

WEEE: WEEE Directive (Directive 2012/19/EU), explained

The WEEE Directive makes every producer of electrical and electronic equipment, importers and distance sellers included, finance the collection and treatment of waste from its products and mark them with the crossed-out wheeled bin, with free take-back by distributors. It has applied since 14 February 2014 and was last amended by Directive (EU) 2024/884, transposed by 9 October 2025.

Reviewed 24 September 2026 by Conphora compliance team · Next review 14 March 2027 · Not legal advice

Key facts

Reference	Directive 2012/19/EU	Act type	Directive
In force	13 August 2012	Applies from	14 February 2014
Amended by	Directive (EU) 2018/849, Directive (EU) 2024/884	Enforced by	Member States inspect and monitor the register data, shipments and treatment facilities and lay down effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties in their transposing laws; the directive is listed in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 on market surveillance for its product requirements.
CELEX	32012L0019		

Key dates

4 July 2012	Directive 2012/19/EU adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in Strasbourg, recasting Directive 2002/96/EC	title and signature block after Art. 27
13 August 2012	Entry into force, the twentieth day after publication in OJ L 197 of 24 July 2012; the directive applies to the ten Annex I categories, including photovoltaic panels, during the transitional period	Art. 2(1)(a), Art. 20(2) and Art. 26
14 February 2014	Deadline for Member States to bring their transposing laws into force and to notify their penalty rules to the Commission	Art. 22 and Art. 24(1)
15 February 2014	Directive 2002/96/EC, as amended by Directives 2003/108/EC and 2008/34/EC, repealed; references to it are read as references to Directive 2012/19/EU per the Annex XII correlation table	Art. 25, Annex XI, Part A, and Annex XII
15 August 2015	Annex V, Part 2 recovery targets apply by Annex I category until 14 August 2018, for example 85 % recovery and 80 % preparing for re-use and recycling for large household appliances and automatic dispensers	Art. 11(1) and Annex V, Part 2
1 January 2016	Minimum collection rate of 45 % of the average weight of EEE placed on the market in the three preceding years; the 4 kg per inhabitant rate applied until 31 December 2015	Art. 7(1)
4 July 2018	Directive (EU) 2018/849 in force: Member State data reporting rewritten in Article 16(6) to (9), Article 16a on incentives for the waste hierarchy inserted and the delegated-act power in Article 19 narrowed to Annexes IV, VII, VIII and IX	Art. 3 and Art. 5
15 August 2018	Open scope: the directive applies to all EEE classified in the six Annex III categories, subject to the Article 2(3) and 2(4) exclusions; Annex V, Part 3	Art. 2(1)(b), Art. 2(4), Art. 12(1)(c), Art. 13(1)(c), Art. 15(2) and Anne

recovery targets apply; producer financing and the date mark for open-scope EEE start from this date

1 January 2019	Minimum annual collection rate of 65 % of the average weight of EEE placed on the market in the three preceding years, or 85 % of WEEE generated; ten listed Member States could postpone it until 14 August 2021 at the latest	Art. 7(1) and Art. 7(3)
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5 July 2020	Deadline for Member States to transpose Directive (EU) 2018/849	Art. 4(1)
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25 January 2022	Court of Justice judgment in Case C-181/20 (Vysočina Wind) declares Article 13(1) invalid in so far as it made producers finance waste from photovoltaic panels placed on the market between 13 August 2005 and 13 August 2012	recitals 4 to 6
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8 April 2024	Directive (EU) 2024/884 in force: producer financing limited to photovoltaic panels placed on the market from 13 August 2012 and open-scope EEE from 15 August 2018, EN 50419:2022 referenced for marking, and the Article 24a review inserted	Art. 1 and Art. 3
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1 July 2025	Denmark: elektronikaffaldsbekendtgørelsen, executive order nr. 942 of 20 June 2025, in force, replacing executive order nr. 1566 of 19 December 2022 and implementing Directive (EU) 2024/884	§ 71 and note 1
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2 July 2025	Commission publishes its evaluation of the directive (SWD(2025) 184 and 185): relevant, coherent and proportionate, but nearly half of the WEEE generated is not collected and enforcement gaps remain, particularly for online sellers; findings feed the revision under the Circular Economy Act	
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9 October 2025	Deadline for Member States to transpose Directive (EU) 2024/884	Art. 2(1)
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31 December 2026	Deadline for the Commission to assess the need for a revision of the directive, including a separate photovoltaic-panel category and a mechanism covering panel waste costs if a producer fails, with a legislative proposal where appropriate	Art. 24a
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Obligations by role

