The YAECI project

Actively engaging consumers in energy efficient behaviour

Yearly Appliance Energy Cost Indication (YAECI)
Project co-financed by the European Intelligent
Energy Europe (IEE) Programme

How it all began...

It all began back in 2010 which saw the start of the Dutch retailer programme the "Energy Indicator", which showed the annual energy costs of appliances at the point of sale. page 6

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Foreword – Sergio Ferreira

Sergio Ferreira
Project Officer

This booklet illustrates the main achievements and lessons learnt from the Project YAECI ("Yearly Appliance Energy Cost Indication"), which ended in March 2015, after 3 years of intense work and collaboration across Europe. The project was co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme as part of a broad push to create an energy-intelligent future for us all. The IEE Programme supported EU energy efficiency and renewable energy policies, with a view to achieving the EU 2020 targets.

The main objective of the YAECI project has been to provide consumers with information at the point of sale on the annual running costs of those household appliances with an energy label, in order to stimulate the uptake of affordable efficient products. This booklet starts with a brief explanation about how the project began, going on to describe the main objectives and highlighting the main outcomes, success stories and challenges the project was faced with. Quotes from the project partners, the participating retailers and consumers demonstrate the vast engagement within the project, and help to demonstrate the true findings and common achievements. Key to the success of the project has been the involvement and commitment from the retailers in the countries participating in YAECI. These were key to convey the message to consumers that the most energy efficient household appliances do work out cheaper when taking the annual running costs into account, and thus contributed to increased sales of the most energy efficient appliances.

Consumers should be considered at the heart of the energy system and become active players, as underlined in the Integrated Road map of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan. The transition towards a more sustainable energy system will succeed only with informed, engaged and active consumers. The YAECI Project has placed the consumer at the centre and aligned a good path to increase the understanding and engagement of citizens in energy efficient behaviour.

Sergio Ferreira

Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) is now closed, although a number of projects funded under the programme are continuing. The EU's Horizon 2020 programme now supports the research, demonstration and market up-take of energy-efficient technologies. Funds are available to support energy-efficient buildings, industry, heating and cooling, SMEs and energy-related products and services, as well as for improving the attractiveness of energy-efficiency investments.

The YAECI project

For the past two and a half years I have been coordinating the YAECI project, which has been a most inspiring and learning experience for me personally.

Rebecca van Leeuwen,
Project Coordinator – Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)

I took over the project from my predecessor Boudewijn Huenges Wajer, to whom I will remain grateful for launching the project and for mobilising the discipline and enthusiasm of the project partners. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Consortium for all their hard work in contributing to the success of the project. In addition I would like to mention the support and guidance of our project officers at the European Commission, Christophe Coudun and later Sergio Ferreira, who kept us on track throughout the project and were open to discuss new ideas and challenges which we were faced with throughout the project.

Looking back over the past three years duration of the YAECI project, I think we can be proud to say that we have achieved our main goal of contributing to an increase in sales of the most energy efficient appliances sold in the participating countries of the project, and have actively engaged consumers to consider energy efficiency in their purchasing decisions.

In most countries retailers saw an increase in sales of efficient appliances (A++ and A+++) due to the Action. Quantitative data gathered during the project also showed an increase at a substantial rate and during interviews carried out consumers admitted that seeing the annual running costs displayed in shops influenced their purchase decision.

I think that the concept of YAECI was relatively easy to adopt in the participating countries, although we sometimes under-estimated the time needed to secure commitment from the retailers. However once on board retailers were most enthusiastic and motivated to display the energy indicator on their price tags, and to carry out specific promotional activities to encourage consumers to purchase the more energy efficient products. They quickly saw the advantage of the YAECI concept which helped boost their sales of the more efficient appliances. Consumers too have indicated that the energy cost indicator helped them to make a well-informed purchase decision, by clearly seeing the full picture (i.e. not only the shop price, but how much it costs to run the appliance in terms of energy). This is even more important because not all consumers understand the information displayed on the EU energy label.

The database containing information on the most efficient appliances on the market of those countries, who participated in the project, was an important aspect of the project. It was certainly a challenge to achieve a well- filled quality database. To date there has not been a single system or data supplier who has been able to provide all necessary information. We learnt that although significant effort was put into filling the database as optimally as possible, such a database will never be complete unless it becomes mandatory for suppliers to provide the necessary information. In the future we would recommend a different approach and the development of a European mandatory product database is crucial.

