

Ecodesign requirements for energy-using products

2003/0172(COD) - 20/04/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Astrid THORS (ELDR, FIN) and made a number of amendments to a draft framework directive. (Please see the document dated 06/04/04.) The guiding principles that the Parliament wanted to add to the eco-design rules for energy-using products were clarity, better consumer information and transparency. Parliament felt that the directive was too vaguely worded and should contain more detailed requirements. Members also want new rules to give consumers more information about their dishwashers and other energy-using products. Compromise negotiations with the Council took place after the vote in the Committee on Environment and Public Health in mid-March but they were not successful. However, the Commissioner for energy, Ms Loyola de Palacio said in the parliamentary debate that the Council view is not too far from the Parliament's position so an agreement should be in sight for the second reading after the European Parliament elections. Parliament passed an amendment clarifying which products should be affected first. Members stated 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. These are 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. Parliament also adopted new consumer information requirements for manufacturers and distributors. These must ensure 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. In order to formalise preliminary consultation on the adoption of measures implementing the directive, Parliament proposed the establishment of an Eco-Design Board with balanced participation of all relevant interested parties, including environmental NGOs. Finally, Parliament inserted some amendments clarifying provisions on market surveillance, self-regulation and generic and specific eco-design requirements.