

PRESS RELEASE

A Call for a more sustainable Digital Services Act

29 October 2020 – The Digital Services Act represents a very good opportunity to bring sustainability into the digital debate, in line with the European Green Deal. EucoLight, Eucobat and EXPRA therefore welcome the reference to sustainability in the IMCO report led by MEP Saliba and would like to share some additional recommendations.

Still, for the sustainability angle in the Digital Service Act to be comprehensive, it should include both provisions on providing clear information to consumers and ensuring that producers contribute financially to the costs of waste management.

The Parliament's [report](#), adopted on October 20, includes wording on “fighting false ‘environmental claims’ while calling on online marketplaces to promote sustainability of e-commerce by providing consumers with clear and easily understandable information on the environmental impact of the products. We strongly believe that information on meeting the Extended Producer Responsibility obligations regarding packaging, WEEE and other product-related waste streams and delivery methods or services they buy online should be added to complete the ambition on information to consumers.

A reference to ensure that online platforms take responsibility for the end of life of products and their packaging is of crucial importance to address sustainability in a comprehensive manner thus decreasing and eliminating “free riding”. Free-riding describes the process whereby companies placing products on the market circumvent Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) obligations, including registering with EPR schemes and financing their products’ end-of-life management.

In the Netherlands alone, the value of goods ordered from abroad by consumers online increased by 15% between 2017 and 2018, to €880 million for instance, a figure that has likely been further boosted due to the COVID 19 lockdown period. As an extremely high number of products from different product categories bought online do not comply with national requirements for financing the treatment of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE¹), we see a clear need for harmonised action at EU level to ensure that producers placing products on the market are made responsible for their collection and reprocessing costs.

We hope that the Commission will seize the opportunity to include such elements in its upcoming proposal. As online sales will continue to grow, notably due to the pandemic, the issue is of the utmost importance. As President von der Leyen has stated on several [occasions](#), all sectors should contribute to the Green Deal objectives, and the online sales sector is just too important not to play its part.

ENDS

¹ An OECD [study](#) estimated that around 5% to 10% of all electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) sales are non-compliant, although a [study](#) carried in 2019, by EucoLight, has shown that in some cases over 80% of sellers of certain products, such as LED lamps, can be non-compliant.

About EucoLight

EucoLight is The European association of collection and recycling organisations for WEEE lamps and lighting. On behalf of its 20 members, EucoLight engages with everything related to the WEEE Directive, legislations and standards affecting the collection and recycling of WEEE lighting. EucoLight members collect and recycle, in aggregate, 80 % of the lamp waste collected in the 19 countries in which they operate.

Founded mid-2015, EucoLight has quickly embarked into constructive dialogue with relevant stakeholders to provide expertise in the field of management and treatment of WEEE lighting and to promote the positive role of Extended Producer Responsibility schemes on the environment and society. EucoLight is the voice of European WEEE compliance schemes specialised in managing the collection and recycling of WEEE lighting; working to make the circular economy a reality for lighting products. For more information, visit the EucoLight website www.eucolight.org, follow EucoLight on Twitter @EucoLight or contact the Secretary General, Marc Guiraud (marc.guiraud@eucolight.org).

About Eucobat

Eucobat aisbl is the European association of national collection schemes for batteries. They assure that all waste batteries are collected and recycled in an ecological sound way, and contribute this way to a better environment. As the use of mobile energy from batteries increasingly becomes an essential part of our life, the Eucobat members, as not-for-profit organizations, strive for a better environment by collecting ever more used batteries and by recycling them ever better.

Eucobat members ensure to organize the collection and recycling of used batteries as easily and efficiently as possible, and encourage the sustainable use, collection and recycling of batteries through appropriate and clear communication.

For more information, visit the Eucobat website (www.eucobat.eu), follow Eucobat on Twitter @Eucobat or on LinkedIn or contact the Secretary General, Peter Binnemans (p.binnemans@eucobat.eu).

About EXPRA

EXPRA is the alliance for packaging and packaging waste recovery and recycling systems which are owned by obliged industry and work on a not-for-profit basis. EXPRA acts as the authoritative voice and common policy platform representing the interests of all its member packaging recovery and recycling organisations founded and run by or on behalf of obliged industry. Over the past 20 years, our 26 members across 24 countries, including 17 EU Member States, have co-organised the collection, sorting and recycling of used packaging, with a focus on household packaging, on behalf of the obliged industry. EXPRA members provide over 200 million inhabitants with packaging collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure and ensure recycling and recovery of over 18 million tons of packaging per year. For additional information, please visit www.expra.eu