Although the YAECI project has come to a close, there is continued interest in supporting and promoting the display of running costs for consumers as a tool for motivating them to purchase the more efficient appliances. We have seen that the energy indicator works and could be expanded across the whole of the European Union.

How it all began...

YAECI was a three year project co-financed by the European Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme.

It all began back in 2010 which saw the start of the Dutch retailer programme the "Energy Indicator" ("EnergieWeter"), which showed the annual energy costs of appliances at the point of sale. Following the success of the Dutch Energy Indicator other countries quickly saw the benefits of making a European- wide version of the Energy Indicator. In 2012 the Netherlands Enterprise Agency took the lead in setting up a Consortium in 11 European countries (Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain) to help boost sales of the most energy efficient appliances like refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, dryers, air conditioners and TVs. Following the Dutch initiative the Energy Indicator ("EnergieWeter"), the average annual running costs in euros of domestic appliances with an EU energy label and TVs are now displayed in hundreds of shops and web-shops throughout nine countries in Europe. Thanks to the project, consumers are in a position to make a better informed purchase decision by not only taking the shop price of a product into consideration, but also the annual running costs. The energy indicator demonstrates clearly that a product which at a first glance seems more expensive, can work out cheaper in the long- run as the more efficient appliances use less energy. Water rates are also mentioned on the price tag in those countries where these are relatively high.

Objective
The main objective of the project has been to provide consumers with information at the point of sale on the annual running costs of the household appliances with an energy label, in order to stimulate the uptake of affordable efficient products.

Benefits to the Target Groups

Consumers benefit from efficient products with lower running costs. With the annual running costs of products with an energy label being displayed at the point of sale it makes it possible to purchase the product with the lowest total life-time costs.

Retailers benefit since they have an extra service to offer their customers, additional information - an extra selling tool to attract the attention of consumers and a good sales argument to sell (initially somewhat) more expensive products thus raising their annual turnover.

Manufacturers have an extra stimulus to innovate both relating to energy efficiency and the (cost) price of the product.

Key findings and key achievements

The YAECI project was designed to stimulate the sales of the most efficient household appliances, thus supporting the Energy Labelling Directive (2010/30/EU) and the objective of saving 20 % of the Union's energy consumption by 2020.

Key findings

The objectives of the project were challenging from the start. Critical factors for success were identified as follows:

1. Manufacturers provide the necessary data for the Energy Indicator;

Experience with the data gathering revealed that it is difficult for manufacturers to provide all information on their products on time. In general they favour the Energy label and do not support direct comparison of energy costs without personalised information. In addition although the YAECI project succeeded in gathering a large number of data on a large range of products, the efforts and costs of maintenance and storage of the information proved to be very costly.

2. Retailers include running costs on the label and display material;

A critical element of the project was the involvement and commitment of the retailers. A risk management measure was thus adopted right from the beginning of the project. A condition for continued participation in the project was laid down of at least 15 individual retailers (10 for Malta) or 2 retailer chains per participating country. There were different points during the project when this was monitored including at the start of the Action (by letters of commitment from the retailers), at the Kick-off meeting (2 months after the start), at the second project meeting (6 months after the start) and later on in the project random checks were carried out in shops (and online) to ensure that the retailers were really displaying the energy cost indication on their price tags. These proved to be useful and necessary management tools to ensure and sustain maximum commitment from the retailers throughout the Action.

3. Potential buyers are aware of the advantages of A++ and A+++ energy efficiency classes;

The main goal of the project was to support consumers in making a well-informed purchase decision when shopping for household appliances with an EU energy label. This was primarily the task of the retailers who were responsible for displaying the annual running costs of

the most energy efficient appliances on their price tags and supplying the relevant energy efficiency promotion material making potential buyers aware of the advantages of these energy efficient products.

4. An operational system for storage and update of data, including the different currencies is in place.

The project confirmed that it is not an easy task to collect energy (and other) data for all household appliances in a timely manner. This has been a continuous challenge throughout the project. To date, there is no single system or data supplier that can provide all information required. A lot of effort was put into filling the databank, but it will never be entirely complete. Retailers keep having problems with this, so this requires a different approach in the future.
Also, in 2013 there were still a lot of appliances around with the old energy label. Towards the end of the project more products with the new energy labels were sold, whereby the calculation of the energy costs in euros became easier since the new energy labels do provide the average annual energy consumption of the product. The National Institutes or retailers can use the YAECI calculation method on the basis of the average energy price for households to be determined nationwide. In this way a central database is no longer necessary.

