



## Making energy efficiency clearer: Commission proposes a single 'A to G' energy label and a digital database for products

Brussels, 15 July 2015

See also: [Press release](#): Transforming Europe's energy system - Commission's energy summer package leads the way (15 July 2015)

As part of the Energy Union strategy, launched by the Commission in February 2015, today the Commission proposes a revision of the energy efficiency labelling laws. The proposed revision ensures coherence and continuity and makes sure that customers are able to make better informed choices that will help them save energy and money. It will also directly contribute to the 'Energy Efficiency First' principle of the Energy Union.

### What does the Commission propose exactly?

To provide consumers with a clearer indication of the energy efficiency of products, which are currently classified in different scales (from A to G, from A+++ to D, etc.), and to improve compliance for producers and retailers, the European Commission is proposing a revised energy labelling system consisting of:

1. **A single energy labelling scale from 'A to G'**: the Commission proposes a return to the well-known and effective 'A to G' label scale for energy efficient products, including a process for rescaling the existing labels.
2. **A digital database for new energy efficient products**: the Commission proposes that all new products placed on the EU market are registered on an online database, allowing greater transparency and easier market surveillance by national authorities.

This proposal is in line with the 'Energy Efficiency First' principle included in the Energy Union Strategy, which aims to make the EU energy system more sustainable via well-informed consumer choices.

### Why is the Commission proposing a single 'A to G' energy label?

Since 1995, the EU energy label has proven to be a success: **85% of European consumers use it when purchasing**. It has also driven innovative industry developments, with most of the products being in the top classes (A+++, A++, A+) today and most of the other classes being empty (in some cases, even A). However, such a positive result now makes it difficult for consumers to distinguish the best performing products: they might think that in buying an A+ class product they are buying one of the most efficient on the market, while in fact they are sometimes buying one of the least efficient ones.

In order to make it **easier for consumers to understand and compare products**, the European Commission is suggesting to have **one single 'A to G' energy label**. This will encourage consumers to buy the most efficient products, thereby reducing energy use with a positive impact on the energy bill.

### Why is the Commission proposing a digital database for new energy efficient products?

It is estimated that 10-25% of products on the market do not comply with energy efficiency labelling requirements and that around 10% of envisaged energy savings are lost due to non-compliance. This is at least partly due to weak enforcement by national market surveillance authorities.

To strengthen this enforcement, the Commission proposes a product registration database where manufacturers and importers will register their products, uploading information that is already obligatory under the current EU laws. This makes **key information regarding product compliance centrally available for enforcement authorities in the Member States**, instead of them having to make an often significant and time consuming effort to get this information from economic operators.

The database will also make the **label and key product information available to consumers and dealers** and will facilitate the digitalisation of the energy label.

### What will happen concretely?

When approved by the co-legislators, the Commission proposal will be implemented as follows:

1. **Products already on the market** will be sold with no change
2. **New products** will be sold with the new scale. Old labels, such as those with the A+ to A+++ scales, will be removed by retailers.
3. Producers will **register their products**. The information will be accessible to Member State authorities to facilitate compliance checks and increase transparency.
4. **Consumers** will be informed through dedicated information campaigns undertaken by Member States, in cooperation with retailers.

The European Commission will support 'joint market surveillance actions', such as the EEpliant project in which 12 Member States participate<sup>[1]</sup>.

The new system is expected to bring **additional energy savings equal to the annual energy consumption of the Baltic countries combined (200 TWh per year in 2030)**.

### Benefits for consumers

The revised energy label will save consumers a further **€15 per year** due to:

- Clearer information about the energy efficiency of products
- Possibility to compare products
- More information about products, such as performance, water use or noise

This will add to the current savings of €465 per year, **amounting to €480 per year per household**.

### Benefits for producers and retailers

The revised energy label will bring manufacturers and retailers an **overall revenue increase of over €10 billion per year**, thanks to:

- **The reinforcement of a popular marketing tool**, taken into account by more than 85% of consumers when purchasing
- **A reduced risk of confusion**, leading to increased legal certainty and better compliance
- **A reduced administrative burden**, thanks to product registration and the digitalised label download

This will add to the current €55 billion per year in extra revenue<sup>[2]</sup> **leading to €65 billion per year**.

