



European
Recycling
Platform

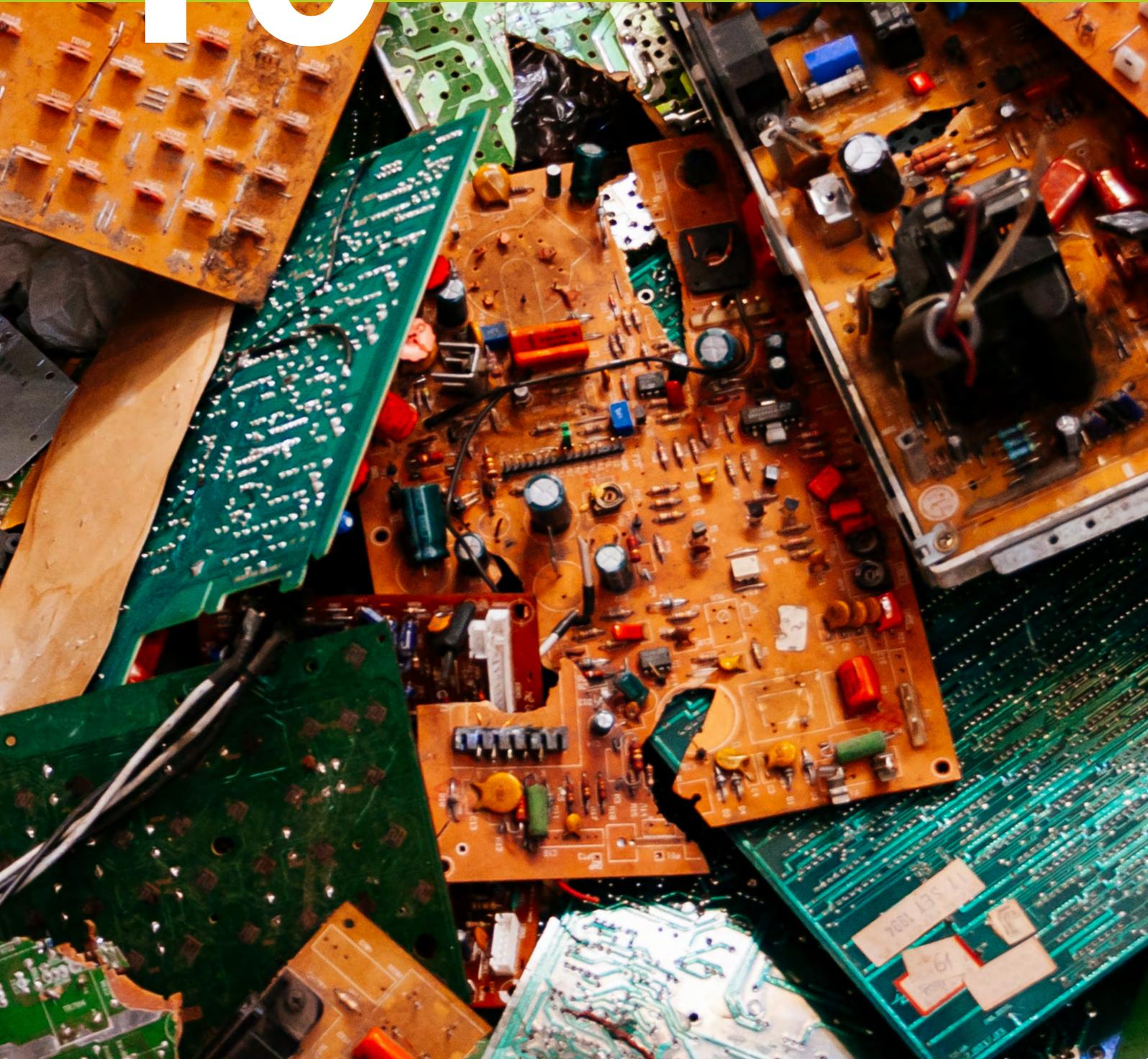
A Landbell Group Company

10

years of WEEE in the UK

Continual evolution

Producer priorities





Producer priorities

The compliance landscape continually evolves, influenced by a diverse range of factors. As producer challenges change, so do their priorities. Factors vary: climbing annual targets are a constant challenge, producers need to be alert to changing regulations, improving

technology affects both the products we're recycling and the recycling systems, and the customer plays a big part too. Founded by producers for producers, ERP are offering support as challenges and priorities evolve.

