



# THE NEW EUROPEAN ENERGY LABEL

## Assessing Consumer Comprehension and Effectiveness as a Market Transformation Tool

***A Navigant Consulting study in collaboration with CLASP***

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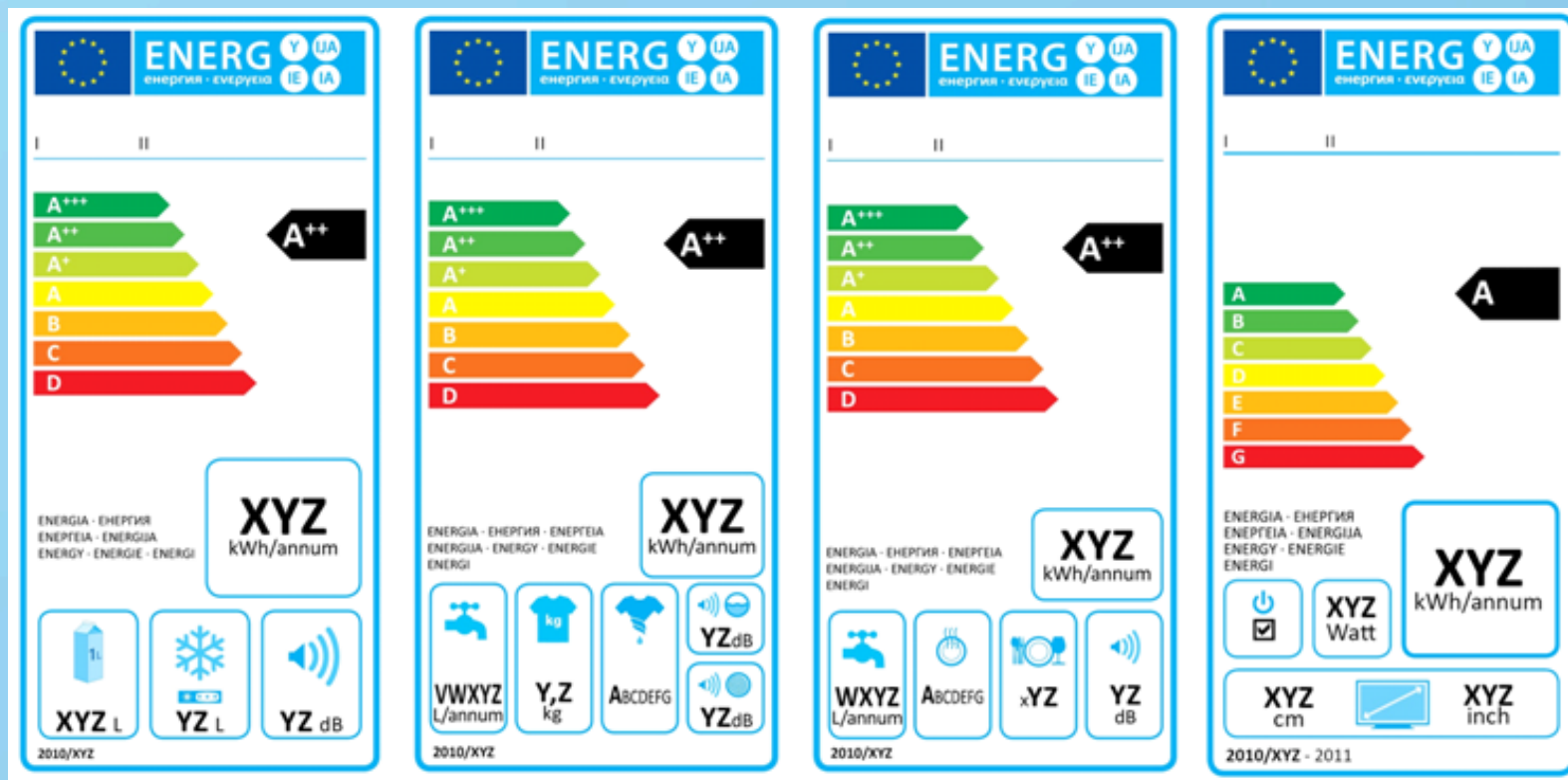
Dr. Pernille Schiellerup, Director of European Programs, CLASP

Wednesday 5 June, 2013, eceee Summer Study, Panel 6.

