



Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs DG

Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska

Exchange of views with the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

23th June 2015

EP – Paul-Henri Spaak (XXX)

15.00 – 16.30

CONTEXT/DEFENSIVES PACKAGE (B)

EP team coordinator:  (EP coordinator – GROW B3)

Telephone number: 

Cabinet Member: Jakub Cebula

[Basis request n°2918](#)

I.1 UNIVERSAL CHARGER

Context:

- *Incompatibility of chargers for mobile telephones is an inconvenience for users across the European Union and creates unnecessary electronic waste.*
- *Major manufacturers of mobile telephones signed a Memorandum of Understanding ("MoU") to harmonise chargers for data-enabled mobile phones sold in the EU. The MoU entered fully into application end 2011, one year after the publication of the relevant standards, and expired end 2012. New generations of mobile telephones, in particular smartphones, and new charging technologies are starting to enter the market. It is important to ensure that harmonisation of chargers of mobile telephones includes them.*
- *The priority is to find a solution based on a voluntary agreement (memorandum of understanding).*
- *In the absence of a voluntary agreement, the Commission will consider to follow the regulatory approach by preparing a delegated act pursuant to Article 3 of the new Radio Equipment Directive (Directive 2014/53/EU).*

EP position/interest:

- *MEPS are in favour of a common charger. A concrete reference to a common charger was a major issue at the time of the adoption of the revised Radio Equipment Directive (2014)*

1. What are the Commission initiatives for ensuring a common charger for mobile telephones in the EU?

- A ‘Study on the impact of the MOU on harmonisation of chargers for mobile telephones and to assess possible future options’ has been carried out. Based on the conclusions of this study, the Commission has invited the manufacturers to agree on a voluntary memorandum of understanding. In the absence of a voluntary agreement, the Commission will consider to follow the regulatory approach.

2. Why is the Commission waiting for an agreement from the manufacturers instead of immediately proposing legal action?

- The 2011/2012 MoU proved to be a success. The study confirmed that the market share of MoU compliant mobile telephones in 2013 was practically 100% within the category of data-enabled mobile telephones. Based on that experience the Commission gives priority to a voluntary agreement as it provides more flexibility with respect to the technical solutions that will need to be agreed by the manufacturers since the beginning.

3. Will the Commission consider the extension of the harmonisation of chargers to other electronic portable devices?

- The Commission will consider the extension of the approach to other small portable devices such as e-readers, cameras, tablets and laptops. The harmonisation of chargers for these electronic devices should further contribute to a reduction of unnecessary waste and to make the everyday life of the citizens easier.

Additional background

- *A ‘Study on the impact of the MOU on harmonisation of chargers for mobile telephones and to assess possible future options’ has been carried out and made available on the Europa website . The study objective was to assess the impacts of initiatives taken on the harmonisation of chargers for mobile telephones and indirectly on the markets for other portable electronic devices and to assess the potential for further harmonisation.*
- *The Commission has been in contact with the representatives of major manufacturers of mobile telephones and has invited them to make proposals to consolidate the achievements regarding the Harmonisation of a Charging Capability for Mobile Phones and to ensure a smooth transition towards the next generation of devices. An initial proposal has just been received from them.*
- *On the basis of their proposal, the Commission is assessing whether harmonisation of chargers can be ensured through a voluntary agreement or whether a legislative proposal under Article 3 of the new Radio Equipment Directive (Directive 2014/53/EU), is necessary.*

The Directive is currently going through its transposition phase and will be applicable as from 13th June 2016.