



# Price comparison websites

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## Summary of survey findings

March 2021

RiDC

# Introduction

**This document reports the findings of a survey completed as one part of an RiDC research project investigating how accessible and easy to use energy switching sites and services are for disabled and older energy consumers, including for users of assistive technology.**

**The research was completed during Spring/Summer 2021 and funded through the Energy Redress Scheme.**

**The online survey was sent to 2500 members of the RiDC Consumer Panel during March 2021. We received 548 valid responses.**

**The full findings of the research, including consumer guidance are available on our website at [www.ridc.org.uk](http://www.ridc.org.uk).**

# Who responded to our survey

Total of 548 respondents

## Demographics

### Age

	n	%
Under 18	2	0.4%
18-39	43	7.9%
40-59	203	37.5%
60-79	262	48.4%
80 and above	31	5.7%
Unknown	7	1.3%

### Impairment

	n	%
Mobility	452	82.5%
Memory	178	32.5%
Learning	46	8.4%
Hearing	166	30.3%
Sight	245	44.7%
Dexterity	212	38.7%
Seizures	7	1.3%
Communication	86	15.7%
Behaviour	57	6.7%

### Gender

	n	%
Female	286	52.3%
Male	255	46.6%
Prefer not to say	4	0.7%
Non-binary	2	0.4%

# Technology use

Q2. What devices do you normally use to browse the internet?

	n	%
Desktop or laptop	378	69.0%
Smart-phone	295	53.8%
Tablet	245	44.7%

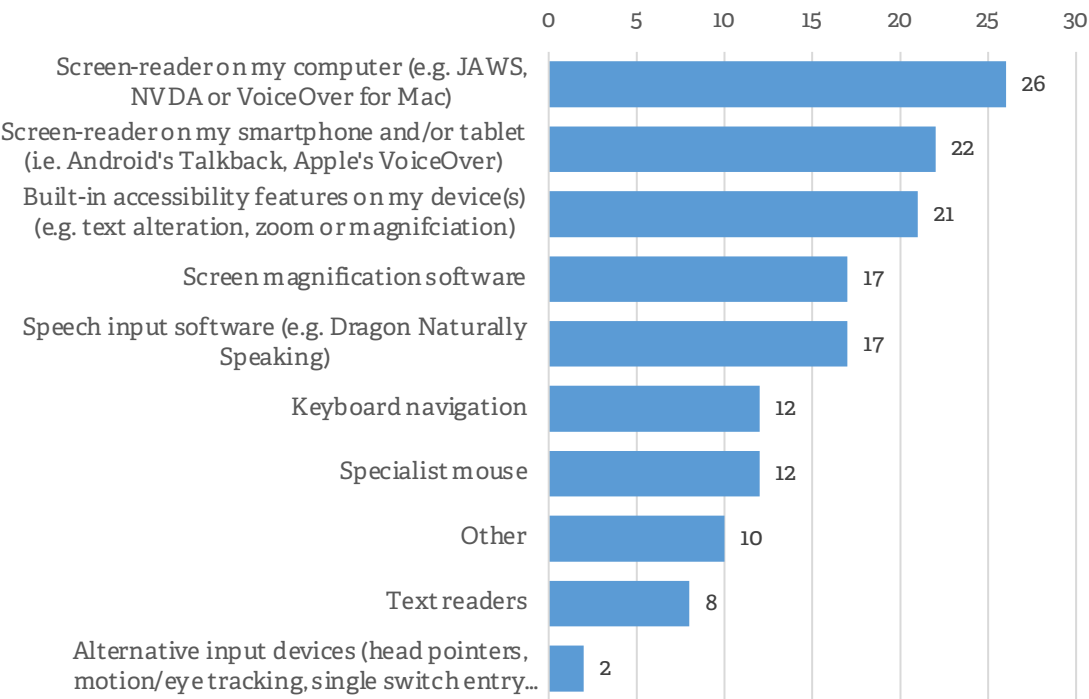
Q3. Do you use any assistive technology to go online?

	n	%
Yes	70	12.8%
No	477	87.2%

Q5. What web browser do you mainly use?