## What was the study about?

- **Much discussed new EU label design and content in 2011:**
  - Refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, televisions;
  - Issued as single labels (as opposed to the old two-part labels);
  - The same for all markets, i.e. they no longer contain national language-specific information (except for the word 'Energ[y]', which is written in all major EU languages);
  - Make use of icons to communicate a variety of performance factors.
  - Revisions to scale to include A+, A++ and A+++.
- **The study assesses the new EU label in terms of:**
  - Consumer comprehension;
  - Effectiveness as a market transformation tool.
- **How does the study fit into the bigger picture?**
  - Review of energy labelling and ecodesign framework directive. European Commission must report to European Parliament and Council by the end of 2014 = opportunity to revisit the design of the energy label.

# The new energy labels



## Methodology

- Methodology designed to understand how consumers use, understand and are motivated by the new labels;
- Quantitative and qualitative data;
- Questionnaires, 10 consumer focus groups and 30 in-depth interviews;
- Fieldwork locations: London, Prague, Madrid, Athens, Warsaw, Frankfurt, Paris, Copenhagen, Milan, Sofia;
- Timing: November-December 2011;
- Significant attention paid to translation;
- Professional market research facilities used.

## Dates & location of interviews and focus groups

Session type	Country	City	Date	No. of participants
<b>In-depth interviews</b>	UK (Pilot)	London	7–8 November 2011	10
	Czech Republic	Prague	14–15 November 2011	10
	France	Paris	28–29 November 2011	10
<b>Focus groups</b>	UK (Pilot)	London	11 November 2011	10
	Czech Republic	Prague	16 November 2011	10
	Spain	Madrid	21 November 2011	9
	Greece	Athens	24 November 2011	9
	France	Paris	30 November 2011	8
	Poland	Warsaw	5 December 2011	10
	Germany	Frankfurt	8 December 2011	10
	Denmark	Copenhagen	14 December 2011	10
	Italy	Milan	15 December 2011	9
	Bulgaria	Sofia	16 December 2011	10

## Findings I

- New labels generally well liked/appreciated;
- Participants preferred the look of the new labels compared to the old;
- Reasonably high level of comprehension;
- Certain icons present significant difficulties → Can in principle be addressed through targeted educational efforts such as in-store leaflets and sales staff training;
- Most consumers are able to use labels correctly rank efficiency of products a simple test of comprehension:
  - But a significant minority had difficulty in doing this; evidence that this could be overcome through explanation;
  - → suggests education/information at the point of sale needed.
- Proportion of consumers able to use the label drops in more complex consumer comprehension test;
- Most made the connection between the label and energy and efficiency, although significant proportion unaware. Did not greatly hinder how participants used/understood label;
- Efficiency reasonably important parameter for participants.

## Findings II

- Majority of consumers strongly motivated by the information on the label;
- No significant difference in comprehension between the A-to-G label and the A+++to-D labels;
  - **But** evidence that higher efficiency classes in the A-to-G label are more motivating than in A+++to-D label;
  - → Suggests sub-division of A class has weakened the market transformation impact of the label;
- Many consumers wrongly interpret an efficiency class as being present on the market if it is indicated on the label → suggests could weaken the market transformation effectiveness of the eligible classes;
- Consumers respond to the division between the three green classes and the rest → suggests this division important when devising efficiency thresholds;
- Most consumers unaware scheme is EU-wide → opportunity to promote the role of government in the scheme to enhance credibility.

## Recommendations from the report

- Consider redrawing the A-to-G efficiency scale in preference to adding more plus signs;
- Maximise the impact of the demarcation between the green and yellow parts of the scale;
- Ensure all efficiency classes indicated on the label are still permitted for sale.
- Review problematic icons and 'Energ[y]';
- Consider increasing awareness of labelling as a government scheme as a way of enhancing trust;
- Strengthen label comprehension through measures to increase consumer understanding;
- Test efficacy of potential future design modifications with consumers before deciding on designs;
- Opportunity to examine reduced market transformation effectiveness of new label found in this study in ongoing and upcoming European Commission funded studies.



# Thank you!

The Extended Executive Summary is in your eceee Summer Study delegates pack

Download the full report from [www.clasponline.org](http://www.clasponline.org)

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