Producer (manufacturer, brand owner, own-brand reseller, importer or distance seller)

- Register in the producer register of every Member State where you are a producer before placing EEE on its market, providing the Annex X, Part A information: name, address and contact person, national identification and tax number, the Annex III category and type of equipment, brand name, how you meet your responsibilities individually or through a collective scheme including the financial guarantee, the selling technique and a declaration that the information is true. In Denmark the registration with Dansk Producentansvar must be made at least 14 days before you first place equipment on the market, and changes must be registered within one month. Art. 16(1) and (2) and Annex X, Part A; § 6 and § 8
- Register in the producer register of every Member State where you are a producer before placing EEE on its market, with the Annex X, Part A information; in Denmark with Dansk Producentansvar at least 14 days before you first place equipment on the market. Art. 16(1) and (2) and Annex X, Part A; § 6
- Register changes to your registered producer information; in Denmark within one month of the change. Art. 16(2); § 8
- Finance at least the collection from collection facilities, treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of WEEE from private households arising from your own products, individually or by joining a collective scheme, and provide a guarantee when placing each product on the market, in the form of participation in a financing scheme, a recycling insurance or a blocked bank account. This applies to Annex I equipment placed on the market after 13 August 2005, to photovoltaic panels placed on the market from 13 August 2012 and to open-scope EEE placed on the market from 15 August 2018; historical waste from other Annex I equipment is financed collectively by all producers on the market in proportion to their market share. Art. 12(1), (3) and (4)
- Finance at least the collection from collection facilities, treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of household WEEE from your own products, individually or through a collective scheme, and your market share of historical household WEEE. Art. 12(1) and (4)
- When placing each product on the market, provide a guarantee that the management of its WEEE will be financed: participation in a financing scheme, a recycling insurance or a blocked bank account. Art. 12(3)
- Finance the collection, treatment, recovery and disposal of WEEE from users other than private households for the same product groups and dates; for historical Annex I waste replaced by new equivalent products you finance the costs when supplying the new products, unless the Member State makes the business user responsible, and you may agree other financing methods with business customers by contract. Producers or third parties acting on their behalf must also provide for the collection of such non-household WEEE. Art. 5(5) and Art. 13
- Mark every item of EEE placed on the market with the crossed-out wheeled bin of Annex IX, visibly, legibly and indelibly and preferably in accordance with EN 50419:2022; only where the size or function of the product makes this necessary may the symbol go on the packaging, the instructions and the warranty instead. Add the Article 15(2) mark showing that the equipment was placed on the market after 13 August 2005, for photovoltaic panels from 13 August 2012 and for open-scope EEE from 15 August 2018; EN 50419:2022, which the directive recommends, also identifies the producer and the date. Art. 12(3), Art. 14(4), Art. 15(2) and Annex IX
- Within one year after placing a new type of EEE on the Union market for the first time, provide re-use centres and treatment and recycling facilities, free of charge and in manuals or electronic form, with the information they need on preparation for re-use and treatment, identifying components and materials and the location of dangerous substances and mixtures. Art. 15(1)
- Report to the register the Annex X, Part B data per category: the quantity of EEE placed on the national market by weight and the quantity of WEEE separately collected, recycled including prepared for re-use,

recovered and disposed of or shipped within or outside the Union, and keep records of the weight of WEEE leaving collection facilities and entering and leaving treatment and recovery facilities. In Denmark the annual report to Dansk Producentansvar is due by 31 March for the preceding calendar year, with an auditor's attestation by 31 May unless a size exemption applies.

Art. 11(4), Art. 16(2)(c) and Annex X, Part B; § 13 and § 14

- Report to the register the Annex X, Part B data per category: EEE placed on the national market by weight and WEEE separately collected, recycled, recovered, disposed of or shipped; in Denmark to Dansk Producentansvar by 31 March for the preceding calendar year. Art. 16(2)(c) and Annex X, Part B; § 13
- Keep records of the weight of WEEE leaving collection facilities and entering and leaving treatment and recovery facilities. Art. 11(4)
- In Denmark, submit an auditor's attestation of the annual report by 31 May unless a size exemption applies. § 14
- Set up, individually or collectively, systems for the recovery of WEEE using best available techniques and meet the Annex V, Part 3 minimum targets for all separately collected WEEE: 85 % recovery and 80 % preparing for re-use and recycling for temperature exchange and large equipment, 80 % and 70 % for screens, 75 % and 55 % for small equipment and small IT equipment, and 80 % recycling for lamps; treatment must at least remove all fluids and the Annex VII substances and components, and WEEE exported outside the Union counts only where equivalent treatment conditions are proven.