Embracing CSR

Over the last decade, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has taken centre stage. Less and less can companies get away with 'greenwashing' – increased scrutiny from well-educated consumers restricts companies from making vague or unsubstantiated claims to appear eco-friendly. This affects producers, as consumers expect products that are ethically sourced before sale, and are recycled or reused responsibly after.

Smart producers realise CSR is more than just a fad – well-executed CSR projects built on the right resources, expertise, and smart partnering can majorly benefit a society's quality of life. They increase a company's capacity to solve business and social problems creatively, and customers reciprocate with their support and loyalty. As customers put increasing value on meaningful CSR,

companies can no longer afford to ignore their responsibilities.

Producer compliance schemes can aid producers by providing quality WEEE treatment that provides detailed KPIs, which can be fed into end-of-year reports and publicised. Their expertise can also provide take-back solutions so that producers can extract maximum value from the products and waste they get back. And PCSs can help set up recycling events or "WEEE amnesties", either at the company's premises or in the wider community. PCSs like ERP UK can also put in place [free battery boxes](#) and collections so that producers can contribute to the recycling of this important waste stream.

17.6
million +
small appliances recycled
by ERP UK

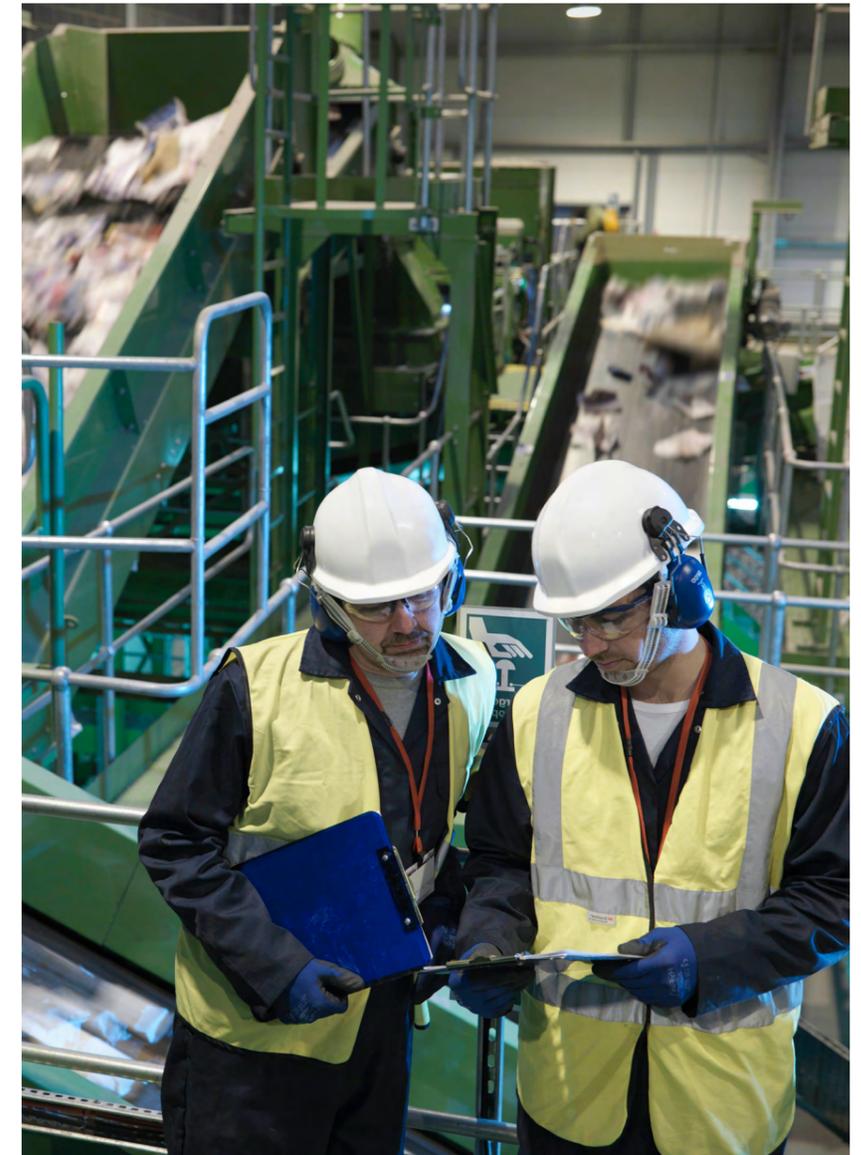


The customer is key

Customers' needs and desires increasingly influence producers and manufacturers. Many customers demand a proactive approach to the environment and businesses need to satisfy certain societal expectations with detailed performance statistics to back up their claims. But customers also demand more flexibility with products themselves.

