Contribution ID: 9421e626-7f86-49dd-8f50-c6a51474190c

Date: 29/07/2021 09:58:27

Public consultation on potential measures for regulating the environmental impact of mobile phones and tablets

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

In 2020, the EU adopted a new circular economy action plan to support the European Green Deal. The initiatives set out in the action plan cover a product's entire life cycle and aim to ensure that the resources used are kept in the EU economy for as long as possible. They include new rules on designing mobile phones and tablets to be resource efficient (circular).

The relevant legislation will build on two EU laws on:

- ecodesign, promoting the durability, reparability and recyclability of products
- energy labelling, promoting energy efficiency in products.

The widespread and increasing use of mobile phones (particularly smartphones) and tablets is giving rise to a number of new challenges, for example:

- -increased functionality of these devices over time has resulted in a greater demand for power, storage capacity and materials to manufacture them. Although they are used in very small quantities, some of these materials raise global concerns because of their social, economic and geopolitical impacts (e.g. critical raw materials such as tantalum and tungsten).
- at the end of their useful life, smartphones and tablets are typically left 'hibernated', i.e. unused at home. This is a waste of resources, as the devices and their materials could, with the right processes, be reused, recycled and/or recovered.
- smartphones are replaced by users every 2 to 3 years on average, as their lifetime is linked to factors such as:
- 1. the user wanting a new model/software (not related to the device malfunctioning).
- 2. the (limited) availability of the most commonly damaged spare parts (the screen, battery and sometimes the back cover).
- 3. the (limited) availability of updated versions of the operating system, firmware or software.
- 4. cost and ease of repair.
- 5. reduced battery endurance over time. A battery that remains charged for longer means better energy performance and efficiency, thanks to less frequent charging and longer overall battery life (total number of charging cycles).

The two new Commission initiatives[1] aim to make mobile phones and tablets more energy efficient and to improve their material efficiency (i.e. make them less prone to damage and premature obsolescence). This will make these devices less harmful to the environment, while ensuring they can still circulate freely in the single market.

The identified areas for potential regulation[2] notably relate to:

- resistance when accidentally dropped
- protection from water and dust
- battery accessibility and longevity
- availability of software/firmware/operating system updates
- product durability
- ability of the product to be disassembled
- availability of priority spare parts
- data deletion and transfer functionalities
- appropriate information for users, repairers and recyclers.

[1] See https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12797-Environmental-impact-of-mobile-phones-and-tablets-Ecodesign and https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12798-Environmental-impact-of-mobile-phones-and-tablets-Energy-Labelling [2] https://www.ecosmartphones.info/

About this open public consultation

This open public consultation aims to offer smartphone and tablet users and stakeholders involved in all areas of the value chain (original equipment manufacturers, component suppliers, users, repairers, recyclers, etc.) the opportunity to express their views on how to best address the policy challenges outlined above and to provide relevant information.

Your feedback, together with evidence from different sources including desk-research and other consultations, will contribute to the analysis on the best possible policy response.

The questionnaire first gathers information about you, the respondent. It is then divided into two sections: one on smartphones and one on tablets, as these two product categories are expected to be responsible for the highest share of environmental impacts when compared to similar categories such as feature phones or cordless phones. You may wish to reply to one or both of these sections. Each section should take around 15-20 minutes. You can also attach position papers/documents to support your views. You can fill in the questionnaire either:

- as a final user (i.e. with questions based on your experience as user, such as For how long did you use your last smartphone?), or
- with a perspective on the whole market (i.e. with questions based on your understanding of the market, such as How long do you estimate the average operational life of a smartphone produced in the last 2 years to be?).

If you have any questions about this consultation, please email them to GROW-ECODESIGN@ec.europa. eu indicating 'open public consultation – mobile phones & tablets' in the subject line.

Thank you for your interest and cooperation.

