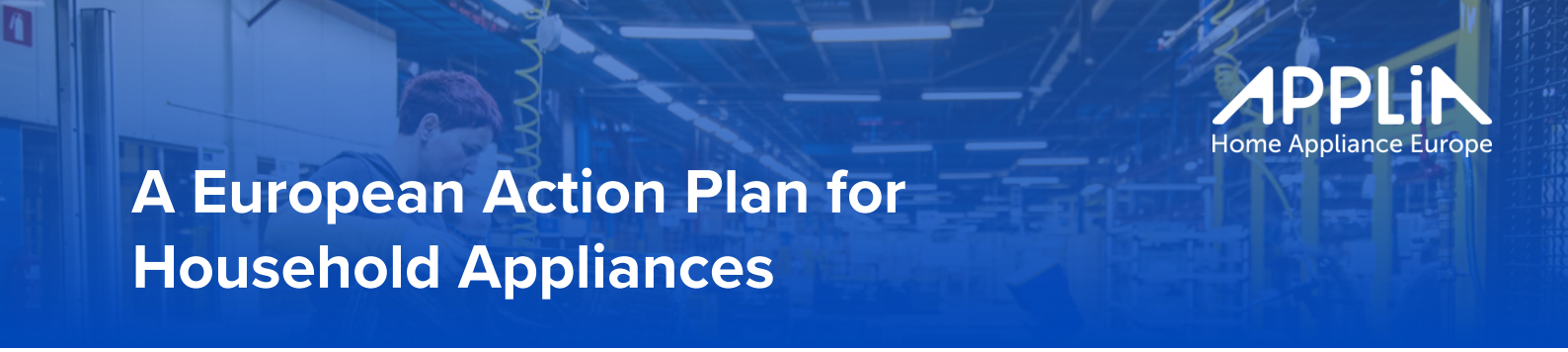


A European Action Plan for Household Appliances

Europe can still keep its home appliance manufacturing base. However, it will not keep it by accident.

Over the past decade, the share of appliances manufactured in Europe for European consumers has fallen from over 80% to 71%. More than 20,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in the last five years alone. These figures point to a growing risk: as production becomes less viable in Europe, future investment, skills and supplier demand may follow it elsewhere.

Yet the sector remains a major European industrial asset, supporting almost **one million jobs**, spending over **€44 billion annually on European** suppliers and serving more than **200 million households**. Rising production costs, cumulative regulatory requirements and uneven competitive conditions are putting further pressure on EU manufacturing. Once production, engineering capability and supplier demand relocate, rebuilding them would take decades.

Ahead of the Competitiveness Council on 3 December 2026, the European home appliance industry calls on the Commission and Member States to commit to a dedicated **European Action Plan for Household Appliances, adopted in 2027**, before more manufacturing capacity and investment leave Europe.

Our guiding principle: comparable products face comparable obligations, wherever they are made.

Why is a dedicated Action Plan for Household Appliances necessary?

- **The warning signs are already visible.** European home appliance sales have fallen back to 2015 levels, with around 170 million units sold in 2025. Imports from producers with structural cost advantages have grown considerably, adding to competitive pressure on European production. As manufacturers reassess future investment and production decisions, **Europe risks losing more factories**, weakening local supply chains and industrial expertise that would be **difficult to rebuild**.

- **The competitiveness challenge is cumulative.** European home appliance manufacturers face a distinct combination of appliance and component - specific product rules, horizontal EU requirements and rising input and energy costs, including costs passed down through measures supporting or protecting upstream industries. This cumulative burden weakens the business case for manufacturing and investment in Europe, while comparable imported finished products often do not face the same costs.

- Appliances also face **more overlapping EU product rules** than most consumer goods, with each new requirement **adding cost to every unit made in Europe**.

- **Losing appliance manufacturing weakens Europe's industrial value chains and energy transition**. Energy-efficient appliances have delivered cumulative energy savings of 98.9 million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe) since 2000. Much of the research, design and testing behind these savings takes place in Europe, close to its factories. Further industrial decline would weaken European supply chains, innovation and the manufacturing capacity supporting Europe's energy transition.

What the Action Plan for Household Appliances must deliver in 2027

1. Identify and address the unintended competitive disadvantage facing manufacturing along the value chain in Europe.

The European Commission must assess the full downstream impact of its industrial, trade and climate policies, including the related cost impact of other industries that shift costs onto European appliance production. This means **closing downstream CBAM gaps**, which impose an estimated **€7–€12 per washing machine** on European producers at an ETS price of €80 per tonne, in some cases comparable to the margin, and addressing the cost impact of EU steel safeguard measures. Together, these gaps and measures disadvantage European producers. **Customs and online enforcement** must also be strengthened, including checks for an accountable EU economic operator and valid WEEE producer registration.

2. Check and avoid the cumulative cost of EU rules before adding new obligations.

President von der Leyen's 2026 State of the Union placed industrial competitiveness and simplification high on the EU agenda. This ambition should also cover downstream sectors such as home appliances. The Commission should carry out an assessment of the cumulative impact of EU requirements on home appliance manufacturing in the EU, as well as on investment and consumer affordability. New obligations should be proposed only where the assessment shows that they would strengthen, rather than erode, Europe’s manufacturing base. Thus, reduce duplicated reporting, build on **EPREL, the EU's existing mandatory product registration database,** for Digital Product Passport requirements, prevent national requirements that fragment the Single Market and ensure workable Ecodesign and Energy Labelling timelines, with enough lead time between adoption and application to redesign products.

3. Make Europe a favourite location for industrial investment.

Improve access to **competitively priced energy, financing and EU research programmes to support factory modernisation, electrification, automation, industrial AI and R&D**. Explore targeted, time-limited incentives for highly energy-efficient and smart-grid-ready appliances that bring measurable benefits to the energy system, open to every compliant product, wherever it is made.

The political choice for 2027 is clear: keep home appliance manufacturing competitive in Europe or risk a wider erosion of Europe’s industrial base. If production leaves, it will weaken thousands of European suppliers, many of them SMEs, and reduce demand for European steel, non-ferrous metals and plastics. An Action Plan protects upstream industries too: it keeps their downstream customers competitive.

The European home appliance industry stands ready to work closely with EU institutions, contribute concrete proposals and welcome policymakers to its manufacturing sites to see first-hand the challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

We ask the Commission to develop a coordinated European Action Plan in 2027, together with Member States and industry, with clear responsibilities, milestones and delivery dates, as it has done for the automotive, steel and metals, and chemicals industries.