

Powering Europe's Competitiveness, Improving People's Lives

A Call for an EU Action Plan for
the Home Appliance Industry

APPLiA
Home Appliance Europe



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Foreword

Across Europe, sustainability has moved from aspiration to implementation. In millions of homes, it is no longer an abstract policy goal but a lived reality. The home appliance industry has played a quiet but decisive role in that shift: making homes more efficient, driving down energy and water use, extending product lifespans, and embedding circular habits into daily life. This is what the green transition looks like when it reaches citizens – tangible, practical, and cost-saving.

Europe now faces a more demanding question: How do we pair this everyday sustainability with a competitive industrial base? The climate transition cannot be sustained without manufacturing capacity, skilled jobs, innovation ecosystems and resilient supply chains rooted in Europe. Emissions targets matter, but so do the factories, engineers and investments behind them. Responsibility must be rewarded, not displaced.

This challenge has only grown more urgent. The geopolitical landscape has shifted dramatically in the past five years: global competition for strategic technologies has intensified, supply chains have fragmented, and industrial policy has become a defining tool of statecraft. In this environment, Europe must be clear-eyed about its strengths. It cannot afford to overlook sectors that already manufacture at scale, innovate domestically, and create high-quality jobs while delivering measurable environmental gains.

The home appliance industry proves that decarbonisation and industrial competitiveness can advance together. Efficiency, circularity and innovation are not constraints on growth; they are drivers of it. With the right policy framework, Europe can turn this alignment into a lasting advantage, supporting households, strengthening industry and anchoring sustainable manufacturing where it belongs.



Hakan Bulgurlu
CEO, Beko

Introduction

In my professional experiences and at the helm of APPLiA, I have had the opportunity to see Europe's home appliance industry at work first hand. From Sweden to Italy, Spain to Poland and across the whole continent, I have seen factories, R&D centres and supply chains where European companies translate policy ambition into practical outcomes. Outcomes that matter to people: more efficient products, lower energy use, durable design and skilled jobs rooted in local communities.

This industry does not sit at the margins of Europe's priorities. It operates at the intersection of climate, energy, digital and consumer policy, turning abstract objectives into tangible results in citizens' homes. Appliances have become one of Europe's most effective tools for reducing energy demand, supporting circularity and improving affordability, without requiring drastic changes in consumer behaviour.

At the same time, the context for delivering these outcomes is becoming more challenging. Rising input costs, regulatory fragmentation and uneven enforcement across the Single Market are increasingly shaping investment decisions. What may appear as technical measures in Brussels can determine whether innovation is scaled in Europe, delayed or redirected elsewhere.

This is not a question of lowering ambition. Europe's goals on sustainability and competitiveness are widely shared by our industry. The challenge is ensuring that policies work together and provide the coherence and predictability needed to deliver at scale. Without this, even highly committed industries will struggle to sustain long-term investment.

The home appliance industry has already shown what is possible when innovation, regulation and market uptake move in the same direction. These achievements are a strong foundation, but they should not be taken for granted.

This brochure sets out why the home appliance industry should be recognised as a strategic industrial asset, and how an EU Action Plan can help secure its contribution for the decade ahead. Europe can build on what already works, or risk weakening one of its most effective delivery mechanisms. APPLiA and its members stand ready to work with European institutions to ensure that ambition and delivery continue to reinforce each other in practice.



Paolo Falcioni
Director-General,
APPLiA



Section 1:
Europe's Everyday
Competitiveness Machine

The Missing Piece in Europe's Competitiveness Puzzle

Europe is entering a decisive decade for its industrial future, seeking to reindustrialise, boost competitiveness, and strengthen its strategic autonomy. **The home appliance industry** stands as a cornerstone of this vision: a globally competitive, resilient, and innovative value chain.

Yet despite this scale and strategic relevance, **the home appliance industry remains outside Europe's industrial priorities.** Competitive conditions have deteriorated, with rising input costs, regulatory complexity, and uneven enforcement inflating risks, distorting competition, and delaying key investment decisions.

