

DIRECTIVES

COMMISSION DELEGATED DIRECTIVE (EU) 2022/274

of 13 December 2021

amending, for the purposes of adapting to scientific and technical progress, Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards an exemption for the use of mercury in cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent lamps for special purposes

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 5(1), point (a), thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Directive 2011/65/EU requires Member States to ensure that electrical and electronic equipment placed on the market does not contain the hazardous substances listed in Annex II to that Directive. That restriction does not apply to certain exempted applications listed in Annex III to that Directive.
- (2) The categories of electrical and electronic equipment to which Directive 2011/65/EU applies are listed in Annex I to that Directive.
- (3) Mercury is a restricted substance listed in Annex II to Directive 2011/65/EU.
- (4) By Decision 2010/571/EU ⁽²⁾, the Commission granted, among other things, an exemption for the use of mercury in cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent lamps (CCFL and EEFL) for special purposes ('the exemption'), which is now listed as exemption 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c) in Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU. The exemption was to expire on 21 July 2016, in accordance with Article 5(2), second subparagraph, point (a), of that Directive.
- (5) The exemption covers a heterogeneous group of lamps of different shapes, technologies, applications, and purposes. Mercury is used in the discharge tube, which is essential to convert electrical energy to light.
- (6) On 15 January 2015, the Commission received an application for renewal of the exemption ('the renewal application'), that is within the time limit laid down in Article 5(5) of Directive 2011/65/EU, which was followed in January 2020 by an additional renewal application from the same applicants. In accordance with Article 5(5) of Directive 2011/65/EU, the exemption remains valid until a decision on the renewal request has been adopted.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 174, 1.7.2011, p. 88.

⁽²⁾ Commission Decision 2010/571/EU of 24 September 2010 amending, for the purposes of adapting to scientific and technical progress, the Annex to Directive 2002/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards exemptions for applications containing lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyls or polybrominated diphenyl ethers (OJ L 251, 25.9.2010, p. 28).

- (7) The evaluation of the renewal application, which took into account the availability of substitutes and the socioeconomic impact of substitution, concluded that the substitution or elimination of mercury in the applications concerned is currently technically impracticable. However, that evaluation highlighted that mercury-free substitutes in the form of light emitting diodes lamps (LED) are available, and that they are used as lighting sources in new equipment coming on the market. The evaluation included stakeholder consultations in accordance with Article 5(7) of Directive 2011/65/EU. The comments received during those consultations were made publicly available on a dedicated website.
- (8) The exemption is consistent with Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁾ and thus does not weaken the environmental and health protection afforded by it.
- (9) Although CCFL and EEFL in many applications have been replaced by mercury free substitutes, some applications still require such lamps to ensure their functionality and to avoid a premature generation of electrical and electronic waste.
- (10) It is therefore appropriate to grant the renewal of the exemption for a period of three years, in accordance with Article 5(2), first subparagraph, of Directive 2011/65/EU, only for those lamps used in the electrical and electronic equipment that was placed on the market before the adoption of this Directive. In accordance with Article 5(2), first subparagraph, of Directive 2011/65/EU, the duration of the exemption is unlikely to have adverse impacts on innovation.
- (11) Directive 2011/65/EU should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

Article 1

Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU is amended as set out in the Annex to this Directive.

Article 2

1. Member States shall adopt and publish, by 30 September 2022 at the latest, the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive. They shall forthwith communicate to the Commission the text of those provisions.

They shall apply those provisions from 1 October 2022.

When Member States adopt those provisions, they shall contain a reference to this Directive or be accompanied by such a reference on the occasion of their official publication. Member States shall determine how such reference is to be made.

2. Member States shall communicate to the Commission the text of the main provisions of national law which they adopt in the field covered by this Directive.

Article 3

This Directive shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC (OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

Article 4

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 13 December 2021.

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN

ANNEX

In Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU, entries 3, 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c) are replaced by the following:

Exemption		Scope and dates of applicability
'3	Mercury in cold cathode fluorescent lamps and external electrode fluorescent lamps (CCFL and EEFL) for special purposes used in EEE placed on the market before 24 February 2022 not exceeding (per lamp):	
3(a)	Short length (≤ 500 mm): 3,5 mg	Expires on 24 February 2025
3(b)	Medium length (> 500 mm and $\leq 1\,500$ mm): 5 mg	Expires on 24 February 2025
3(c)	Long length ($> 1\,500$ mm): 13 mg	Expires on 24 February 2025'