

Question for written answer E-000414/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Resolving regulatory conflict between the circular economy and single market rules

The EU positions the circular economy as being central to competitiveness and climate goals, while the single market's product safety framework ensures consumer protection and fair competition.

Current EU product legislation, designed for linear markets, creates barriers for circular business models. The refurbished electronics sector, growing 10.2 % annually and towards EUR 123.4 billion by 2031, faces inconsistent Member State classifications with refurbishers treated as manufacturers in some countries and as distributors in others. This fragmentation undermines single market harmonisation and limits the scaling of circular operations that extend product lifecycles and reduce e-waste.

Consequently, tension exists between product safety and circular economy objectives, even though these goals should reinforce each other. Circular material use has risen from 10.7 % to 11.8 % in over a decade, while e-waste continues to grow, highlighting a systemic failure to move beyond linear models.

1. How will the Commission resolve regulatory conflict between the circular economy objectives and single market product safety rules, to ensure that they are complementary and do not require trade-offs?
2. Will future product legislation, including the proposed new legislative framework revision and circular economy act, be designed to accommodate both linear and circular business models from the outset, instead of forcing circular operators into frameworks built for new products?

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