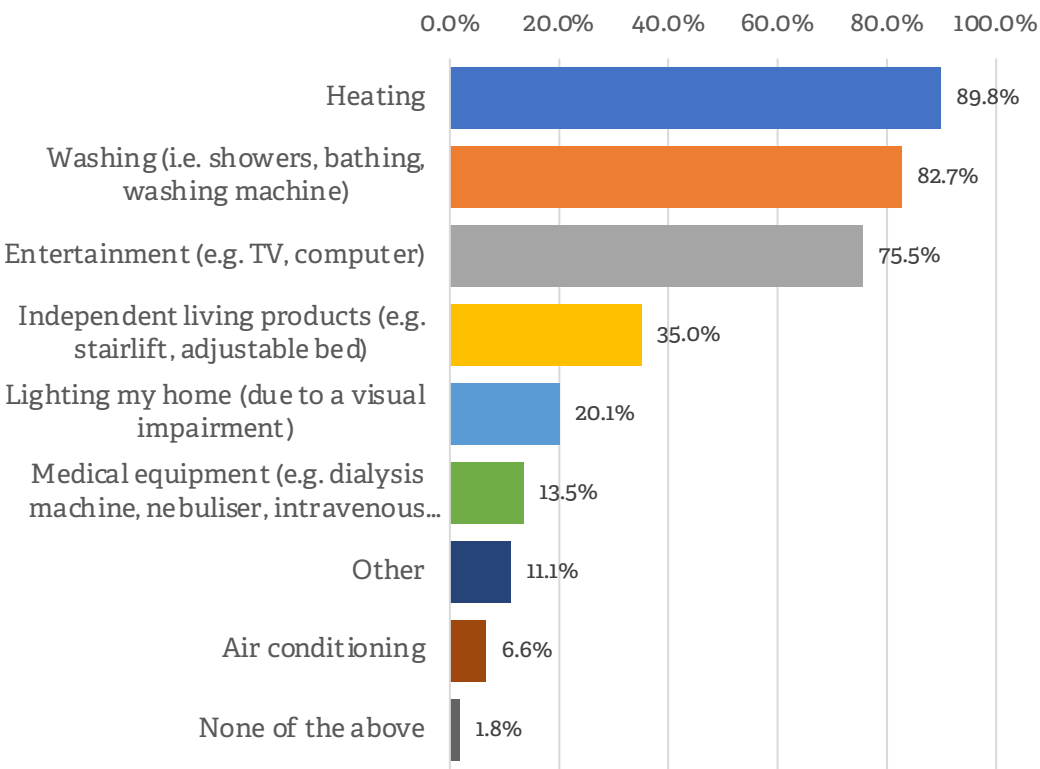
	n	%
1. Google Chrome	259	47.3%
2. Safari	117	21.4%
3. Firefox	64	11.7%
4. Microsoft Edge	57	10.4%
5. Internet explorer	31	5.7%
6. Other	20	3.6%

Q4. Which of the following assistive technology do you use? (n= 70)



# Energy use and needs

Q7. Given your disability or impairment, which of the following energy uses are essential for your health and well-being?



- **¾ respondents use more energy** as a result of their disability and/or impairment(s).
- **2/3 of respondents are left with higher energy bills** because of this. This causes financial difficult to half of them.

Q8. Do you use more energy as a result of your disability or impairment(s)?

	n	%
Yes	413	75.5%
No	90	16.5%
Don't know	44	8.0%

Q9. Does the energy you use leave you with high energy bills?

	n	%
Yes	347	63.3%
No	123	22.4%
Don't know	78	14.2%



Q10. Does the energy you use cause you financial difficulty? (n= 347)

	n	%
Yes	188	54,2%
No	159	45.8%

# Energy use and needs

**Q11. Are you aware of energy suppliers' 'Warm Home Discount'?**

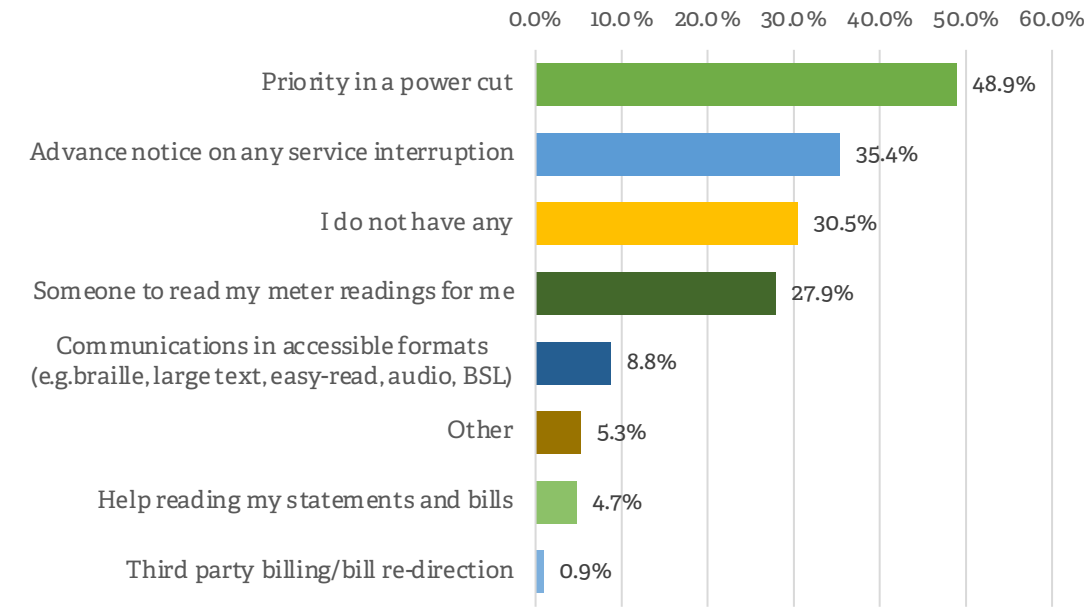
	n	%
Yes	332	60.6%
No	216	39.4%



**Q12. Are you currently a recipient of the 'Warm Home Discount'? (n= 331)**

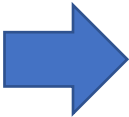
	n	%
Yes	114	43.5%
No	168	50.8%
Don't know	19	5.7%

**Q13. With regard to your disability or impairment(s) and your energy supplier, do you have any particular access requirements?**



