APPLiA's Position on Energy Efficient Products Omnibus (Omnibus XII)

APPLiA appreciates the Commission's efforts to draft a legislative proposal aimed at simplifying the regulatory framework for energy-efficient appliances. However, we consider that **the proposal falls short of its simplification potential**. We wish to present concrete recommendations to refine these provisions and further alleviate the administrative burden on manufacturers, who continue to face an excessively complex and costly regulatory environment.

1. Main messages

- Prioritise digital energy labels over paper ones, which are a significant source of environmental and financial waste.
- Prevent redundant databases to mitigate unnecessary financial and administrative burdens on manufacturers.
- Streamline the rescaling proceed for suppliers and dealers, preventing long presence of different labels for identical models at the same time in the market.
- Ensure a coherent regulatory framework that avoids overlapping requirements for product and components.

2. Prioritise digital energy label

APPLiA strongly advocates for a transition toward digital-first energy labeling to replace the mandatory printing of physical labels, which is a significant source of environmental and financial waste.

We believe that physical labels in each product box have no consumer value. End users only see the printed label after the product delivery, meaning it plays no role in their active purchasing decisions.

What is relevant for consumers is to see the physical label in shops before purchasing the appliances. Consequently suppliers should only print and deliver to the dealers the number physical label they actually required for this activity.

Printing millions of physical labels (approximately 100 million labelled products are placed on the EU market annually) leads to significant environmental and financial waste—a substantial loss considering that the vast majority remain unused.

While the Omnibus Proposal opens up the possibility of using digital labels as an option, it grants the Commission a mandate to decide on a product-by-product basis where to eliminate the physical label.

In our view, this approach is insufficient to deliver the simplification promised by the proposal, lower unnecessary costs for manufacturers, or prevent paper waste.

APPLiA proposes that the Omnibus establish digital labels as the default framework for all future product regulations. **Physical labels, in the form of an A to G scale, should be used in brick-and-mortar stores to properly inform consumers, but should not be mandatorily enclosed inside every packaging box.**

Additionally, APPLiA explicitly supports maintaining the legal right of dealers and consumers to request a printed label or Product Information Sheet (PIS) on demand free of charge, ensuring no retail segment is disadvantaged.

To prevent the transition to digital labels from placing an undue burden on retailers, manufacturers, during the pre-ordering phase, should request retailers to specify the necessary number of physical labels they might need, if any.

Finally, the future framework should also contain exemptions from mandatory digital labels for cases like labelling of lighting products, where labels are printed on the packaging, a procedure that should remain possible.

Below you can find a suggestion for amending Article 3(1) of the Omnibus Proposal in order to avoid a default physical label in each box, while meaning the mandatory physical label for displays in shops.

1. ~~The~~ Suppliers shall ensure that products that are placed on the market are provided with, for each individual unit, free of charge, accurate labels in accordance with this Regulation and as specified in the relevant delegated acts. In view of the characteristics of the product, delegated acts shall specify how the QR code or EPREL model registration number ~~label~~ and other labelling-relevant information~~, such as the QR code, is~~ are to appear on the product, on its packaging or in the documents accompanying the product, with the aim of digital provision through the product database.

(new) Suppliers, during the pre-ordering phase, shall

(a) inform dealers that products will be delivered without a physical label in the packaging box,

(b) indicate to dealers where they can download the label for a specific model via EPREL, and

(c) inform dealers that they can specify the number of labels they require for products on display.

3. Prevent different labels for the same models at the same time in the market

The Omnibus Proposal introduces the following in Article 11.13(c) of framework energy label regulation, that *"the dealer shall be permitted to sell units of models placed on the market before the rescaling date and accompanied only with the non-rescaled label until 12 months after the rescaling date."*

We have serious doubts about such a long timeline as this would allow different units of the same model to bear different labels (old and new one) for several months. Such a situation would confuse consumers who would find either on the same or different shop floors, different units of the same products ranked differently.

To maintain consumer trust in the energy labeling system, **the period during which two units of an identical model are offered** with differing labels—whether within the same retail outlet or across separate locations—**must be kept as brief as possible.**

That rescaling aims at creating renewed differentiation between products, competition between manufacturers and promotes technological advancement. As manufacturers, we invest heavily to design products that perform well under a new

scale. If products carrying old labels can continue to be sold for another 12 months after a rescaling, that incentive to invest is reduced.

