



Questions and Answers about the rescaled EU energy labels and ecodesign measures

Brussels, 1 March 2021

1. Which products will be covered by rescaled energy labels now and in the future?

The first four product categories covered by the new energy label as of 1 March 2021 are i) fridges and freezers, including wine storage fridges, ii) dishwashers, iii) washing machines and washer-dryers, and iv) television sets and other external monitors, such as computer displays, which are covered by a label for the first time. In addition, a new label will be introduced for “commercial fridges” – a new product group for refrigerating appliances used in shops and vending machines. From 1 September 2021, the new labels will also apply to light bulbs and lamps with fixed light sources.

The energy label framework regulation foresees that the next group of products to be addressed will be i) tumble driers, ii) local space heaters, iii) air conditioners, iv) cooking appliances, v) ventilation units vi) professional refrigerator units, vii) space and water heaters, and viii) solid fuel boilers. The preparatory work for the regulation of these products is still at an early stage.

2. Does the energy label drive consumer choices and industry practices?

A Eurobarometer survey in 2019 showed that 93% of the population recognised the EU energy label and for 79% of consumers it had influenced their choice of purchase. Manufacturers are aware of this influence on consumer choices and are therefore keen to put products on the market, which are in the highest possible category when compared to competitors. While companies have many different reasons for investing in research and innovation, the energy label provides a clear indication to consumers, which companies are leading the way in terms of manufacturing the most energy efficient products.

To illustrate just how much energy efficiency innovation has taken place in recent years we can compare the evolution of product ratings; roughly two-thirds of refrigerators and washing machines sold in 2006 were labelled as class A. By 2017, over 90% of those sold were labelled A+, A++ or A+++.

3. What benefits do EU ecodesign and energy labelling rules offer to citizens, industry and our planet?

Whereas the EU energy label offers consumers clear and transparent help when making their purchasing choices, EU ecodesign rules are aimed more at manufacturers – setting minimum standards for products placed on the EU market.

The estimated benefits^[1] of all combined energy labels and ecodesign measures will create primary energy savings by 2030 of approximately 230 Mtoe (million tonnes of oil equivalent) per year. This is the equivalent of the annual final energy consumption of Spain and Poland combined. For consumers, this means an average saving of up to €285 per year on their household energy bills.

For example, specifically for dishwashers, it is estimated that the annual energy use would be one third lower by 2030 than without such measures, representing a saving of 80 kWh per year; and the more efficient use of water would provide water savings of 476 million m³ a year – equivalent to 190,000 Olympic sized 2-metre deep swimming pools. For fridges and freezers, the annual energy consumption would be 64% less by 2030.

Moreover, in 2020 the additional business revenue due to ecodesign and energy labelling measures is 66 billion euros, and could increase to 91 billion euros by 2030. Related jobs had increased by more than 930,000 by 2020 and could reach around 1.26 million by 2030.

4. What was the process for agreeing these changes to the energy labels?

The changes to the label were developed through a rigorous and fully transparent process, with the close involvement of stakeholders and Member States at all stages.

Following an in-depth "preparatory study" exploring the technical, economic, environmental and social aspects of each product group, there was an extensive stakeholder consultation (including industry, consumer organisations, environmental NGOs, Member States representatives, etc.) **for each product group**. The Commission's concept was further discussed by experts and then agreed upon by Member State representatives. Finally, the European Parliament and Council had a two-month period to raise objections.

The changes that enter into force on 1 March 2021 concern the following regulations adopted by the Commission in March 2019:

- washing machines and washer-driers (Regulation ([EU](#) 2019/2014))
- dishwashers (Regulation ([EU](#) 2019/2017))
- electronic displays (Regulation ([EU](#) 2019/2013))
- refrigerators (Regulation ([EU](#) 2019/2016))
- light sources (Regulation ([EU](#) 2019/2015))

5. Will these changes happen at retail level overnight, or is there a transition period foreseen?

Manufacturers have been involved in the process and informed about the changes. From a consumer perspective, the new label has in principle already been applicable since November 2020 – so that consumers who have bought products in recent months will have found 2 labels in the packaging (the old and the new one). Retailers have 14 working days after 1 March 2021 to change the labels in their displays in shops and online outlets.

There are also some exceptions. For example models discontinued after 1 November 2020 (but still in stock) will be able to keep the old label for a 9-month period.

6. What is the aim of the EU-wide database EPREL and what is its added value for consumers?

Given the widespread use of smartphones by consumers, the QR-code on the new energy labels links directly to the product page in the EU-wide database EPREL (European Product Registry for Energy Labelling). It will make it easy for consumers to access additional information that is not on the label. For a fridge for example, such information could cover the model dimensions, details of the lightbulb contained, the type of compartments and their individual volume, and the minimum guarantee offered by the supplier. In time, this database will also facilitate direct comparison of products.

It will also be useful for Market Surveillance Authorities in each EU country to access the database and help them check that manufacturers are complying with the rules.

For more information

Press release - [IP/21/818](#)

[\[1\]](#) The estimated figures are provided by the 2019 Ecodesign Impact Accounting study, not yet published by the European Commission. [This study](#) presents the updated results of a comprehensive accounting of the impacts of ecodesign and energy labelling measures on energy consumption, socio-economic impacts (jobs), industrial competitiveness (revenues) and technology development, over the period 1990-2050 (for EU-28).

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