

The new EU Repair Act: repair over replacement

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What this European legislation means for your business

The European regulatory landscape is evolving rapidly. As part of the European Green Deal, the European Union has introduced several legislative initiatives that support the transition towards a more circular economy. Examples include the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), the EU Repair Act, the Directive Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition, and the proposed Green Claims Directive.

Together, these initiatives address different aspects of a product's lifecycle. The ESPR introduces product-specific requirements concerning sustainability, durability, and repairability, while the EU Repair Act, officially the Right to Repair Directive (EU) 2024/1799, complements these requirements by prioritising repair over replacement during the use phase. The Directive Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition and the proposed Green Claims Directive, in turn, help consumers make better-informed and more sustainable purchasing decisions.

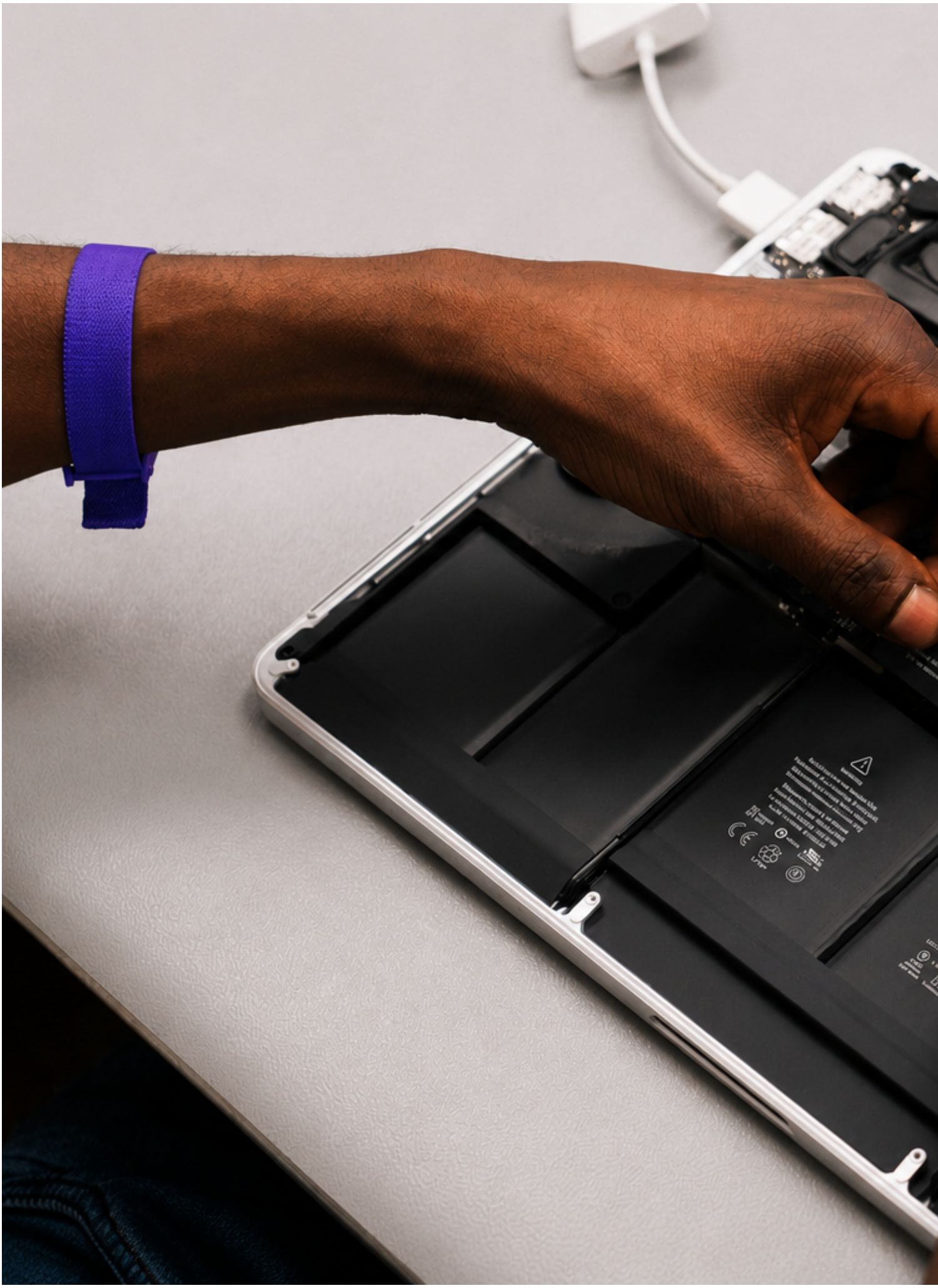
More repair, less replacement, less waste

As EU Member States are required to apply the national rules implementing the Right to Repair Directive, often referred to as the EU Repair Act, this article examines the practical implications for manufacturers and economic operators.

