



Combining Strategies, Engaging Retailers and Convenience: ECOSWEEE Unlocks Best Practices for Small E-Waste and Batteries Management

[Brussels, Belgium] – After having run twenty pilots across Europe in the past two years, the ECOSWEEE project, co-funded by the EU, has presented vital insights for enhancing the collection of small end-of-use electricals and batteries.

ECOSWEEE emphasizes the importance of engaging retailers as key facilitators, and prioritizing user convenience to create sustainable, scalable collection models. A combination of incentives, as opposed to one single incentive, is more effective in collecting more end-of-use items. Incentives can stimulate participation but are never the sole success driver – infrastructure, demographics and legislation have a strong impact too.

Best practices

The project identified the following constitutive elements for environmentally and economically sustainable outcomes.

- Accessible, visible, high-traffic **collection points** drive higher collection.
- **Retailers** emerged as critical facilitators due to their direct consumer **touchpoints** and bridge between them and producers and PROs. Strengthening their role is essential to collecting more small products and batteries.
- **Repetition builds habits:** repetitive, consistent campaigns are effective in fostering **consumer loyalty** and lasting **behavioural change**.
- The second hand market of **repairers** and **refurbishers** complements buy back strategies. The project recommends that these organisations report their activities and the quantities of devices they collect in order to inform product lifespans. Whilst buy-back strategies may not be suitable as long-term solutions for Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) that manage the collection, they highlight opportunities for the second-hand market to play a greater role.
- While **Deposit Return Systems** show potential as incentives for consumers to return products at end of use, the project concludes that they may not be the best fit for long-term strategies. Additional testing tailored to specific markets, products and locations is needed to refine their viability.



Focus on E-Vapes: A Growing Challenge

Two pilots highlighted the growing issue of **e-vapes**, addressing challenges such as low awareness, growing quantities consumed, inappropriate disposal, and fire risks from lithium batteries.

Says Pascal Leroy, Director-General of the WEEE Forum, one of the partners in the project: *“The project recommends establishing a **dedicated e-vape collection network**, particularly through retail stores, supported by strong promotional campaigns. Products should be **designed** to make it easier to remove batteries safely. And we call on the legislator to introduce **clear regulatory measures** for the safe transport and disposal of e-vapes, including fire prevention protocols.”*

Policymaking

The project’s conclusions and recommendations provide practical guidance for policymakers, offering scalable solutions to improve small e-waste and battery collection systems. By addressing gaps in infrastructure, retailer involvement, and incentive structures, ECOSWEEE supports the development of waste legislation aligned with the EU’s circular economy goals.

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About the ECOSWEEE Project

The ECOSWEEE project, co-financed by the EU LIFE Programme, aimed to design and test innovative methods to increase the collection and recycling rates of small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and portable batteries. By exploring scalable strategies and fostering collaboration, the project contributes to a sustainable circular economy.