BELT

BOOST ENERGY LABEL TAKE UP

WHITE PAPER

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OCU La fuerza de tus decisiones

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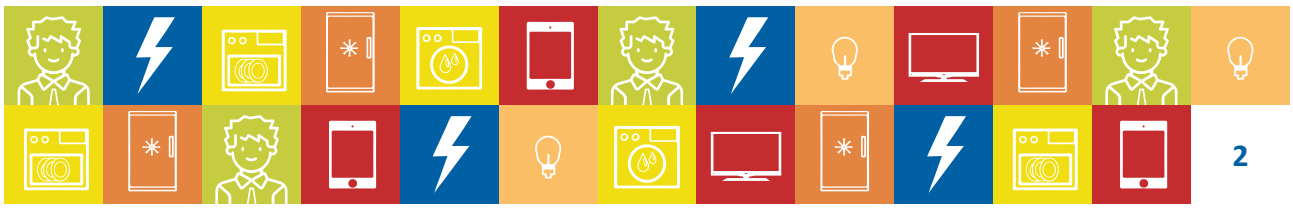
SUMMARY



1.

THE EU ENERGY LABEL SYSTEM: WHAT ITS FUNCTIONS ARE? WHY IT IS CHANGING?

Since 1992, the **EU energy label system** helps to value the **efficiency of products**. The system consists of **progressive classes: each one shows a level of energy consumption**, facilitating consumers and professional buyers in the search and selection of increasingly **energy-efficient appliances**, guiding the development of innovative and efficient products.

Thanks to the increased supply and demand for energy-saving products, descending also from the relapses in terms of communication and awareness generated by this system, the energy consumption, and energy costs of household appliances have been considerably reduced through the years.

Following the technological changes and related to consumer choices that have occurred over the years, the EU energy label system has already changed several times and, at the moment, is still affected by a new and important process of change.

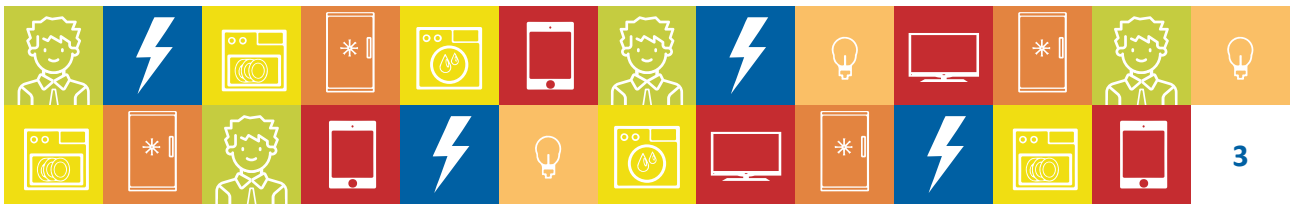
Recent surveys carried out by the Eurobarometer on Europeans' attitudes on EU energy policy have shown that 93% of respondents are aware of the energy labels. Although around 80% of them consider them to be decisive in identifying the most efficient products, with the former labelling it was now impossible for most people to realise that there was a whole class difference between a double or triple "+" or that an "A+" fridge might be one of the least efficient products on the market.

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Makes cities inclusive, single, resilient and sustainable

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

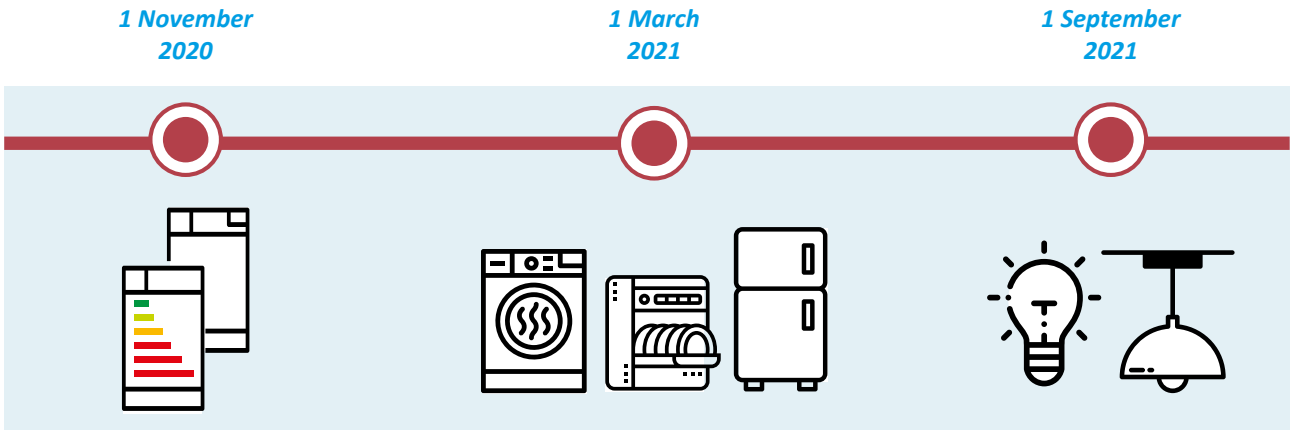
The uptake of the new energy label will contribute to the achievement of some United Nations Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals.



Indeed, **the current system, consisting of 10 classes**, from four different A classes (A, A^{+}, A^{++}, A^{+++}) till G class, **has become less effective over time**, losing its original transparency.

Due to technological evolution and the gradual disposal of more obsolete and less efficient appliances, most of the products available on the market today are located in the best performing classes (A^{+++}, A^{++}, A^{+}). These changes have progressively weakened the communicative effectiveness of the system, making it increasingly difficult for consumers to understand which are the most efficient products, and consequently causing less commitment on the part of manufacturers to create new-generation devices, even more efficient and performing.

