

Reply to be sent by email

Dear ,

Cabinet Šefčovič asked me to reply to your email.

Please allow me to recapitulate the facts about the 'common charger'.

Around 10 years ago there were 30 different phone chargers available on the market. Consumers often had trouble to recharge their phones unless they kept the appropriate charger with them. In 2009 the Commission facilitated a voluntary agreement between phone companies to implement a common charger solution. That voluntary agreement was a success with respect to consumer convenience as well as reduction in electronic waste. In most cases users were finally able to recharge their phones when they forgot their chargers at home. Practical indeed, especially considering that the new generation of phones require frequent charging. In addition, existing chargers can be reused, and this can potentially help to reduce electronic waste.

In 2014, at the end of that voluntary agreement, the Commission tried to facilitate its extension with the aim of implementing a single common charging solution. Unfortunately, the proposal received from the industry did not provide such a common charging solution. Other than being technically unjustifiable, the risk was to go back to a new proliferation of charger type, resulting in inconvenience to EU citizens. For this reason the Commission is now considering to regulate smartphones as well as, possibly, as related products (tablets, cameras, etc.) with a common charging solution.

One of the Commission's objectives is to facilitate EU citizens' life. Reducing products' environmental footprints is another. We are confident that any future action on a common charger will aim to satisfy both objectives.

Yours sincerely,


Head of Unit



European Commission - DG GROW
Unit C3 – Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Systems