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Summary

A transparent consultation with manufacturers is essential to achieve the objectives of the BELT project – facilitating the transition period, informing and supporting all stakeholders, and helping to minimize errors at all levels of the value chain, from manufacturers to consumers. In particular, BELT aims to help manufacturers to adapt their practices and use the rescaled labels, pushing innovation in designing energy efficient products.

This document sets out the plan for a transparent consultation with manufacturers, and defines how to effectively engage manufacturers and their associations to gather feedback on the findings, the materials produced and actions that will be put in practice during the project.

Since the planning process of the consultation workshops constitutes an ongoing process, adaptations are expected to take place throughout the project lifetime, consultation activities will be monitored and reported during the duration of the project.





1 Introduction

Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 aims to promote the uptake of more efficient energy-related products, repealing Directive 2010/30/EU and the first Directive 92/75/EEC. Additional Commission Delegated Regulations (EU), which supplement Regulation (EU) 2017/1369, dictate the rescaling of energy labels. Unless properly managed, the rescaling of energy labels can create difficulties and confusion amongst all market actors, such as consumers, retailers and manufacturers. Washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators, TVs, and lighting appliances, which are placed on the market from the 1st of March 2021 onwards, must have the new labels.

The BELT project has the objective to facilitate the transition period informing and supporting all stakeholders and to minimize errors at all levels of the value chain, from manufacturers to consumers.

In this context, this document sets out the plan for a transparent consultation with manufacturers, and defines the how to effectively engage manufacturers and their associations to collect information on their needs, gather feedback on the findings, materials produced and actions that will be put in practice during the project.

The transparent consultation with manufacturers will be achieved through the establishment of a manufacturers network and the organisation of activities, events, and website, which will act as a dialogue platform and ensure that the BELT project meets its objectives.

In order to increase the impact of the project, manufacturers will be invited to participate in collaborative and co-working activities such as focus groups aimed at collecting feedback on the BELT approach. The aim of these activities is to promote mutual learning mechanisms between manufacturers and the BELT project, and to facilitate the cooperation between manufacturers, and both retailers and consumers.

The manufacturers and manufacturer associations that participate in the transparent consultation process will be given the opportunity to:

- participate in collaborative workshops and events
- consult and contribute to the project's research and materials
- contribute to the elaboration of a joint communication strategy
- use the project's results and communication material

This plan is designed to be used as a practical guide for the implementation of the BELT consultation activities. It lists the actions that need to be taken to realise a successful consultation and the responsibilities of each of the project partners. The task outcomes will provide insights and feedback to WP2 for the content and material creation (tasks 2.1, 2.3,





2.4.) and for the quantitative and qualitative evaluation regarding economic, environmental, technical and social aspects (real data on i.e. market research, future trends foreseen, consumption of the products, materials usage will be collected through manufacturers collaboration and used as inputs for task 2.2).

The consultation activities will be scheduled in line with the communication plan developed in task 2.7 and exploiting synergies with LABEL 2020 project initiatives.

2 Mapping and grouping of stakeholders

The focus of the consultation is on manufacturers and manufacturer association in the target countries and at the European level. Therefore, stakeholders will be mapped according to whether they are a manufacturer or association, type of products they produced, size of the organisation, and the geographic level at which they operate. Table 1 shows how the stakeholders will be grouped, and already includes, as an example, some European manufacturer associations.

Table 1. Stakeholder mapping table

	Category	Name	Size of the company	Geographic coverage	Products involved
Manufacturers stakeholder list	Producers	Whirlpool EMEA	Large	Europe	Refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers
		Bosch	Large	Europe	Refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers
		Candy	Large	Europe	Refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers
		[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]
	Association	APPLiA	21 direct members; 27 national associations	Europe	Refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers



	Lighting Europe	more than 1000 lighting companies	Europe	Lighting applications
	Digital Europe	71 corporate members; 40 national trade associations	Europe	TVs
	Electronics Product Stewardship Canada	26 members	Canada	Refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers, lighting applications, TVs
	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]

2.1 Privacy and personal data protection

The stakeholder list construction and management are performed ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework for data protection. Moreover, preventive measures will be taken to protect everyone's right to privacy and to ensure that personal data are safe from unforeseen use.

The engagement of stakeholders for the creation of manufacturers network requires data/information exchange, and therefore requires participation of humans and involves the collection of basic personal data. For the stakeholders list purpose, only basic personal information (e.g. person's name, employer's name, country, email, position within the company) are collected. Conversely, sensitive personal information (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction) will not be collected. Data collection and processing will closely follow the provisions of Article 6 of the Directive 95/46/EC (or Article 5 in the EU Regulation 2016/679) and will be compliant with Article 8 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union and with national legislations, ensuring that data will be processed fairly and lawfully.

