



# RIGHT TO REPAIR

To:

Mr Frans Timmermans, European Commission Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal

Ms Margrethe Vestager, European Commission Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and European Commissioner for Competition

Mr Thierry Breton, European Commissioner for the Internal Market

Mr Virginijus Sinkevičius, European Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

## Why Europe needs a 10-year smartphone

**210 million smartphones are sold annually in the EU - that's almost 7 every second. And despite 77% of EU citizens preferring to repair their goods rather than buy new ones, only around 11% will repair their phones when they break.**

**The only way to reverse the trend is to urgently put an end to premature obsolescence. We are therefore asking Europe to be a true leader, and ensure that every new smartphone put on the market lasts for *at least 10 years*.**

In March 2020, the European Commission's Circular Economy Action Plan promised a "new Right to Repair" and measures to ensure that sustainable products, services and business models become the norm.

This commitment was more than welcomed as the production of electronics contributes significantly to the ecological crisis.

But the initial Right to Repair measures implemented this year for household appliances are far from being enough. Not only do they restrict these improvements mainly to professional repairers, they do not address the central issues of the cost of repair and software updates.

All Europeans should have the right to use their smartphone for at least 10 years. That is the spirit of our campaign. Phones need to be easy to disassemble so that batteries and other parts can be easily replaced. All spare parts should be affordably available to consumers as well as repair professionals. Manufacturers must commit to providing repair information and long-term software and security updates.

Finally, everyone should be able to make informed purchasing decisions about the repairability of the phones they're buying. That is why we are asking for a European repair index, highlighting the most easily and affordably repairable phones.

These measures are key not only to achieve Europe's sustainability ambitions but also to create new jobs and build resilient communities.

Smartphones are everywhere, and by regulating them the Commission has a unique opportunity to influence a global shift in the way they are designed, repaired and reused. Yet,

we are already witnessing manufacturers asking to delay the implementation of future regulations - something we simply cannot afford.

A 10-year phone sounds like a challenge, but it is well within reach.

The time to act is now. The latest IPCC report could not be clearer and as you are attending COP26, words need to be supported by real action and legislation.

Extending the lifetime of smartphones by just one year could save 2.1 million tonnes in annual CO2 emissions. Going further and extending the lifetime from 3 to 10 years would save 6.2 million tonnes annually by 2030 - a 42% reduction on the overall footprint of the products. This is the right level of ambition for a continent striving for climate neutrality.

And there is no reason why all devices - not just smartphones - should not last at least 10 years. Electronic waste is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the world - 53.6 million tonnes were discarded in 2019, out of which only 17% were properly recycled, let alone repaired. Most consumer electrical and electronic products are not expected to be included in the forthcoming Ecodesign Working Plan, proposals for a repair index, or other measures foreseen in the Circular Electronics Initiative - this must change.

Our campaign is supported by leading thinkers and activists in the repair, digital rights, design and sustainability sectors who are all co-signatories of this letter.

The time for ambition is now.

### **Our demands:**

- *The bundling of spare parts should be prevented through dedicated ecodesign rules as it allows manufacturers to group together spare parts. This significantly increases the cost of spare parts and hence the cost of repair, making it less likely to happen. It is also a waste of materials when only one part fails.*
- *Spare parts should be mandated to be delivered within 3 working days.*
- *The issue of the price of spare parts needs to be addressed as part of the Circular Electronics Initiative to ensure repair becomes truly affordable, for example by preventing any barriers on using reused parts.*
- *Part pairing (the use of software by manufacturers to pair some spare parts to an individual unit of a device) should be prevented and software updates should be extended to 10 years. The current proposals for ecodesign rules will only require software support for 3-5 years.*
- *A repair index should be introduced to help citizens identify the most repairable phones. However, the current methodology critically ignores the issue of the cost of repair. Not only technical feasibility determines the likelihood of a repair, price does too. This should not be neglected.*
- *These measures need to be implemented fast - considering the changing nature of products concerned and the ecological and social emergencies. This requires more Commission resources and staff to be made available for EU's product policy.*



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**Signed by:**

100 organisations

7382 individuals

**Signed by 86 organisations members  
of the Right to Repair campaign:**

**Austria:**

- Association for Waste Prevention
- Refurbed
- Repanet
- Reparatur Netzwerk
- Revolve Circular

**Belgium:**

- Aegee Europe
- Catapa
- Circular Brussels
- Cero
- De Transformisten
- Ecos
- EEB
- Free ICT Europe
- Generation Climate Europe
- Justice et Paix
- Pronto Fix
- Relaks
- Repair & Share
- Repair Together
- Reuse
- Tournevie

