

Saving on your energy bills by making better buying choices

Consumers have more information and new choices to reduce energy consumption in their households by considering energy labelling when buying energy efficient appliances and lighting and obtaining energy passports before making decisions to rent or buy homes.

Energy costs us money – every time we turn on the lights, go to the refrigerator, get in the car or turn up the heating. To become more energy aware and energy efficient, whether through better home insulation or lower electricity use, consumers need to know about energy efficient appliances and energy saving behaviour. Better information gives people the opportunity to make better choices. Whether it is a meaningful, consistent, clear labelling scheme (energy labelling), or better certification for the energy performance of buildings (energy passports), the right information can drive sustainable, energy efficient choices. Similarly, tightening minimum energy performance standards for products (eco-design) removes the worst performers from the market so that newer appliances use less energy.

The EU-funded INOGATE Programme is working with its Partner Countries to introduce three energy efficiency requirements to align with EU energy efficiency directives. Energy labelling, helps consumers to make informed purchase decisions, so that when you buy a new refrigerator, stove or heater you can see how different products compare on energy efficiency. Eco-design will ensure that the product you buy meets a minimum energy performance standard. If it does not meet this standard, then it cannot be legally traded. An energy passport provides an objective assessment of the energy performance of buildings for both owners and tenants, so that when you buy, rent or lease a house or apartment, you know its overall energy performance, including the extent to which energy efficient building materials (such as insulation and double-glazed windows) and devices (such as boilers and lighting) are included. Better information will make choosing energy efficient products and buildings easier for the consumer.

“ Saving energy (electricity or heat) is very important nowadays. I recently changed all the light bulbs in the house with LED bulbs. After half a month the energy consumption was reduced by 14%, which I think is very good. Also, in our family we changed the windows to preserve the heat in winter time.

Tudor Guzun of Chisinau.

! Comparatively speaking, energy efficient measures such as the above will save 10% of primary energy used in EU Member States by 2020, helping to reduce utility bills significantly. Partner Countries can make similar savings by applying these three energy efficiency regulations.

Spotlight on success



Ukraine has made considerable progress in transposing EU legislation into the field of energy labelling with four labelling regulations approved for household

appliances and another seven product regulations under development (with the help of INOGATE). In addition Minimum Energy Performance Standards have been established for refrigerators and boilers. Transposition of the Eco-design directive is also being investigated.

In **Armenia**, customers buying, selling or renting property will require an energy passport to establish the energy performance of their homes. Armenian legislation will require all buildings to have improved insulation, double glazed windows and efficient heating to conform to new energy efficiency standards. Energy audits will be carried out on existing buildings with new buildings obliged to conform to the new standards.

Georgia plans to replace its existing inefficient light bulbs with energy efficient ones within the next 20 years. Economic analysis by INOGATE has shown that improving the efficiency of lighting in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors in Georgia can potentially save about 1200 GWh/year from the country's annual electricity consumption. This means a savings of over 15% of total national electricity consumption and up to 75% of electricity consumption used for lighting. To put this saving in context, it equates to a third of the annual output of Georgia's 1.32GW Enguri hydropower



plant, which has the second highest concrete dam in the world.

Energy efficient lights are already being sold locally, to consumers who are being incentivised to change the lighting in their households. Natia who recently moved from an old tower block in Tbilisi to a new construction with LED lights said this: "In our previous home, we had to pay four Lari for paying lobby illumination. Here we are using LED light bulbs and pay just 1 Lari. All these are a big relief because, we are still paying for our mortgage loan and every Lari matters."

The Tbilisi City Hall is also actively engaged in the process to phase out old light bulbs in public areas. The plan envisions modernising the street illumination system, replacing old lamps with energy-saving LED lightbulbs. City officials believe there is an opportunity to at least halve the illumination cost through this change.

The EU-funded INOGATE Programme promotes international energy cooperation between the European Union and the Partner Countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

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