These are the main reasons why, **starting from autumn 2020, a new simplified labeling system has being introduced.**



Although having to present both labels (old + new), the new label must not be displayed in shops and online shops.

New labels for dishwashers, washing machines, washer dryers, fridges & freezers, commercial fridges and electronic displays must be visible in shops.

New labels for lighting sources must be visible in shops.

2.

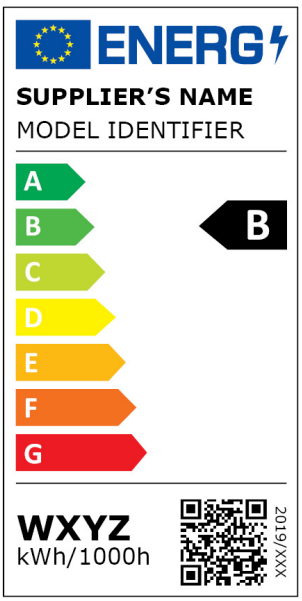
FROM 10 TO 7 CLASSES: THE NEW EU ENERGY LABEL SYSTEM

For the reasons described in the previous paragraph, **the European institutions decided to introduce a new energy labeling system for various types of household and commercial appliances.**

The main change consists in the passage **from the current 10 classes of energy consumption to 7 classes**, to make the understanding of the consumption levels of the appliances clearer and more immediate, and to cope with the excessive "saturation" of the most advanced classes of the system in use so far.

The label now only includes the energy classes from A-G, and the consumption levels assigned to each class will be updated regularly by the Commission when the highest classes are too populated.

The label is linked to a new EU product database (European Product Database for Energy Labelling - EPREL), accessible via QR-Code. The database provides additional information for all labelled products to consumers, retailers and market surveillance bodies.



In 2021, new labels were rolled out in physical and online stores for the following 6 product groups:


Refrigerators and freezers, including wine store appliances, for domestic use


Washing machines and washer-dryers


Dishwashers


TV and displays


Light sources


Refrigeration equipment with direct sales function

A completely new label is implemented for the "refrigeration equipment with direct sales function product group" (also known as commercial refrigerators and freezers). This label is relevant for professional buyers, both private and public entities.

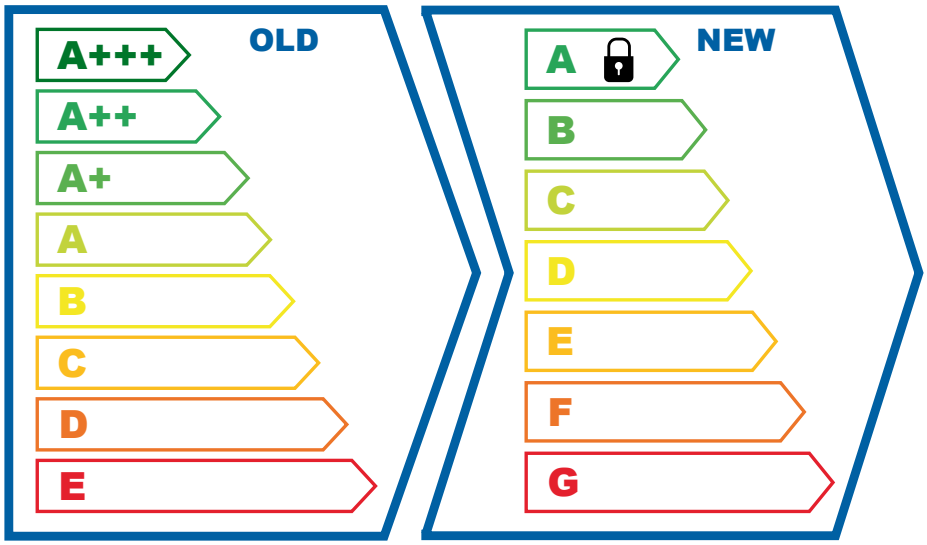
Afterward, the new label will be introduced also per other groups of products, including:

- Air conditioners
- Comfort Fans
- Tumble driers
- Vacuum cleaners
- Etc.

For these products, the new rescaled labels will be implemented as soon as the relevant EU regulations come into force, with changes **predictably expected between 2022 and 2023.**

OLD AND NEW LABELS: THE MAIN DIFFERENCES

The system being replaced is divided into 10 classes: from A, composed of 4 levels, to G. The new system consists of 7 classes. For this reason, **on the new labels, A classes with the plus sign are disappeared, so that only classes from A to G remain.**



There could be no class A products since the new label is entered into force. The intention linked to the change of label is to initially keep class A empty, to stimulate further product innovations.