Personal data will be destroyed when the activities finalize and the relevant outcomes are obtained. The consortium guarantees that all personal data collected during the project will be kept secure and unreachable by unauthorized parties. The data will be handled with appropriate confidentiality and technical security, as required by law in the individual countries and the EU law. Confidentiality of the data will be ensured by means of a privacy policy. Stakeholders will be informed that the privacy policy applies when participating in any of the project research activities.





2.2 Continuous mapping of stakeholders

The stakeholder list presented above may be filled with companies' contacts and will be constantly maintained and updated. To this purpose, a dedicated section will be created on the BELT website that will allow for the registration of stakeholders.

3 Definition of the objective of the consultation

The consultation activities will consist of webinars, workshops, presentations, and a dedicated website, among others. The consultation with manufacturers will contribute to the BELT project objectives in the following ways:

- increasing visibility of the project, materials developed and impact, ensuring manufacturers engagement
- validation of the projects methods, materials, and targets
- awareness raising of the project, facilitating the use of the materials produced by the manufacturers
- identifying synergies with other existing initiatives (e.g. LABEL2020)
- ensuring the content, materials and methods produced and employed by BELT are aligned to the actual needs of manufacturers
- delivery of trainings to engage with manufacturers and help them minimise the errors and identify opportunities of such a rescaling
- effective communication of the BELT outcomes to manufacturers
- increasing manufacturers awareness regarding sustainability issues

4 Consultation plan structure

The consultation will address a relatively homogenous group of stakeholders – appliance manufacturers and manufacturer associations. Nevertheless, there are differences in between products and potentially across target countries as well, and therefore it may be necessary to apply to some degree customised consultation strategies.

However, a set of baseline activities have been identified for each consultation event. They will serve as a starting point to manage the organisation and the planning of the consultation. The organisers of each workshop or activity may then adapt the content to the specific context, location, and audience.

The following aspects will be considered for each consultation initiative:



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- Definition of consultation date and venue
- Definition of consultation topic (agenda preparation)
- Definition of the appropriate consultation methodology
- Allocation of responsibility within the BELT Consortium
- Identification of collaboration opportunities with LABEL2020
- Budget allocation and approval
- Definition target group of attendees
- Definition of desired outcomes
- Dissemination plan (promotion and visibility)
- Preparation of the consultation materials
- Evaluation of the consultation initiative
- Follow-up activities

The presented key organizational aspects were selected to support the optimal and successful implementation of the consultation. An initial list of consultation activities and events is presented below. We expect to organise between 5 and 10 consultation events.

Table 2: preliminary list of consultation activities and events.

Year	Month	Project month	Project year	Event	Location	Activity	Target audience
2020	May	9	Y1	n/a	n/a	Leaflet	Producers
2020	June	10	Y1	EUSEW	Brussels	Workshop/ Booth at the networking fair	Producers/ policy makers
2020	June	10	Y1	n/a	Online	Webinar/ Website	Producers/ retailers
2020	Sept	13	Y2	EKG Berlin	Berlin	Presentation	Researchers/ producers/ policy makers
2020	Sept	13	Y2	IFA Berlin	Berlin	Workshop using Circulab methodology	Producers
2020	Nov	15	Y2	ECOMONDO	Rimini (Italy)	Workshop/ Booth at the networking fair	Producers/ researchers/ consumers/ policy makers





The BELT website is already available (at <https://www.belt-project.eu/>); it provides general information and news regarding the project development. Additionally, the website has been designed to contain dedicated sections for manufacturers, retailers, consumers and public/business procurement personnel. The specific sections will be linked to external websites managed by different project partners. ECODOM is in charge of the set up and the management of the website dedicated to manufacturers. The manufacturers website will be developed taking into account the business actor's needs. Therefore, it will contain general content regarding the new energy label (timing, legislative requirement, legislative references, etc.) as well as targeted content for specific professional people (designers, marketing specialist, retailers, etc.). Moreover, training materials (brochures, factsheets, webinars...) will be made available through the manufactures website. The dedicated website will also be used as tool to collect business actors' feedback, to enlarge the stakeholder's network and to advertise the initiatives dedicated to manufactures organized along the project.

The consultation initiatives will be promoted also through a bi-monthly newsletter addressing business actors. Visitors of the BELT project website will have the possibility of signing-up for the newsletter.

At the same time, the consultation materials will be made available through other channels, such as the websites of manufacturer associations. APPLiA, the European home appliance association, has already expressed interest in using BELT materials on their website.