There's a strong demand for better return and repair services for EEE products. Groups like [The Restart Project](#) in London have been created purely to meet and channel the demand for more sustainable, longer-lasting EEE products. The group relies heavily on volunteers, running electronics repair events with local communities, schools, and companies. There's a genuine appetite to value and use EEE products for longer, which the current system needs to recognise.

EEE manufacturers will need to focus on meeting the demand for quality used products, with [50% of customers](#) saying they would be willing to purchase second and third-hand items. Producers will need to develop business models that reflect customers' needs, and generate profits, while simultaneously realising their environmental and sustainability goals. To meet this challenge, we need to consider the circular economy.



Towards a circular economy

More and more businesses are committing to help establish a circular economy. The [Ellen McArthur Foundation](#), which aims to accelerate the transition to a circular economy, has partnered with giants of various industries such as Google, Philips, Unilever, Nike, and Renault since its formation in 2010. It's worth emphasising that, in the UK, [WRAP](#) estimated that EEE businesses can realise about £4.4 billion of financial benefit by using resources more sustainably and adapting circular business models.

The shift towards the circular economy is and will continue to be a major priority for the next

decade, as business and government realise its value and adapt their practices accordingly. When circular economy principles are applied throughout the entire EEE product lifecycle, it will improve profitability for manufacturers but also the customer experience through increased convenience and value for money.

For ERP CEO, Umberto Raiteri, the circular economy agenda will move up another level as we recycle more waste and reclaim more materials: "The more volumes of recycled materials available, the higher the opportunity to close the loop. At the moment, a relatively small percentage of materials are put back

into use. But this figure will grow as recycling technology improves and the amount of reclaimed materials increases."

ERP Quality and Audit Manager, Dora Caria, highlights another issue: "We're trying to increase the recycling potential of some of the output fractions from WEEE treatment, for example, plastics. Many are flame-retardant and we can't reintroduce flame-retardant plastics into new products as they would be contaminated and not meet the required standards."

Supporting a sustainable approach

The figures show that UK producers have set an example in sustainability over the last decade: the UK has recycled over 5 million tonnes of WEEE. To ensure this continues, producers need support. Because the compliance landscape is so diverse, support needs to come in many forms and evolve alongside producer needs and priorities.

This is why ERP have moved towards a complete service-based approach for members. Producers need access to a comprehensive range of services across WEEE, batteries, packaging, and data processing that delivers them value beyond simple compliance.

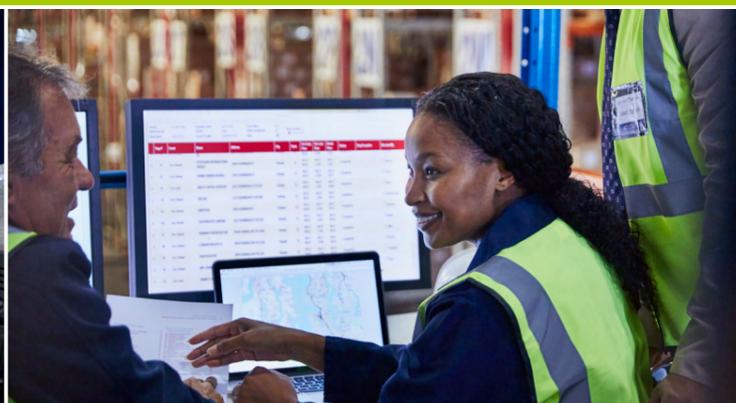
Producers often need a tailored approach that works for their specific situation and business plans, not a 'one size fits all' offer. PCSs need to continually innovate to reduce complexities wherever possible so that businesses can make the most of their resources as they become more sustainable.

Electrolux are a founding partner of ERP, and today count everything from commercial stats, savings, efficiencies, improvements, problem-solving, reduced complexity, and eased entry to new markets as the main benefits of ERP's support.

"We get regular visits from our account manager, who keeps us up to date with any legislative changes that may affect our business, and we also get invites to the quarterly workshops," explains Ian Steedman, UK and Ireland Logistics Market Manager at Electrolux. "We can tap into their knowledge and expertise, and speak to them without knowing anything about compliance or the regulations. They are passionate about compliance, and take the worry away from us as a producer. They also lobby on our behalf, and manage our end-of-line products responsibly for us."