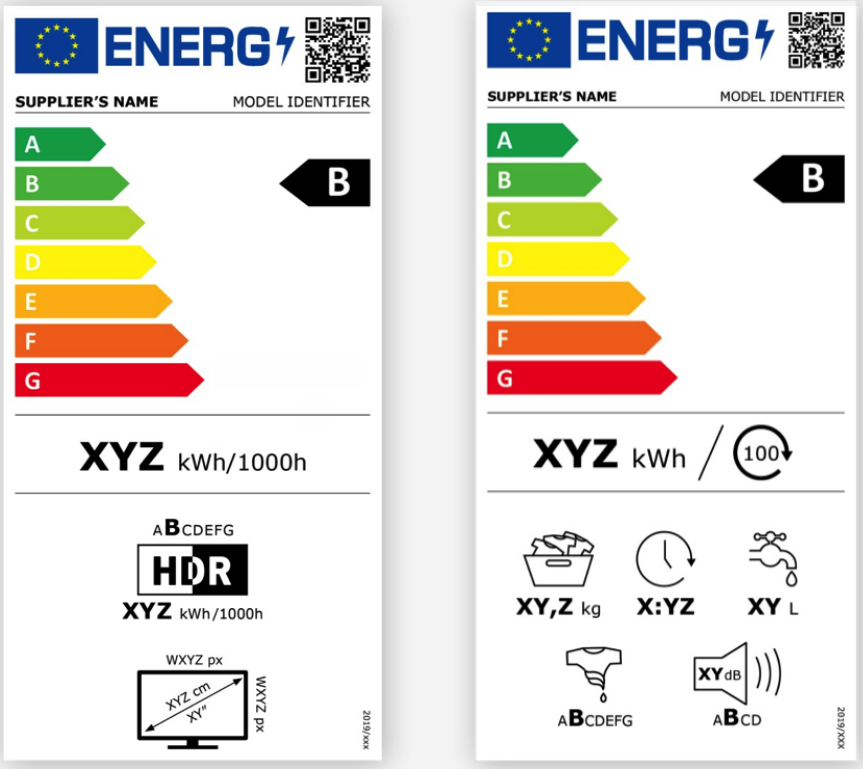
The most efficient products currently labeled as A^{+++} will roughly correspond to the new label class B or C, depending on the product group. However, it should be noted that **it is not possible to establish a precise correspondence between the information on the energy class shown in the old label and the information on the energy class shown in the new one.** This is since the rescaled labels are elaborated using new methods of testing.

Another change from the current system will consist in presence of a QR-Code providing a direct link to specific non-commercial information, introduced directly from manufacturers

in the EPREL database developed by the EU, to foster transparency and easier market surveillance by national authorities. The code will be shown on the upper right corner of the label (or in the lower right corner in the case of light sources).

The energy consumption of the products indicated more clearly than in the previous system, **in the central section of the label.**

Finally, the lower part of the label contains various pictograms referring to specific characteristics of the product. Most of the pictograms from the old label are also used in the new version. However, some pictograms have been slightly adapted and some are new (for example those that refer to energy efficiency in HDR mode for televisions and displays, and the duration of the washing program for washing machines).



New pictograms in the new labels: some examples

4.

THE MAIN BENEFITS AND CHANGES FOR PUBLIC BUYERS

Generally, the transition to a new labelling scheme will have several positive impacts.

First of all, **consumers will be able to better understand the energy consumption levels of appliances**, and consequently to make **more efficient consumption choices**. This will allow them to save money and at the same time contribute to a **reduction in energy consumption across the EU, with consequent benefits from the point of view of environmental sustainability**.

These impacts will also have consequences from the point of view of production, because **companies will be increasingly stimulated to create energy efficient products**, gradually eliminating from the market the most obsolete ones, characterized by high levels of consumption and environmental impact.

To allow the concrete realization of this scenario, **a fundamental role will be played by big buyers groups, both public** (public administrations) **and private** (large business groups).

European institutions believe that **big buyers are a strategic actor for transforming the market for energy-efficient products**. Thanks to the demand generated by them, the European market will be directed **towards the production of goods and services with a lower environmental impact** and investments in the search for innovative eco-sustainable solutions.

Taking into account the great **purchasing capacity** of public buyers (public procurement accounts for over 14 % of the EU 's GDP)[1] , their role is crucial in stimulating the uptake of energy efficient products. For this reason, **some of the most important immediate changes** that will derive from the introduction of the new energy labelling system **will impact the activity** of this **this category of professionals**.
Therefore, several awareness raising activities on the new energy labelling system are aimed at public buyers,- including those undertaken as part of the **BELT** (Boost Energy Label Take up) project.

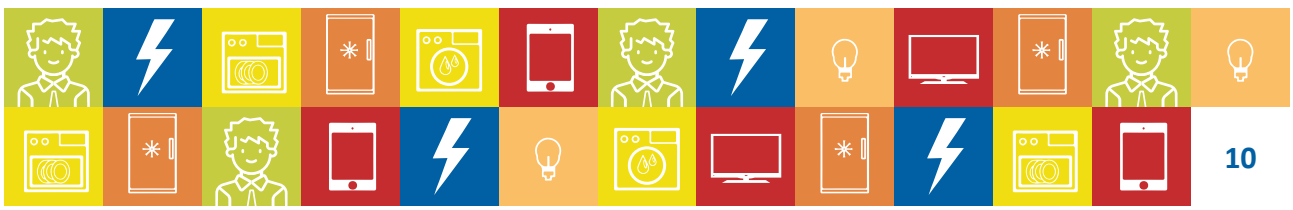
1 European Commision, Single Market Scoreboard (2019)

The main change for public buyers will concern their ability to promote high energy efficiency standards in public tenders. Following the full entry into force of the respective delegated regulations for the new labelling of different classes of energy-related products, will be mandatory to purchase only and exclusively appliances that have adopted the new energy labeling system, and they will have the opportunity to automatically exclude from tenders all producers who have not yet switched to the new system.

These changes will be in consistent with Directives 2014/24/EU, 2014/25/EU and 2014/23/EU on public procurement and concessions. Moreover, As far as European legislation is concerned, it was declared as early as 2012 as a desirable objective for the central governments of the member states purchase only products, services and buildings with high energy efficiency performances (Article 6 of Directive 2012/27/EU of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency). Referring to the Energy Labelling Directive 2010/30/EU on 2014, the Directive 2012/27/EU repealed the provision that requires contracting authorities to endeavour to procure only products belonging to the highest efficiency class, where such products are covered by delegated acts under this Directive. Art 6.3 Directive 2012/27/EU replacing it with the provision for which: “Member States shall encourage public bodies, including at regional and local levels, with due regard to their respective competences and administrative set-up, to follow the exemplary role of their central governments to purchase only products, services and buildings with high energy-efficiency performance. Member States shall encourage public bodies, when tendering service contracts with significant energy content, to assess the possibility of concluding long- term energy performance contracts that provide long-term energy savings”.