About you

0	Bulgarian
0	Croatian
0	Czech
0	Danish
0	Dutch
•	English
	Estonian
	Finnish
	French
	German
0	Greek
0	Hungarian
0	Irish
0	Italian
0	Latvian
0	Lithuanian
0	Maltese
	Polish
	Portuguese
	Romanian
	Slovak
	Slovenian
0	Spanish
0	Swedish
*I am	giving my contribution as
0	Academic/research institution
_	Business association
0	Company/business organisation
	Consumer organisation
	EU citizen
	Environmental organisation
	Non-EU citizen

*Language of my contribution

Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
Public authority
Trade union
Other
*First name
Florian
*Surname
Feillet
*Email (this won't be published)
florian.feillet@gmail.com
*Organisation name
255 character(s) maximum
ETNO (European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association)
*Organisation size
Micro (1 to 9 employees)
Small (10 to 49 employees)
Medium (50 to 249 employees)
Large (250 or more)
Transparency register number
255 character(s) maximum
Check if your organisation is on the <u>transparency register</u> . It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.
08957111909-85
*Country of origin
Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.
Afghanistan Djibouti Libya Saint Martin
Åland Islands Dominica Liechtenstein Saint Pierre and Miquelon

0	Albania	0	Dominican	0	Lithuania	Saint Vincent
			Republic			and the
						Grenadines
	Algeria		Ecuador		Luxembourg	Samoa
	American Samoa		Egypt		Macau	San Marino
	Andorra		El Salvador		Madagascar	São Tomé and
						Príncipe
	Angola		Equatorial Guinea	a [©]	Malawi	Saudi Arabia
0	Anguilla		Eritrea		Malaysia	Senegal
0	Antarctica		Estonia		Maldives	Serbia
	Antigua and		Eswatini		Mali	Seychelles
	Barbuda					
	Argentina		Ethiopia		Malta	Sierra Leone
0	Armenia		Falkland Islands		Marshall Islands	Singapore
	Aruba		Faroe Islands	0	Martinique	Sint Maarten
	Australia		Fiji		Mauritania	Slovakia
	Austria		Finland	0	Mauritius	Slovenia
	Azerbaijan		France		Mayotte	Solomon Islands
0	Bahamas		French Guiana	0	Mexico	Somalia
	Bahrain		French Polynesia		Micronesia	South Africa
	Bangladesh		French Southern		Moldova	South Georgia
			and Antarctic			and the South
			Lands			Sandwich
						Islands
	Barbados		Gabon		Monaco	South Korea
	Belarus	0	Georgia	0	Mongolia	South Sudan
0	Belgium	0	Germany	0	Montenegro	Spain
	Belize		Ghana		Montserrat	Sri Lanka
	Benin		Gibraltar		Morocco	Sudan
0	Bermuda		Greece		Mozambique	Suriname
	Bhutan		Greenland		Myanmar/Burma	Svalbard and
						Jan Mayen
	Bolivia		Grenada		Namibia	Sweden

	Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba	0	Guadeloupe	0	Nauru	0	Switzerland
0	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	Guam	0	Nepal	0	Syria
0	Botswana		Guatemala	0	Netherlands	0	Taiwan
0	Bouvet Island	0	Guernsey	0	New Caledonia	0	Tajikistan
0	Brazil		Guinea	0	New Zealand	0	Tanzania
0	British Indian Ocean Territory	0	Guinea-Bissau	0	Nicaragua	0	Thailand
0	British Virgin Islands	0	Guyana	0	Niger	0	The Gambia
0	Brunei		Haiti		Nigeria	0	Timor-Leste
0	Bulgaria		Heard Island and		Niue	0	Togo
			McDonald Islands	3			
0	Burkina Faso		Honduras		Norfolk Island	0	Tokelau
0	Burundi		Hong Kong	0	Northern	0	Tonga
					Mariana Islands		
0	Cambodia		Hungary	0	North Korea	0	Trinidad and
							Tobago
0	Cameroon		Iceland	0	North Macedonia	0	Tunisia
0	Canada		India	0	Norway	0	Turkey
	Cape Verde		Indonesia	0	Oman	0	Turkmenistan
0	Cayman Islands		Iran	0	Pakistan	0	Turks and
							Caicos Islands
0	Central African		Iraq		Palau	0	Tuvalu
	Republic						
0	Chad		Ireland		Palestine	0	Uganda
0	Chile		Isle of Man	0	Panama	0	Ukraine
0	China		Israel		Papua New	0	United Arab
					Guinea		Emirates
0	Christmas Island		Italy		Paraguay	0	United Kingdom
	Clipperton	0	Jamaica	0	Peru	0	United States

