

# NEWSLETTER #REUE

*Issue no. 1 - March 2024*



dgade

DIREÇÃO-GERAL DAS  
ATIVIDADES ECONÓMICAS

The EU Ecolabel (known in Portugal by its acronym, REUE) Newsletter is a biannual online publication developed by the competent body in Portugal for granting EU Ecolabel licenses - the Directorate-General for Economic Activities (DGAE).

This publication, available in Portuguese and English, provides information on the main national and international developments regarding the EU Ecolabel activity. You can access this newsletter via the REUE page on the DGAE website.

In this edition you can find information on:

- [The REUE page, a new image with more features](#)
- ["How to navigate a maze painted green?": interview with Ana Cristina Tapadinhas, Director General of the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection](#)
- [University of Coimbra organizes an event about the EU Ecolabel](#)
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# The REUE page: a new image with more features

The EU Ecolabel website has been redesigned to offer more organized information for both consumers and businesses. In addition, all the information is available in Portuguese or English.

*(Click below to discover the new areas)*



## Knowing EU Ecolabel (Consumers)

[Guiding Principles](#)

[Benefits of Products and Services with EU Ecolabel](#)

[Product & Services Groups](#)

[EU Ecolabel Product Catalogue \(ECAT\)](#)

[Consumers' FAQ](#)

## Obtaining EU Ecolabel (Businesses)

[How to apply](#)

[Applicable Fees in Portugal](#)

[Legislation, Criteria and Validity](#)

[Market Surveillance](#)

[Businesses' FAQ](#)

## EU Ecolabel in Portugal (Facts and Figures)

[Statistics on EU Ecolabel Licences in Portugal](#)

[Portuguese Catalogue for EU Ecolabel Products and Services](#)

[#REUE Events](#)

[#REUE Newsletter](#)



This new page also offers video tutorials that will help you navigate the European Commission's pages and find the information you need to submit an application to the EU Ecolabel!

# "How to navigate a maze painted green?"

## Interview with Ana Cristina Tapadinhas, Director General of the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the European Consumer Organization (BEUC) published the report of a survey carried out jointly with the International Consumer Research and Testing (ICRT) and 16 consumer organizations. This report, entitled "The Great Green Maze", illustrates the panorama of how environmental advertising confuses consumers. You can [read this report on the BEUC website](#).



Given the importance of this topic in the context of consumer awareness and education activities, the REUE team contacted Dr. Ana Cristina Tapadinhas, Director General of the [Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection \(DECO\)](#), one of the 16 organizations (and the only Portuguese one) that contributed to this survey.



The purpose of this contact was to find out more about the concerns, challenges and opportunities that DECO identifies regarding consumer literacy on issues related to sustainability and green claims and considering the results of this study.



Ana Cristina Tapadinhas, Diretor-General, DECO

Although 73% of consumers who are familiar with ISO 14024 Type 1 Eco-labels say they have a medium or high level of trust in these labels, only 3 out of 10 of those surveyed recognize the EU Ecolabel.

Regarding recognition of the EU Ecolabel, do you think Portugal is better or worse placed than the other 15 countries surveyed?

What opportunities do you see for improving the EU Ecolabel's visibility on the national market?

As far as this study is concerned, Portugal appears to be in line with the European average in terms of recognising the EU Ecolabel. However, the level of perception of the EU Ecolabel falls short of what we believe its recognition and visibility should be. In this sense, it is imperative to establish regular cooperation mechanisms between the European Commission, Member States, companies and consumer organisations in order to promote the EU Ecolabel, not only at national level, but also at European level.

Indeed, consumers are increasingly interested in purchasing products with better environmental performance. In this context, the EU Ecolabel presents itself as an easy-to-identify logo for "more environmentally friendly" products and services, which consumers can trust and recognise wherever they are in the European Union.

In this sense, it is important to continue efforts to increase consumer awareness and recognise companies that "pass" the ambitious criteria in all areas relevant to the environment and health, thus encouraging uptake and increasing the availability for consumers of relevant certified products and goods. The establishment of essential criteria for the contracting of products and services in public procurement, particularly for EU Ecolabel products and services, could boost the mobilisation of companies. Other simpler measures could include encouraging retailers to highlight EU Ecolabel products on their shelves, informing consumers about the relevance of this label.