Measures including the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and steel safeguards have added significant pressure, exposing European manufacturers to deepening competitive asymmetry – although extending the scope of CBAM to finished products as proposed by the European Commission in its 'Strengthening CBAM proposal' would go some way to alleviating some of the additional pressure. At the same time, fragmented, overlapping, and inconsistent regulations—from the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and the Data Act to the weak enforcement of key legislation across Member States, such as the WEEE Directive—slow innovation, increase compliance costs, and penalise responsible businesses.

Without coordinated action, Europe risks losing one of its most productive industrial ecosystems. Yet the sector's potential is clear: with the right conditions, it can anchor high skilled manufacturing, accelerate circularity, and drive Europe's next wave of industrial innovation.



Europe's home appliance industry is facing mounting pressure on multiple fronts.

Rising input costs and measures designed to ring-fence the EU market (e.g., steel safeguards) are driving up production costs.



At the same time, a fragmented regulatory landscape — from ESPR to the Data Act — increases compliance burdens and slows investment.

Weak enforcement of EU rules allows non-compliant imports to undercut responsible manufacturers, eroding trust in the Single Market.



Together, these pressures threaten one of Europe's most productive industries.



The home appliance industry has deep roots in Europe. For generations, our R&D centres, factories and supplier networks have transformed engineering and design into products that improve daily life - lowering household bills, saving water and energy, and creating skilled, long-term jobs across many regions. This heritage matters: it develops local skills, involves thousands of suppliers and translates innovation into real economic value for communities across the EU.

Yet the sector is under growing pressure on multiple fronts. Rising prices for especially materials and energy increase production costs across the value chain. A fragmented regulatory landscape, from product stewardship rules to new data-related obligations, adds complexity and compliance burdens that slow investment and divert capacity away from innovation. In addition, weak market surveillance by EU Member States allows non-compliant imports to enter the market, undercutting responsible manufacturers and eroding trust in the Single Market.

These challenges, taken together, threaten one of the EU's most productive industries. However, if the home appliance sector is fully acknowledged as a strategic industry - not only for its contribution to reducing climate change but also for the socioeconomic benefits delivered at scale - it can continue to thrive and safeguard Europe's competitiveness and economic growth.

Yannick Fierling
President and CEO,
Electrolux Group



Rebuilding the Foundations of Europe's Industrial Competitiveness

An **EU Action Plan for the Home Appliance Industry** would provide the clarity, coordination, and competitive framework needed to safeguard investment and ensure this strategic ecosystem remains rooted in Europe. The Action Plan must focus on three decisive areas:

1. Secure competitive manufacturing conditions: Affordable, decarbonised energy; reliable access to raw materials and components; and a level playing field across borders. Consistent enforcement of Europe's high standards strengthens trust in the Single Market and rewards responsible businesses.

2. Build a smarter, more agile regulatory environment: Simplify and align overlapping rules, and ensure competitiveness is considered alongside sustainability. Europe needs regulations that work together - not against one another - and that treat innovation as an enabler of progress.

3. Invest in next-generation competitiveness: Support digitalisation, AI, circular design, and the skills that power advanced manufacturing. Strong partnerships with universities and training institutes can reinforce productivity, safety, and sustainability while strengthening Europe's industrial workforce.

Together, these measures form more than a policy roadmap; they represent a renewed partnership between Europe and one of its most productive sectors - built on predictability, cooperation, and a shared commitment to keeping Europe the best place to design, manufacture and innovate.



Home Appliance Industry Footprint in Europe

1



€79.7bn direct & indirect value added to Europe's GDP

Systemic GDP contributor underpinning revenues and wages

2



~983,695 jobs (direct & indirect)

Region-wide, quality employment that sustains skills and jobs across the value chain

3



75% of large appliances sold in Europe are made in Europe

Domestic manufacturing strength

4



500+ manufacturing and R&D sites across Europe

A lab-to-factory pipeline that keeps R&D and scale-up at home

5



>130 manufacturing sites in Europe.

