

**Contact: Pauline Constant: +32 (0)2 789 24 01**  
**Date: 01/10/2019**  
**Reference: BEUC-PR-2019-024**

### **EU makes 5 household appliances safer and repairable but does not go the full mile**

The EU has just adopted the 'Ecodesign' package which will improve five types of products that most consumers own at home: lighting, fridges, TV screens, dishwashers and washing machines. Besides relying on less energy, the appliances will be easier to fix and, in some cases, safer. However, the measures should have gone further to make it easy for consumers to repair their goods.

BEUC and its sister organisation ANEC - the consumer voice in standardisation - have long called for the measures, which will bring along the following benefits for consumers:

- **Spare parts will have to be available for 7 to 10 years as a minimum.** This makes products more durable and generates less waste.
- **Toxic flame retardants will be banned in TV screens<sup>1</sup>,** which will push manufacturers to resort to safer alternatives to delay a fire.
- **Light bulb flickering will decrease.** Repeated exposure to flickering light can affect the nervous system.
- **Energy consumption will keep going down,** helping consumers not only to save money, but also to minimise their impact on the planet.

Monique Goyens, BEUC's Director General, commented:

"The new repair requirements will help improve the lifetime of everyday appliances that currently fail too quickly.<sup>2</sup> It is crucial we bin the current 'throwaway' trend, which depletes natural resources and empties consumers' pockets. It is excellent news that consumers' health will be better protected, thanks to fewer flickering light bulbs and the removal of harmful flame retardants in TV screens. The EU has started with five products that most consumers own at home and we strongly encourage legislators to make more product categories repairable."

However, it is a disappointment that consumers will not be able to repair themselves.

"Certain spare parts and maintenance tips will only be available to professional repairers. That means people who are willing to repair by themselves, especially for economic

---

<sup>1</sup> The ban applies to the back cover and stand of electronic displays. See BEUC blog '[Time's up for harmful flame retardants in TV screens](#)', June 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Belgian consumer organisation Test Achats/Test Aankoop has launched the online platform '[Trop vite usé/Te rap kapot](#)' for consumers to flag products that fail too quickly. Almost 8,500 products have been reported since the launch in late 2016.

reasons, are going to be left behind. If we want consumers to truly enjoy their right to repair, manufacturers should make repair accessible.”

Stephen Russell, Secretary General of ANEC, commented:

“The new measures should have gone further to make it easy for consumers to have longer lasting goods. It is helpful that spare parts will become available, but the maximum delivery time of 3 weeks would surely be too long for a family with a broken washing machine. In practice, the inconvenience would go on for at least a month, because once the spare part is delivered, the washing machine still needs to be fixed.”

Next steps:

The Ecodesign and the Energy label measures will be officially published in the Official Journal. The measures will enter into force in 2021.

As of 2021, the confusing A+, A++, A+++ classes will disappear from the Energy label, thanks to [new measures adopted last March](#).

More information:

Factsheet '[The new Energy label: back to A-G scale](#)'

News piece '[New Ecodesign measures to make repair easier and products safer](#)', 31/01/2019

ENDS

***If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please let us know.***

