

EGMF comments on the EC roadmap on proposal for a legal act on AI requirements

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EGMF represents European manufacturers of garden, landscaping, forestry and turf maintenance equipment.

EGMF is pleased to provide its comments on the new Roadmap on proposal for a legal act on AI requirements. Firstly, we greatly appreciate the initiative of the Commission to address specific ethical and legal issues raised by AI with the overall objective of stimulating the uptake of trustworthy and lawful AI across the Single Market. EGMF fully supports the focus on trust-based and human-centric AI.

EGMF's view is that AI should not be addressed as a threat, but rather as an opportunity to enhance product performance, innovation and social welfare. However, when drawing up possible regulatory measures, it is important to ensure that these measures do not overregulate, are consistent with other regulations (e.g. Privacy, Cybersecurity, IoT, etc.) and leave enough room for innovation.

We acknowledge the need to verify whether the existing legislation sufficiently covers risks resulting from AI, yet we call for a sound impact assessment in order to prevent over-regulation and/or legal uncertainty. For example, EGMF is convinced that current EU product safety regulation is largely fit for purpose and sufficiently covers AI as a risk cause.

It should also be kept in mind that AI may not only increase risks but can offer different technological options to maintain or potentially reduce risks. For further political development of the issue, EGMF proposes to have a discussion amongst the relevant stakeholders on the definition of risk and also about the risk levels.

Furthermore, the sectorial approach of the EU when defining high-risk seems to lead to sectorial legislation in the future. EGMF calls for a horizontal approach as we fear that a vertical approach would lead to significant legal gaps and uncertainty. It would be very difficult to revise all relevant vertical legislation in a coherent manner. As a result, it would be worth the effort to aim for a European horizontal AI law which would allow the introduction of basic principles such as prohibition of discrimination, ethic rules, permissible purpose etc.

Among the policy options proposed, EGMF is in favour of either option 0 or option 1. Current legislation with Risk Assessment requirements (e.g. MD) already cover AI indirectly, so such legislation does not need changing. Option 1 would offer the opportunity of soft legislation which can focus on industry-led actions, such as the development of standards. This would allow manufacturers to continue referring to the Machinery Directive to provide machinery compliance and safety, while committing to soft legislation on AI via specific industry standards/codes of conduct in relation to trustworthy uses of data

With regard to option 2, a voluntary labelling scheme could be set up for those AI applications that do not qualify as 'high-risk'. If complied with certain requirements on AI, companies could label their products and services as trustworthy, and participate in the scheme on voluntary basis. However, once a company has decided to use the label, the requirements would be binding. EGMF believes that,



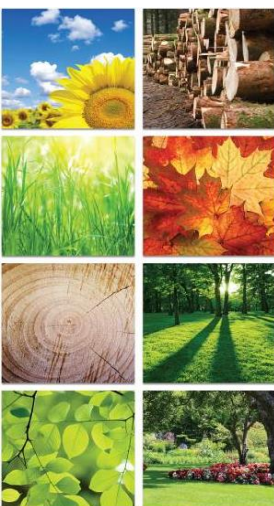
before any type of voluntary labelling scheme is introduced, clear transparent rules and metrics based on international standards have to be agreed on, and national schemes should be avoided.

In general, whatever option is considered, the main demand of the garden machinery industry is to have rapid development and citation of relevant harmonised standards within the New Legislative Framework.

Conclusion

AI-related issues covering more than one industry/product category, should be tackled via horizontal EU legislation, while keeping flexibility in specific, vertical EU legislation based on its application. For this reason, options 0 and 1 are most preferred.

For further information, please contact: EGMF Secretariat, secretariat@egmf.org



The European Garden Machinery Industry Federation – EGMF – has been the voice of the entire garden machinery industry in Europe since 1977. With 30 European corporate members and 7 National Associations representing manufacturers of garden, landscaping, forestry and turf maintenance equipment, we are the most powerful network in this sector in Europe.

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