

EUREFAS - The European Refurbishment Association Publishes New Document: Bridging the Gap to a Circular Economy

Brussels, June 2024

EUREFAS (European Refurbishment Association) is proud to publish its latest document addressing new members of parliament, titled "Bridging the Gap to a Circular Economy: The European Refurbishment Industry's Contribution." This pivotal document highlights the vital role the refurbishment industry plays in promoting sustainable practices, enhancing European sovereignty, and supporting local economies.

Why Refurbishment Makes a Difference

1. **Environmental Impact:** It significantly reduces the industry's carbon footprint and preserves our planet's invaluable resources.
2. **Economic Growth:** It fosters a sustainable industry that creates jobs and generates economic activity.
3. **Consumer Benefits:** It ensures high-quality standards for refurbished products, prioritizing consumers' interests for reliable, affordable alternatives.

Refurbishment: Breathing New Life into Devices

Refurbishment involves a comprehensive process of collecting, testing, cleaning, data wiping, and repairing devices to ensure they are market-ready. The refurbishment market represented 20 millions of units sold in Europe in 2023¹, showcasing its growing significance.

Boosting the European Industry & Strengthening European Sovereignty

Refurbishment extends device lifespans, reducing dependency on imports and revitalizing the European economy. It brings digital sector value back to Europe, creates jobs, and enhances the EU's strategic autonomy by minimizing reliance on critical raw materials. Refurbished devices offer significant savings, making essential technology accessible while reducing digital inequality. Our sector stimulates local economies and supports employment, presenting a cost-effective solution amid economic uncertainty. Lastly, it reduces the need for new device manufacturing, which accounts for 80% of the environmental footprint of consumer electronics. By extending the lifespan of devices, refurbishment can reduce CO2 emissions by 87%² compared to manufacturing new devices and decrease e-waste.

¹ CCS Insights, Europe's role in Circular Economy, 2024

² "Assessment of the environmental impact of a set of refurbished products", ADEME - French Environment and Energy Management Agency, September 2022
<https://librairie.ademe.fr/dechets-economie-circulaire/5241-evaluation-de-l-impact-environnemental-d-un-ensemble-de-produits-reconditionnes.html>

Our asks to Parliament

FAIRNESS - A Level Playing Field for the European Refurbishment Sector

EUREFAS calls on the European Parliament to enact legislation that ensures effective competition policies, adequate regulations, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure fair competition between EU and non-EU players, as well as between manufacturers and refurbishers. This will promote local economies, job creation, growth, innovation, and consumer choice.

REPAIRABILITY - Creating better devices for consumers

Reliable repairs require compatible parts, improved product design, and the elimination of anti-repair practices. Legislative advancements should continue to make refurbishment accessible, cost-effective, and encourage consumers to choose refurbished over new.

QUALITY - Ensure Consumers' confidence

A standardized label setting high-quality standards for products and organizations is essential for consumer confidence. Standardized labels, endorsed by authorities, will ensure quality assurance and foster market development.

LEGAL CLARITY - A Regulatory and Legal Framework Tailored to the Second-Hand Sector

EUREFAS calls for a new classification system for second-hand sector economic actors and a fitness check of existing regulations to ensure they support repair and refurbishment activities.

SUSTAINABILITY - Solving the Sourcing Equation

To achieve a true circular economy, we must improve take-back and collection schemes, prioritize reuse over recycling, and increase consumer awareness. Enhancing these systems will open up sourcing opportunities at the European level.

Conclusion

EUREFAS is mobilizing to encourage forthcoming EU initiatives supporting fairness in competition practices, consumer trust and confidence, product repairability, sustainability, and tailored legal clarity for the second-hand sector.

Empowering consumers to participate in the circular economy is a genuine opportunity to reconcile the economy, ecology, and purchasing power. It's time to pave the way for a greener world for future generations.

About EUREFAS:

The European Refurbishment Association (EUREFAS) aims to guide European institutions in shaping legislation towards more sustainable consumption of consumer electronics. EUREFAS works in a united front with the common goal of minimising overall environmental impact and ensuring long-term sustainability of the electronics industry by achieving a circular economy.

Find out more at www.eurefas.com.

EUREFAS has signed the transparency register of the European institutions under the number 332404341982-26 and is thus committed to fully comply with its code of conduct while engaging vis à vis the EU officials.

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