Pan-European industrial backbone with employers in many regions

6



€44+ billion in annual upstream supplier spending

Deep industrial supply chain impact

7



€108bn projected EU market by 2030

Future growth engine worth anchoring in the region

8



Patents granted for home appliances in Europe: 2,191 in 2014 vs 4,700 in 2024

Patent diversification drives innovation and competitiveness

9



Washing machines: 46 l/cycle in 2022 vs 65 l/cycle in the late 1990s

Innovation that lowers total operating costs and boosts purchasing power

10



Dishwashers: 9.5 l/cycle in 2022 vs 20 l/cycle in the late 1990s

Proof that EU manufacturing converts R&D into market competitiveness



Section 2:

The Home Appliance Industry: Where Policy Ambition Meets Everyday Life

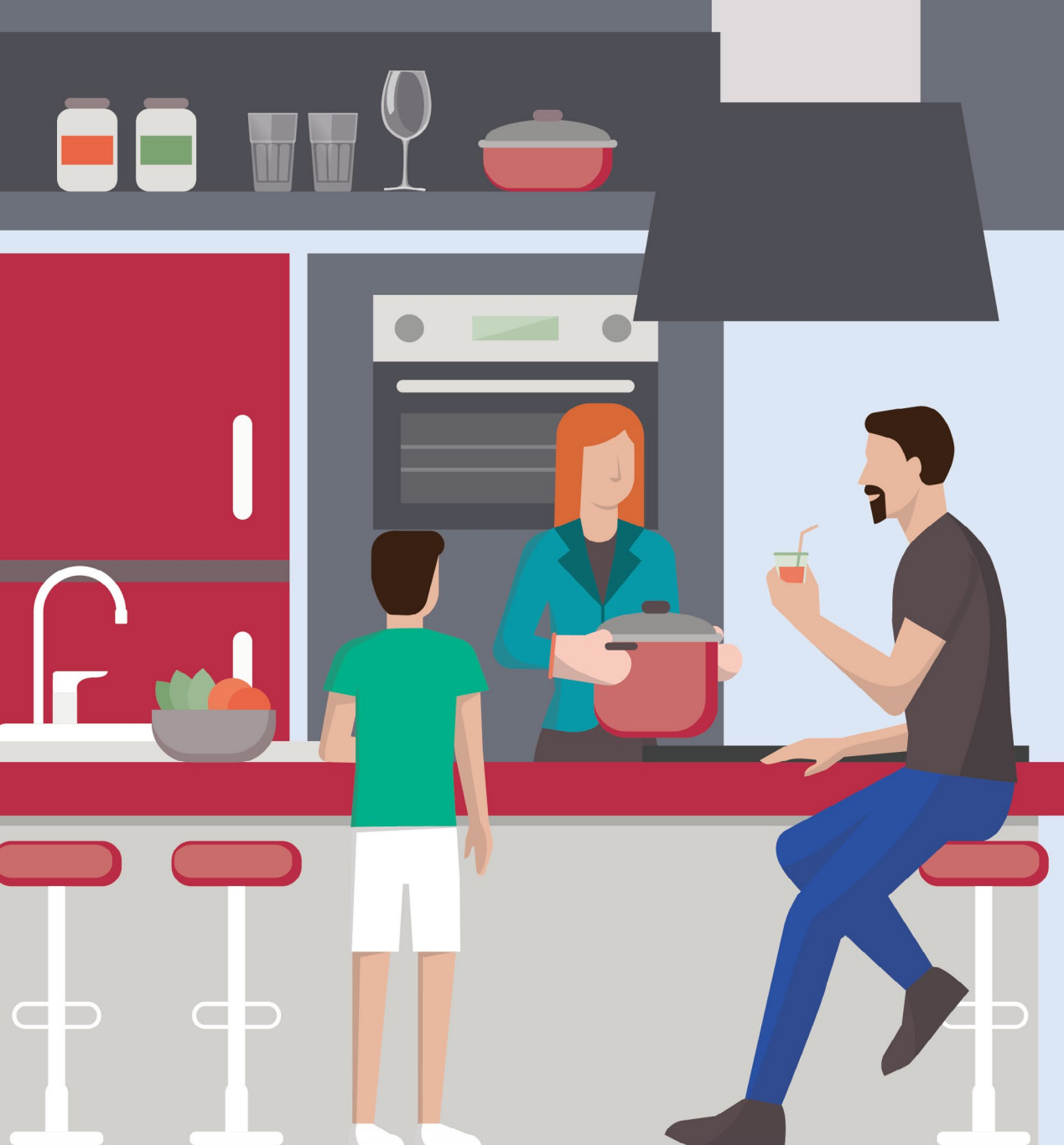
Where Ambition becomes Reality

Every major European policy – from the Green Deal Industrial Plan to the Digital Decade – shares a single purpose: to improve people's lives through a more sustainable, innovative, and competitive Europe. **The home appliance industry is where that ambition takes tangible form.**

Across every household and community, **it transforms Europe's policy goals into visible progress:** reducing emissions, lowering energy bills, advancing digitalisation, and accelerating circularity.

Despite this proven contribution, the sector remains under-recognised in the EU's industrial strategy.





Clear, trusted information for smarter decisions

The industry's stewardship of the EU Energy Label helps 75% of consumers choose efficient appliances.



Efficiency that reduces energy use and household costs

Generational innovation cuts energy consumption, avoids emissions, and lowers bills.



Connected appliances that support everyday life

Smart devices save time, optimise energy use, and offer new functionality.



Repair, durability, and take-back schemes built in

Warranties, repair options, and take-back programmes make circular consumption simple and accessible.

Closing the Gap between Ambition and Delivery

Europe's policy landscape is rich in ambition but fragmented in execution, slowing progress just when Europe can least afford it.

The EU home appliance industry is a trusted, visible, and proven industrial ecosystem already capable of turning policy ambition into measurable consumer benefit.