**Q14. Are you aware of a Priority Services Register?**

	n	%
Yes	332	60.6%
No	215	39.3%



**Q15. Are you on your energy supplier's Priority Services Register? (n= 330)**

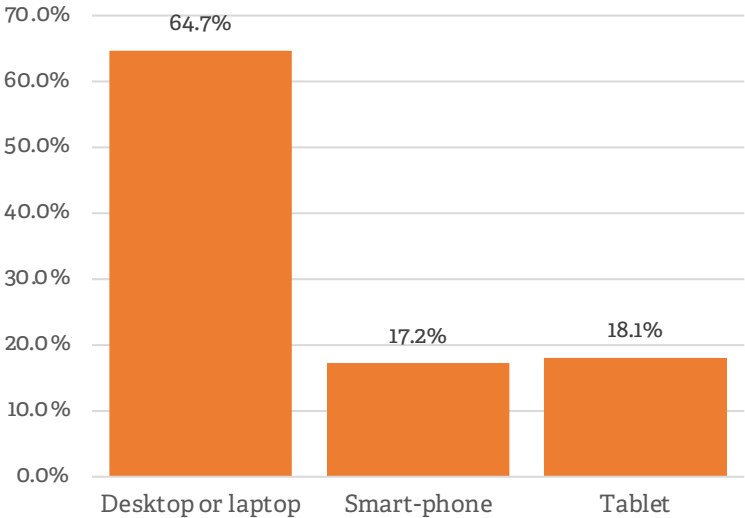
	n	%
Yes	269	81.5%
No	26	7.9%
Don't know	35	10.6%

# Experience

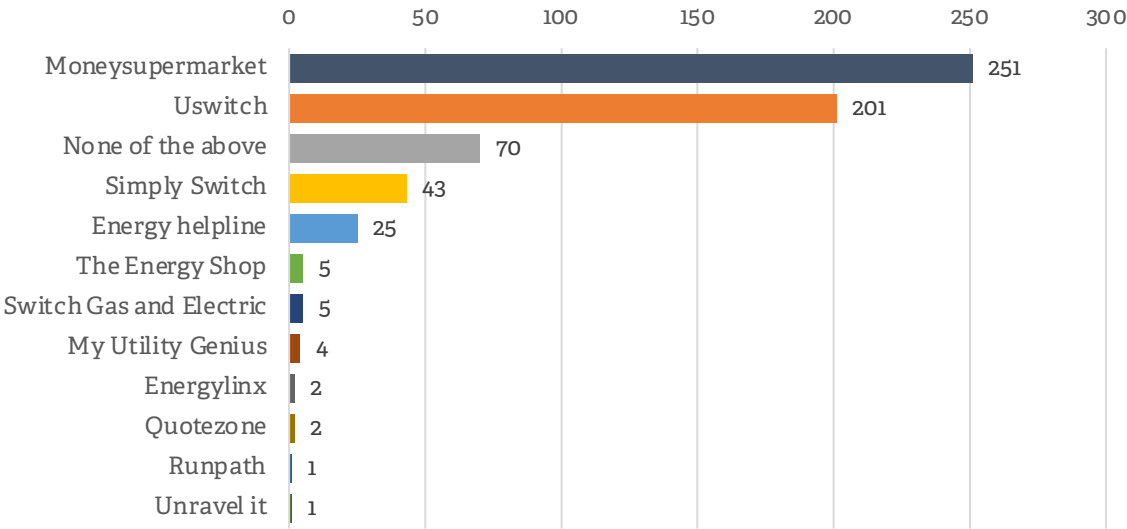
**Q17. Have you used a price comparison websites or switching service before?**

	n	%
Yes	388	70.8%
No	143	26.1%
Not sure	17	3.1%

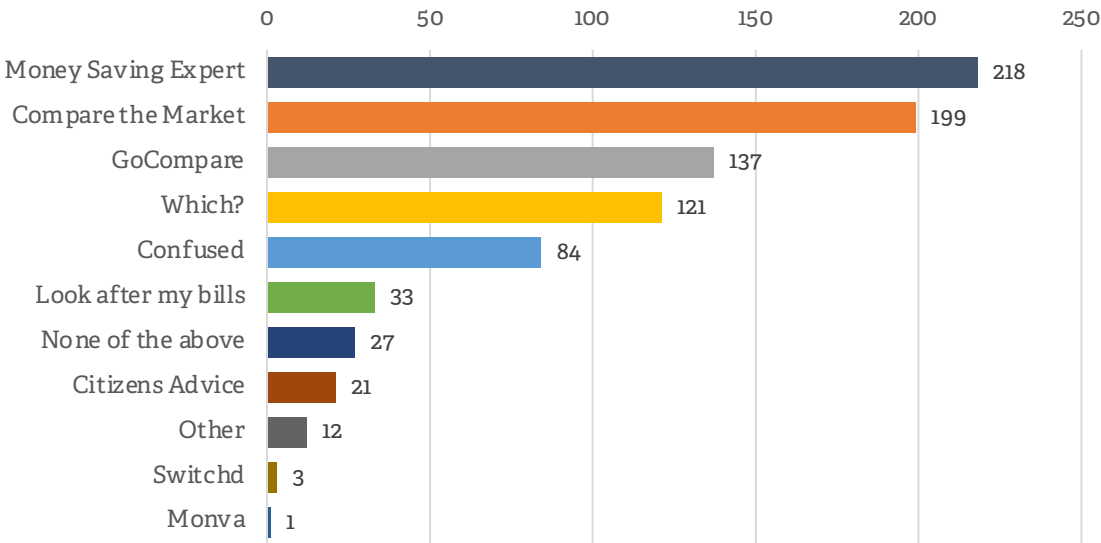
**Q18. Which device would you be more likely to use when browsing a price comparison website? (n= 354)**



