16	19	28	64	63	60	65	97	45	29
	52%	48%	66%	56%	55%	55%	58%	58%	36%	47%	42%	53%	55%	46%	49%	51%	55%	56%	52%	57%	52%	41%
Commercial body like Confused.com	199	15	6	20	12	16	17	13	17	15	21	47	8	10	9	21	24	16	27	34	16	20
	20%	16%	12%	25%	13%	19%	19%	22%	31%	28%	18%	21%	28%	24%	16%	17%	21%	15%	22%	20%	18%	28%
Consumer body like Citizens Advice	166	16	10	10	19	14	10	8	13	9	18	39	1	4	16	25	18	18	22	25	17	10
	17%	17%	20%	12%	20%	16%	11%	14%	24%	17%	16%	17%	3%	10%	28%	20%	16%	17%	18%	15%	20%	14%
None of these	31	6	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	5	7	2	4	2	5	2	3	3	1	-	6
	3%	6%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%	7%	10%	4%	4%	2%	3%	2%	1%	-	8%
Don't know	85	11	-	4	10	5	9	3	4	3	23	13	2	4	2	11	8	11	7	13	9	6
	8%	12%	-	5%	10%	6%	10%	5%	7%	6%	20%	6%	7%	10%	4%	9%	7%	10%	6%	8%	10%	8%

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 15
Q14. Does your current business energy contract have a fixed end date?
Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Yes	572	54	26	52	47	57	53	31	29	32	54	137	15	18	35	79	71	66	72	99	42	45
	57%	58%	52%	64%	49%	67%	58%	53%	53%	60%	47%	61%	52%	44%	61%	63%	62%	61%	58%	58%	48%	63%
No	267	27	18	17	30	16	22	18	19	17	36	47	9	18	15	36	28	28	33	45	25	12
	27%	29%	36%	21%	31%	19%	24%	31%	35%	32%	31%	21%	31%	44%	26%	29%	24%	26%	27%	26%	29%	17%
Don't know	163	12	6	12	19	12	16	10	7	4	25	40	5	5	7	11	16	14	19	26	20	14
	16%	13%	12%	15%	20%	14%	18%	17%	13%	8%	22%	18%	17%	12%	12%	9%	14%	13%	15%	15%	23%	20%

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Table 16
Q15. How confident or not confident are you in being able to negotiate a new business energy contract?
Base: All respondents

			Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base		1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
NET: Confident		740	71	36	63	66	63	56	41	43	39	96	166	21	31	44	88	82	83	96	127	60	56
		74%	76%	72%	78%	69%	74%	62%	69%	78%	74%	83%	74%	72%	76%	77%	70%	71%	77%	77%	75%	69%	79%
Very confident	(4)	187	16	13	15	20	17	12	13	12	7	20	42	6	8	10	28	20	22	13	39	12	21
		19%	17%	26%	19%	21%	20%	13%	22%	22%	13%	17%	19%	21%	20%	18%	22%	17%	20%	10%	23%	14%	30%
Fairly confident	(3)	553	55	23	48	46	46	44	28	31	32	76	124	15	23	34	60	62	61	83	88	48	35
		55%	59%	46%	59%	48%	54%	48%	47%	56%	60%	66%	55%	52%	56%	60%	48%	54%	56%	67%	52%	55%	49%
Not very confident	(2)	188	11	11	11	26	18	25	12	7	13	12	42	5	6	8	34	21	17	19	35	21	10
		19%	12%	22%	14%	27%	21%	27%	20%	13%	25%	10%	19%	17%	15%	14%	27%	18%	16%	15%	21%	24%	14%
Not at all confident	(1)	31	2	3	2	2	1	4	3	3	-	1	10	1	2	1	2	7	4	5	5	3	-
		3%	2%	6%	2%	2%	1%	4%	5%	5%	-	1%	4%	3%	5%	2%	2%	6%	4%	4%	3%	3%	-
NET: Not Confident		219	13	14	13	28	19	29	15	10	13	13	52	6	8	9	36	28	21	24	40	24	10
		22%	14%	28%	16%	29%	22%	32%	25%	18%	25%	11%	23%	21%	20%	16%	29%	24%	19%	19%	24%	28%	14%
Don't know		43	9	-	5	2	3	6	3	2	1	6	6	2	2	4	2	5	4	4	3	3	5
		4%	10%	-	6%	2%	4%	7%	5%	4%	2%	5%	3%	7%	5%	7%	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	7%
Mean		2.93	3.01	2.92	3.00	2.89	2.96	2.75	2.91	2.98	2.88	3.06	2.91	2.96	2.95	3.00	2.92	2.86	2.97	2.87	2.96	2.82	3.17
Standard deviation		0.72	0.65	0.85	0.67	0.75	0.69	0.75	0.82	0.77	0.62	0.57	0.75	0.76	0.76	0.65	0.75	0.78	0.73	0.65	0.75	0.71	0.67
Standard error		0.02	0.07	0.12	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.06	0.05	0.15	0.12	0.09	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.08

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Absolutes/col percents

Table 17

Q16. We'd like you to imagine that your energy contract came to an end and you were automatically transferred onto expensive rates, and you knew you could leave without penalty. Which of the following would you be most likely to do?