Key achievements

- Well filled database (includes updated models of all white appliances, air conditioning and TVs);
- Implementation of the YAECI project worked well despite national differences. The concept is relatively easy to integrate;
- The methodology for the calculation is transparent, easy to adapt for individual countries as it is based on the information found on the EU energy label;
- The key parameters and basic national data based on official sources and on the existing national initiatives (i.e. EnergieWeter), has increased the robustness and reliability of the Action;
- During the project period, a relatively high market share of EE appliances was achieved. In most countries retailers saw an increase in sales of efficient appliances (A++ and A+++) due to the Action. Quantitative data showed an increase at a substantial rate;
- The Energy Indicator has gained a broad acceptance amongst the cooperating retailers during the course of the Action;
- Recognisable logo in line with goal;
- Both small and larger retailers are involved;
- Many of the participating retailers have expressed interest in continuing with the Energy Indicator;
- Consumers highly agree that the display of energy costs can help them to make an informed purchase decision, that the Energy Indicator practically influenced their purchase decision and that they will pay attention to the Energy Indicator in the future;
- Consumer organisations and many public authorities support the approach of the Energy Indicator.

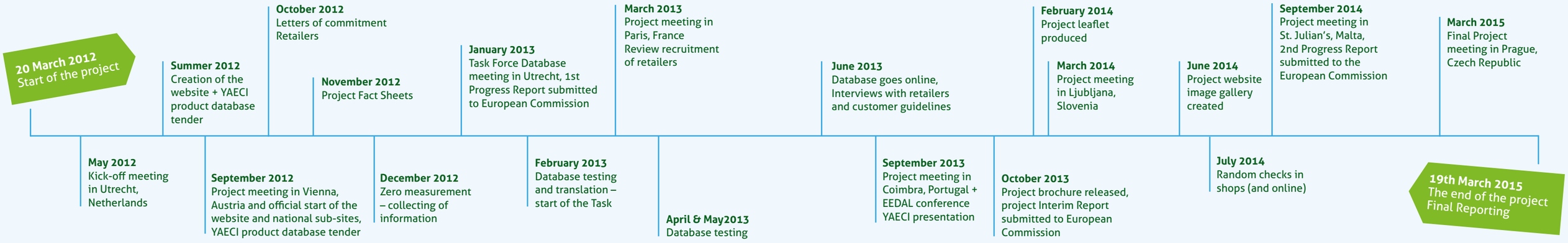
The YAECI Database

In order to calculate the average annual energy costs of household appliances in euros, it was necessary to gather information from the energy labels of those appliances sold by the participating retailers in the project. It was opted to store this information in a centralised database to ensure that all retailers in all participating countries use the same basic information.

Dutch company 2ba developed the YAECI database and hosted it until March 19th, 2015. After testing by the YAECI Partners, the database was ready for data transfer from the existing Dutch database and was open for uploads by suppliers, retailers and YAECI partners in April 2013. Suppliers were asked to provide the necessary information for all new products. For better coverage of products the Consortium Partners agreed to take on Icecat, an independent worldwide publisher of product content, to fill the YAECI database with extra product data for the participating countries. Missing information was reported and added when found.

Suppliers always had the possibility to check and correct their information in the database so that only correct and validated information was used. Through the cooperation of the suppliers, 2ba, Icecat and the National YAECI partners, the data was kept up-to-date for the retailers. The YAECI database provided the necessary information to make it possible for the retailers in all participating countries to display the average annual energy costs in their shops and web-shops.

Milestones



Step 1 Methodology and Recruitment of Retailers: The first step was to develop a methodology for calculating the annual running costs and to recruit retailers and suppliers.

Step 2 Database development: The next step was to set up a database for participating suppliers and retailers containing the necessary product information to enable a calculation of the annual running costs. Consequently it was the task of the retailers, with cooperation from project partners, to attach the annual running costs of the appliance to the price tag or energy label. The goal was to demonstrate that when taking the energy cots into account, a more expensive appliance could work out cheaper in the long-run.

Step 3 Communication and Promotion: An efficient and continuous communication flow both within the project (including retailers) and to external interested parties was necessary to guarantee the success of the project. The main activities included the project website and national sub-websites, brochures, leaflets, articles, press conferences and press releases.