Recognising it as a strategic asset would unlock its full potential, transforming one of Europe's most established manufacturing sectors into a key driver of competitiveness, innovation, and social progress.

When people talk about the green transition, they often picture big infrastructure or new energy systems. But a large part of Europe's sustainability story is already happening quietly at home. With every new generation of appliances, we have reduced energy and water use, extended product lifetimes, enabled repair, and brought circular solutions into daily life. The result is tangible: lower bills, less waste, longer-lasting products and smarter use of resources.

What makes the home appliance industry unique is that innovation does not end at the factory gate. It travels into kitchens, bathrooms and laundry rooms across Europe, empowering consumers to make more sustainable choices without compromising comfort or affordability. From efficient motors and recycled plastics to take-back schemes, refurbishment and digital services, these technologies are not distant ambitions — they are operating at scale today.

Paolo Falcioni
Director-General, APPLIA



How We Get There: Making Policy Work for People

Achieving this vision requires policy that connects industrial excellence with consumer' daily experience. An EU Action Plan for the Home Appliance Industry would do exactly that, ensuring that every regulation and investment delivers greater affordability, reliability, and sustainability for Europeans at home.



1

**Make policy coherence
visible in citizens' lives.**

When Europe designs smarter, more consistent rules – aligning energy, circularity, and digital objectives – innovation flows faster to the market. Streamlined regulation means manufacturers can invest sooner in the next generation of efficient, connected, and sustainable products that cut energy bills automatically, last longer, and reduce waste.



2

**Reward
responsibility.**

Enforcing the same high environmental, safety and quality standards for all products, regardless of origin, protects consumers and reinforces confidence in the Single Market. A consistent regulatory framework ensures that appliances meeting Europe's standards remain both affordable and accessible, while promoting sustainability and durability.



Invest in innovation that improves everyday life.