**Denmark:**

- Fair Denmark
- Prosa
- Repair Café Denmark

**Estonia:**

- K-Space
- Paranda

**France:**

- Backmarket
- Coben
- Ethikis ad Civis
- HOP
- Repair Café France
- Spareka
- Zero Waste France

**Germany:**

- Anstiftung
- DNR Europe
- GermanWatch
- Ifixit
- Netzwerk Reparatur Initiativen
- Runder Tisch Reparatur

**Greece:**

- Epanekkinis

**Hungary:**

- Friends of the Earth Hungary

**Iceland:**

- Reykjavik Tool Library

**Ireland:**

- Community Resource Network Ireland
- Cycle Sense
- Rediscovery Center
- The Useless Project

**Italy:**

- Giacimenti Urbani

**Luxembourg:**

- Mouvement Ecologique
- Oekozenner Padenfall

**Netherlands:**

- 4Phones
- Captain Mac
- Minicopters Dji Repair
- Mobile Parts
- Natuur & Milieu
- Repair Café International

**Norway:**

- Ava Norway
- Friends of the Earth Norway
- Restarters Norway
- Sustainability & Design Lab

**Poland:**

- Quickfix
- Zero Waste Poland

**Portugal:**

- Lipor
- Repair Café Lisboa

**Slovakia:**

- Repairably

**Slovenia:**

- Pirate Party Slovenia

**Spain:**

- Ereuse
- Setem

**Sweden:**

- Repair Café Malmö

**Switzerland:**

- Thingsy
- Repair Café Fribourg

**United Kingdom:**

- Association of Heritage Engineers
- Community Resource Network  
Scotland
- Hello Klyk
- Hex
- Green Alliance
- My Mac Fixer
- Nesta
- Nottingham Fixers
- Remade Network
- Repair Café Tunbridge
- Southampton Repair Café
- Studio Steer
- Technical in Nature
- The Restart Project
- Transition Chesterfield
- Watlington Climate Action Group

## Co-signed by 14 additional organisations

**Belgium:**

- Edri
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- Zero Waste Europe

**France:**

- GreenIT

**Germany:**

- DigitalCourage
- Epicenter.works

**Greece:**

- Homo Digitalis

**Netherlands:**

- Fairphone
- Good Electronics
- SOMO

**Poland:**

- Centrum Cyfrowe

**Slovenia:**

- Državljan D / Citizen D

**Turkey:**

- Alternatif Bilisim

**United Kingdom:**

- Privacy International

## Co-signed by 7382 individuals, including:

**Ross Anderson**, Professor at University of Cambridge, UK

**Leyla Acaroglu**, Founder of Disrupt Design, Australia

**Aja Barber**, Activist, UK

**Flore Berlingen**, Author, France

**Reuben Binns**, Associate Professor at University of Oxford, UK

**Frederic Bordage**, Founder at Green IT, France

**Biljana Borzan**, MEP (S&D), Croatia

**Anna Cavazzini**, MEP (The Greens), Germany

**Adélaïde Charlier**, Founder of Youth for Climate, Belgium

**David Cormand**, MEP (The Greens), France

**Alexandra Deschamps-Sonsino**, Founder of Designswarm, UK

**Tomas Diez**, Director at Fab Lab Barcelona, Spain

**Claire Fernandez**, Executive Director at EDRI, Belgium

**Paula Forteza** MP (LREM), France

**Sandra Goldmark**, Professor at Barnard, USA

**Eva Gouwens**, CEO at Fairphone, the Netherlands

**Claude Gruffat**, MEP (The Greens), France

**Jason Hickel**, Author, UK

**Thibaud Hug de Larauze**, CEO of Backmarket, France

**Yannick Jadot**, MEP (The Greens), France

**John Keane**, Ceo of SolarAid, UK

**Mike Little**, Co-founder of WordPress, UK

**Magid Magid**, Former MEP (The Greens), UK

**Sara Mattieu**, MEP (The Greens), Belgium

**Gerry McGovern**, Author, World Wide Waste, Ireland

**Nathan Metenier**, Activist at Youth & Environment, Belgium

**Martine Postma**, Founder of Repair Café Foundation, the Netherlands

**Rob Phillips**, Independent Designer (RCA), UK

**Alison Powell**, Associate Professor LSE, UK

**Julia Reda**, former MEP, Germany

**Arne Semsrott**, Journalist at OKFN, Germany

**Mounir Satouri**, MEP (The Greens), France

**Max Schrems**, Founder of European Center for Digital Rights, Austria

**Adrian Smith**, Research Professor at University of Sussex, UK

**Michelle Thorne**, Senior Program Officer at Mozilla, Germany

**Marie Toussaint**, MEP (The Greens), France

**Jilian York**, Director for International Freedom of Expression, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Germany

**Kyle Wiens**, Co-founder at iFixit, USA