Make-or-break aspects of the EU's Sustainable Products Initiative

Digital Product Passport

Information is key to ensure that products are sustainably designed, sold, (re)used, repaired and treated at the end of their life. As part of the Sustainable Products Initiative, the European Commission proposes to create Digital Product Passports (DPP), with the aim to store and share all relevant information along the product lifecycle. Ambitious information requirements, ones that are mandatory, wide-ranging and properly enforced, could create an incentive to make more sustainable choices, starting at the manufacturing stage and finishing at end-of-life.

The DPP has the potential to create new opportunities for circularity and make circular business models viable. It would enable buyers to better assess product sustainability performance and choose accordingly. It could also help identify which products pose a threat to our health and the environment (e.g. substances of concern, wasteful components or types of products), and incentivise their replacement.

The SPI will be successful if...

For the Digital Product Passports to play their crucial role, the SPI should require them to:

- ✔ Become mandatory and ultimately apply to all products on the EU market.

- ✔ Introduce mandatory information requirements, supporting ecodesign of products, long product lifetime, and improved material recovery. For example, the DPP should provide details on spare parts availability, repair history and a full list of chemical contents.

- ✔ Be accessible to all relevant actors, including consumers and market surveillance authorities, and adapt information to the targeted user.

- ✔ Be used to generate data needed to accelerate the phase-out of unsustainable products (including substances of concern). The DPP can be used by manufacturers and designers to better understand product performance, and what is needed to improve them. But it could also be used by public authorities to refine regulatory requirements when it comes to ecodesign legislation.

- ✔ Include due diligence and information on the conditions in which products are manufactured.

- ✔ Standardise the information format to allow comparison between.

- ✔ Verify the accuracy of information through dedicated enforcement mechanisms.

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Digital Product Passport

Circularity **Transparency** **Sustainability along the entire value chain**
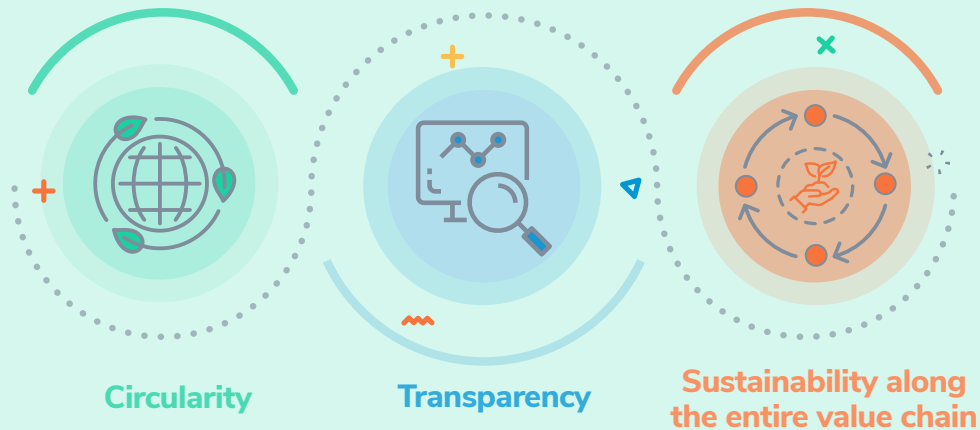
The SPI will be too weak if...

While information requirements can encourage companies to develop more sustainable products, they will not suffice unless they are coupled with sustainable performance requirements, which will be a true game changer for our products.

In addition, data accessibility needs to be guaranteed: it should be free of charge, standardised, provided in the user's language, and contain the necessary level of detail.

The Digital Product Passport will also require a significant investment not only from the European institutions, but also companies and national authorities – and we need to make the most out of this investment: DPP should not be applied to isolated sectors only, even if its use will be decided on a sector-by-sector basis. The rule-of-thumb is very simple: the more we use it, the more impactful it will become.

A strong SPI is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to make sustainable products the norm!

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