

EU rules to force USB-C chargers for all phones

Manufacturers will be forced to create a universal charging solution for phones and small electronic devices, under a new rule proposed by the European Commission (EC).

The aim is to reduce waste by encouraging consumers to re-use existing chargers when buying a new device.

All smartphones sold in the EU must have USB-C chargers, the proposal said.

Apple has warned such a move would harm innovation.

The tech giant is the main manufacturer of smartphones using a custom charging port, as its iPhone series uses an Apple-made "Lightning" connector.

"We remain concerned that strict regulation mandating just one type of connector stifles innovation rather than encouraging it, which in turn will harm consumers in Europe and around the world," the firm told the BBC.

Most Android phones come with USB micro-B charging ports, or have already moved to the more modern USB-C standard.

New models of the iPad and MacBook use USB-C charging ports, as do high-end phone models from popular Android manufacturers such as Samsung and Huawei.

The changes would apply to the charging port on the device body, whereas the end of the cable connecting to a plug could be USB-C or USB-A.

Around half of chargers sold with mobile phones in the European Union in 2018 had a USB micro-B connector, while 29% had a USB-C connector and 21% a Lightning connector, a Commission impact assessment study in 2019 found.

The proposed rules will apply to:

smartphones

tablets

cameras

headphones

portable speakers

handheld video game consoles

Other products including earbuds, smart-watches and fitness trackers were not considered for technical reasons linked to size and use conditions.

The proposal also standardizes fast charging speeds - meaning devices capable of fast charging will be charged at the same speeds.

Preventing waste

EU politicians have been campaigning for a common standard for over a decade, with the Commission's research estimating that disposed of and unused charging cables generate more than 11,000 tonnes of waste per year.

In the European Union, around 420 million mobile phones and other portable electronic devices were sold in the last year.

The average person owns around three mobile phone chargers, of which they use two regularly.

In 2009, there were more than 30 different chargers, whereas now most models stick to three - the USB-C, Lightning and USB micro-B.

It may be a number of years before the proposals come into effect.

The legislative proposal, known as a Directive, will be debated by the European Parliament and national governments.

MEPs and member states may suggest amendments to the proposal. Only once the EC has agreed these amendments, will the directive be enacted.

The EC hopes that will happen in 2022 - after which member states usually have two years to enact the rules into national law, and manufacturers will have 24 months to change their charging ports.

"We gave industry plenty of time to come up with their own solutions, now time is ripe for legislative action for a common charger. This is an important win for our consumers and environment and in line with our green and digital ambitions," Commission Vice President Margrethe Vestager said.

欧盟将强制所有手机使用 **USB-C** 充电接口

根据欧盟委员会（EC）提出的新规，制造商将被迫为手机和小型电子设备提供通用充电解决方案。

其目的是通过鼓励消费者在购买新设备时重复使用现有充电设备来减少浪费。

该提案称，在欧盟销售的所有智能手机都必须配备 **USB-C** 充电器。

苹果公司警告，此举将遏制创新。

苹果公司生产的智能手机使用定制充电端口，其 **iPhone** 系列使用苹果制造的“闪电”连接线。

苹果公司告诉英国广播公司：“我们坚持认为，严格规定只能使用一种连接线会扼杀创新，而不是鼓励创新，这反而会损害欧洲和世界各地消费者的利益。”

大多数安卓手机都配有 **USB micro-B** 充电端口，或者已经更新为更现代的 **USB-C** 端口。

iPad 和 **MacBook** 的新机型使用 **USB-C** 充电端口，三星和华为等知名高端安卓手机制造商也使用 **USB-C** 充电端口。

规定要求设备主体上的充电端口需要更改为 **USB-C**，而连接到插头的电缆端可以是 **USB-C** 或 **USB-A**。

欧盟委员会 2019 年的一项影响评估研究发现，2018 年在欧盟销售的手机充电器中，约有一半采用 USB micro-B 接口，29%采用 USB-C 接口，21%采用“闪电”接口。

新规提案将适用于：

智能手机

平板电脑

照相机

耳机

便携式音箱

手持电子游戏机

嵌入式耳机、智能手表和健身追踪器等产品由于受尺寸和使用条件等技术原因限制不在适用范围内。

该提案还对快速充电速度进行了标准化，这意味着能够快速充电的设备将以相同的速度充电。

防止浪费

十多年来，欧盟政客一直在为通用标准而努力，欧盟委员会的研究估计，废弃和未使用的充电线每年会产生超过 11000 吨的废物。

在欧盟，2020 年销售了约 4.2 亿部手机和其他便携式电子设备。

普通人大约有三个手机充电器，其中两个经常使用。

2009 年，共有 30 多种不同的充电器，而现在大多数手机型号都使用三种——USB-C、“闪电”和 USB micro-B。

这项提案可能需要若干年才能生效。

欧洲议会和各国政府将针对这项指令进行辩论。

欧洲议会议员和成员国可对提案提出修改意见。只有在欧盟委员会同意这些修改意见后，该指令才能通过。

欧盟委员会希望在 2022 年颁布该指令——此后，成员国一般有两年的时间将该项指令写入本国法律，制造商将有 24 个月的时间更换充电端口。

欧盟委员会副主席玛格丽特·维斯塔格表示：“我们给了业界足够的时间来提出他们自己的解决方案，现在采取立法行动统一充电器的时机已经成熟。这对我们的消费者和环境来说是一个重要的胜利，符合我们的绿色和数字化发展目标。”