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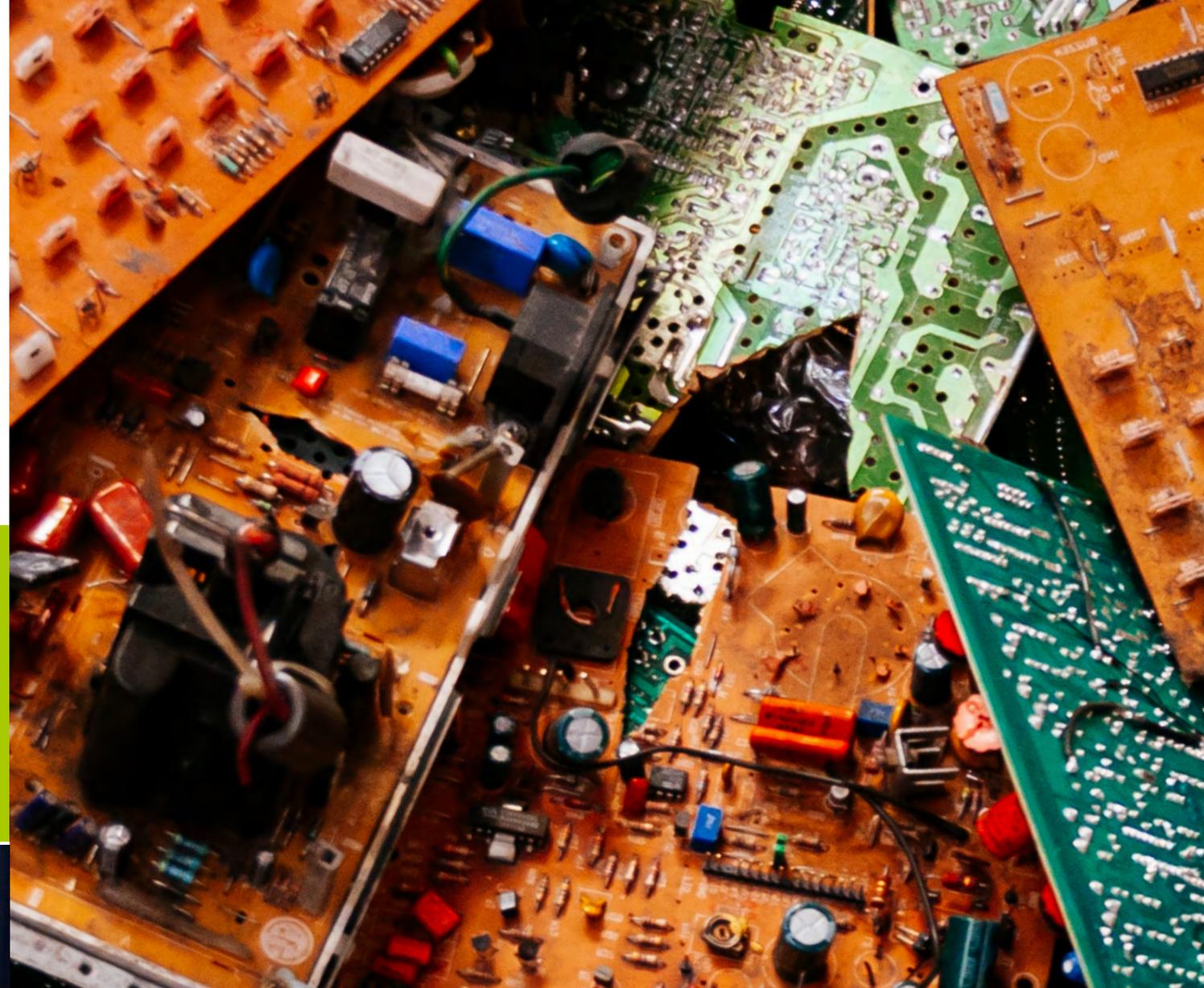


Maximising waste's value

We can't maximise waste's value if it doesn't get into the system. WEEE can evade the system for many reasons: unscrupulous individuals and groups can try to sell e-waste on the grey or black markets, people may hoard EEE at home with the intention of repairing it or disposing of it later, or may simply be ignorant of how and where to dispose of WEEE.

All of the above pose a challenge to producers, legislators, and local authorities. To reach the rising targets they're facing each year, we need to ensure that waste enters the system by connecting with the public and educating them about the importance of recycling WEEE. Awareness programmes that counteract the scarcity of waste in the system are paramount. From recycling

competitions for schools to big-name concerts where admission is free in exchange for a small item of waste, ERP has taken this mandate to educate and inform seriously – and it will continue to do so in the future.



Get in touch – we'd love to hear from you!



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