

Radio Equipment Directive: common charger for electronic devices

2021/0291(COD) - 04/10/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 602 votes to 13, with 8 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2014/53/EU on the harmonisation of the laws of the Member States relating to the making available on the market of radio equipment.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amends the Commission's proposal as follows:

Universal charger for mobile devices by 2024

The Directive provides that new mobile devices on the EU market must be equipped with a USB-type C charging receptacle by the end of 2024. This requirement should apply to all portable mobile phones, tablets, digital cameras, headphones and headsets, handheld video game consoles, portable speakers, e-readers, keyboards, computer mice, portable navigation systems, earbuds with a power delivery of 100 watts or less.

Within 40 months of the entry into force of the text, i.e. by 2026, this obligation should be extended to laptops.

Encouraging technological innovation

As wireless charging becomes more widespread, the European Commission will have to harmonise interoperability requirements by the end of 2024 to avoid negative consequences for consumers and the environment.

The Commission will have to request, no later than 24 months after the date of entry into force of the directive, one or more European standardisation organisations to develop harmonised standards setting out technical specifications for charging interface(s) and charging communication protocol(s) for radio equipment that can be charged by means other than wired charging.

Supply of equipment without a charging device

The Directive introduces requirements to ensure that consumers or end-users are not obliged to buy a new charger when purchasing a new mobile phone or similar radio equipment.

Economic operators should ensure that information on whether or not a charging device is included with the radio equipment is displayed in graphic form using a user-friendly and easily accessible pictogram, when such radio equipment is made available to consumers and other end-users.

Harmonised fast-charging technology

The Directive ensures that devices that ensure fast charging will now have the same communication protocol for charging. This will help to ensure that the charging speed is the same regardless of the compatible charger used with an appliance.

Better informed consumers

In order for buyers to make an informed decision on whether or not to purchase a new charger with their new product, dedicated labels should inform consumers about the charging characteristics of new devices so that they can more easily check the compatibility of the chargers they own.

Safety instructions and information

Manufacturers should ensure that radio equipment is accompanied by instructions and safety information. The instructions should contain all the information necessary to use the radio equipment for its intended purpose.

The following information should also be included in the instructions in the case of radio equipment intentionally emitting radio waves: (a) the frequency band(s) in which the radio equipment operates; (b) the maximum radio-frequency power transmitted in the frequency band(s) in which the radio equipment operates.

Report

No later than four years after the date of entry into force of the Directive, the Commission should present a report on the impact of the possibility of acquiring radio equipment without any charging device and without cables, in particular with regard to consumer convenience, reduction of environmental waste, behavioural changes and the development of market practices.

This report should be accompanied, if appropriate, by a proposal to amend the Directive in order to introduce a mandatory unbundling of the sale of charging devices and cables from the sale of radio equipment.