0	Cocos (Keeling)	Japan	0	Philippines	0	United States
	Islands					Minor Outlying Islands
	0 1 1:			D: :		
	Colombia	Jersey		Pitcairn Islands		Uruguay
0	Comoros	Jordan	0	Poland	0	US Virgin Islands
0	Congo	Kazakhstan		Portugal		Uzbekistan
0	Cook Islands	Kenya		Puerto Rico		Vanuatu
0	Costa Rica	Kiribati		Qatar		Vatican City
0	Côte d'Ivoire	Kosovo		Réunion		Venezuela
0	Croatia	Kuwait		Romania		Vietnam
0	Cuba	Kyrgyzstan		Russia		Wallis and
						Futuna
0	Curaçao	Laos		Rwanda		Western Sahara
0	Cyprus	Latvia		Saint Barthélemy		Yemen
0	Czechia	Lebanon		Saint Helena		Zambia
				Ascension and		
				Tristan da Cunha	l	
0	Democratic	Lesotho		Saint Kitts and		Zimbabwe
	Republic of the			Nevis		
	Congo					
0	Denmark	Liberia		Saint Lucia		

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. Fo r the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published. Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

*Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the personal data protection provisions

How do you want to fill in the questionnaire?

- as a **final user** (i.e. with questions based on your experience as user, such as *For how long did you use your last smartphone/tablet?*). For the following questions, please focus unless explicitly stated on the latest smartphone /tablet in your possession. If you currently own more than one, please focus on one of them only. If you do not have a smartphone/tablet, please fill in the questionnaire based on your understanding of the product.
- with a perspective on the **whole market** (i.e. questions relate to your understanding of the market, such as *How long do you estimate the average operational life of a smartphone produced in the last 2 years to be?).*

Do you want to fill in the section on smartphones?

- Yes
- O No

Do you want to fill in the section on tablets?

- Yes
- O No

Part 1 - smartphones

1. Which of the following characteristics do users consider important when choosing a new smartphone?

	not important	somewhat important	important	don't know
Price	0	0	•	0
Ecodesign, e.g. durable, upgradeable, reparable designs or designs requiring fewer materials	•	•	•	©
Battery endurance (meaning the amount of time your smartphone can operate, starting with an initially fully charged battery until the device shuts off automatically due to a drained battery)	•	•	•	©
Long-lasting battery (meaning a battery with a durability comparable to the smartphone lifetime)	©	•	•	•
Performance (speed, functionalities such as quality of pictures)	©	•	•	0
Brand and design	0	0	•	0
Guarantee	0	0	•	0
Availability of local repair centres	0	•	0	0
Availability of spare parts	0	0	0	•
Availability of software/firmware updates for a certain period of time	•	•	©	0
Accompanying information on how to repair the product	0	•	©	0

A take-back scheme offered by the manufacturer or seller (i.e. you can take an obsolete device back to the manufacturer/seller at no cost or receive a discount when purchasing another device)	•	•	©	•
Accompanying information about the environmental impact of the manufacturing phase of the product itself	•	•	©	•

- 2. How long do you estimate the average operational life of smartphones produced in the last 2 years to be? (NB1: 'hibernated' smartphones left unused e.g. in a drawer, are not considered in use; NB2: the estimate should consider the operational life of a second hand product if relevant, i.e. total number of years in use)
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1 to less than 2 years
 - 2 to less than 3 years
 - 3 to less than 5 years
 - 5 years or more
 - Don't know
- 3. Do you consider that the average operational life of a smartphone corresponds to its price?
 - In general terms, the higher the price, the higher the quality and, therefore, the longer the durability.
 - All smartphones have the same average durability.
 - There is no link between price and durability
 - Don't know
- 4. When smartphones are no longer being used where do they usually end up?
 - Users tend to still keep them in their household or store them (in the case of business users)