Simultaneously, older products would continue to retain an artificially favourable position. Ultimately, with a 12 month double labeling period, the effect of the rescaling would be detrimental to early adopters of a rescaled label and work against efforts to improve efficiency.

In order to prevent it, we propose different timelines for models that will remain in the market also after the rescaling date and other models that will be discontinued and no longer placed on the market after that date.

For models of products that will not continue being put on the market, they can remain with the non-rescaled label for 12 months, as suggested in the Commission's Proposal.

For models of products that will continue being put on the market also after the rescaling date, when the supplier has made the rescaled label available, the dealer will have to display the rescaled label in 14 days. The digitalisation of the label and possibility to download it from EPREL should not require longer delays.

We propose the following modification to Article 11.13(c) of (UE) 2017/1369.

(c) the dealer shall be permitted to sell units of models placed on the market before the rescaling date and accompanied only with the non-rescaled label until 12 months after the rescaling date, provided that no further units of the same model are placed on the market on or after the rescaling date.

4. Prevent redundant databases to reduce unnecessary financial and administrative burdens

The European Product Registry for Energy Labelling (EPREL) is a cornerstone for Europe, acting as the definitive infrastructure for regulatory compliance, market transparency, and environmental accountability. The EPREL framework also permits digital energy labels as a legitimate alternative to physical ones. By embedding a language-neutral QR code directly onto appliances, manufacturers can seamlessly link consumers to the EPREL database post-purchase, offering modern, flexible access to product specifications.

As far as the Digital Product Passport (DPP) is concerned, rather than building an entirely new parallel data infrastructure for products already registered in EPREL, the EU must utilise EPREL as the definitive vehicle for home appliances.

Upgrading EPREL to handle additional circularity data points, at the product model level would fulfill DPP objectives smoothly. This adaptation would prevent the severe information overload and multi-million-euro IT costs associated with creating a separate database.

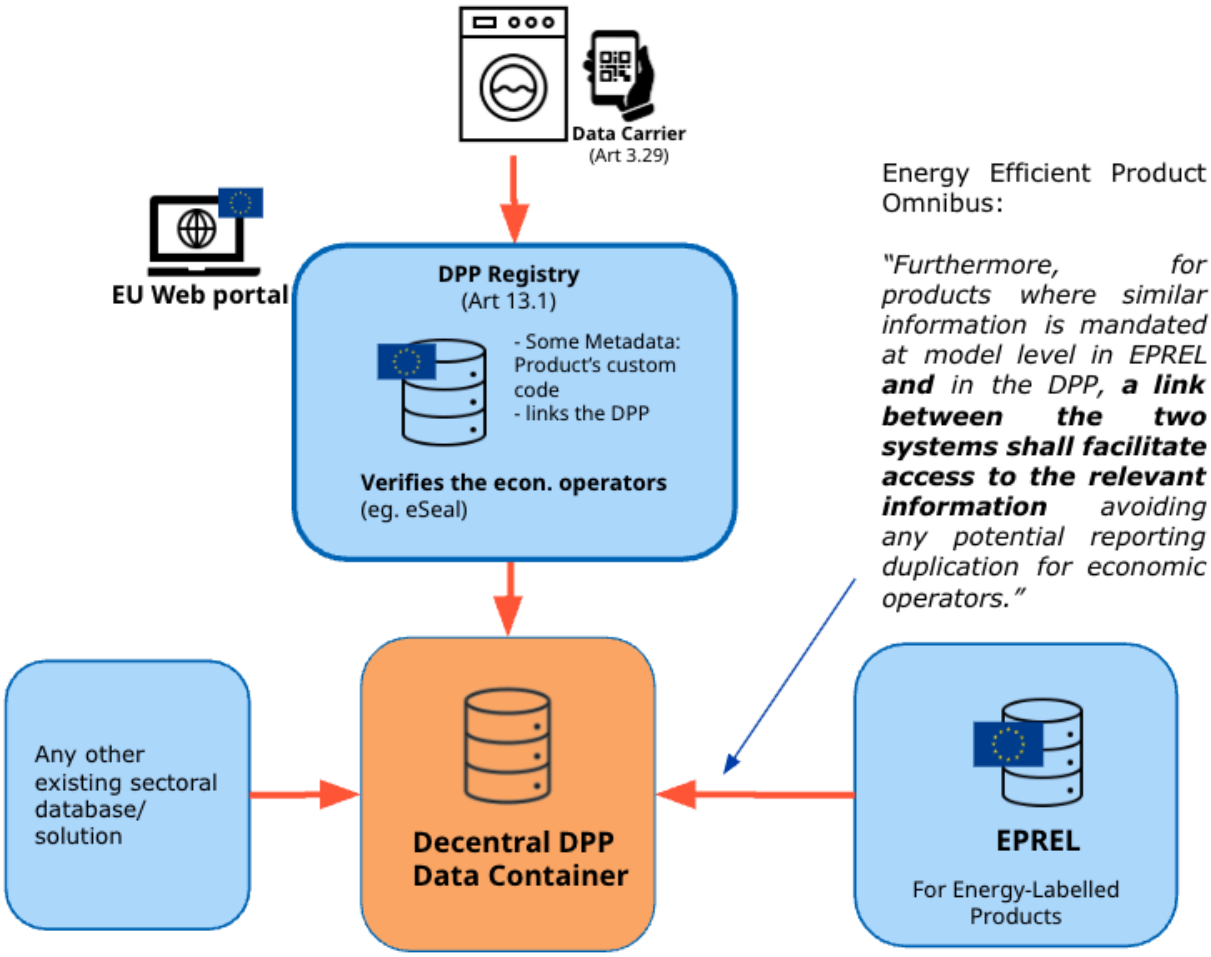
The following paragraph, contained in Article 12(a) of the Omnibus Proposal, would open the door to the coexistence of two parallel databases, which is something we must avoid.