Base: All respondents

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	1002	93	50	81	96	85	91	59	55	53	115	224	29	41	57	126	115	108	124	170	87	71
Negotiate new fixed contract in advance (with current or new supplier)	802	71	41	63	75	75	77	43	40	47	87	183	19	31	43	97	97	87	99	141	69	61
	80%	76%	82%	78%	78%	88%	85%	73%	73%	89%	76%	82%	66%	76%	75%	77%	84%	81%	80%	83%	79%	86%
Look at fixed contracts after the contract has rolled over onto the expensive rate	138	11	7	15	17	8	10	11	11	5	14	29	5	2	12	22	14	15	16	24	14	7
	14%	12%	14%	19%	18%	9%	11%	19%	20%	9%	12%	13%	17%	5%	21%	17%	12%	14%	13%	14%	16%	10%
Take no action and roll onto the new expensive rates	21	3	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	5	3	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2
	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	10%	7%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Don't know	41	8	1	1	3	1	2	4	3	-	11	7	2	5	1	5	2	3	7	3	3	1
	4%	9%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	7%	5%	-	10%	3%	7%	12%	2%	4%	2%	3%	6%	2%	3%	1%

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Table 18
What is the principal activity of your organisation?
Base: All answering

		Q3. Employees in business											Q4. Turnover									
	Total	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	More than 9	Less than £10,000	£10,001 to £25,000	£25,001 to £50,000	£50,001 to £100,000	£100,001 to £200,000	£200,001 to £300,000	£300,001 to £500,000	£500,001 to £1,000,000	£1,000,001 to £1,400,000	More than £1,400,000
Base	982	93	48	77	90	84	91	58	55	51	114	221	28	39	57	120	111	107	121	168	86	71
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	19	1	3	-	3	1	3	1	-	-	3	4	-	-	1	4	3	1	2	3	1	1
	2%	1%	6%	-	3%	1%	3%	2%	-	-	3%	2%	-	-	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Construction	57	3	2	4	5	6	2	4	3	3	9	16	-	2	1	2	4	6	9	13	7	9
	6%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	2%	7%	5%	6%	8%	7%	-	5%	2%	2%	4%	6%	7%	8%	8%	13%
Education	27	1	1	-	2	2	5	-	1	3	4	8	1	-	1	2	4	3	5	7	4	-
	3%	1%	2%	-	2%	2%	5%	-	2%	6%	4%	4%	4%	-	2%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	-
Health	47	3	1	6	2	4	3	1	1	2	7	17	3	4	4	6	3	3	6	9	4	1
	5%	3%	2%	8%	2%	5%	3%	2%	2%	4%	6%	8%	11%	10%	7%	5%	3%	3%	5%	5%	5%	1%
Central and Local Government	7	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	1	-	-
	1%	-	-	-	2%	1%	-	2%	-	-	2%	*	-	-	-	1%	1%	2%	-	1%	-	-
Manufacturing	76	7	3	2	9	7	6	5	5	3	7	22	1	1	4	11	5	6	11	10	13	9
	8%	8%	6%	3%	10%	8%	7%	9%	9%	6%	6%	10%	4%	3%	7%	9%	5%	6%	9%	6%	15%	13%
Retail	133	25	12	18	18	15	13	6	4	3	10	9	5	8	9	27	14	16	17	13	9	4
	14%	27%	25%	23%	20%	18%	14%	10%	7%	6%	9%	4%	18%	21%	16%	23%	13%	15%	14%	8%	10%	6%
Services	194	15	7	12	15	20	11	14	13	15	25	47	3	9	7	19	24	18	24	47	20	16
	20%	16%	15%	16%	17%	24%	12%	24%	24%	29%	22%	21%	11%	23%	12%	16%	22%	17%	20%	28%	23%	23%
Hotels, food services, sport and leisure	108	17	5	7	9	5	18	6	4	9	12	16	4	6	11	21	17	14	15	10	-	1
	11%	18%	10%	9%	10%	6%	20%	10%	7%	18%	11%	7%	14%	15%	19%	18%	15%	13%	12%	6%	-	1%
Culture and entertainment	16	3	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	-	1	5	-	-	3	1	2	-	4	2	4	-
	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	-	1%	2%	4%	-	1%	2%	-	-	5%	1%	2%	-	3%	1%	5%	-
Transport	31	3	2	3	1	3	1	2	2	3	3	8	1	1	3	1	3	4	3	6	2	5
	3%	3%	4%	4%	1%	4%	1%	3%	4%	6%	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%	1%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	7%
Utilities & Telecommunications	23	1	1	2	-	1	3	1	-	2	-	12	1	-	1	2	1	3	1	4	3	5
	2%	1%	2%	3%	-	1%	3%	2%	-	4%	-	5%	4%	-	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	3%	7%
Wholesale	43	1	-	1	4	2	3	2	4	1	7	18	-	1	-	1	2	-	5	13	6	10
	4%	1%	-	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%	7%	2%	6%	8%	-	3%	-	1%	2%	-	4%	8%	7%	14%
Private Households with employed persons	5	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	-
	1%	-	2%	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1%	-	-	2%	2%	1%	-	-	-	1%	-
Other	188	12	9	19	19	17	22	14	15	7	19	35	8	4	10	20	26	31	19	30	12	9
	19%	13%	19%	25%	21%	20%	24%	24%	27%	14%	17%	16%	29%	10%	18%	17%	23%	29%	16%	18%	14%	13%
Don't know	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5	1	1	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	1%	1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	2%	-	4%	*	4%	8%	2%	-	1%	-	-	-	-	1%