Step 4 Evaluation: Activities were continuously monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Activities included the preparation and submission of the Mid- term evaluation reports, comprising consumer, retailer and effect evaluations and the final evaluation report comprising consumer, retailer and the quantitative effect of the Action.

Energy savings indication

Monitoring activities played an important role in the project, in order to determine the shift of energy efficiency classes of appliances sold induced by the Action.

Despite the fact that most countries were seriously affected by the economic crisis, a shift in sales of the energy efficiency classes towards the most efficient ones did occur during the Action.

In general the calculations shown in the table below are based on the shift of energy efficiency that occurred before launching the Action until some months after having launched the Action. (The table refers to those product categories covered by the YAECI project amongst the participating retailers of the member countries of YAECI).

The shift was derived by setting a zero measurement before the start of the Action and a sales measurement following the start of the Action for those appliances sold by the participating retailers. In addition, in order to measure the sales data, information regarding the number of appliances sold per product group for the participating retailers was gathered. Data was provided by retailers either in the form of exact sales numbers or as a range. The energy savings were then calculated for each product group and retailer on the basis of the derived shifts, the annual sales of the retailers, and the typical annual energy consumption of the appliances in the different product groups. The savings are reported as electricity savings in Gwh/year and as primary energy in toe/year . Additionally they are also reported as reductions in CO_2-emissions based on the country specific emission of greenhouse gases for the production of electricity kg CO_2 /kWh.

Due to the implementation measures of the European Ecodesign Directive, a general shift towards more energy efficient appliances occurred in Europe during the course of the YAECI project: new products brought on to the market had to be energy efficiency class A+ instead of class A for cooling appliances (7/2012), washing machines (12/2013) and dishwashers (≥11 place settings, 12/2013); resp. energy efficiency class A instead of B for dishwashers (≤10 place settings; 12/2013). This brought about changes in the individual assortment of the cooperating retailers in the different countries, which were generally implemented quickly. The zero measurement still showed a significant share of energy efficiency classes already excluded by the Ecodesign implementing measures for new appliances amongst some of the participating retailers.

YAECI Results – calculations of the savings in electricity consumption and reductions in CO_2 emissions that occurred due to the display of energy costs amongst cooperating retailers

Several reasons can be accounted for the relatively low shift in sales of those products in the highest energy efficiency classes. These include the fact that there were less retailers in general who participated in the Action (i.e., no retailers from France nor Germany), lack of data and as already mentioned, due to the economic crisis.

Product group	Savings in electricity [GWh/a]	Share of savings in electricity [percent]	Savings [toe (primary energy)/a]
Televisions	0,64	14,2%	162
Cooling appliances	1,43	31,5%	358
Dishwashers	0,87	19,2%	219
Washing machines	0,78	17,3%	196
Combined washer dryers	0,09	2,0%	23
Tumble dryers	0,38	8,4%	96
Air-conditioners	0,33	7,3%	83
Total	4,53	100%	1.137