> "Where a supplier has chosen to upload such documents, or where such documentation is available to the authorities via a Digital Product Passport linked to the model's registration in EPREL, the information included in EPREL shall be accepted for the purposes of Article 7(2). *\[presumably of the ESPR Art. 7 Information Requirements\]*"

For APPLiA it is of utmost importance that EPREL should remain the tool for data containers, where companies can upload energy label information and other documents related to ecodesign data.

To achieve real simplification, what industry needs is to prevent the burden of multiple databases with correlated multiple data upload.

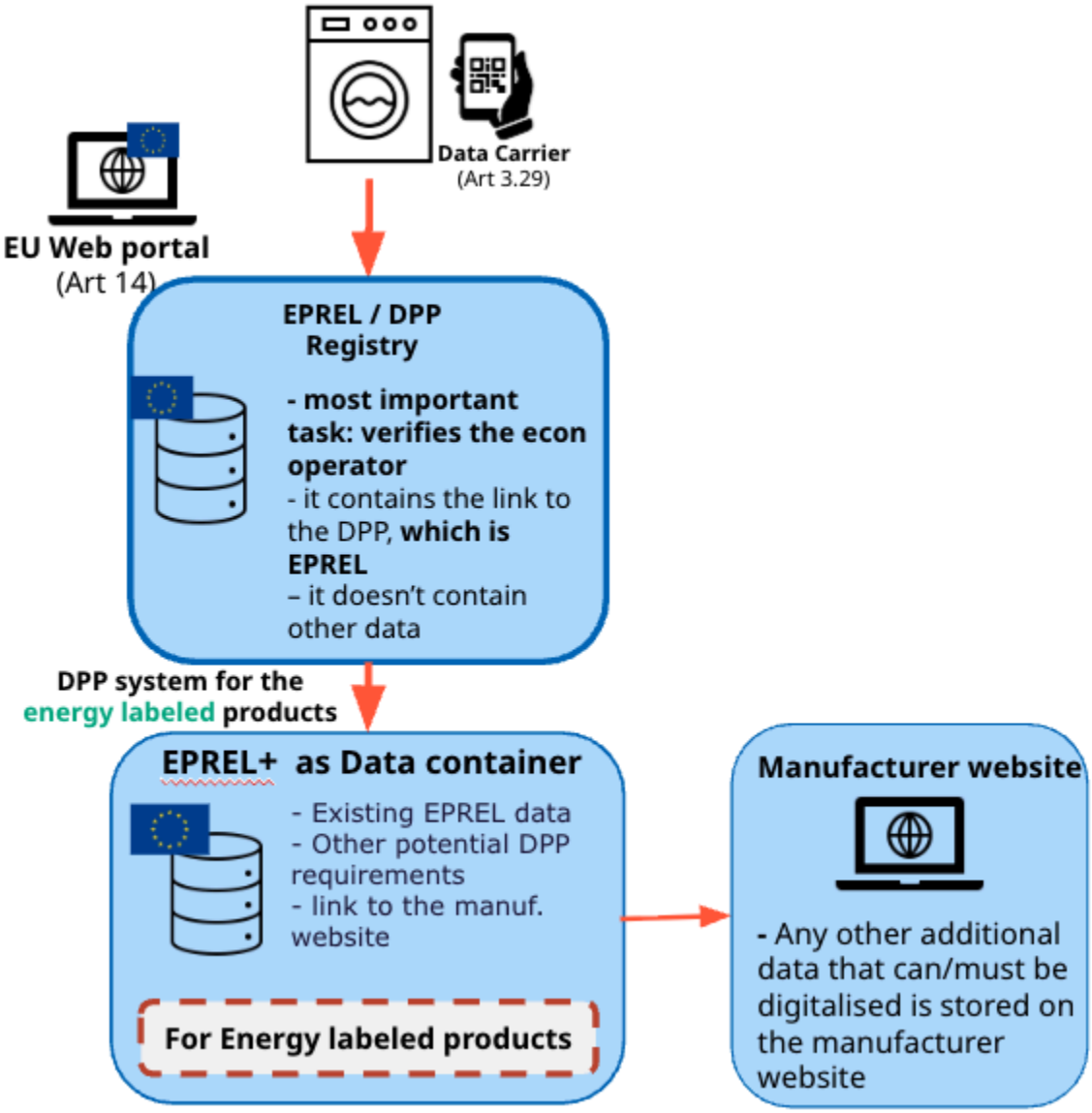
In the following page you can find a visualisation of what the text of the Omnibus Proposal might lead to.