In the universe of 16.000 respondents from European and non-European countries, it was found that 79% of the interviewed said they make an effort to live in a more environmentally friendly way, but only 40% were willing to pay more for a product with a verified green claim and only 25% of those interviewed said they look for environmental information when buying a product.

Do you think Portuguese consumers are making efforts to live more sustainably?

What, in DECO's view, can the average Portuguese consumer do to lead a more sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle?

Portuguese consumers are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their choices. Although more sustainable options may represent a larger initial investment in some cases, growing awareness of environmental issues and the existence of affordable and sustainable alternatives have been motivating more consumers to adopt responsible consumption practices, even on a limited budget.

In fact, recognising the need to help citizens to learn about their carbon footprint and reflect on their consumption habits, adopting a more sustainable lifestyle, DECO created [LifestyleTest](#). It's a calculator - free and very easy to use - that measures citizens' carbon footprint in four areas: home, transport, food and shopping. LifestyleTest is aimed at all citizens who are concerned about climate change and want to be part of the solution. By adopting a positive and sustainable lifestyle, they are actively contributing to building a better planet.

**Faça o teste à sua  
pegada de carbono e  
surpreenda-se com  
o resultado**

Descubra o seu impacto no ambiente e adote um estilo de vida mais positivo e sustentável.

Fazer o teste



LifestyleTest is the result of the PSLifestyle - Positive and Sustainable Lifestyle project, developed in 8 European countries (Portugal, Italy, Greece, Germany, Estonia, Slovenia, Turkey and Finland). The LifestyleTest was co-created and co-designed by the citizens of the countries involved, through their participation in Living Labs, 7 of which took place in our country, and it was this sharing experience that allowed us to create a simple calculator that is fully adapted to the reality of each country. By taking this quick test, citizens get to know their carbon footprint. Consumers also receive personalised actions to reduce their carbon footprint and can create a plan for a more sustainable life. Among the numerous actions suggested, each citizen can choose the ones they want to carry out, thus creating their own personalised action plan for a more sustainable life.

Of the more than 3,600 tests carried out so far in Portugal, we have already established that the average total footprint of Portuguese citizens is 9,101 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/person/year. The area in which the footprint of Portuguese citizens is highest is transport (4,705 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/person/year), followed by food (2,212 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/person/year), shopping (1,154 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/person/year) and the home (1,029 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/person/year).

Based on these results, there are some measures that Portuguese consumers can adopt and contribute significantly to building a more sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyle, in line with their budget:

- Understand the environmental impacts of products and their consumption habits;
- Choose products and services with EU Ecolabel;
- Favour local, organic and sustainable products, buying in bulk and avoiding food waste;
- Implement energy and water efficiency measures at home and, where possible, use renewable energy sources to reduce long-term costs and minimise environmental impact;
- Practising the reuse, recycling and composting of waste.

This report indicates that 34% of respondents have identified attempts at greenwashing in the last year, but there is still a long way to go to promote consumer literacy: one third of respondents do not feel able to distinguish between false claims and true claims; two thirds say they have little or no information about the requirements companies must meet to use green claims; and 40% of respondents believe they understand carbon claims, although there are errors in their interpretations of these claims.

How has DECO invested in consumer literacy on sustainability?

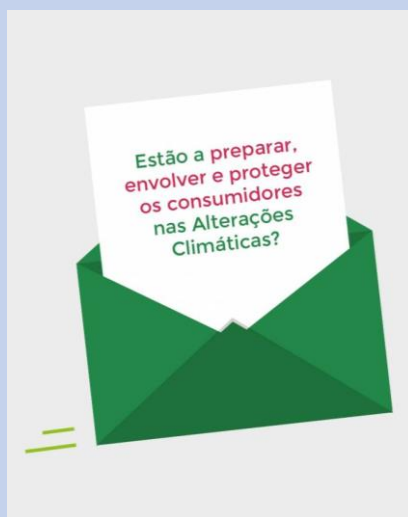
Are you optimistic about what Portuguese consumer trends will be in the coming years?

DECO has invested significantly in promoting consumer literacy in the field of sustainability through various initiatives and different themes within this area. In this context, we would highlight the campaign "[Greenwashing: Don't paint yourselves green! Tell the truth like it is](#)", which was supported by the Directorate-General for Economic Activities and which aims to alert consumers to choosing more sustainable products and recognising the existence of misleading environmental claims.