1 GWh final electricity corresponds to 250,79 toe primary energy

What retailers say about the project

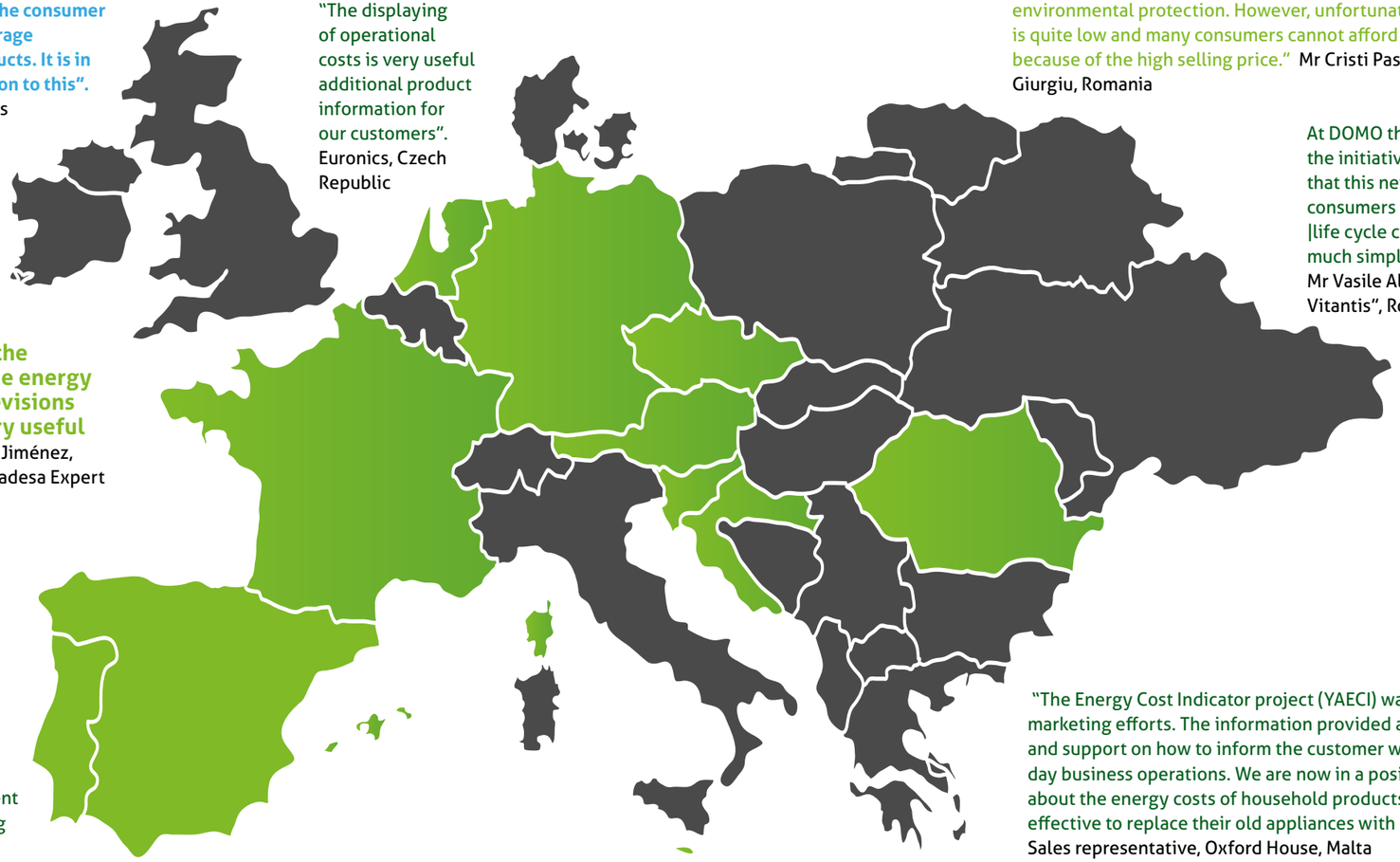
"The goal of the Energy Indicator is not only to make the consumer more conscious of the energy costs, but also to encourage manufacturers to produce more energy efficient products. It is in any case nice that the YAECI project made a contribution to this".
Jeroen Blank, Marketing Manager, BCC, the Netherlands

"The displaying of operational costs is very useful additional product information for our customers".
Euronics, Czech Republic

"In my opinion, the additional information that the YAECI project brings, namely the displaying of the annual cost of the electricity consumed by household appliances and consumer electronics, are very useful for highlighting the energy savings (and therefore the money savings) during the life cycle, when a high energy efficient product is purchased. The information contained in leaflets, brochures and the other information materials presented by ICEMENERG were clear and well explained both to our staff and to consumers, in order to raise the awareness on energy savings and environmental protection. However, unfortunately, in Romania, the standard of living is quite low and many consumers cannot afford to purchase a device A +++ or A ++ because of the high selling price." Mr Cristi Pasarica, Executive Manager R'ART Giurgiu, Romania

"The database and the information materials of the YAECI project with energy costs of the domestic white appliances, televisions and air conditioning products are very useful for shops. We are grateful for these types of initiatives to the European Commission and to Escan". Proselco (Retail chain), Spain.

At DOMO the staff were very enthusiastic about the initiative of the YAECI project and they said that this new label is very useful, because many consumers were asking about the annual costs or |life cycle costs. "Now, with the YAECI label it is much simpler and easy to explain and to compare." Mr Vasile Alexandrescu, Shop Manager DOMO Vitantis", Romania



"The Energy indicator, the YAECI database, the information brochures and leaflets about the energy costs of the domestic white appliances, televisions and air conditioning products have been very useful for the sales of efficient products". Mr. Diego Jiménez, Manager and Mr. Luis Miguel Sánchez, Sales Manager. Fadesa Expert (Retail chain), Spain.