This plan will be used as the baseline on which the actual set up and implementation of the events will be realized. However, since the planning process is an ongoing process, to which adaptation is expected to take place, it should be taken into account that the presented list will be continuously updated and revised according to the specific needs occurring along the project developments.

4.1 Definition of the consultation date and venue

The first preliminary activity necessary to realize the draft consultation plan presented in table 2 is mapping relevant events that will occur until the end of the project.

The project aims to include between 5 – 10 consultation events. At the same time, conference calls and webinars may be organised for addressing specific issues.

Once the event has been selected, the most suitable venue will be defined taking into account cost issues and additional aspects aiming at facilitate stakeholder participation (e.g. logistic issues as possibility to easily reach the place by public transport).

4.2 Definition of the consultation topic and agenda preparation

The topic of each consultation will be defined taking into account the specific needs and progress of BELT tasks and stakeholders.



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4.3 Definition of the appropriate consultation format

Considering cost and time efficiency issues, as well as the opportunity to establish synergies with other projects, and networks, and evaluating the change of carrying out parallel networking activities, different types of consultation events have been identified:

- Organization of a side event at a conference/exhibition
- Organization of a side event at a major BELT event
- Organization of a stand-alone event
- Participation as exhibitor in a fair/exhibition
- Organization of a webinar (also as training activities)

The consultation activities can be autonomous or complementary to other events. In the latter case the results of the first consultation will feed in the second event for further investigation and assessment (e.g. a webinar will follow a workshop to inform stakeholders about relevant BELT progress).

The duration of the consultation events will depend on the specific objectives and on the profile of the participants, aiming on one hand to not discourage participation, on the other hand to have enough time to promote discussion and to present everything adequately.

4.4 Identification of stakeholders and invitation

The manufacturers and manufacturer associations identified in the stakeholder mapping will be invited to take part in the consultation events.

When consultation activities focus on specific products or geographies, only the corresponding stakeholders will be invited to participate.

Invitations will be sent out in advance, indicating the purpose, topic, date and location of the events, and when necessary, a deadline for registration.

4.5 Preparation of the consultation material

The implementation of the consultation activities will require the preparation of BELT communication materials, depending on the selected consultation approach. For instance, in case of physical consultation meetings (i.e. workshop), it will be necessary to make available a flipchart, beamers, post-its, posters, flyers, etc.

4.6 Evaluation of the consultation initiative

At the end of each consultation activity, the participants will be invited to complete a satisfaction survey, aiming to assess the accomplishment and success of the main aspects of the initiative and to provide an overall evaluation of the event.





The evaluation will address primarily:

- organization of the activity (including logistical issues)
- achievement of the consultation objectives
- achievement of the stakeholders' objectives
- used tools and materials
- performance of the presenters and of the moderator
- The level of participation of the participants
- The general level of satisfaction
- suggestions of other consultation topics
- suggestions for improvements

The information collected will be carefully analysed and used as a starting point for improving the performance and the effectiveness of future initiatives.

4.7 Follow up activities

4.7.1 For the Participants

After each consultation activity, if necessary, the participants will receive the presentation materials as well any other relevant material. The main conclusions and take away messages of the activity will be highlighted. This will also present an opportunity to refer participants to the BELT website, where they will be able to register and access BELT materials.

4.7.2 For the Consortium

All the project partners will receive the minutes of the event and will be informed about the consultation outcomes.

A report describing the performed consultation, in the form of a post and as an article, will be published on the internal BELT communication channels.

5 Potential risks and proposed solutions

Potential risks and mitigation approaches were considered for the consultation activities (Table 3).



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Table 3. Potential risks and mitigation strategies.

	Potential risks	Mitigation approach
Set-up	Scarce participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make appropriate invitation • Development of a reserve list • Ask for confirmation
	Difficulties finding appropriate venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start selection well in advance • Be flexible and adapt to the circumstances with creativity • Take advantage of the international networks of contacts consisting of project partner networks
	Financial problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend according to planned budget • Keep control of expenditure • Evaluate different alternatives
Implementation	The participants are passive or scarcely involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared about participants' interests • Explain consultation outline at the beginning • Ensure that everyone can express their opinion • Organize working sessions in small groups • Use tools that promote interactions • Schedule Q/A sessions • Provide useful insights
	Participants are tired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule breaks • Keep working session within time limits (be on time) • Select comfortable place (eg. with natural light)
	Poor interaction between participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule networking sessions • Moderator to make efforts to involve everyone • Setting rules for interaction and behaviour
	The objectives of the consultation are missed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning of the session • Moderator avoids getting off-topic • Planning of follow-up activities