

## **Refurbishment to support the Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan.**

### **For a greener and fair EU refurbishment market**

#### **Eurefas - The European Refurbishment association**

Gathering the environment-focused players in high tech and electronics refurbishment throughout Europe, **EUREFAS** aims at strengthening collaboration between European professional stakeholders, sharing their expertise with public authorities and administration, promoting environmentally virtuous and socially benefic products by raising consumers' awareness.

As such, we thus fully support the Circular Economy Action plan (CEAP) objectives : making sustainable products the norm in the EU market - empowering consumers by providing them more information on environmental characteristics and to encourage sustainable choices, to take action in the high tech sector for a longer products' lifespan and improving waste treatment.

#### **What is refurbishment about ?**

Refurbishment is giving devices a second life, while collecting, testing, if needed restoring and reselling a product and returning them to other consumers or businesses. All data are wiped and the second owner can use the product as if it were new. Refurbishers can resell devices on their own commercial websites, through shops, and/or work through marketplaces and retailers **while providing a professional warranty to the consumers, thus encouraging the act of buying second hand devices**. This is what distinguishes refurbishers from other professional repairers.

#### **Supporting purchasing power, local jobs and circular economy**

Refurbishment is a growing market that holds many benefits regarding society's actual demands on an economic, social and environmental scales :

1. Representing 10 to 15% of high-tech products sales in some countries in Europe, refurbished products market offers a strong GDP growth (5Md dollars in Europe) and significant local - both low and high skilled - job creation projections (around 700 000 jobs in 2030)<sup>1</sup>, thus widely contributing to the European economy in a post COVID recovery context.
2. By providing high tech and quality products up to 70% cheaper than their brand new counterparts, refurbishment strengthens consumers' purchasing power and allows everyone to equip themselves with products which have proven to be indispensable in our everyday lives, while meeting a key evolution in their demands with environmental matters playing a key role in their choice<sup>2</sup>.
3. Last but not least, whereas a brand new smartphone requires 60kg of CO2 and 44kg of raw materials, refurbishing a smartphone saves 30kg per product and 40kg of raw materials. Refurbishment is thus essential to answer the digital pollution challenge and meet up with the Circular Economy Action Plan and the Paris Climate Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_420](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_420)

<sup>2</sup> According to Eurobarometer Flash 338, 77% of the consumers would rather repair their product than buy a new one

## **How can the CEAP actually support this sector ?**

### *1. Providing a common and harmonized definition of refurbishment.*

First and foremost, refurbishment needs to be expressly addressed in the legislation and identified as specific actors in the second hand sector of activities vis a vis other categories of professionals, including producers and repairers. Without a clear, specific and consistent legal framework the refurbishment sector will not be in a position to expand and thus help meet the CEAP objectives.

### *2. Helping and supporting refurbishment processes by encouraging collection schemes and respecting waste treatment hierarchy*

New collection schemes have to be encouraged to boost EU supply of used high tech products, otherwise. At this stage, due to limited collection opportunities, refurbishers tend to outsource products far from the EU, which is antagonistic with the essence of the circular economy, even though millions of smartphones are today left behind in our drawers in Europe! Producer Responsibility Organizations should be encouraged to participate in the development of these new collection schemes and public authorities should launch wide public campaigns in order to educate the people to the potential of second hand products.

### *3. Securing a level playing field with manufacturers / Enjoining manufacturers to play a fair game*

Also a level playing field should be guaranteed between all the actors of the value chain, especially the manufacturers who should not prevent repair but encourage reuse. Especially, access to spare parts and repair schemes should be guaranteed by manufacturers, at a fair price in order to not discourage refurbishers to collect and repair, or the consumers to buy second hand products from other stakeholders than the OEM.

### *4. Giving customers a Right to repair and nudging them into making truly sustainable choices*

The refurbishment market development has leveraged on customers' demand on social and environmental scales. They should be encouraged in this habit evolution with adequate tools in order to make enlightened and confident consuming choices, such as the development of:

- an EU repairability index that expressly points out which products are easily repairable or not;
- a label attesting to the quality of refurbishment and/or repair;
- the launch of education and pedagogy campaigns to highlight the refurbishment and reuse benefits.

In addition, the EU should ensure an effective consumer's right to repair, whatever the age or the state of its device and as long as possible.



**What else does the sector need ? - Strengthening the growth of a competitive European industry**

*European refurbishment players face the same difficulties as other EU sectors. One of the main problems lies in fair competition that has to be ensured by EU authorities, especially in refurbishment activities where the lack of legislation allows it to easily misbehave. Fiscal schemes should also take into account all the costs and difficulties that this promising business is facing and avoid any additional burden, such as the copyright levies.*

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