Household electricity prices show sticky downward trends despite reductions in wholesale electricity prices in 2023. This may warrant a closer look at retailer behaviour and clauses in their energy customer contracts.

At national level, Member States face trade-offs in their choice of support measures (e.g. helping affordability, security of supply, efficiency or the energy transition). Careful consideration of the costs, objectives and the impacts of the measures they choose to adopt is important.

Every EU country adopted emergency measures to mitigate the energy crisis. In total, EU Member States spent up to €646 billion on emergency measures in 2022, based on the Bruegel dataset.

Wholesale electricity prices peaked due to gas supply scarcity, but emergency measures mitigated the increase in retail prices.

Overall electricity demand dropped as a reaction to high prices, with variations between Member States, partly due to different emergency measures adopted.

Sufficient capacity for cross-border trading ensures the resilience of the energy system during crises, supporting efficient energy flows.

Measures for support to consumers should be temporary, targeted, and tailored to avoid long term distortionary effects.

Any emergency necessarily calls for trade-offs and compromises; however, some approaches outperform others. There is always merit in adopting energy savings and risk preparedness measures. These no-regret measures offer benefits without risks.

Unilateral national-level interventions should be avoided. Cross-border coordination ensures network and market resilience.

Coordinated efforts across Member States on emergency measures mitigate market fragmentation risk. Unilateral national-level interventions should be avoided. Cross-border coordination ensures network and market resilience.

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EMERGENCY MEASURES

Interactive database of 439 measures (by country, type)