### Benefits for Member States

The Commission's proposal also has tangible benefits for Member States:

- **Time savings**, with a reduction of 10-15% of their market surveillance time thanks to the product registration database
- **Reduced administrative burden**, since the proposal is for a Regulation, which is directly applicable. Thus, Member States will not have to transpose the provisions into national legislation

### Benefits for the environment

The current energy efficiency labelling measures deliver about 175 million tonnes of oil equivalent of savings in primary energy every year. This is equivalent to the annual primary energy consumption of Italy or the yearly consumption of about 60 million households.

The revision of the 'A to G' energy label is expected to bring additional savings equal to the annual energy consumption of all the Baltic countries combined (i.e. around 17 million tonnes of oil equivalent per year in primary energy).

### What's next?

This Commission proposal will be sent to the European Parliament and the Council. They will discuss it and together will reach an agreement. This is expected to take one year. When approved by the co-legislators, the Commission will implement these changes for product groups that have an energy label within a period of five years for most products.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Energy efficient products: legislation in place

Energy efficient products are currently covered by two EU Directives:

- The **Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC)** - the tool for making products more energy efficient
- The **Energy Labelling Directive (2010/30/EU)** - the tool through which the consumer can recognise the best performing products

The individual product measures adopted under these Directives allow consumers to buy the most

energy efficient products, and ensure a level playing field for European companies.

### **Energy efficient products: further legislative steps**

As foreseen by the **Energy Union's Strategy**, the European Commission is implementing key actions to increase energy efficiency, such as the revision of the **Energy Labelling Directive (2010/30/EU)**.

The Energy Union Strategy identifies concrete steps to ensure energy supply security, reduce EU Member State dependence on imports from third countries, to integrate national energy markets further and improve the participation of consumers, to enhance energy efficiency, decarbonise the energy mix and promote research and innovation in the energy field.

More information is available here: [http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/energy-union/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/energy-union/index_en.htm)

### **Energy efficient products available on the market**

Currently there are:

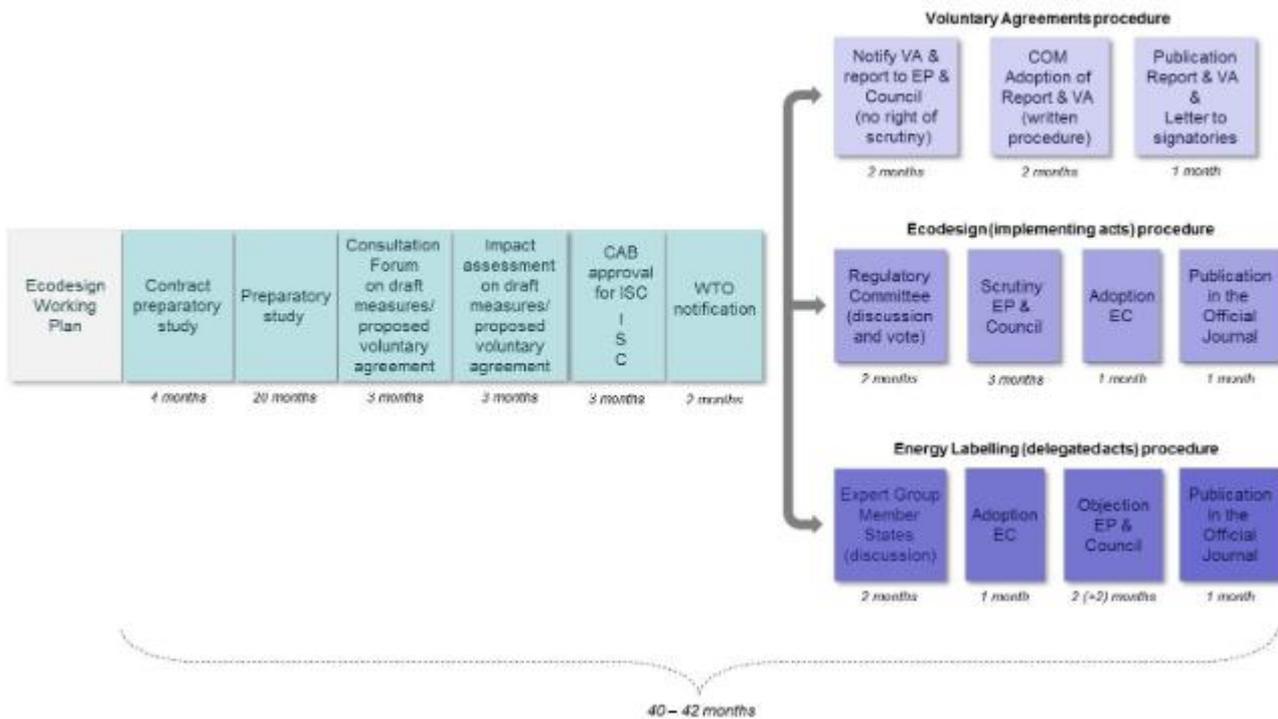
- **11 product groups** covered by the **energy efficiency and labelling rules**: dishwashers, washing machines, tumble driers, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, lamps, luminaires, televisions, air conditioners, domestic cooking appliances and ventilation units.
- **8 product groups** covered by **efficiency requirements** (and not by labelling): simple set-top boxes, external power supplies, electric motors, circulators, fans, water pumps, computers, power transformers.
- **3 horizontal measures** covering the following: standby/off mode electric power consumption of electric and electronic products, standby power consumption of networked devices, and energy labelling on the internet.