**Q19. Which of the following (OFGEM accredited) price comparison websites or switching service have you used? (n= 388)**



**Q20. Which of the following price comparison websites have you used? (n= 388)**



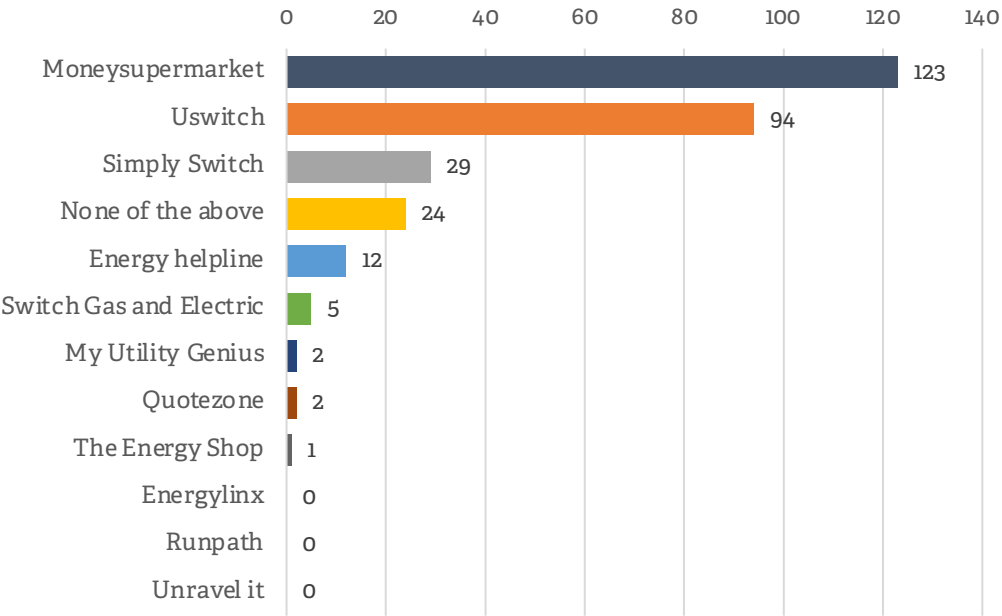


# Awareness

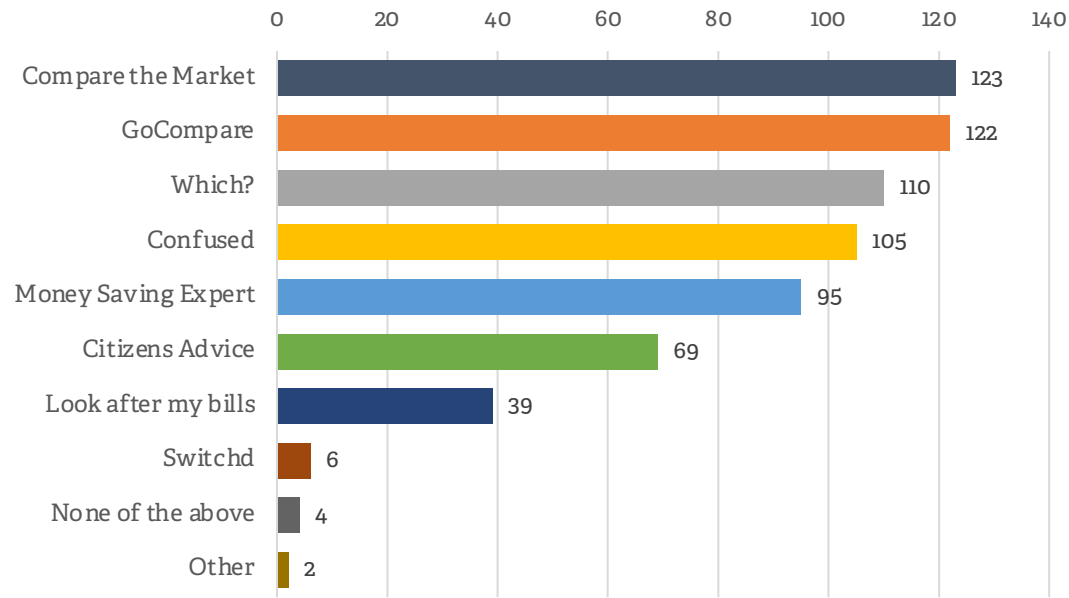
Q21. Are you aware of OFGEM accreditation on price comparison websites? (n= 388)

	n	%
Yes	80	20.6%
No	308	79.4%

Q22. Which of the following (OFGEM accredited) price comparison websites have you heard of? (n= 143)



Q23. Which of the following price comparison websites have you heard of? (n= 143)



- **Only 1 in 5 of respondents** who have used price comparison websites **are familiar with OFGEM accreditation or have come across a symbol indicating this.**
- **Non-users of price comparison websites are more familiar with price comparison that are not OFGEM accredited.**



# Confidence

**Q24. How digitally confident would you say you are?**

	n	%
Very confident	220	40.1%
Somewhat confident	266	48.5%
Somewhat unconfident	49	8.9%
Very unconfident	13	2.4%