Thanks to this fundamental change, which will have a great impact on orders concerning large-scale production and supplies, **important and consistent benefits in terms of decreasing environmental impact are expected**.

The most relevant will be a **greater rationalization of public spending**, a decisive contribution towards **greater collective awareness** of the importance of reducing energy consumption, up to a **major stimulus to a technological and production innovation** that puts sustainability issues at the center.



Regarding the public spending the new Energy label frame work represents an opportunity to develop **smart and green procurement strategies** based on three main objectives:

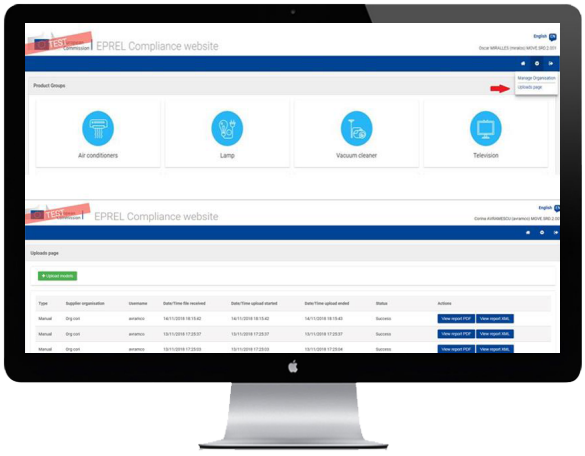
1. Efficiency (low prices, low total costs, low transaction costs and workable solutions);

2. Innovation and quality development, based on innovation and market maturation, including through the development of new solutions that can support growth and job creation.

3. Sustainability through environmental and energy requirements and the development of green solutions

These strategies can both intercept new opportunities and comply with the longstanding and established findings of **European Green Public Procurement (GPP)**.

As in GPP also the new energy labels are clear and verifiable environmental criteria for products and services in the public procurement process and for these reasons could help the **European Commission** and a number of **European countries** in their efforts for developed guidance in this area, in the form of **national GPP criteria**. An example of these level playing field that may accelerate and help drive the single market for environmentally sound goods and services are the new voluntary **EU GPP criteria for computers, monitors, tablets and smartphones**[2].



2 EU GPP criteria for computers, monitors, tablets and smartphones (2021)

5.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS CREATED AS PART OF THE BELT (BOOST ENERGY LABEL TAKE UP) PROJECT

The European institutions believe that the transition from the old to the new energy labeling system for electronic equipment is of strategic importance to ensure fundamental returns from the point of view of savings, reduction of consumption, innovation, and environmental sustainability.

For this reason, they have strongly focused on communication and awareness actions to ensure that consumers, producers, and all other stakeholders, including groups of public and private big buyers, acquire the awareness of the change taking place, and have all the information necessary to act accordingly.

The activities of the BELT (Boost Energy Label Take up) project are also among those of this nature. Their goal is to promote the greatest possible knowledge of the new regulation among consumers and the network of manufacturers and distributors of new appliances compliant with European labeling rules, to maximize their effectiveness.

In particular, **one of the privileged targets of the project is the big buyers' groups, both public and private**, for the reasons described in the previous paragraphs.
To achieve these objectives, the project was conceived and developed to realize the following actions:

- collection and analysis of **good practices**
- **dissemination and communication** aimed at the media
- organization of **training events** for companies and distributors
- development of **action plans** for local administrations and citizen involvement.

In this general framework, in 2020 and 2021 for the maximum success of the project, the following communication and dissemination activities were carried out and are still ongoing.

Communication plan

The first and fundamental intervention consisted in the elaboration of a communication plan, awareness, and training plan with a European scope. One of the main goals of the plan was to **make clear the potential benefits that will derive from new rules and clarify the timing** for the gradual implementation of the new labels.

Given these general objectives, the intention to improve skills was among those of a more specific and priority nature and operational skills of public administrations and small and medium-sized enterprise, to increase the number of tenders and contracts, as well as the number of purchases, which they contemplate the acquisition of products compliant with the new energy labeling rules.

For these reasons, the actions of the plan have been designed to be addressed to a particularly varied audience of recipients. Among others, the networks of producers and distributors of instruments compliant with the new European labeling rules, public administrations and other types of public bodies and organizations, possibly also associated in networks for Green Public Procurement (hereinafter GPP), and again businesses, with particular reference to small and medium-sized ones.

With specific reference to public administrations and the business world, the primary target identified were professionals and employees who in the first case deal with the management of tenders, and in the second management of purchasing activities or are potentially interested in operating in this sector.

In both cases, the goal pursued with the plan was to direct

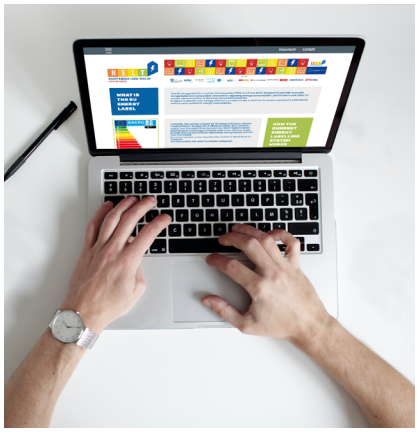
11 countries involved in BELT's communication plan

them to specific communication activities and materials to improve their skills and knowledge on the subject, raising awareness of the advantages deriving from the introduction of new rules on the energy labeling of products.
The communication activities were designed and implemented to be addressed to the **European public** and in particular to the countries directly involved in the realization of the BELT project: **Italy, Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, and Slovenia**, but also to other partners countries as **Germany, Spain and Switzerland**.