The proposal risks leading to the creation of two parallel systems: EPREL as it is and a DPP data container. Manufacturers could be asked to share data through at least two different channels (EPREL and DPP), with two different QR codes.

We believe that for energy labelled products, the DPP should be the Data Register, verifying the economic operator and linking to the data container, which for energy labelled products would be EPREL.

The graphic below illustrates our proposed framework for a smooth, unified integration of the DPP with an enhanced EPREL system.


Data Carrier
(Art 3.29)
EU Web portal
(Art 14)
EPREL / DPP
Registry
- most important task: verifies the econ operator
- it contains the link to the DPP, which is EPREL
– it doesn't contain other data
DPP system for the energy labeled products
EPREL+ as Data container
- Existing EPREL data
- Other potential DPP requirements
- link to the manuf. website
For Energy labeled products
Manufacturer website
- Any other additional data that can/must be digitalised is stored on the manufacturer website

We recommend that Article 12(a) is amended in the following manner to prevent redundant databases and double uploading leading to unnecessary financial and administrative burdens on manufacturers.

Where a supplier has chosen to upload such documents, on EPREL and ~~or~~ where such documentation is ~~available~~ accessible to the authorities via a Digital Product Passport registry linked to the model's registration in EPREL, the information included in EPREL shall be accepted for the purposes of Article 7(2). EPREL shall be the only database where such documentation is available. *\[presumably of the ESPR Art. 7 Information Requirements\]*"

5. Prevent cascading requirements for product and components

For several years, manufacturers of finished goods have called on the European Commission to **exempt components and sub-assemblies integrated into finished goods, covered by ecodesign and energy labelling product-specific rules**, from product-specific ecodesign and energy labelling delegated acts. The core rationale remains unchanged: certain finished goods are already subject to comprehensive system-level performance requirements. Each component and sub-assembly is designed for the purpose of having the full appliance as efficient as possible. Furthermore, to support circular business models, these components must remain available on the market for several years to enable appropriate repair and replacement.

Following recent exchanges with DG ENER, we acknowledge the concerns raised regarding potential market loopholes and circumvention risks voiced by component and sub-assembly manufacturers.

In response, we have updated the advocacy strategy to incorporate robust digital verification safeguards. By making component exemptions conditional on clear model linking in EPREL (accessible via QR code), Market Surveillance Authorities can immediately verify intended use and prevent abuse.

A comprehensive joint proposal was developed in collaboration with several trade associations. The paper is submitted to the "Have Your Say" portal under the corresponding consultation.



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