**Q25. How confident are you that you would be able to use a price comparison website right now?**

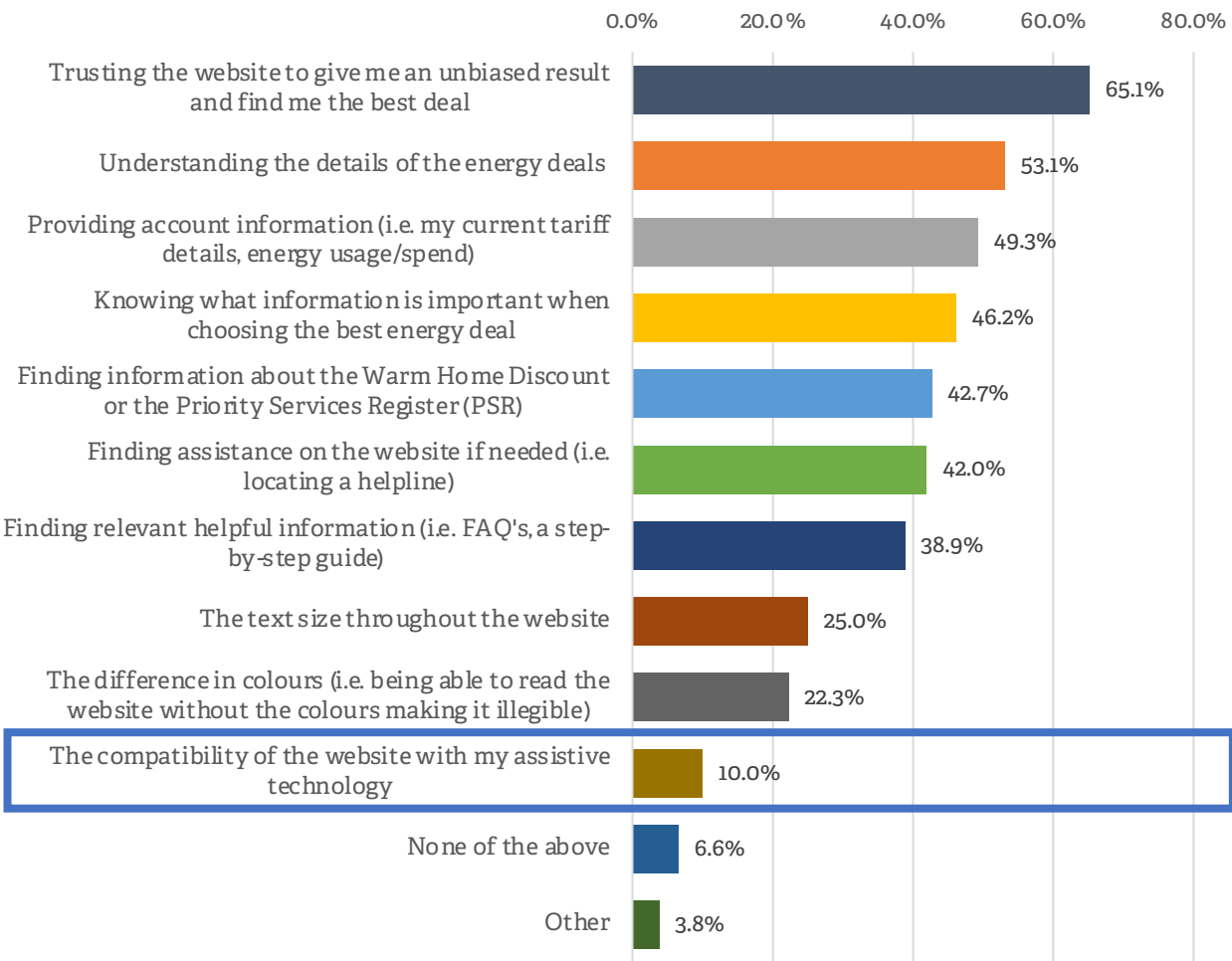
	n	%
Very confident	215	39.2%
Somewhat confident	229	41.8%
Somewhat unconfident	79	14.4%
Very unconfident	25	4.6%

**Q26. Would you feel more confident using a telephone service to compare energy prices or deals?**

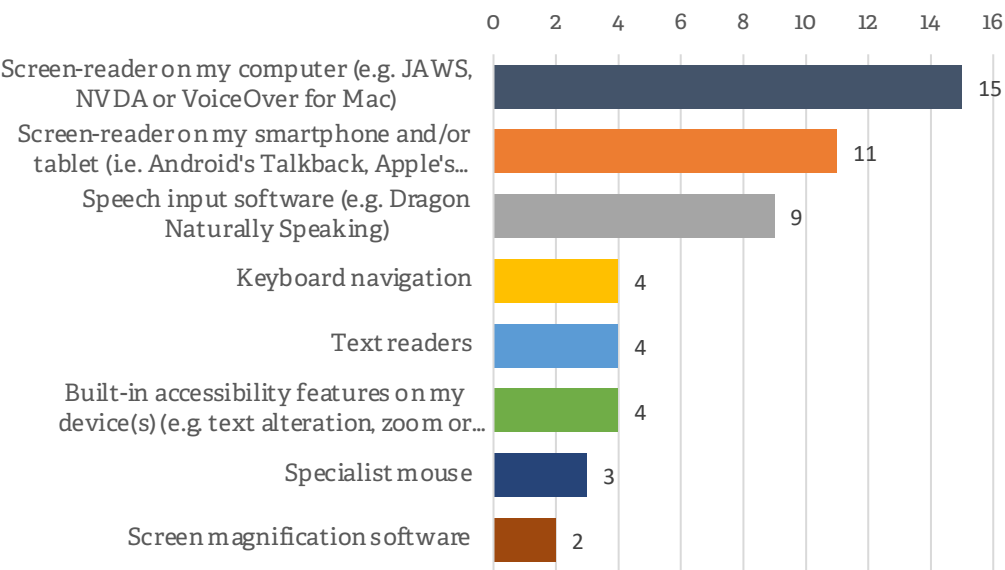
	n	%
Yes	86	15.7%
No	369	67.3%
Don't know	93	17.0%