All the communication materials and actions described in the following points are a direct consequence of what was planned with the elaboration of the communication plan.

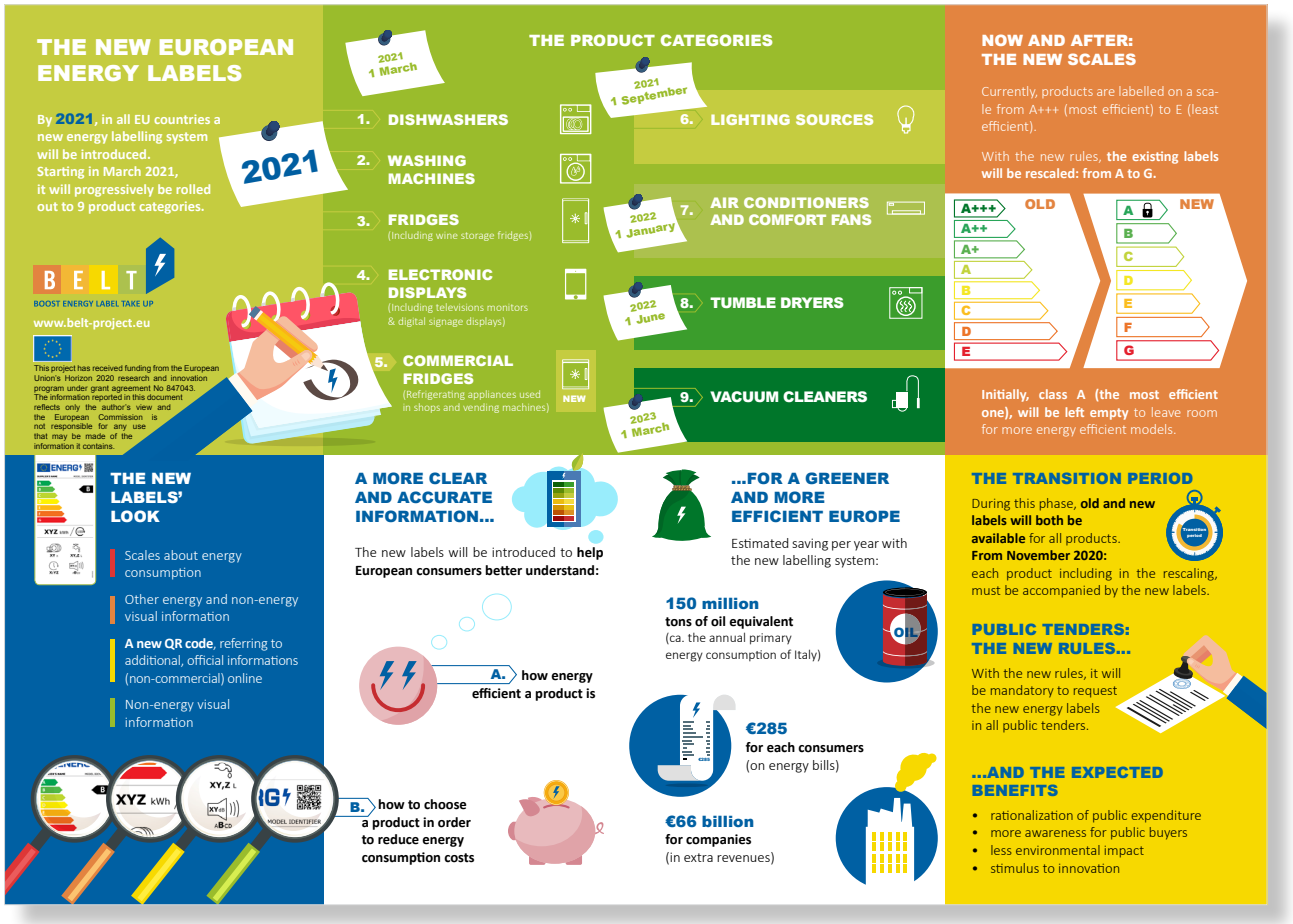
Visual Identity

The second strategic step was in the definition of a visual identity of the project, preparatory to the characterization of all the communication products and materials under construction during its execution, in order to guarantee the maximum possible recognition of the project.



