

Ecodesign requirements for energy-using products

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The committee adopted the report by Astrid THORS (ELDR, FIN) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure. MEPs argued that the directive was too vaguely worded and should contain more detailed requirements. They also wanted new rules to give consumers more information about their dishwashers and other energy-using products. The most important amendments were agreed by the major political groups and a compromise will be sought with the Council before the first reading vote in plenary. One of the key amendments adopted sought to clarify which products should be affected first. MEPs said that one year after the adoption of the framework directive the Commission should adopt implementing measures for those products that offer a high potential for cost-effective reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, i.e. heating and water heating equipment, electric motor systems, lighting in both the domestic and tertiary sectors, domestic appliances, office equipment, consumer electronics and HVAC (heating ventilating air conditioning) systems. Stand-by losses of all products should also be regulated rapidly. The committee also adopted new consumer information requirements for manufacturers and distributors, ensuring that consumers are provided with information on the environmental impact of the product throughout its life cycle, the ecological profile of the product and the benefits of eco-design as well as the role they themselves can play in reducing energy consumption by sustainable use of the product. MEPs also wanted industry and environmental NGOs to be given a say in eco-design. An amendment was adopted establishing an Eco-Design Board with balanced participation of all relevant interested parties. Other aspects of the directive clarified by MEPs were market surveillance, self-regulation and generic and specific eco-design requirements.