"We always like to offer added value and useful information to our customers. We are delighted to be a part of the YAECI project, because the indicator enables a clearer insight into actual running costs of appliances. We have noticed that the Energy Indicator contributed to sales of high efficiency products."
Mernard RA company, Slovenia

" The Energy Indicator is a very important support tool for our trade and certainly as information to the user in general".
Mr Joaquín Español. President of the Association of Retailers in Aragon Region, Spain

"The implementation of the Energy Indicator has been very positive because it greatly facilitates the choice of equipment by customers. Before this label customers looked for the energy label but did not realise how they can save on the purchase of certain equipment compared with others and now it´s much easier to decide at the moment of purchase. Until now there are no barriers identified in implementing the label." Pedro Guerreiro (Store manager from Setúbal), Portugal.

"The Energy Cost Indicator project (YAECI) was of great value for our sales and marketing efforts. The information provided about the annual running costs and support on how to inform the customer was most useful for our day-to-day business operations. We are now in a position to inform our customers about the energy costs of household products and advise them when it is cost effective to replace their old appliances with a new, more efficient model."
Sales representative, Oxford House, Malta

"The implementation of the Energy Indicator (YAECI) has been very positive. Customers do notice the label and question us about what it is. We explain that it greatly facilitates the perception regarding energy costs of the equipment once it is translated into euros. Regarding areas for improvement, in my opinion the size of the label should be increased to make it more visible and also opt for a bright colour." Tiago Oliveira (Store manager from Montijo), Portugal.

Many smart solutions have grown from listening to what consumers really want. We create new products with real people in mind and design solutions that have a real impact on our lives. The YAECI Project does the same".
Aleksander Uranc, Brand Management Director, Gorenje d.d, Slovenia

"I think displaying the energy cost indicator is an important step in providing real cost transparency to our customers!" (Retailer) Austria

"Our Consumers really appreciated the added value of the energy cost indicator."
(Retailer) Austria

"With the implementation of the Energy Indicator I will sell more efficient refrigerators". Retailer, Croatia.

What consumers say...

"I know I can find the energy consumption on the Energy label. But really, I had no idea what that means in Euros!" Consumer Croatia

"It will be cheaper to cook and wash"

"Throughout the project retailers were faced with many barriers, mainly due to lack of understanding of consumers"

"I will live greener"

"The energy cost indicator showed me clearly why it's a bad idea to be too stingy when buying a new tumble dryer."
Consumer Austria

"Mister, what does A+++ stand for"

"A,B;C;D ... it is all the same"

"If it uses less water – does it wash at all?"

Lessons learnt

Retailers
It was clear that initially there was a general lack of awareness regarding energy efficiency amongst retailers. Training of staff proved necessary and cooperation with the retailers was slow. Marking of products is not always the same throughout Europe (GTIN issue). How to manage relationships with retailers proved somewhat challenging. Retailers are most competitive amongst each other. In general it took a lot longer than anticipated to get retailers to comply and commit. However most retailers did eventually recognise the YAECI database as a useful tool to support the sales of energy efficient products and proper labelling.

Database
The database containing information on the household appliances on the market of those countries, who participated in the project, was an important aspect of the project. It was certainly a challenge to achieve a well- filled quality database. To date there has not been a single system or data supplier who has been able to provide all necessary information. We learnt that although significant effort was put into filling the database as optimally as possible, such a database will never be complete unless it becomes mandatory for suppliers to provide the necessary information. In the future we would recommend a different approach and the development of a European mandatory product database is crucial. No product should be allowed on the market if not included in the product database with the relevant technical information.

Alternative data gathering
During the course of the project it proved more effective to gather the product data via a sub-contractor. This was not foreseen in the original planning. Asking the individual countries to get the relevant data from suppliers would have been much more cumbersome and time consuming. It is important to have control over the information submitted and sharing of experiences amongst the YAECI member countries proved to be valuable.

Consumers
The main lesson learnt was that it is important to keep messages simple. The price of appliances remains important and thus consumers do find the information about how much products consume in energy most useful. Consumers have indicated that they were influenced by the energy cost indicator to make a better informed purchase decision, by clearly seeing the total picture (i.e. not only the shop price, but how much it costs to run the appliance in terms of energy and in some cases water).

Success stories

Success stories and learning points from the project partners.

