Ecodesign rules to ensure sustainable products on EU market

The EU will introduce minimum standards to make nearly all products on its market sustainable, durable and eco-friendly.

Long lasting, safe, and recyclable products that are less harmful to the environment should become the norm in the EU. But how? The answer might lie in new ecodesign rules.

Further information
Read how the EU wants to achieve a circular economy by 2050

What is ecodesign?
Ecodesign entails the integration of environmental considerations into product development,
aiming to create goods with the lowest possible environmental impact throughout their life cycle.

EU manufacturers already have to align with ecodesign rules for energy-related products, such as heaters, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners or computers, reducing energy consumption and negative environmental effects in the design stage. The EU now wants to go a step further and introduce ecodesign rules for almost every product.

10%

Annual energy consumption savings by ecodesign products in 2021

New rules for eco-friendly products

In April 2024, Parliament approved the deal reached with the Council on a new ecodesign regulation that will significantly broaden the scope of products it applies to. It will also introduce additional requirements and minimum standards for durability, reparability, energy efficiency as well as recycling. It will also address premature obsolescence practices, to avoid products losing their functionality due to design features, unavailability of spare parts or lack of software updates.

Parliament made sure that ecodesign requirements should be introduced as a matter of priority for some products with a high impact on the environment, including iron, steel, aluminium, textiles, furniture, tyres, detergents, paints and chemicals.

A Digital Product Passport will accompany products, providing consumers with all the relevant information needed to help them make informed decisions. Consumers will have the possibility to compare information from the product passports on a web portal managed by the Commission. It will also make controls easier for public authorities.

In addition, the new rules aim to stop the destruction of unsold products, which is a waste of valuable economic resources and is becoming an environmental problem. The rules oblige large companies to report the number of unsold consumer products discarded per year and the reasons why that was necessary.

The destruction of unsold apparel, clothing accessories and footwear will be banned two years after the regulation enters into force and some other categories could be added in the future.

Next steps
After formal approval from the Council and the Parliament, the regulation enters into force 20 days after its publication. The Commission then has to set specific requirements for different products and producers and EU countries will have 18 months to comply with them.

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