

## What do you value the most when changing your heating appliance?

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ENERGIES 2050 & University of Nova

Space heating and hot water needs account for nearly 80% of European residential households' energy demand. A major part of the installed heating appliances is not efficient and, thus prompting increasing the energy consumption, inducing higher negative environmental impacts, and increasing energy bills. However, today's market offers solutions to reduce the energy consumption by installing efficient heating system! Well... maybe it is time to change?



*Source: Nattanan Kanchanaprat, Pixabay*

## What does motivate you to change?

Heating appliances have a long-life period, with an average above 15 years old. This means the decision to replace these appliances with newer and more efficient solutions does not happen often. Most often the heating system replacement is an emergency decision upon the break or malfunction of the existing solution. Therefore, there might be other factors that could motivate the change: Maybe it is to save money and to protect the environment? The increased comfort and lower noise impacts? Or maybe the social circle or the easy access to the information and to a professional support?

We have a response! A study was conducted in five European countries – France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain – to understand consumers decision process. Three key findings were identified regarding the motivations to replace an old and inefficient heating system:

- **Co-benefits**

Did you know that efficient heating systems can offer more than direct benefits of saving money and reducing CO2 emissions? Consumers who are **aware of the additional benefits** the replacement of an old and inefficient heating solution brings to their home's quality of life (e.g. increased comfort, better air quality, lower noise, lower greenhouse gas emissions, etc) are more likely to look for information and change to a more efficient heating system.

*You want to know more about co-benefits? Check out our factsheet about efficient heating co-benefits!*

- **Influencers**

Have you ever engaged some actions because your relatives advised you so? As the **social circle and connections** becomes more and more important in consumers life, in the change of heating appliance is not different. Consumers value their friends and relative's opinion when changing to an efficient heating appliance, considering it as one of the most trusted communication channels.

- **Local organisations and energy agencies**

Are you looking for a professional's advice before engaging in renovation or appliances replacement? You are not alone to have this behaviour. Not only public opinion from social connections is important, but **specialized organizations** also play an important role. Investing in an efficient heating solution brings more details and specifications than usual shopping, so specialized opinions and advices are still very relevant and represent one of the most credible sources of information.

## Results differ among countries

For sure, there are some dominant findings, however, you might behave differently depending on the country you are from! Since communication channels are consumers main drivers of information, it is extremely important to understand what the most credible sources of information and most trusted communication channels are.

In France and in Germany, consumers have a very similar behaviour in terms of the values on which they base their choices. Official campaigns from national authorities and energy agencies and trusted labels are one of the main valued criteria when choosing heating appliances. Also, consumers usually value the energy and monetary savings as well as the access to information about the appliance's functionalities. Family and friends are looked upon when deciding for a new heating system, in addition to the official information sources. Also, Germans make confidence in radio channels and websites in addition to the previously mentioned information sources.



*Source: Gerd Altmann, Pixabay*

In Italy, consumers value the energy efficiency gain that emerge with the installation of new more energy efficient heating technologies. They are also more willing to pay for a solution that offers increased comfort and value their inner social circle's opinion. Italian consumers look for trusted information privileging local organisations, energy agencies, installers, and online apps.

In Portugal, consumers value the additional benefits presented by energy efficient heating solutions, as well as solutions that are easier to operate and require simpler maintenance procedures. On the heating topic the Portuguese consumer looks for information presented by local organizations, energy agencies websites and communication campaigns. The internet is the main vehicle for the Portuguese consumers to look for information on energy efficient heating. Also, family and friends are looked upon when deciding for a new heating system.

Finally, in Spain, consumers value efficient heating solutions co-benefits, such as easy maintenance, their inner social circle's and media's opinion. The most trusted communication channels are family and friends who have installed new efficient heating appliances, as well as mobile apps and radio channels.

What about you? What do you value the most when looking to replace your heating system? Have you recently talked to your friends about heating systems? Do you know what is your heating bill compared to theirs? Do you wonder if your heating system is better or worse than the one your friends have installed? Or do you look for information in official specialised webpages or directly consult professionals? Does your behaviour follow the national trend?