Art. 8(2) and (3), Art. 10(2), Art. 11(1) and Annex V, Part 3

- Do not prevent WEEE from being re-used through specific design features or manufacturing processes unless they bring overriding advantages for the environment or safety, and where you are established in another Member State appoint an authorised representative by written mandate; a distance seller selling into a Member State where it is not established must do so. Art. 4 and Art. 17
- Do not prevent WEEE from being re-used through specific design features or manufacturing processes unless they bring overriding advantages for the environment or safety. Art. 4
- Where you sell EEE by distance contract into a Member State where you are not established, appoint an authorised representative there by written mandate; a producer established in another Member State may do so. Art. 17

Distributor (wholesaler or retailer, in store or online)

- When supplying a new product to a private household, take back the old equipment of equivalent type that fulfilled the same functions, at least free of charge and on a one-to-one basis, unless the Member State has arranged an equally easy and free alternative for the final holder. Art. 5(2)(b)
- In retail shops with sales areas relating to EEE of at least 400 m², or in their immediate proximity, collect very small WEEE with no external dimension over 25 cm free of charge for end-users and without any obligation to buy, unless an assessment made public shows that existing collection schemes are at least as effective. Art. 5(2)(c)
- Ensure that WEEE you receive is passed on for proper treatment under Article 8, and transmit the information on the WEEE received by you that the Member State needs to establish its collection rate, free of charge; WEEE that presents a health and safety risk because of contamination may be refused. Art. 5(2)(c) and (e) and Art. 7(2)(b)
- Ensure that WEEE you receive is passed on for proper treatment under Article 8; WEEE that presents a health and safety risk because of contamination may be refused. Art. 5(2)(c) and (e)
- Transmit free of charge the information on the WEEE you received that the Member State needs to establish its collection rate. Art. 7(2)(b)
- Provide users with the information the Member State requires, for example in the instructions for use or at the point of sale: that WEEE must not be disposed of as unsorted municipal waste, which return and collection systems exist, the user's role in re-use and recycling, the effects of hazardous substances and the meaning of the crossed-out wheeled bin. Art. 14(2) and (5)
- Check who the producer is: if you resell under your own name or trademark, or place EEE from another country on the market on a professional basis, you are yourself a producer with the full registration, financing, marking and reporting duties. In Denmark a distributor may not acquire and sell EEE from producers that are not registered in the producer register. Art. 3(1)(f)(ii) and (iii) and Art. 3(1)(g); § 12 and § 70, nr. 4
- If you resell EEE under your own name or trademark, or place EEE from another country on the market on a professional basis, you are yourself a producer with the full registration, financing, marking and reporting duties. Art. 3(1)(f)(ii) and (iii) and Art. 3(1)(g)
- In Denmark, do not acquire and sell EEE from producers that are not registered in the producer register. § 12 and § 70, nr. 4

Authorised representative

- Act under a written mandate from the producer and take responsibility for fulfilling that producer's obligations under the directive on the territory of the Member State where you are established; a producer established in another Member State may appoint you, and a distance seller selling into your Member State must. Art. 17(1) to (3)
- Register in the national producer register with the Annex X, Part A information, including your own name, address and contact person and the contact details of the producer you represent, and undertake to keep it up to date. In Denmark the producer registers its representative with Dansk Producentansvar, which asks the representative to confirm the registration digitally within 7 days; each producer may register only one representative. Art. 16(1) and (2)(a) and (b) and Annex X, Part A, point 1; § 7, stk. 4 and 5
- Report the Annex X, Part B data for the represented producer: reporting period, category, quantity of EEE placed on the national market by weight and quantities of WEEE separately collected, recycled, recovered, disposed of and shipped. Art. 16(2)(c) and Annex X, Part B
- Ensure the financing, guarantee, marking and information duties of Articles 12 to 15 are met for the represented producer's equipment on your territory, since the mandate makes you the person responsible for the producer's obligations there. Art. 12 to Art. 15 and Art. 17(1) and (2)