# Access

## Q27. What aspects of a price comparison website or switching service could be challenging?



## Q28. Which of your assistive technology might this not be compatible with? (n= 55)



- Respondents' **main concerns** about using a price comparison related to: **Trusting the website to give fair deals, understanding the energy deals and providing account information or personal details.**
- **1 in 10 of respondents would worry about the compatibility of these websites with their assistive technology.**
- Of these respondents, **incompatibility with their screenreader on their computer and smartphone/tablet and speech input software** were their biggest concerns.

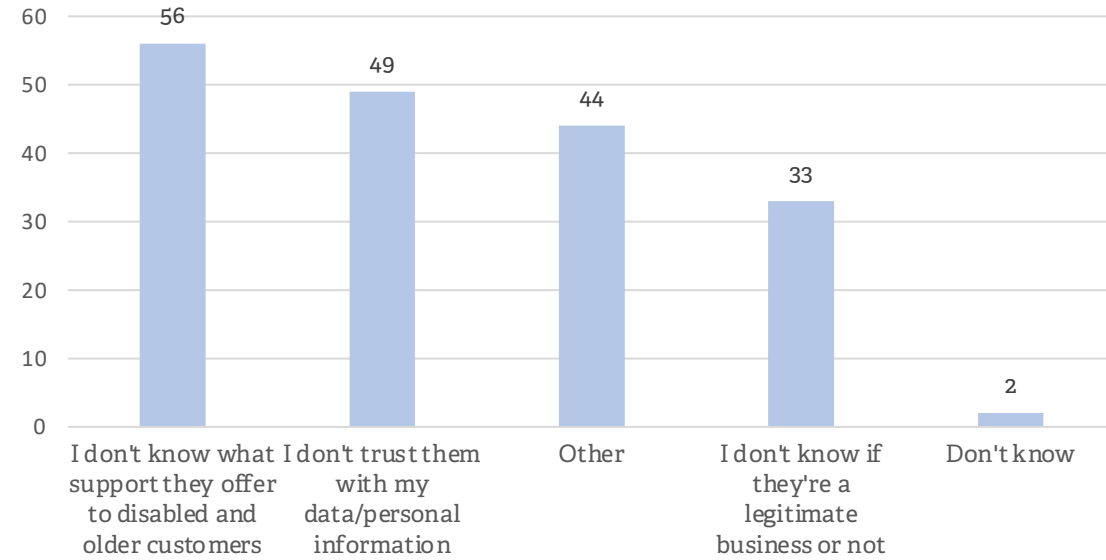
# Trust

## Q29. Do you trust price comparison websites?

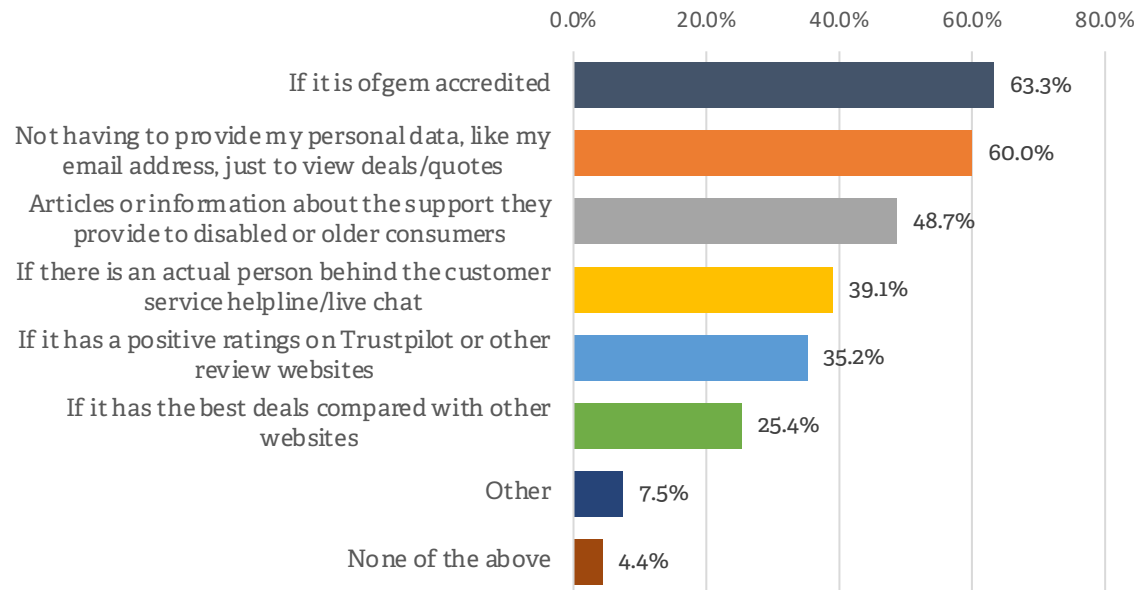
	n	%
Definitely yes	18	3.3%
Probably yes	209	38.1%
May or may not	205	37.4%
Probably not	90	16.4%
Definitely not	26	4.7%