Infographics

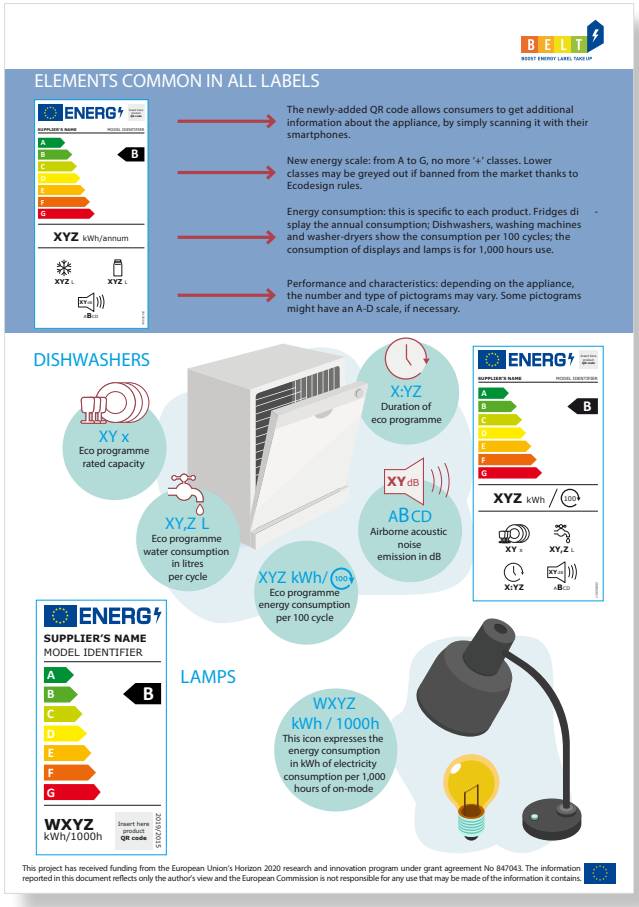
With the creation of two infographics, the main changes resulting from the introduction of the new European energy labeling system were illustrated, giving particular attention to the consequences for the professional experience of public and private buyers.

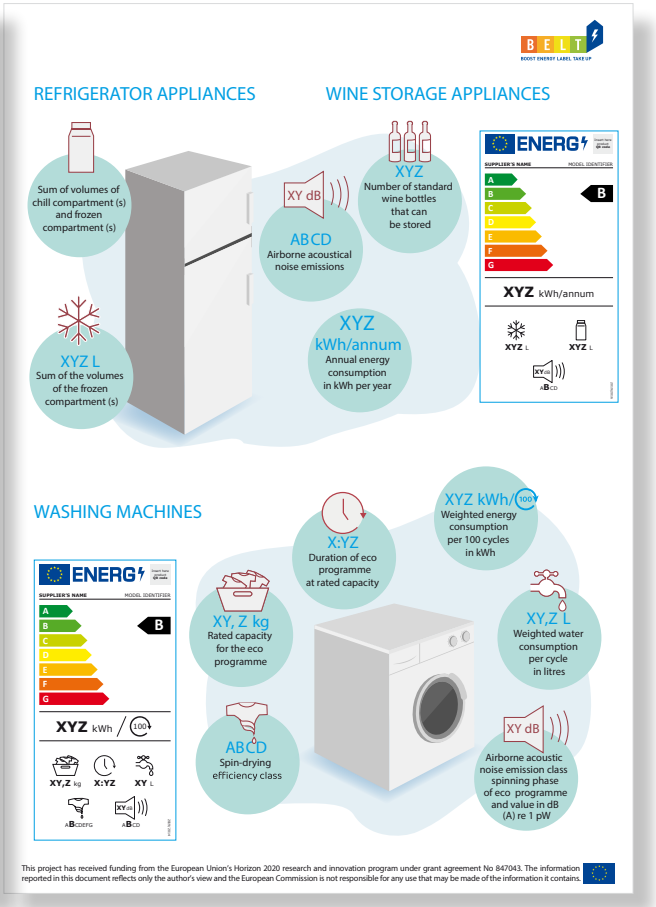


CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THE INFOGRAPHIC

Factsheets

With the creation of two factsheets, timely information was provided to the targets of public and private buyers on the context and the changes resulting from the introduction of the new European energy labeling system.





CLICK TO DOWNLOAD FACTSHEETS

Guidelines

The creation of specific guidelines aimed at public buyers and private buyers was functional to provide information and insights of an operational and popular nature about the new European energy labeling rules and the consequences of their introduction on the activities of these professionals.

EUROPEAN ENERGY LABELLING SCHEME

Legal certainty
- legal form of the regulation (immediate effect in national laws)
- uniformity of application (but sanctioning system delegated to national authorities)
- responsibility for dealers and suppliers

Stakeholders' needs
- readability (conscious consumer choices)
- unique declaration on label and product fiche (compliance with competition rules at European level)
- information on the products available on the EPREL platform

5. WHAT ARE THE CHANGES FOR PRIVATE BUYERS?

FAQs FOR PRIVATE BUYERS

Besides the labels, how can I compare the performance of an old device I have in A* with a new one in A?**
Objective evaluations and comparisons will be possible thanks to the EPREL database. From the end of 2020, a section of the database of products subject to rescaling will be accessible, specifically dedicated to professional buyers and consumers, which can be accessed via the dedicated platform on the EU website. As manufacturers are obliged to make available many technical information of the products concerned, it will be possible to deepen the details and compare the products of the different suppliers on the same platform. Until March 1st 2021 the data referring to the previous labelling will be available; from March 1st 2021 the data referring to the new labelling.

What additional information will be introduced in the new labels?
The new labels will allow you to have technical data sheets at your fingertips thanks to their QR codes. For each product, the new label presents a QR code directly linked to the EPREL database, through which it will be possible to immediately consult the product information sheets. In this way, it will be possible to access all strategic information, for a more rapid and effective evaluation of economic opportunities in terms of performance, savings and compliance with regulations (see paragraph 9).

Will the new label be a practical tool for social accountability and corporate social responsibility?
Yes, the new labelling will contribute to the accountability needs of a company, making it a practical tool updated to the most recent guidelines and consolidated international standards on the subject (ISO 26000, GRI 302, AA1000). The new labelling will provide the opportunity to highlight the company's attention to environmental and energy issues with a tool that is accountable and easily recognisable by stakeholders, facilitating the transmission of information on the social responsibilities taken by the company.