Dietlinde Quack, Oeko, Germany
"We were quite happy to find significant shifts in energy efficiency classes towards the more efficient classes amongst almost all participating retailers during the course of the action."

Juraj Krivošík, Executive Director, SEVEn, the Energy Efficiency Center, Czech Republic
"We understand the YAECI project as an attempt to bring the energy label even closer to the consumers, by delivering the information on the product electricity and water costs in monetary terms. Since some consumers may not be familiar with the kWh figures, the number in Czech Crowns or Euros or other local currencies can help the consumer to appreciate the lower running costs of the more energy efficient appliances.

Project efforts have aimed to engage retailers in sharing this information with their clients and in the Czech Republic we have been pleased that some major online retailers showed an interest in this mechanism just by adapting the scheme into their own system. It is clear that even more effort is needed to promote the scheme to more retailers and to the end-users, and it should also be discussed if and how the scheme could be integrated into the formal energy labelling scheme. All such efforts to communicate and highlight the advantages of efficient products to consumers do make sense."

Miha, Neva and Mihael, ZRMK, Slovenia
"We have worked on buildings, clean vehicles, efficient street lighting, even with prison staff and prisoners. "Indicators for appliances" sounds simple and straightforward, but in reality it was no less serious work than in any other project, which demanded our full attention and dedication. At the end of the project we feel satisfied – we have reached our goals and met the targets, we succeeded in motivating important retailers, we gained attention of national media and we made an outreach to quite a large audience. In fact, we would be even more satisfied if the project continued. We learned some important things about communication with business enterprises, about the focus of consumers, and last but not least by comprehensively supporting our retailers we learned in detail about the characteristics of various appliance types and groups, and about calculating their operational costs. If there was some frustration (or better, fear) at the beginning, mainly linked to the question of attracting national stakeholders, by the end of the project we have forgotten about it completely.

The highlights were several; we decided to list here dissemination and communication success (national print and TV media), the growing enthusiasm of participating retailers, the visible positive feedback from consumers, and bringing the indicator itself and the topic of appliances' operational costs onto the main agenda. A parallel highlight: an excellent and well-coordinated consortium, which made our work even more enjoyable.

If you were to launch the YAECI project now what would you have done differently? This is not an easy question, as boundary conditions change from year to year, even from month to month, depending on the wider economic situation and business plans of retailers. If we had to state one example, it would probably be an even more intensive and persuasive contact with retailers from

day one on, to gain more time for practical implementation of the action."

Stefan Schaa, PiM, Malta
"In Malta, the YAECI project can be considered a success in many ways as it involved some of the most important retailers and helped them to inform their customers about the yearly running costs of products with an EU energy label. This was the first initiative of this kind in Malta. Consequently, some problems were encountered during implementation which made regular monitoring by us and in some instances corrective action necessary. We have also managed to link the YAECI project with other ongoing efforts such as 'The European Sustainable Energy Award for Prisons', the 'Nearly Zero Energy Buildings 2021 – Open Doors Days' and 'Come On Labels'. Furthermore, the national regulating body, the Malta Resources Authority, was very supportive throughout the project and facilitated project presentations at a number of national events. But it would have helped if an obligation was placed on suppliers to provide product specific information into a central database to make the Energy Cost Indicator more effective and reliable for consumers."

If you were to launch the YAECI project now what would you have done differently? "In Malta, if we had to launch the YAECI project now, more emphasis would be given towards communicating directly with consumers who are at risk of fuel poverty about the benefits of replacing old household appliances with more efficient ones. We would also intensify discussions with national bodies on how to implement a new replacement scheme to facilitate the uptake of more energy efficient products."

Maurice Estourgie, UNETO VNI, the Netherlands
"It was very nice sharing our experience on the Energy Indicator ("EnergieWeter") in the Netherlands with the other countries and seeing it being implemented across Europe.

It has always been a problem to collect energy (and other) information for all appliances, which has been a focal point throughout this project. To date, there has not been a single system or data supplier that can provide all the information required. A lot of effort was put into filling the databank as well as possible, but it will never be entirely complete. Retailers keep having problems with this, so this requires a different approach in the future.
Highlights of the project included the setting up and managing the European database for YAECI and the various countries. In October 2013 that we could already publish that the first retailers in the other European countries had started stating the energy costs in euros on their price tags. This marked the roll-out of the initiative across Europe. At the end of the project that almost all countries and most retailers want to continue informing their customers on the average annual energy costs in euros.