## Q30. Why do you not trust price comparison websites? (n= 116)



## Q31. What would make you trust a price comparison website?



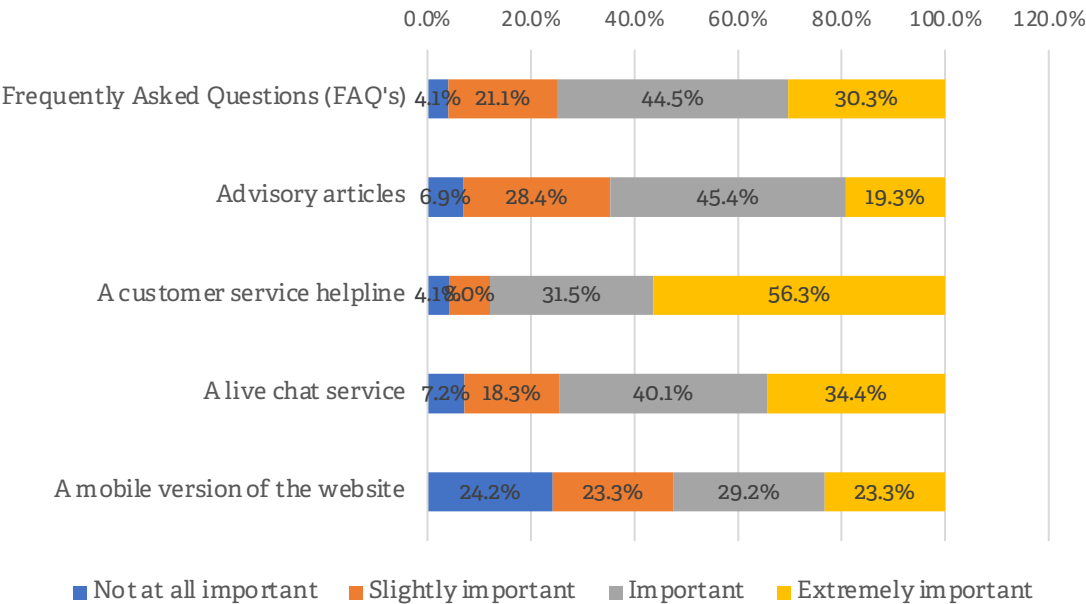
- **About 1 in 5 of respondent do not trust price comparison websites for reasons mainly relating to the lack of support they offer to disabled and older customers, lack of trust when providing them with personal information,**

# Preferences

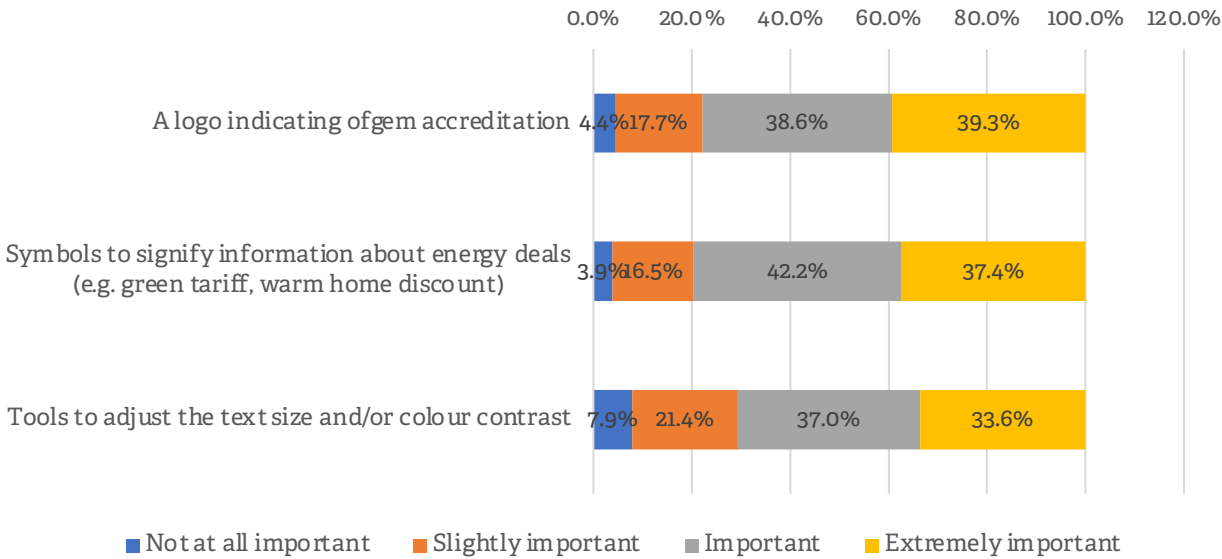
**Q32. Do you think the requirement to provide an email or set up an account off-putting when using a price comparison website?**

