



Raising standards for consumers



The Consumer Voice in Europe

HOW CONSUMERS BENEFIT FROM ECODESIGN YEAR AFTER YEAR

Time to appreciate Ecodesign and to release
the Ecodesign Working Plan 2015-2017

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Compared with the EU Energy Label, which is widely used in shops and is broadly recognizable by most people, Ecodesign acts invisibly. Yet Ecodesign delivers economic and qualitative benefits to consumers which ANEC and BEUC hereby substantiate through the presentation of study results commissioned to investigate such benefits.

ANEC and BEUC investigate the benefits to consumers brought about by Ecodesign

The study assesses the financial savings resulting from Ecodesign and Energy Labelling for an average European household. The average family, taken as a case study, consists of a couple, their child and a dog. They live in a 3-bedroom house and have about 20 appliances and 45 light bulbs. The study methodology is based on the calculation of the total cost of ownership of all their appliances¹.

The main conclusions of the study are twofold:

- 1. Consumers save over 330€ yearly by doing nothing, thanks to Ecodesign!**
Savings are achieved as soon as the consumer buys new appliances. **Consumers can increase these savings to 450€** if the product falls into the best class of the **Energy Label**.
- 2. Savings for consumers could be considerably higher if:**
 - **Ecodesign and labelling measures were always set at the cost-optimal point for consumers** (Least Life Cycle Costs). This is currently often not the case because measures are introduced too late or are not ambitious enough.
 - **Ecodesign would in the future consider more strongly the durability, reparability and upgradeability of products.**

Policy recommendations

- **Necessity to swiftly put forward the Ecodesign Working Plan**

We call on the Commission to release the Ecodesign Working Plan 2015-2017 without further delay and to disregard unsubstantiated media reporting on Ecodesign. Our study provides additional evidence that Ecodesign is an opportunity to offer all consumers in the EU better performing products and also save money.

- **More ambitious and timely Ecodesign requirements required**

The Working Plan also needs to be ambitious. An important finding of the study is that consumers presently do not save as much as they could. Too often, the Ecodesign requirements have not been set at the optimal level. Hence ANEC and BEUC call for the timely revision of existing Ecodesign and labelling measures to set ambitious

¹ The total cost of ownership is the purchase price in addition to the running costs (including energy costs). For the sake of representability, this amount is divided by the number of years the product is used to give an annual cost. From there, and when compared to a world where products would not be regulated under Ecodesign, one can obtain net financial savings provided by Ecodesign, not only for each appliance, but also overall.

requirements, and avoid long timelines for their implementation, in order to take full advantage of savings possible through Ecodesign. Furthermore, the Working Plan should also include new consumer relevant product groups, such as mobile phones.

- **Durability, reparability and upgradeability should be more systematically covered under Ecodesign**

Setting requirements on the lifetime of products more systematically would also bring benefits to consumers. This is especially relevant for products where there is little improvement potential on energy efficiency, but where consumers and the environment would nonetheless profit from a prolonged use of these products. Therefore, we propose that durability, reparability and upgradability are necessarily considered through Ecodesign.

- **In parallel, the EU Energy Label needs to return as quickly as possible to the well-known A-G scale**

Since Ecodesign and the EU Energy Label are complementary tools, we believe it is a necessity that the revision of the latter progress smoothly. We welcome the decision in principle to return to the well-understood - and transformational - closed A-G scale, we now call on decision-makers to no longer delay the process. Consumers should see new labels in shops as soon as possible, and no later than within 3 years after the new framework legislation entered into force. A revision time of 5 years or more would be unacceptable, both in terms of the unnecessary waste of energy in the meantime and added costs to consumers.

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