

Smart Meters Divided the UK. This Media Analysis Shows Us Why

Media Analysis Summary



Smart meters are innovative digital devices that have been developed to substitute the conventional gas and electricity meters in the UK. Their primary purpose is to furnish users with immediate data on their energy usage, empowering them to effectively regulate their energy consumption and curtail their expenses.

However, the rollout has been controversial, with some consumers and advocacy groups expressing concerns about **costs**, **privacy** and **technological issues**, which became the main topics in the media debate.

Topics in the smart meters debate by share of voice



37%

Energy costs



25%

Technological issues



19%

Environmental impact



15%

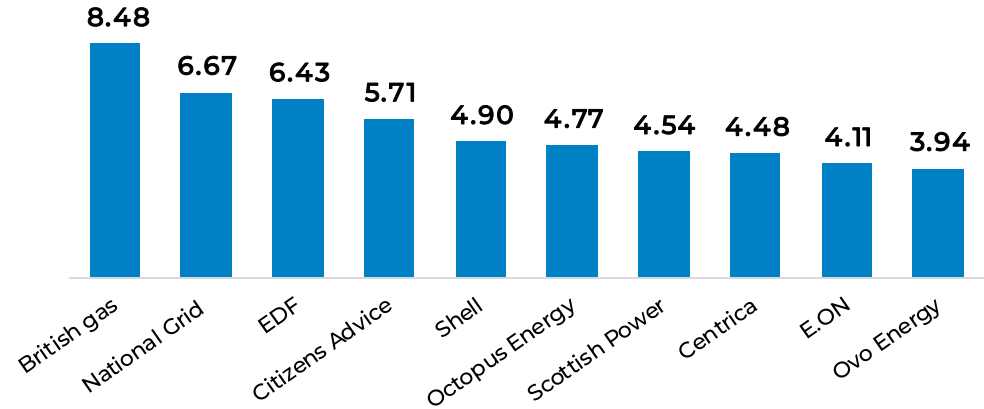
Data privacy



4%

Health concerns

Top 10 organisations in the smart meters debate by media impact score



Some companies secured positive coverage by offering advice to customers or grants and financial assistance funds. For instance, **British Gas** emerged as the most influential provider in terms of media impact as it introduced plans to pay customers to cut their electricity use at teatime to avoid blackouts during the winter.

5 takeaways from the smart meters debate:

- Cost-effectiveness emerged as the most pressing issue
- Prepayment meters caused a reputational problem for suppliers
- Technological issues drove negative coverage
- Environmental impact was presented as a double-edged sword
- Data privacy generated conspiracy theories on social media

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