

Framework for energy efficiency labelling

In July 2015, the European Commission proposed a regulation on energy labelling that would replace and repeal the 2010 directive on the subject. The Parliament proposed a series of amendments in July 2016, setting the stage for interinstitutional 'trilogue' negotiations. An agreement was eventually reached in March 2017, and the agreed text is due to be voted in the June plenary.

Background

[Directive 2010/30/EU on energy efficiency labelling](#) encourages consumers to buy more efficient household appliances through energy labels with common scales that can inform consumers about the relative energy consumption of each product. The technical parameters for 'scaling' household appliances in any given product group (e.g. dishwashers, refrigerators, televisions) are set out in Commission delegated acts. The directive replaced Council Directive 92/75/EEC on energy labelling, which created the first EU energy label and included an A to G scale. The 2010 directive introduced the possibility of new product classes (A+, A++, A+++) that reflected the considerable technological advances in energy efficiency of many household appliances.

The Commission carried out a [review](#) of the energy labelling directive, which found that the introduction of new product classes as part of the 2010 directive had reduced the effectiveness of the energy label in motivating consumers to buy more efficient products, especially when compared to the original A to G scale. The lower classes of many product groups are now relatively unpopulated, and for some product groups only appliances of class A or above can be sold on the market because of related [ecodesign requirements](#).

Commission proposal

In July 2015, the Commission adopted a [proposal for a regulation](#) that would restore an A to G scale for labelling, replacing the existing scale on which product classes can reach A+++. The Commission also proposed some other changes: establish a mechanism for automatically rescaling products in order to accommodate further energy improvements; set up a product database for both consumers and suppliers; and create a Union safeguard procedure to improve market surveillance. Technical parameters for the labelling of individual product groups would continue to be adopted in the form of delegated acts.

European Parliament position

The Industry, Research and Energy Committee (ITRE) adopted a report containing [proposed amendments](#) that were submitted for a plenary vote in July 2016. These amendments reflected the general thrust of the Commission proposal, but also sought to accelerate the process of reviewing and rescaling product groups (as well as replacing the old labels); establish automatic trigger criteria for future rescaling; provide more detailed provisions on the operation of the product database; develop stronger market surveillance mechanisms; and raise public awareness of energy labelling in the Member States, with a coordinating role for the Commission.

Outcome of negotiations

Negotiators for the Parliament and Council reached a final agreement in March 2017 after trilogue meetings. Many Parliament amendments were accepted in the [compromise text](#). The institutions agreed that only the top class (A) of products would generally be left empty after rescaling; the Commission would adopt delegated acts for rescaling and other provisions (except the safeguard procedure, where implementing acts would apply); and the most common product groups would be rescaled within 15 months of entering into force.

First-reading report [2015/0149\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: ITRE; Rapporteur: Dario Tamburrano, EFDD, Italy. For further information see our ['EU Legislation in progress' briefing](#).

