



Nudging and beyond: Consumers toward circular behaviour

Overview

THE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR CONSUMERS IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

"**Retailers** are skilled **choice architects**; **policy makers** are **regulation architects**. How can we best engage regulatory tools for a more circular system?" - William Neale, Advisor for Circular Economy and Green Growth, **DG Environment, European Commission**.

The new CEAP focuses on consumers – ecodesign and other regulatory tools can give consumers a broader choice, and give retailers or prosumers ways to enact these choices. The new consumer agenda will set out a new role for consumers by improving information and operationalising the right to repair.

Ways and Interventions to foster the shift towards circular behaviour

"**Consumers have multiple roles in the circular economy, as buyers, carers, repairers, sellers and sharers.** They need to have both the motivation and the opportunity to act. 77% of Europeans actually claim to make an effort to repair broken items, but 45% do not seek information on reparability when buying products." - Prof. **Oksana Mont, International Institute for Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE), Lund University**.

Policies fostering sustainable consumption

- Prohibit planned obsolescence through durability standards
- Increase product durability through a mandatory labelling system for the product's expected life in normal use
- Extended (Producer) Responsibility to repair and replace defective products for at least four years
- Right-to-repair – support repair industry & offer consumer guarantees for repaired products
- Increase reparability, e.g. VAT reduction for repairs in Sweden
- Lower repair costs by opening up repair markets to independent repairers
- Mandatory provision of reasonably priced spare parts to independent repairers
- Require repair manuals/videos to be available and easily accessible on the internet to the public
- Clear legal frameworks for leasing, renting and sharing-based business models
- Certification schemes for second-hand goods

Circular consumption should also be **supported by nudging**, fostering changes in the physical environment that **make consumers' choices easier**; **encouraging** circular, **repairable** and **upcyclable products**; and simplifying and framing information.

CIRCULAR BUSINESS INITIATIVES IN THE CONSUMER INTERFACE IN GERMANY

dmDrogerie Markt

- **Empowering consumers to choose sustainable alternatives.** For example, green products are placed everywhere in the stores, so that consumers can compare labels and price
- **Engaging consumers in recycling initiatives** and increasing transparency of recycling systems

"The time to act is now. Change should be led by governments" - **Dagmar Glatz**, Product Management, Sustainability and Packaging, **dmDrogerie Markt**

CIRCULAR BUSINESS INITIATIVES IN THE CONSUMER INTERFACE IN ROMANIA

George Bădescu, Executive director, **Association of Large Commercial Networks**

- **Keeping nature clean together:** consumers are encouraged to recycle used oil ecologically and in return they receive mineral water or dishwashing detergent. Almost a year later, 100 000 litres of used oil have been collected, 100 billion litres of water have been saved from contamination and 50 000 consumers have been involved in the project.
- **Payment with PET:** "We Put a Price on Plastic" is a circular economy programme aimed at reducing the amount of plastic packaging and introducing plastic into a responsible circuit, through reduction, reuse and recycling. Customers are able to buy fruit and vegetables from local producers in the partner supermarket in their city, with PET.
- **Each battery counts!** For every seven used batteries delivered, customers receive 1 new AAA or AAA 1.5V battery. Special containers for collecting used batteries can be found at Customer Info, in all of the retailer's physical stores.

CONSUMER COOPERATIVES

(supermarkets owned by their consumer members)

"**Engagement and involvement** are **key** for the success of the **circular economy**, and **consumer cooperatives also provide a sustainable business** for a sustainable recovery post Covid-19", **Rosita Zilli**, Deputy Secretary-General, **EuroCoop**

FROM ATTITUDE TO ACTION - GENERATING MORE CIRCULAR BEHAVIOUR

- **Main tool** for fostering cooperation throughout the supply chain is "**own brand**" **products**
- Important to **send more coherent messages to consumers** (e.g. with fewer types of labels)
- **Offer a large assortment of ecolabelled**, organic products
- Ensure **prices convey the right signal** (accessible and affordable) and that **waste is reduced at every stage of the chain**

Pioneers in offering sustainable products and promoting sustainable initiatives: [Coop Italy - Viviverde eco-label](#) and [Hispacoop](#).

NEW CHALLENGES

Challenges for retailers include **implementing deposit refund schemes** and **transposing the requirements of the single-use plastics** directive.