Penalties

Member States lay down the rules on penalties for infringements of their national provisions adopted under the directive; the penalties must be effective, proportionate and dissuasive and had to be notified to the Commission by 14 February 2014. Member States must also inspect and monitor at least the information reported to the producer register, shipments and in particular exports of WEEE outside the Union, and the operations at treatment facilities, and may charge the costs of analysing and storing used EEE suspected to be WEEE to the producers or the persons arranging the shipment. In Denmark the elektronikaffaldsbekendtgørelsen, executive order nr. 942 of 20 June 2025, punishes with a fine anyone who places EEE on the market without being registered, gives incorrect or misleading registration information, sells equipment from unregistered producers, fails to report or reports incorrectly, fails to provide the financial guarantee, fails to mark the equipment, fails to take back or collect assigned WEEE or ignores an order from the supervisory authority; the penalty can rise to imprisonment of up to 2 years where the infringement was intentional or grossly negligent and caused environmental damage or a financial gain, and companies can be held criminally liable. Miljøstyrelsen supervises the producer duties, may order documents, data and supply-chain information, buy test products under a hidden identity and order online content changed or removed, and hears appeals against decisions of Dansk Producentansvar within 4 weeks. Art. 22 and Art. 23; § 65 to § 70

Checklist

- 1. Confirm each product is EEE within 1 000 V AC or 1 500 V DC and that no Article 2(3) or 2(4) exclusion applies; assign it to one of the six Annex III categories, noting that photovoltaic panels fall in large equipment.
- 2. Map where you are a producer: where you manufacture or brand, where you resell under your own brand, where you import on a professional basis, and every Member State you sell into by distance communication (Article 3(1)(f)).
- 3. Register in each national producer register before placing products on that market, with the Annex X, Part A data; in Denmark register with Dansk Producentansvar at least 14 days before the first sale (Article 16, § 6).
- 4. For Member States where you are not established, appoint an authorised representative by written mandate and register through it; distance sellers must (Article 17).
- 5. Choose how to finance: join a collective scheme or set up an individual system, and put the financial guarantee in place for every product placed on the market (Article 12(3)).
- 6. Apply the crossed-out wheeled bin and the producer and date mark to the equipment itself, per EN 50419:2022, and move it to the packaging, instructions and warranty only where size or function requires (Articles 14(4) and 15(2), Annex IX).
- 7. Publish the re-use and treatment information for each new type of EEE within one year of first placing it on the Union market (Article 15(1)).
- 8. Set up the data flow for the annual report of quantities placed on the market and WEEE collected and treated, per category and by weight; in Denmark by 31 March with the auditor's attestation by 31 May (Article 16(2)(c), Annex X, Part B, §§ 13 and 14).
- 9. If you are a distributor, organise free one-to-one take-back at the point of sale and, in shops with at least 400 m² of EEE sales area, collection of very small WEEE without purchase (Article 5(2)).
- 10. Keep the registration current, record changes within one month in Denmark, and re-check the framework after the Commission's Article 24a review, due by 31 December 2026.

Sources

1. Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment, consolidated text of 8 April 2024 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02012L0019-20240408>
2. Directive 2012/19/EU as published in OJ L 197, 24 July 2012 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32012L0019>
3. Document information, dates and relationships for CELEX 32012L0019 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32012L0019>
4. Directive (EU) 2018/849 amending Directives 2000/53/EC, 2006/66/EC and 2012/19/EU (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018L0849>
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6. Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 on market surveillance and compliance of products, Annex I (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R1020>
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8. New evaluation looks at how to improve WEEE Directive, 2 July 2025 (European Commission, DG Environment) — https://environment.ec.europa.eu/news/new-evaluation-looks-how-improve-weee-directive-2025-07-02_en
9. Bekendtgørelse nr. 942 af 20. juni 2025 om at bringe elektrisk og elektronisk udstyr i omsætning samt håndtering af affald af sådant udstyr (elektronikaffaldsbekendtgørelsen) (Retsinformation) — <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2025/942>
10. Producentansvar for elektronik (Miljøstyrelsen) — <https://mst.dk/erhverv/groen-produktion-og-affald/affald-og-genanvendelse/producentansvar/elektronik>

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