The campaign also targeted companies, calling on them to join the EU Ecolabel and warning of the irreparable loss of trust that occurs when consumers spend their money on choices that are tainted by false claims.



We would also highlight the action "[Climate change: is your municipality prepared?](#)" launched in 2022, which included a tool to find out how Portuguese municipalities were preparing for climate change. Alongside the results of analysing municipal websites on climate vulnerabilities or impacts that have already occurred and climate projections that already affect or will affect the municipality, the platform allowed consumers not only to consult DECO's municipal assessment, but also to assign an individual rating to their municipality. More than 2,000 consumers rated around 117 municipalities with a negative overall rating, with DECO concluding that more effective local measures are needed when it comes to climate action.



Notwithstanding the approval of a [Basic Climate Law](#) - which acknowledged several of DECO's demands - DECO could not fail to point out that the action or inaction of local councils affects consumer behaviour on a daily basis: mobility, housing, food, waste management and water efficiency are key areas of their intervention and have an important bearing on citizens' ecological footprint. For this reason, DECO decided to favour the direct involvement of consumers, allowing them to share their concerns about their local authority with DECO.

The campaign was active throughout the year, enabling DECO to present municipalities with a set of recommendations in the areas of Environmental Justice, Housing and Energy, Mobility, Food and the Promotion of Sustainable Consumption. DECO's intervention enabled the association to join the Local Climate Action Councils of several municipalities and to strengthen its programme of partnerships with local authorities.

As far as the coming years are concerned, we believe there is reason for optimism. Growing concern about environmental issues, along with increased awareness of greenwashing practices and the importance of consumer literacy, leads us to believe that more and more citizens are willing to adopt more sustainable behaviours.

However, it is also important to recognise that a number of challenges remain. For sustainable consumption to become the norm, companies must offer products and services with a reduced environmental impact that are accessible and convenient.

And for this to happen, structural changes are needed in our society.

It is therefore crucial to continue investing in consumer education and awareness-raising, as well as promoting stricter regulations and transparency by companies to ensure a positive shift towards more sustainable consumption.

Since 2021, DGAE and DECO have consistently collaborated with the aim of promoting the EU Ecolabel and a more sustainable lifestyle. Below you will find links to some of the joint promotional activities between DGAE and DECO.



# University of Coimbra organizes an event about the EU Ecolabel

On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the Center for Chemical Engineering and Renewable Resources for Sustainability (CERES) of the Faculty of Science and Technology of the University of Coimbra hosted a [hybrid event dedicated to the EU Ecolabel](#) in the Noble Auditorium of the Chemical Engineering Department.

The event had the participation of Carla Pinto ([DGAE](#)), Saul Silva ([Greendet](#)), Sofia Castelão ([The Navigator Company](#)), Marta Lopes ([Green2You](#)) and Rita Leão ([Real Abadia Congress & Spa Hotel](#)).

The event is part of the "[CERES Talks](#)" cycle, which takes place in the third week of each month and aims to promote a stimulating environment for debate and learning, aimed at professionals from the industry sector, academics and students interested in the latest developments in the field of Chemical Engineering. You can watch a recording of the event on the [CERES YouTube channel](#).



# CORPO SANTO

— HOTEL —  
★★★★★



## Do you know the first 5-star EU Ecolabel hotel in Portugal?

In January 2024, Lisbon gained its first EU Ecolabel tourist accommodation.

Located in one of the noble areas of central Lisbon and close to the cosmopolitan Bairro Alto and Chiado, the [Corpo Santo Lisbon Historical Hotel](#) is a 5-star hotel that offers excellent service in a refined, relaxed and comfortable environment where the old and historic combine with the modern and cosmopolitan. In the hotel you can find a museum center of high historical value, full of ancestral pieces found in the reconstruction of the building, where a part of the Fernandina Wall, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, stands out. The structure of the building, typical of Baixa Pombalina, gives different dimensions, characteristics and views, offering various types of accommodations throughout its 75 rooms. Find this and other EU Ecolabel tourist accommodations in Portugal in the [Portuguese Catalogue of EU Ecolabel Products and Services](#).



## Success Story Cosmopak Cosmetic Products

# COSMOPAK

[Cosmopak](#) has been featured on the European Commission's EU Ecolabel page as a [success story](#).