6. THE NEW ENERGY LABEL: COMPARISON OF THE CLASSES

The choice of products belonging to the highest energy classes has important implications in terms of energy, economy and above all environment. In the following tables we have provided some comparisons, purely by way of example, comparing the various energy classes according to several aspects, concerning the six groups of products that will be affected in 2021 by the new energy label. In creating the following tables, the underlying assumptions were considered: the cost of an electric kWh equals to 0.2159 € / kWh (average electricity price in the EU-28 according to Eurostat); the amount of CO_2 emitted into the atmosphere for each electric kWh consumed equals to 0.296 kg (EU-28 average of the CO_2 Intensity of Electricity Generation, according to Environment European Agency); the amount of CO_2 absorbed annually by a tree equals to 10 kg.

6

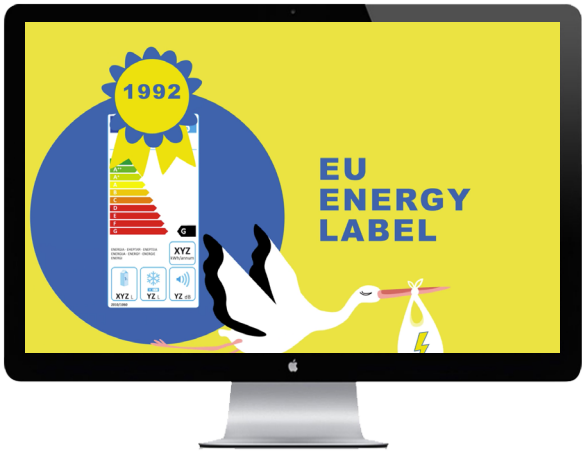
CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THE GUIDELINES

Videos

Two videos were made within the project.

One of a promotional nature, designed especially for social and digital channels, aimed at presenting in a synthetic way the main changes and advantages deriving from the introduction of the new energy labeling system, and to stimulate users to consult the other information channels and material of the BELT project to deepen knowledge on the subject.

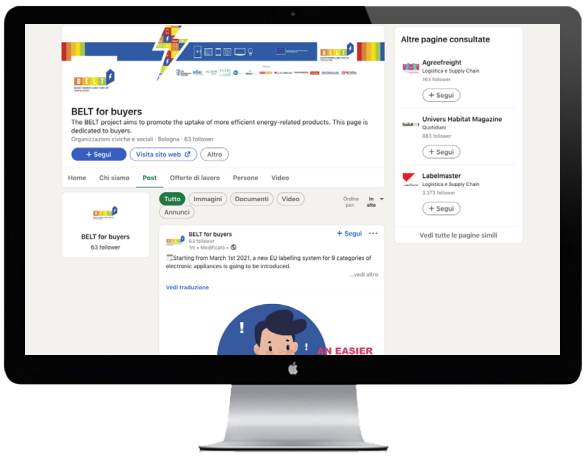
The second video was conceived and created as an informative and operative tutorial, to describe in detail the main changes and benefits deriving from the introduction of the new energy labeling system, with specific reference to those that will concern the categories of big public and private buyers.

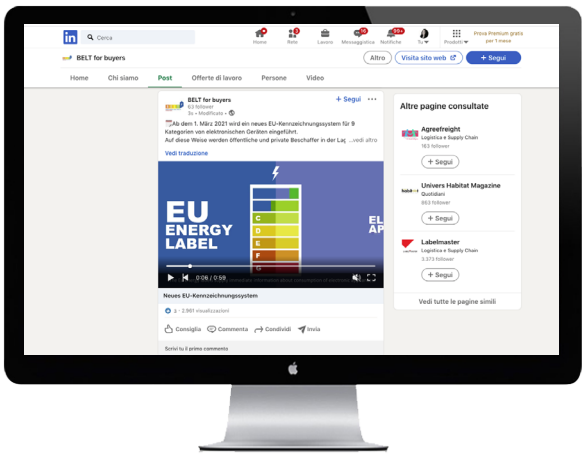


LinkedIN page

The creation of the promotional video was followed by the activation of a LinkedIN project page, specifically dedicated to public and private buyers and conceived as the main channel for the dissemination of informative and in-depth materials created during the project.

In conjunction with the creation of the page, a digital sponsorship campaign for the promotional video of the project was launched, the details and main results of which are described in the next item.





CLICK FOR LINKEDIN

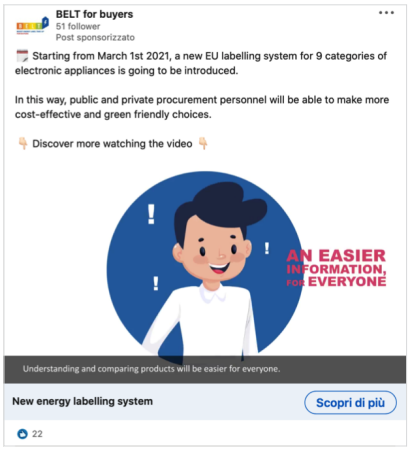
Sponsored digital campaign

Immediately after the creation of the project's LinkedIN page, a digital sponsorship campaign was launched aimed at promoting his knowledge and more generally that of the BELT project.

The implementation of the campaign took place with the dissemination of sponsored messages of the promotional video of the project, and was addressed in particular to professionals in the purchasing sector (but also from other sectors), both public and private, operating in Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Switzerland, Belgium, Lithuania, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, for an estimated total of about 10,000 cities reached by the ads.

The campaign was carried out between December 2020 and February 2021 and led to the following main results:

- over 236,000 unique users viewed the ad (82% of the private sector and 18% of the public sector)
- over 74,000 continuous video views
- about 500 clicks to the project website
- over 2,900 social interactions
- 76 new followers of the LinkedIN page.



