
Brussels, 22 March 2017

Energy Efficiency First! Progress made at the product level – now let's follow through at system level with ambitious EED and EPBD reviews!

Europe has taken another step forward towards boosting the energy efficiency of individual appliances, as an informal deal on a new energy efficiency labelling framework was struck last night between the Council and the European Parliament, under the Maltese Presidency and EP lead Rapporteur Darius Tamburrano.

“Our industry has till now been a fan of energy labelling,” comments Adrian Harris, Director General of Orgalime. “This tool is a success – a win-win for industry, consumers and the environment. Such European regulation makes sense and has delivered results. Both energy labelling and eco-design have helped our industry contribute to realising almost half of the EU’s 2020 energy efficiency target.”

“At the product level, therefore, the principle of ‘Energy Efficiency First’ is a reality,” explains Harris. With the product level now well addressed, Harris emphasises that it is time to focus on the systems integrating these products: “There is now much to be gained through amending the Energy Efficiency and Energy Performance of Buildings Directives, both of which adopt a systems approach – this is where with an ambitious approach we can achieve the next leap forward in energy efficiency,” he states. “Our recommendations on the Clean Energy Package provide an overview of what is needed.”

Orgalime believes in ‘Energy Efficiency First’ and consumer empowerment, including through reliable, simple and easy to understand energy efficiency information. Energy Labelling is one essential pillar of EU energy policy that has undoubtedly delivered convincing results. It is an example of where the European level has provided clear added value for EU consumers, for the industry affected, and for the environment.

The new energy labelling framework foresees critical rule changes in two main areas. First, on the rescaling of products: this is a challenging, costly and burdensome process for companies – so the fact that the institutions have agreed to base it on technological advancements is a positive development. Second is the new product database – something that remains a thorn in the side of industry. “We simply do not believe that any database can replace physical checks of products,” Harris stresses. Member States will now have to dedicate sufficient resources for checking entries in the database in addition to checks on the ground, which they are already not carrying out enough. This is essential to ensure fair competition by identifying free-riders who have not bothered to register at all. Moreover, it will be vital to ensure that any commercially sensitive data provided is kept confidential – otherwise Europe will lose its leadership in energy efficiency technologies. Orgalime continues to call for careful implementation in this area and is ready to cooperate with the relevant legislative bodies for this.

Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 40 trade federations representing the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 24 European countries. The industry employs some 10.9 million people in the EU and in 2015 accounted for more than €1,900 billion of annual output. The industry accounts for over a quarter of manufacturing output and a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.

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The Energy Labelling Framework was originally presented by the Commission under the headline 'Transforming Europe's Energy System', as part of the Energy Union Strategy. On 30 November 2016, the Commission then proposed its comprehensive 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' package. "Tonight's deal is one step towards implementing the Energy Union at home," concludes Harris. "It is imperative that the next step be a timely, ambitious and comprehensive outcome on the Clean Energy Package."

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Notes for Editors:

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