Cosmopak has prepared the future of its business selling high quality, environmentally friendly cosmetics to the hospitality industry to meet the growing demand for reliable green products.

The company has modified its products to make them more sustainable and to obtain the EU Ecolabel. This has allowed the company to grow and enabled its partners to provide a more environmentally conscious service.

Cosmopak's factory, located in Ovar, produces shampoo, hair conditioner, shower gel, liquid soap, body lotion and other personal care products for a wide range of brands. The factory employs around 70 people and is expanding its production capacity. EU Ecolabel certification has enabled the company to expand its client portfolio to include new partners looking for environmentally friendly options in response to consumer demand.

For several years now, Cosmopak has been establishing partnerships with brands concerned about the environment, such as Paradores, NH and Eco Think. Cosmopak believes that the EU Ecolabel is the best option for demonstrating the environmental excellence of its products and for enabling its business to grow.

Find this and other EU Ecolabel products in Portugal in the [Portuguese Catalogue of EU Ecolabel Products and Services](#).



## EU Ecolabel criteria under review

The review of the EU Ecolabel award criteria is a multi-stage process involving different stakeholders, carried out in accordance with Annex I to [Regulation \(EC\) No 66/2010 on the EU Ecolabel](#).

After consulting the EU Ecolabel Committee, the European Commission, its Member States, the competent bodies and other interested parties may initiate and lead the review of the EU Ecolabel allocation criteria.

The team leading the review of the EU Ecolabel award criteria produces various documents, including a proposal for criteria, a technical report supporting the proposal, a preliminary report, a final report, a manual for potential EU Ecolabel users and competent bodies, as well as a manual for public procurement authorities. These materials are submitted to the European Commission and the EU Ecolabel Committee.

Six decisions are currently under review, which began on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March with the first meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group:

1. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1214 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for hand dishwashing detergents;
2. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1215 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for industrial and institutional dishwasher detergents;
3. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1216 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for dishwasher detergents;
4. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1217 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for hard surface cleaning products;
5. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1218 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for laundry detergents;
6. [Commission Decision \(EU\) 2017/1219 of 23 June 2017](#) establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for industrial and institutional laundry detergents.

## EU Ecolabel statistics in Portugal

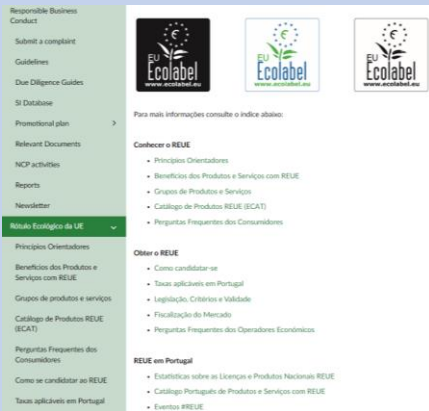
Below are the figures as of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for the number of EU Ecolabel licences awarded by DGAE and the number of products and services within those EU Ecolabel licences associated.

Product Group	No. of Licences	No. of Products and Services
Clothing and Textiles	1	3854
Cleaning	11	72
Paper	10	2792
Holiday Accommodation	6	6
Do it Yourself	6	70
Personal and Animal Care Products	1	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6868</b>

On the DGAE page "[Statistics on EU Ecolabel Licences and Products](#)", you can check all the statistical data made available since 2017, as well as the progression graphs relating to the number of EU Ecolabel Licences awarded by DGAE and the associated number of Products and Services within those EU Ecolabel Licences.

Check global statistics on the European Commission's website "[Ecolabel facts and figures - European Commission](#)".

# Reach us



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A Newsletter do Rótulo Ecológico da União Europeia (REUE) é uma publicação online semestral desenvolvida pelo organismo competente em Portugal para a atribuição de licenças REUE - a Direção-Geral das Atividades Económicas (DGAE). Esta publicação, disponível em português e em inglês, vem dar a conhecer as principais novidades no contexto nacional e internacional sobre a atividade do REUE. Poderá aceder à Newsletter através da Página do REUE, dentro do website da DGAE. Registe-se para receber as futuras edições.

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[Inicie sessão no Google](#) para guardar o seu progresso. Saiba mais

**\* Indica uma pergunta obrigatória**

Nome / Name \*

A sua resposta