

MAKING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS THE NORM

A ONE-PAGE GUIDE ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY PACKAGE I

Two years after the publication of the Circular Economy Action Plan, the first Circular Economy Package has arrived. How can we ensure that products become more sustainable? How will consumers make informed choices about their purchases? Will consumers be freed of "greenwashing" and false environmental claims?

The Commission presented its solutions on 30 March 2022. For your convenience, OPP has created this one-page guide with everything you need to know.



ECODESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS REGULATION (ESPR)

ESPR is at the heart of the package. It establishes a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for product categories. The ecodesign requirements will cover product **durability** and **repairability**, **circularity**, **energy and resource efficiency**, the **life-cycle environmental impact**, and more. Rules on **minimum recycled content** and preventing and reducing waste, including **packaging waste**, will also be set.

Key aspects of the proposal include:

- broadening the scope of the **Ecodesign Directive** in terms of products and requirements
- making **Digital Product Passports** the norm for all products regulated under the ESPR to **keep consumers informed**
- preventing and stopping the destruction of **unsold consumer goods**
- strengthening **market surveillance**
- setting mandatory criteria for the **public procurement** of sustainable products

Product design dictates up to
80%
of its life-cycle environmental impact

In 2021, ecodesign requirements
saved consumers
€ 120
billion
in energy costs

93%
of EU consumers recognise
the energy label

ECODESIGN AND ENERGY LABELLING WORKING PLAN 2020-2024

Until the ESPR enters into force, the **Ecodesign Directive** will remain the key driver of energy efficiency improvements. The Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Working Plan will work to achieve this by **covering new products** and **increasing the ambition** on products that are already regulated.

The plan focuses on "energy-related products" (ErPs). Currently, about **30 ErPs groups are regulated** through about **50 measures**, covering about **half of the EU total final energy use**.

3 main groups will be prioritised:

1. **Heating & cooling appliances**
2. **Products with "old" energy labels**
3. **Products with significant additional savings potential or where there is a clear or urgent need for revisions (e.g. water pumps, fans, external power supplies)**

NEW RULES TO EMPOWER CONSUMERS FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION

The proposal on empowering consumers for the green transition is key to **support consumers** and enable them to take **informed purchasing decisions**. The proposal will amend EU consumer law in order to:

- provide consumers with information about **product durability**
- **prohibit "greenwashing"** and false environmental claims
- **ban early obsolescence**, including planned obsolescence practices

Targeted sectoral initiatives

STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE & CIRCULAR TEXTILES

Textiles and footwear are currently not subject to any specific requirements governing circularity, so ESPR will be the legal framework for setting EU rules. Once ESPR enters into force, secondary legislation will set ecodesign performance and information requirements and a Digital Product Passport.

The Strategy for Sustainable & Circular Textiles goes beyond ESPR with the aim to **boost circular business models**, **reduce textile waste**, and **ensure consumer affordability** and **business competitiveness**. Simultaneously, the co-creation process of the transition pathway of the textiles industrial ecosystem has been launched.

COMPLEMENTARY SECTORAL RULES ON CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Construction products fall within the scope of the ESPR, but due to the interlinkages between environmental and structural performance as well as health & safety concerns, construction products have been addressed in a separate regulation which was published in the package. In the case of energy-related construction products, sustainability aspects will be primarily dealt with under the ESPR.

The Commission also notes that **batteries** will be primarily dealt with under the proposed Batteries Regulation and **packaging** under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (PPWD) which is currently under revision. ESPR will have a complementary role to REACH and RoHS when it comes to **chemicals**.

Use the promo code "**ESPR**" for 2 months of free access to our dedicated Circular Economy policy coverage!