With the EU Repair Act, Europe is taking another step towards a **circular economy** in which products last longer, create less waste, and consume fewer raw materials.

For many years, products have become increasingly difficult or expensive to repair because spare parts are no longer available, software restricts repairs, or replacement simply costs less than repair.

This Directive introduces new consumer rights and repair obligations for certain product categories. However, many of the detailed technical requirements concerning repairability, spare parts, and repair information are set out in separate product-specific EU legislation, particularly under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and its product-specific implementing measures. The EU Repair Act therefore complements these product-specific rules by strengthening consumers' right to repair and introducing corresponding obligations during the after-sales phase.



Why is this legislation a turning point?

It represents an important next step in the EU's broader circular economy framework. Until now, many companies were not legally required to repair products after the warranty period had expired. The EU Repair Act changes this: manufacturers of certain product categories, such as household appliances and mobility devices, must offer repair services for several years after selling their products, unless repair is impossible. The precise obligations vary depending on the product category concerned and the underlying product-specific legislation.

The Directive also strengthens consumers' right to repair by making repairs easier, more transparent, and more accessible. It introduces a European Repair Information Form and a European online repair platform where consumers can easily find repair services and sellers of refurbished products. In addition, consumers who choose repair during the statutory guarantee period will receive at least an additional 12 months of guarantee coverage. This extension of the statutory guarantee period may have a more direct impact on many companies selling consumer goods.

Which obligations apply to your business?

Companies placing products on the European market must first determine whether their products fall within the scope of the applicable EU repairability legislation and which obligations apply to them. The exact obligations depend on the product category and the relevant EU product legislation, including the ESPR and its implementing measures.

Where applicable, manufacturers must comply with the relevant requirements concerning repairability, repair services, spare parts, and repair information set out in the applicable EU legislation.

Finally, companies must carefully assess whether software restrictions, digital locks, or contractual provisions could be considered unlawful barriers to repair. Restrictions may still be imposed for reasons of safety, cybersecurity, or intellectual property, but they must be objectively justified.

The repair obligation for manufacturers currently applies to specific categories of consumer products covered by European repair legislation, such as smartphones, tablets, washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators, electronic displays, vacuum cleaners, and certain products containing batteries for light means of transport, such as e-bikes and e-scooters. Additional product categories may be added over time.



Some practical examples

You are: a Belgian manufacturer of smart household appliances

You are a Belgian company that produces connected kitchen appliances and sells them throughout Europe. Today, your customers often replace your product when a display module or battery fails because replacement parts are difficult to obtain.

Under the EU Repair Act, you must **provide spare parts for several years** after selling the product. You must also provide your customers and independent repairers with repair information and options at a reasonable price. This could mean redesigning certain products so that they can be opened and repaired more easily. You may also need to adapt supply chain contracts, spare parts logistics, and customer support procedures.

You are: a manufacturer of connected mobility devices

As a company selling e-scooters and battery-powered mobility devices, you currently use software that only recognises batteries supplied directly by the manufacturer. Under the new legislation,

restrictions that unnecessarily prevent compatible repairs could become problematic. You will need to assess carefully whether these restrictions are genuinely necessary for safety or cybersecurity reasons.

In addition, separate requirements under the EU Batteries Regulation will introduce repairability obligations for certain batteries from 2027.



How can you prepare for the EU Repair Act?

The EU Repair Act must be transposed into Belgian law by 31 July 2026. Companies should therefore:

1. Determine whether their products fall within the scope of existing or future EU repairability legislation

Check whether your products fall within the scope of the EU Repair Act and product-specific legislation, including the ecodesign requirements under the ESPR framework.

2. Assess the impact on their products and services

Where applicable, assess whether your products and after-sales processes comply with the relevant requirements concerning repairability, repairs, spare parts, and repair information.

3. Reassess their software, spare parts, and service strategies

Check whether repair restrictions, spare parts pricing, or service policies could create compliance risks.

4. Prepare internal processes and customer communication

Update repair procedures, consumer information, warranty handling, and service processes before the new rules take effect.

In particular, check whether your warranty procedures account for the extension of the statutory guarantee period when consumers choose repair.

The EU Repair Act clearly shows that sustainability, regulatory compliance, and circular business models are becoming increasingly interconnected. Together with the ESPR and other circular economy legislation, it forms part of an increasingly coherent EU framework designed to extend product lifespans and promote repair and circular business models. Companies that anticipate these developments early can reduce risks while strengthening customer trust and their competitive position. Repair services, refurbishment activities, and spare parts management can therefore develop into valuable new business models within the circular economy.

Find out more

Wondering what the EU Repair Act means for your products?

The rules affect product design, spare parts, repair services, and customer communication. Discuss your challenges with our experts and discover how your company can prepare in good time.

Talk to our expert

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