	n	%
Yes	458	83.7%
No	89	16.3%

**Q33. How important do you think it is for price comparison websites to have the following?**



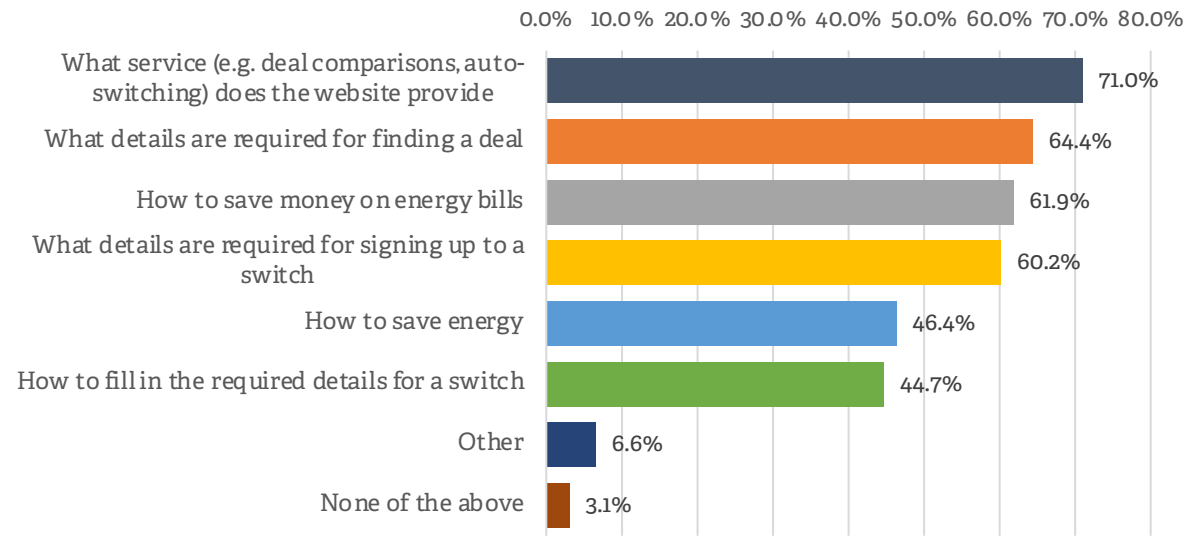
**Q34. How important do you think it is for price comparison websites to contain the following?**



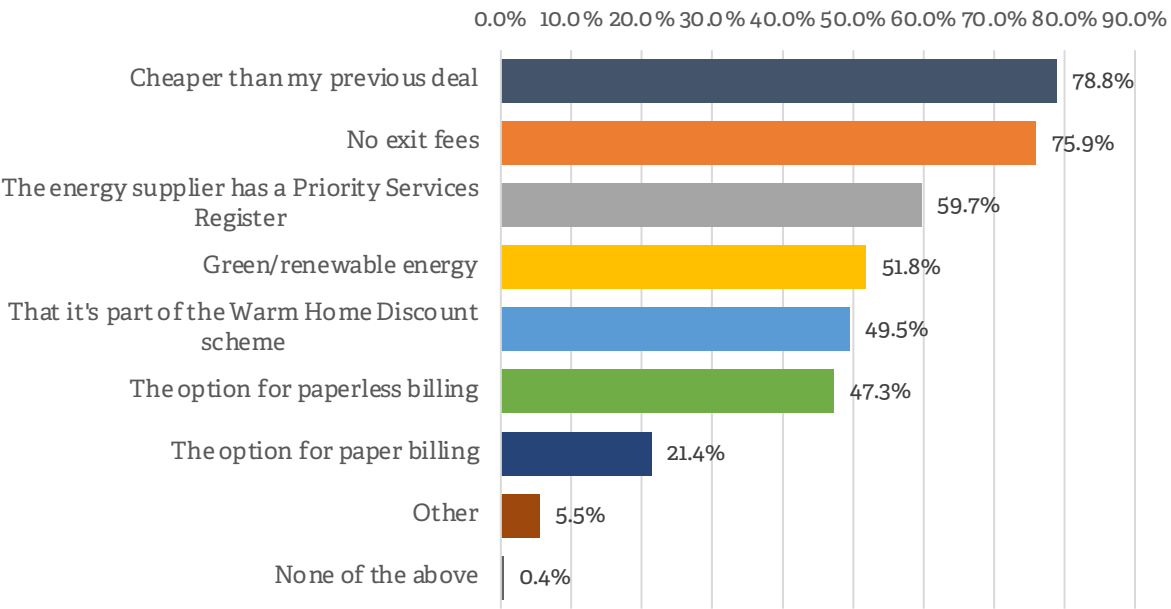
**Q35. Are there any other features that you think would be important for a price comparison website to have?**

# Preferences

**Q36. If a price comparison website were to contain FAQ's or advisory articles, what would you want them to tell you about?**



**Q37. Which of the following features are important to you in an energy deal?**



**Q38. What would be the best way for a price comparison website to advertise to you its service?**

	n	%
Email	340	62.0%
TV advertisement	213	38.9%
Direct mail	147	26.8%
Newspaper or magazine advertisement	125	22.8%
Radio advertisement	77	14.1%
Text	35	6.4%
Phone call	18	3.3%