

EU unveils 'right to repair' rules to cut tech waste

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The EU hopes tighter regulations can help cut into the estimated 35 million tons of potentially repairable products being thrown out each year in the bloc.

The EU's executive arm proposed new rules on Wednesday that would force manufacturers to allow customers to have broken products

repaired, in a bid to cut the number thrown out.

The EU estimates that the number of viable products, such as dishwashers, televisions and mobile phones, binned prematurely in the bloc each year result in 35 million tons of waste.

Buying replacements costs [consumers](#) 12 billion euros annually.

Under the proposals—part of Brussels' ambitious green push—manufacturers will have to repair goods still under guarantee if that costs the same or less than a replacement.

Consumers will also have the right to demand that firms fix their products, if they can still be mended, within 10 years of purchase, even if they are no longer under warranty.

"It's essential that consumers are able to get their goods repaired, and more easily and buy less," said EU commissioner Didier Reynders.

"This will help to support the environment reducing waste and [greenhouse gas emissions](#) and the use of resources."

The 10-year rule will apply to products that are subject to the EU's "repairability requirements", with the bloc promising to add phones and tablets to that category soon.

The [new regulations](#) also look to raising [consumer awareness](#) by having EU states set up online databases to help them find repairers.

The proposals now need to be negotiated between the European Parliament and member states before they can be turned into law.

Consumers and green groups have long been pushing for the EU to

tighten up regulation to ensure companies offer easier options to help repair their goods.

"Longer lasting and more repairable products are a no brainer to save consumers' money and the planet's resources," said Monique Goyens, director of the European Consumer Organization said.

"Today's proposal is the long-awaited instruction manual for a consumer right to repair, yet several pages are missing."

She said that Brussels should look at extending the legal guarantee period beyond the current two-year period for longer-lasting goods.

Green MEP Anna Cavazzini welcomed the moves to prioritize fixing [products](#) that are still under guarantee.

"Defective smartphones or washing machines should be repaired as standard and not simply replaced with a new product," she wrote on social media.

But she said it needed to be made easier for independent repairers to mend goods "so corporate giants like Apple no longer dictate the rules for repairs".

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