

Press release – Parliament wants binding rules on common chargers to be tabled by summer



There is an “urgent need for EU regulatory action” to reduce electronic waste and empower consumers to make sustainable choices, MEPs say in a resolution approved by 582 votes to 40, with 37 abstentions, calling for the mandatory introduction of common chargers for all mobile devices.

Parliament wants the Commission to adopt the [delegated act](#) foreseen in the 2014 [Radio Equipment Directive](#) by July 2020 or, if necessary, table a legislative measure by the same date, at the latest.

Without hampering innovation, the EU executive should ensure that the legislative framework for a common charger will be “scrutinised regularly in order to take into account technical progress”. MEPs reiterate that research and innovation are vital to improve existing technologies and come up with new ones.

Parliament also wants the Commission to:

- take measures to best ensure the interoperability of different **wireless chargers** with different mobile devices;

- consider legislative initiatives to increase the volume of **cables and chargers collected and recycled** in EU member states;
- ensure that consumers are no longer obliged to buy new chargers with each new device: **strategies to decouple** the purchase of chargers from the purchase of new devices should be introduced with a common charger solution, MEPs say, stressing however that “any measure aiming at decoupling should avoid potentially higher prices for consumers”.

According to estimates, around 50 million metric tonnes of e-waste are generated globally per year, with an average of more than 6 kg per person. In Europe, total e-waste generated in 2016 was 12.3 million metric tonnes, equivalent to 16.6 kg on average per inhabitant. Short lifecycles for some devices also lead to more e-waste, notes the resolution.

Background

In the 2014 Radio Equipment Directive, EU lawmakers called for a common charger to be developed and gave the Commission powers to pursue this via a delegated act.

The Commission’s approach of “encouraging” industry to develop common chargers fell short of the co-legislators’ objectives. However, some progress has been made, said the Commission in the [plenary debate on 13 January 2020](#): in 2009, there were more than 30 charging solutions, while today there are three charger types.

In its [resolution on the European Green Deal](#), Parliament called for an ambitious new circular economy action plan aiming to reduce the total environmental and resource footprint of EU production and consumption, with resource efficiency, zero pollution and waste prevention as key priorities.

The European Commission adopted its [2020 Work Programme](#) on 29 January, in which it commits to present a legislative initiative on common chargers in the third quarter of 2020.