- The devices are sold or given away
- The devices are disposed of in electronic waste collection/recycling (incl. leaving it to the retailer to dispose of)
- The devices are disposed of but not in electronic waste collection/recycling
- Don't know
- 5. For which activities/functions, and for how long each day, are smartphones used on average?

	less than 30 minutes	30 minutes- less than 1 hour	1 hour - less than 2 hours	2 hours - less than 4 hours	4 hours or more	Don't know
Overall use	0	0	0	•	0	0
Phone calls	0	•	0	0	0	0
Using applications for chat	0	0	•	0	0	0
Streaming media, i.e. video or music content	0	0	•	0	0	0
Taking pictures	•	0	0	0	0	0
Playing offline games	•	0	0	0	0	0
Playing online games	0	•	0	0	0	0
Browsing the web	•	0	0	0	0	0
Other	•	0	0	0	0	0

- 6. How long is the average battery endurance of a smartphone produced in the last 2 years (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery until the device shuts off automatically due to a drained battery)?
 - Less than 6 hours
 - 6 hours less than 12 hours
 - 12 hours less than 24 hours
 - 24 hours less than 48 hours
 - 48 hours or more
 - Don't know
- 7. How do users typically charge their device?
 - Full charging

Fast charging, if the manufacturer provides a fast charger Don't know 8. Which of the following elements would, in your view, make it easier to repair smartphones compared with the current situation? (You can choose more than one option.) The compulsory availability of critical spare parts for a minimum amount of time (e.g. 6 years) A maximum cap on the price of spare parts Access to repair and maintenance information, such as disassembly maps of the device 'Do it yourself' repair/refurbishment operations for some components (e.g. the battery) that do not require technical knowledge, with commonly available tools provided Real time information on ageing of the device/components during the use phase, such as the number of charge/discharge cycles of the battery Don't know I think it is already easy to repair smartphones now Other solutions

Other solutions - please specify

Partial charging (i.e. not full charge)

- Take a step back from the ultra slim design of the current devices with embedded batteries and 2.5D /3D displays. This type of design makes the smartphone complex to repair as it often involves glue to fasten the parts together. Moreover the Li-Po battery's cable is often soldered on the mainboard (or fastened with a LIF/ZIF connector) which make it more difficult to swap then a Li-ions battery pack.
- Spare parts availability at reasonable cost, availability of OEM specific tools for professional repair and availability of latest SW updates.
- We also suggest that warranty being still applicable after professional repair which would also help making it easier to repair smartphones compared with the current situation
- 9. If there was an EU ecodesign regulation on smartphones, addressing material efficiency aspects in particular (such as those mentioned in the previous questions), how do you think it would affect innovation in the sector?
 - I would not expect it to have any impact on the innovation capability of this sector
 - The ecodesign requirements could promote innovation in this sector (please specify how/what).

- Ecodesign requirements for smartphones could indirectly cause barriers to innovation (please specify which)
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

(Please specify)

ETNO believe that the ecodesign requirements could promote innovation in this sector. Be it on the question of critical/scarce materials substitution/sourcing or innovative mechanical and electronic design to make the device more compatible with the "design-for-recycling/repair/refurbishment/remanufacturing" principles. This drives innovation in order to make the devices more sustainable, e.g. repairability, updateability , durability and recyclability.

