

Ecodesign for sustainable products

Ecodesign refers to the integration of environmental sustainability considerations into the characteristics of a product, and into processes throughout its value chain. On 30 March 2022, the European Commission put forward a proposal for a regulation establishing a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products. The European Parliament is expected to vote on the report adopted by its Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) during the July plenary session. The report as voted would then form Parliament's position for negotiations with the Council, which has recently adopted its position.

Background

The EU still lacks an overarching legislative framework with rules for sustainable production and consumption of all products, and most products are still not designed with their lifecycle environmental impacts in mind. It is therefore difficult for consumers and economic operators to make sustainable choices when buying products.

European Commission proposal

On 30 March 2022, the Commission put forward a [proposal](#) for a regulation establishing a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for sustainable products. It was part of a [circular economy package](#) aimed at making sustainable products the norm, and cutting the EU's resource dependencies. The proposed regulation lays down rules applicable to all products on the internal market, with the aim of making them more durable, reusable, repairable, upgradable, recyclable and generally less harmful to the environment. Product groups would be prioritised in a working plan adopted by the Commission. The regulation would also include rules on a digital product passport, green public procurement, and banning the destruction of unsold goods. It would repeal [Directive 2009/125/EC](#) establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products.

European Parliament position

The ENVI committee [report](#), adopted on 15 June 2023, introduces new provisions: the working plan for 2024-2027 would prioritise several products (iron; steel; aluminium; textiles, notably garments and footwear; furniture, including mattresses; tyres; detergents; paints; lubricants; chemicals; energy-related products; and electronic products). When setting the eco-design requirements, the Commission would have to ensure that manufacturers do not make products prematurely obsolete. One year after the new regulation's entry into force, the destruction of unsold textiles and footwear, and electrical and electronic equipment, by companies would be banned. This would not apply to small and medium-sized enterprises. The Commission would also set up a public online platform allowing consumers to compare information included in product passports. Information essential to end users' health, safety and rights would have to be provided in physical form with the product. Furthermore, ENVI introduced new provisions to increase transparency of the Ecodesign Forum's work, and to allow the forum to request the Commission to prepare ecodesign requirements for a particular product group, which the Commission would have to take into consideration. ENVI also added new provisions on remedies for consumers if a product does not comply with ecodesign requirements. The report is expected to be put to the vote in plenary in July. The Council adopted its [general approach](#) on 22 May 2023.

First-reading report: [2022/0095\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: ENVI; Rapporteur: Alessandra Moretti (S&D, Italy). For further information see our [‘EU Legislation in progress’](#) briefing.



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