## WHAT DO CONSUMERS VALUE THE MOST?

### FRANCE

- Official campaigns from national authorities and energy agencies
- Appliance with a positive energy label (above C)
- Receiving information about heating appliances options
- Energy and monetary savings
- Willingness to pay for house and consumer wellbeing

### GERMANY

- Official campaigns from national authorities and energy agencies
- Appliance with a positive energy label (above C)
- Receiving information about heating appliances options
- Energy and monetary savings
- Willingness to pay for house and consumer wellbeing

### ITALY

- Willingness to pay for house and consumer wellbeing
- Increase house energy efficiency
- Inner social circle opinion
- Receiving information about heating appliances options

### PORTUGAL

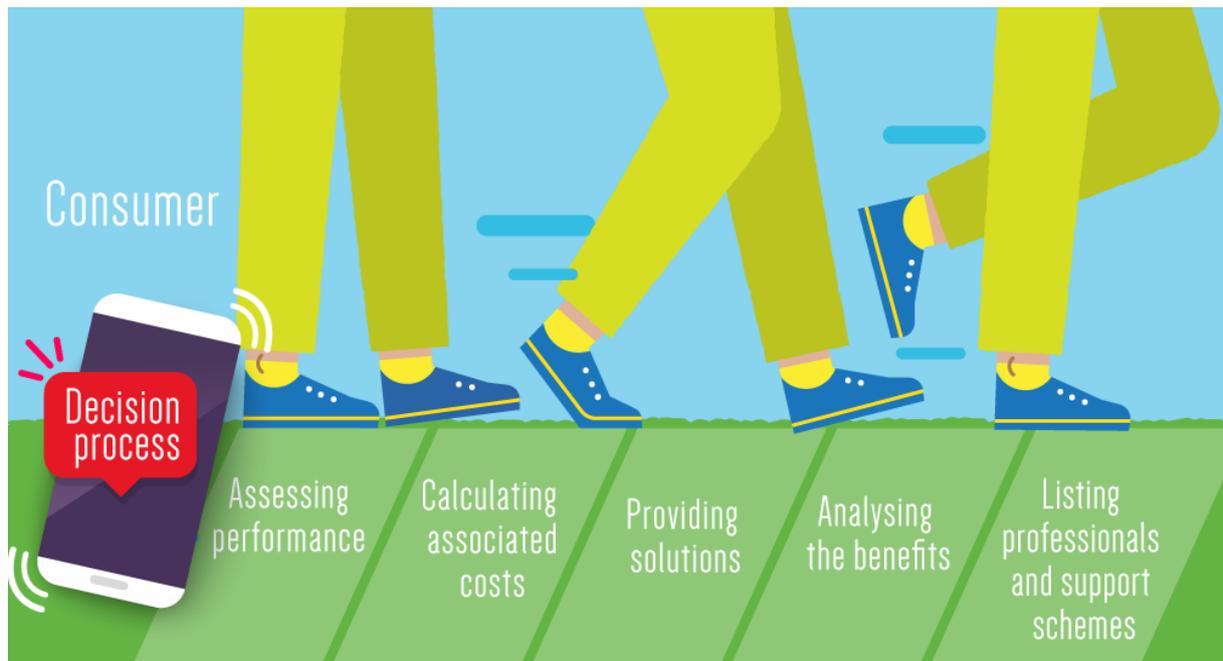
- Willingness to pay for house and consumer wellbeing
- Easy maintenance and operation
- Official campaigns from national authorities and energy agencies
- Receiving information about heating appliances options

### SPAIN

- Receiving information about heating appliances options
- Inner social circle opinion
- Easy maintenance and operation
- Increase house energy efficiency
- Willingness to pay for house and consumer wellbeing
- Communication from the media

## WHICH ARE THE MOST TRUSTED INFORMATION CHANNELS?

FRANCE	GERMAN	ITALY	PORTUGAL	SPAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People that I know and have an energy efficient heating system</li> <li>• Local organisations &amp; energy agencies</li> <li>• Stores of energy efficient heating system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People that I know and have an energy efficient heating system</li> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• Stores of energy efficient heating system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local organisations &amp; energy agencies</li> <li>• Installers and/or related professionals</li> <li>• Mobile apps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local organisations &amp; energy agencies</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• People that I know and have an energy efficient heating system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Mobile apps</li> <li>• People that I know and who have an energy efficient heating system</li> </ul>



To get more information about the HARP project and to access informative consumer materials, we invite you to visit <https://heating-retrofit.eu/> [The link is to be customized with a national webpage] and to follow us on twitter **@HARPproject**.



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