FOCUS PERFORMANCE ITALY - Digital campaign

- 33.542 unique users viewed the ad
- 6.940 video views
- 147 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE GERMANY - Digital campaign

- 13.567 unique users viewed the ad
- 6.268 video views
- 17 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE SPAIN - Digital campaign

- 35.421 unique users viewed the ad
- 13.131 video views
- 74 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE IRELAND - Digital campaign

- 8.209 unique users viewed the ad
- 3.692 video views
- 25 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE PORTUGAL - Digital campaign

- 52.583 unique users viewed the ad
- 15.964 video views
- 94 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE LITHUANIA - Digital campaign

- 14.219 unique users viewed the ad
- 5.113 video views
- 18 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE BELGIUM - Digital campaign

- 9.479 unique users viewed the ad
- 3.971 video views
- 5 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE SWITZERLAND - Digital campaign

- 7.901 unique users viewed the ad
- 3.249 video views
- 8 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE GREECE - Digital campaign

- 25.538 unique users viewed the ad
- 7.824 video views
- 47 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE CROATIA - Digital campaign

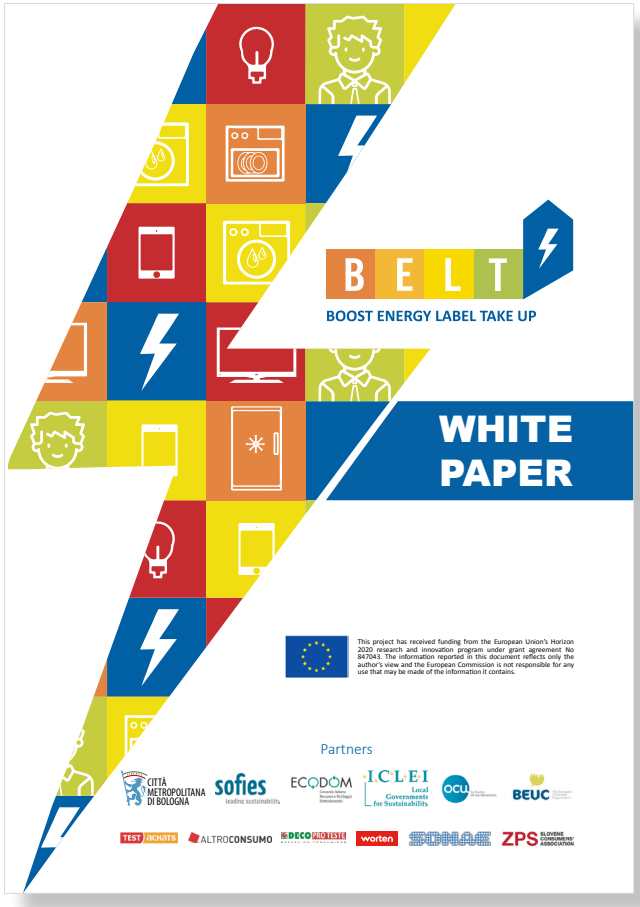
- 19.863 unique users viewed the ad
- 6.134 video views
- 26 clicks to the project website

FOCUS PERFORMANCE SLOVENIA - Digital campaign

- 11.350 unique users viewed the ad
- 2.192 video views
- 22 clicks to the project website

White Paper

The following white paper, aimed at public and private sector buyers, provides clarification on the main changes deriving from the introduction of the new energy labeling system, and detailed information on all communication and awareness activities carried out, and still in progress, within the BELT (Boost Energy Label Take up) project.



Train the trainers session

On 9th November 2020, ICLEI organized a train the trainers' webinar on the revised energy label. ICLEI used the training material developed within the project to inform the trainers on how public procurers can adapt to the new regulation. Trainers from the following countries participated: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania. The trainers will share the information received during the training with procurers across their network in 10 countries and help them understand the new labels. This approach will contribute to a European wide dissemination of the information on the new label.

Newsbits on Sustainable Procurement Platform and Procurement Forum

The information on the revised energy label was also promoted via various iclei communication channels such as the Sustainable Procurement Platform and the Procurement Forum.

CLICK FOR SUSTAINABLE-ROCUREMENT.ORG

CLICK FOR PROCUREMENT-FORUM.EU

Newsletter

An article on the revised energy label was published in the Green Public Procurement (GPP) News Alert. The Green Public Procurement News Alert is sent to 3,175 direct contacts. The information was also shared through the Procura + newsletter which is sent out to 950 recipients.

Additional communication activities

As part of the project, graphic and textual contents were also created for the implementation of Metropolitan City of Bologna web page dedicated to the project, and for the design of presentations and other training materials presented during webinars and other types of events.

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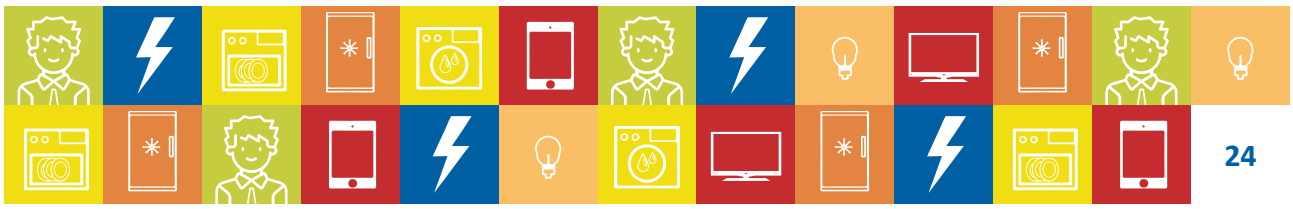

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