

Contact: Pauline Constant: press@beuc.eu
Date: 23/02/2021
Reference: BEUC-PR-2021-008

Consumers will finally benefit from a clearer energy label from 1 March

From 1 March, a clearer and more reliable energy label is to appear on fridges, TV sets, dishwashers and washing machines on sale across Europe. This is the first step of a long process that will help consumers better understand how much energy their household appliances consume. The major change is that the A+, A++ and A+++ energy efficiency classes will disappear, meaning the label will revert to its original scale from A to G. This move is the consequence of a deal that EU institutions reached in 2017 and [formally adopted in 2019](#).

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

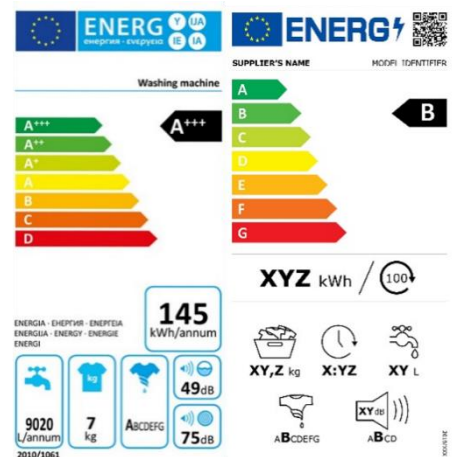
"It is a victory for consumers to see the new label finally sweep over the shelves across Europe. Consumer organisations have long called on the EU to get rid of the 'plus' classes that had become misleading. Fewer than one in four consumers understood that an 'A+' fridge was the least performing on the market.¹ As such, it was high time for a label overhaul that would make it easier for consumers to spot the most energy-efficient appliances and save money.²"

Stephen Russell, Secretary General of ANEC, commented:

"We welcome the return to the clear and straightforward message to consumers to "Buy A" but would have preferred a swifter transition in the shops. On 1 March, only five appliances that most of us own at home will get the new label. That means consumers may be confused, as the old and the new labels will coexist in shops for some time."

Background:

- **The change is not about the product's energy consumption, it is only about its score.** As a result of the rescale, an electrical appliance scoring A+++ in the current system may be classified as only a C, D or even an E appliance under the new label. This might seem confusing, but consumers need not worry. The differences between the current and the new scores are due to refined measurement methods adopted by the European Commission. In short, the 'downgrading' of a product's energy class means only that the new score is more accurate and helpful.
- Here is a **timeline** of the rescale for the different product groups (made by BEUC):



Left: the old label; right: the new one set to appear on appliances as of 2021.
 Sources: European Commission



- Apart from the energy label revamp on 1 March 2021, new Ecodesign rules will enable consumers to benefit from products that are safer, longer lasting and easier to repair.

More information:

- ANEC-BEUC factsheet, [The new energy label: back to the A-G label](#)
- European Commission [explainer](#) on the new energy label
- BEUC is part of [BELT](#), an EU project which helps consumers understand the new energy label. More information in this [BEUC news piece](#).

ENDS

¹ Result from a survey by German consumer organisation vzbv: [Energielelabel muss verständlicher werden](#)

² A 2016 ANEC-BEUC [study](#) calculated that the average European household could save up to €454 per year by choosing the products in the Energy Label's top class.

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