Part 2 - tablets

1. Which of the following characteristics do users consider important when choosing a new tablet?

	not important	somewhat important	important	don't know
Price	0	0	0	•
Ecodesign, e.g. durable, upgradeable, reparable designs or designs requiring fewer materials	•	•	•	•
Battery endurance (meaning the amount of time your tablet can operate, starting with an initially fully charged battery until the device shuts off automatically due to a drained battery)	•	•	•	•
Long-lasting battery (meaning a battery with a durability comparable to the tablet lifetime)	•	•	•	0
Performance (speed, functionalities such as quality of pictures)	0	0	•	0

Brand and design	©	©	•	0
Guarantee	©	0	•	0
Availability of local repair centres	0	•	0	0
Availability of spare parts	0	•	0	0
Availability of software/firmware updates for a certain period of time	•	•	©	•
Accompanying information on how to repair the product	•	0	0	0
A take-back scheme offered by the manufacturer or seller (i.e. you can take an obsolete device back to the manufacturer/seller at no cost or receive a discount when purchasing another device)	•	•	•	•
Accompanying information about the environmental impact of the manufacturing phase of the product itself	•	•	•	•

2. How long do you estimate the average operational life of tablets produced in the last 2 years to be? (NB1: 'hibernated' tablets left unused e.g. in a drawer, are not considered in use; NB2: the estimate should consider the operational life of a second hand product if relevant, i.e. total number of years in use)

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to less than 2 years
- 2 to less than 3 years
- 3 to less than 5 years
- 5 years or more
- Don't know

- 3. Do you consider that the average operational life of a tablet corresponds to its price?
 - In general terms, the higher the price, the higher the quality and, therefore, the longer the durability.
 - All tablets have the same average durability.
 - There is no link between price and durability
 - Don't know
- 4. When tablets are no longer being used where do they usually end up?
 - Users tend to still keep them in their household or store them (in the case of business users)
 - The devices are sold or given away
 - The devices are disposed of in electronic waste collection/recycling (incl. leaving it to the retailer to dispose of)
 - The devices are disposed of but not in electronic waste collection/recycling
 - Don't know
- 5. For which activities/functions, and for how long each day, are tablets used on average?

	less than 30 minutes	30 minutes- less than 1 hour	1 hour - less than 2 hours	2 hours - less than 4 hours	4 hours or more	Don't know
Overall use	0	0	0	•	0	0
Using applications for chat	0	•	0	0	0	0
Streaming media, i.e. video or music content	0	0	•	0	0	0
Taking pictures	•	0	0	0	0	0
Playing offline games	•	0	0	0	0	0
Playing online games	0	0	•	0	0	0
Browsing the web	0	0	•	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

years (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery users (i.e. how long can it operate starting with an initially fully charged battery)?	ıntil
 7. How do users typically charge their device? Full charging Partial charging (i.e. not full charge) Fast charging, if the manufacturer provides a fast charger Don't know 	
 8. Which of the following elements would, in your view, make it easier to repair tablets compared with the current situation? (You can choose more than one option.) The compulsory availability of critical spare parts for a minimum amount of time (e.g. 6 years) A maximum cap on the price of spare parts Access to repair and maintenance information, such as disassembly maps the device 'Do it yourself' repair/refurbishment operations for some components (e.g. battery) that do not require technical knowledge, with commonly available tools provided Real time information on ageing of the device/components during the use phase, such as the number of charge/discharge cycles of the battery Don't know 	s of
I think it is already easy to repair tablets nowOther solutions	

- 9. If there was an EU ecodesign regulation on tablets, addressing material efficiency aspects in particular (such as those mentioned in the previous questions), how do you think it would affect innovation in the sector?
 - I would not expect it to have any impact on the innovation capability of this sector
 - The ecodesign requirements could promote innovation in this sector (please specify how/what).
 - Ecodesign requirements for tablets could indirectly cause barriers to innovation (please specify which)
 - Other (please specify)
 - Don't know

(Please specify)

ETNO believe that the ecodesign requirements could promote innovation in this sector. This drives innovation in order to make the devices more sustainable, e.g. Repairability, Updateability

Conclusion

Would you like to attach a position paper/document to support your views?

- Yes
- No

Please upload your file

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

959422f3-62d9-474a-bbcc-4cffca45a17e/ETNO_position_paper_Ecodesign_energy_labelling.pdf

Contact

GROW-ECODESIGN@ec.europa.eu