On 3rd February 2015, UNETO-VNI held a round-table meeting with three major retailers and representatives of the other parties involved. Everyone was positive about continuing with YAECI "EnergieWeter", but clearly indicated that it is better to have retailers make the calculation of the average energy costs themselves rather than their having to rely on a data supplier and incomplete data. Retailers can use the YAECI calculation method on the basis of the average energy price for households to be determined nationwide."

Orlando Paraíba, Director Ena, Portugal
"Besides difficulties in obtaining reliable data retailers demonstrate a great acceptation of the project from the top to the shop management. YAECI´s message was disseminated very efficiently to customers helping many of them at the moment of their purchase.

The Energy indicator became part of the routine of the (online) shops of the participating retailers and the impact was so positive that nowadays customers frequently request the energy indicator also for other appliances (out of the scope of the project).

Energy/water indicators simplified consumer´s understanding and represents an important factor when comparing two similar domestic appliances. A great tool for marketing.

If you were to launch the YAECI project now what would you have done differently? "Find a better way to compare results between countries, the same guidelines and procedures for all participating countries to be easier to compare results It would be interesting to have a report with the measure of the action in each country and comparison of results between them."

Margarita Puente, Escan, Spain
"During the YAECI project, the Spanish National Energy Policy did not support the domestic appliances sector in Spain. One Spanish manufacturer stopped his activity during some months and some big (vertical chains) and small domestic appliances shops have closed. YAECI activities have helped with up to date information of efficient products and a new data, the energy cost. Many leaflets, brochure, small posters have been used in some shops in Madrid and Zaragoza. Unfortunately big vertical chains did not participate directly, but information was provided to them.
Some associations of retailers at national and regional level have also participated in some activities".
"Although convincing the 2 retailer chains to participate took more effort than planned, the participation of them has been continuous and fruitful. Associations of retailers like FECE (National), ECOS ACEAR of Aragon (Regional) and ACEMA of Madrid (Regional) also contributed positively to the Action"".

Marko Biscan, EIHP, Croatia
"One of success stories is that we succeeded in recruiting retailers, especially the biggest in Croatia, with the greatest market share. The negotiations were exhausting and time consuming which led to implementation delays. The greatest success story was that YAECI project data and contacts were used for motivating and establishing the National Subsidy scheme and calculation of subsidies for buying the most efficient appliances. The National Subsidy scheme will be launched in May 2015 and will be founded by the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund".

If you were to launch the YAECI project now what would you have done differently? This can be divided in two aspects – methodology and implementation. What was learned and could be changed is that a different approach in methodology of cost calculations is needed. The analysed data for Croatia shows that usage of appliances must be taken into account, and that European average values are not appropriate/applicable for all appliances. The same goes for electric energy prices, as appliances are used at different time periods with different unit prices. As regards implementation a wider range of retailers could have been involved in the project and more national support accomplished with the goal to cover almost the whole market.

"This project is very different than most EU projects as it is more focused, visible and practical" – After explaining the project to my colleagues
"If this is going to work we will have to do it ourselves" – After learning about data download from database".

Future outlook

In general the YAECI project has contributed to more energy efficient appliances being produced and to motivating consumers to purchase more energy efficient appliances across nine European countries. When asked most of the retailers currently participating in the project showed interest in continuing to use the YAECI concept by showing the energy indicator at the point of sale.

A new idea has been inspired by the project to develop a customised, tailor-made tool for retailers to use in shops to enable comparison of products with an older label and the latest energy labels and to combine this with personal usage patterns. The tool would demonstrate clearly to customers that products with an energy efficient label, which may appear more expensive at first glance, do in fact work out cheaper in the long run when the annual running costs are taken into account. So the same principle as YAECI, but then with a different approach. More Member States have expressed an interest in cooperating in such a project such as Italy, Greece and Sweden. The idea would be to spread the word to even more retailers.

Synergies with other relevant projects are being looked into and ways to cooperate to complement each other and to avoid any duplication of work. There is continued interest in supporting and promoting the display of annual running costs for consumers to help motivate them to buy more efficient appliances. The transition towards a more sustainable energy system will succeed only with informed, engaged and active consumers. Consumers should be considered at the heart of the energy system and become active players.

http://www.appliance-energy-costs.eu/eu/summary-of-the-project/summary

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