



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

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Date: 06/10/2008
Reference: ANEC-PR-2008-PRL-009 - PR 040/2008

Consumers strongly in favour of keeping the A-G Energy Label

Want to buy a new energy-efficient tumble-dryer? Buy an "A" class! It's easy... everyone knows the EU A-G Energy Label. According to our new survey¹, between 97 and 99% of respondents identify "A" as the most energy-efficient household appliance. But what if the choice were suddenly between B17 and 14C or 5 and 9? Would you know which one is the most energy-efficient? Of course not... and you're not the only one.

A victim of its own success, with too many products crowded in the top A of the scale, the lay-out of the EU A-G Energy Label is about to be revised by the Commission. But maybe not in the right way!

ANEC and BEUC have been calling for the labelling scheme to be made more dynamic through a review of the thresholds of the various classes²: "A" should always indicate the best. But some industry voices propose to change the existing A-G label into a new label with an unclear open-ended numerical scale (annex 2). A combination of letters and numbers in a confusing double scale is also being offered as a possible solution by the Commission (annex 3).

Our recent survey shows that when the A-G label is compared with numerical scales (7-1 or 9-3), the majority of respondents in all countries (from 70% in the Netherlands to 81% in Italy) find the A-G rating easier to understand.

The message "buy A" is easy to understand and to remember. A-G is practically a household name across Europe, empowering consumers to act more sustainably, by choosing more energy-efficient appliances. Changing this well-known scheme to a system with numbers would confuse consumers, and undo the very good work achieved over the last fifteen years.

Monique Goyens, BEUC Director General, said: "When the Commission launched its Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production three months ago, it highlighted the need to 'improve the energy and environmental performance of products and foster their uptake by consumers'. In our view, this will certainly not be achieved by confusing them".

Stephen Russell, ANEC Secretary General, added: "The present EU Energy Label, with A-G colour-bar ratings, has become very well-known among consumers and our study confirms this. Hence it is only prudent for the A-G format to be retained as the basis for informing consumers".

A summarised version of the findings is attached.

The full summary of the research is available on www.anec.eu & www.beuc.eu

¹ ANEC, BEUC, Consumer Focus (formerly UK National Consumer Council), the UK Energy Saving Trust and the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) asked Ipsos MORI to carry out empirical research concerning consumers' perception of the A-G Energy label.

² For example each time a pre-defined percentage (for example 20%) of the appliances on the market reach an A grade

Annex 1

Annex 2

Annex 3

Current A-G Scale	Industry Proposal for a numerical scale (1-7)	Possible new layout under discussion
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