With targeted support for digitalisation, AI, and advanced manufacturing, the industry can develop technologies that anticipate consumer needs. By coupling industrial investment with consumer incentives, Europe can accelerate the uptake of top-grade, energy-efficient appliances that deliver real savings and better performance in every home.



Empower people through skills and resilience.

Partnerships between industry, academia and policymakers can strengthen Europe's workforce for a digital, circular economy. This promotes industrial progress that translates into secure, skilled employment.

Taken together, these actions will turn policy coherence into consumer benefit: lower energy bills, longer-lasting products, cleaner manufacturing, and jobs that sustain communities.

Home Appliance Industry Contribution to Europeans' Lives

1



Washing machines:
46 l/cycle in 2022 vs
65 l/cycle in the late
1990s

Industry is a water security enabler, delivering direct consumer savings

2



75% of consumers rely on the EU Energy Label when purchasing appliances

Overall sector commitment to sustainability and positive impact of technological innovation

3



Dishwashers:
9.5 l/cycle in 2022 vs
20 l/cycle in the late
1990s

Less water consumption equals lower water bills

4



92 Mtoe of energy savings for households between 2020 and 2023

Tangible delivery of energy security and climate targets

5



7 Mt of household items are hoarded and working. **3 Mt** are hoarded and broken.

Opportunity to promote circular consumer habits

6



Home appliances represent **56% to 62.4%** of all EEE placed on the EU market

The main volume of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE) must be addressed with clear consumer information on durability and repair.

7



276.5M repaired units placed on the market in 2023

Repaired units are more accessible to low-income families

8



Energy consumption during production: **-50%**

Lower energy consumption during production ensures that consumers don't incur extra costs

9



95% repair requests actually repaired

High repair percentage ensures consumer trust and drives adoption of circular habits

Conclusion

Europe's home appliance industry is not a future promise. It is a proven system that already delivers on the objectives Europe has set for itself – sustainability, competitiveness and tangible benefits for citizens.

Across millions of European homes, this sector reduces energy and water use, extends product lifetimes, enables repair and reuse, and embeds circular behaviour into everyday life. At the same time, it sustains skilled jobs, anchors innovation locally and reinforces Europe's industrial resilience. Few industries can credibly claim this combination. Fewer still deliver it at scale.

Yet delivery alone is no longer enough. The pace of geopolitical change, intensifying global competition for industrial investment and the accelerating green transition mean that Europe's strategic industries now face a decisive moment. Fragmentation, rising costs and regulatory misalignment are not abstract risks – they are forces that shape where factories are built, where capital flows and where skills are retained.

The implication is clear. Europe cannot claim climate leadership while allowing the industrial capacity that underpins it to erode. It cannot speak of strategic autonomy while depending on imports for products that are already efficiently designed and responsibly manufactured in Europe.

An EU Action Plan for the Home Appliance Industry is therefore not a concession to one sector. It is a test of Europe's ability to align ambition with reality. It is about enforcing fair competition, enabling investment, scaling innovation and securing skills where they already exist.

The industry is ready. The solutions are known. The costs of inaction are rising.

What remains is a choice: build on what works, or allow one of Europe's most effective industrial ecosystems to be weakened by default. The window to act is open – but it will not remain so for long.

Contact

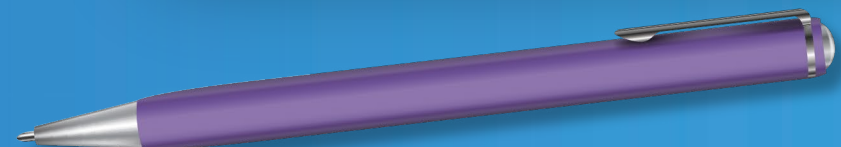
E-mail

hello@applia-europe.eu

Address

Boulevard Brand Whitlock, 114
Brussels, 1200, Belgium
(Tram stop: Georges Henri - near Montgomery)

www.applia-europe.eu





www.applia-europe.eu