Labelling and efficiency requirements for heaters and boilers (such as gas boilers and heat pumps) will enter into force from September 2015 onwards. These will only apply to new products on the market.

### **How decisions are taken for energy efficient products**

In the EU, all energy efficiency measures are developed through a rigorous and fully transparent process, with the **close involvement of stakeholders and Member States at all stages**. This includes:

- An **in-depth "preparatory study"** with the involvement of stakeholders that explores the technical, economic, environmental and social aspects of a product group.
- An **extensive stakeholder consultation** (including industry, consumer organisations, environmental NGOs, Member States representatives, etc.) through the so-called 'Consultation Forum'.
- An **assessment of the impacts** on the environment, industry and consumers, followed by expert discussions and a vote in a committee with Member State representatives.
- Final **scrutiny by the European Parliament and Council** who may reject the measure (this has so far not happened, showing strong political support for these measures).



## The importance of energy efficiency for...

...the EU energy system. Increasing energy efficiency in the European Union, in combination with the development of renewable energy sources, is the best way to **reduce our dependence on external energy suppliers**. The EU imports 53% of the energy it consumes, and therefore it is investing in energy efficiency means while increasing our energy independence.

Moreover, the EU's experience proves that the reduction of industry emissions was achieved while industrial **production increased**, with energy efficiency being the main contributor: between 1995-2010; the Gross Value Added in industrial sectors increased by 18% while industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions decreased by 20%.

Last October, EU leaders approved the 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy, and in doing so agreed to double their efforts on **climate change mitigation**. The 40% greenhouse gas reduction target is accompanied by a binding EU target to increase the share of renewable energy to at least 27% by 2030. In addition, there is an EU target to **increase the EU's energy efficiency by at least 27%, subject to a review by 2020 that will consider a higher target of 30%**.

On 25 February 2015, the Commission announced its Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy. This proposal contributes to the 'Energy Efficiency First' principle of the Energy Union.

## Want to know more:

For more information and documents please see: <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/news/new-electricity-market-consumers>

On Energy efficient products: <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-products>

Please also see infographic in the Attachment to this fact sheet.

[1] For more information:

[http://www.prosafe.org/images/Documents/EEPLIANT/EEPLIANT\\_Press\\_release\\_v2.pdf](http://www.prosafe.org/images/Documents/EEPLIANT/EEPLIANT_Press_release_v2.pdf)

[2] Source: Ecodesign Impact Accounting, VHK, 2014

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/studies/doc/2014\\_06\\_ecodesign\\_impact\\_accounting\\_part1.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/studies/doc/2014_06_ecodesign_impact_accounting_part1.pdf)

MEMO/15/5350

General public inquiries:

[Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](tel:0080067891011) or by [email](#)

Attachments

[Single label.pdf](#)