

Microsoft gives in to EU pressure: Windows 10 will get free security update

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Microsoft has agreed to address the demands of European human rights activists and extend Windows 10 support to users in the European Economic Area (EEA) without further conditions.

Extended Security Updates (ESU) will now be available free of charge, although the formal end of support for the system is still scheduled for October 14, 2025.

In October last year, the company announced that Windows 10 owners could receive a year of security updates after the system “died,” but only for a one-time fee of \$30 (or the equivalent based on local rates).

In June, [a “free” alternative](#) was introduced: protection could be extended through *Microsoft Rewards* or by syncing settings to the cloud via *Windows Backup*.

This option did not sit well with Euroconsumers, a coalition of consumer groups from Luxembourg and Brussels. In July, lawyers [sent a letter](#) to Microsoft headquarters, arguing that this policy violated the *Digital Markets Act* and the *Digital Content Directive*, as well as the EU’s climate and sustainability goals. The company was accused of **artificially incentivizing users to upgrade its services, turning basic protection into a marketing ploy.**

Correspondence obtained by Tweakers confirms Microsoft’s change of direction. [Now](#), according to Marco Scialdone, legal director of Euroconsumers, *EEA users will be able to activate the free ESU simply by logging into their Microsoft account*. They will no longer be required to copy apps, settings, and passwords or “earn” points for additional services.

However, Euroconsumers insists that *this step in the right direction doesn’t solve the main problem. An additional year doesn’t meet the requirements of the Digital Content Directive or the EU’s stated sustainability goals*. The main obstacle is **Windows 11’s hardware limitations. The new operating system requires a Trusted Platform Module (TPM), making a significant portion of older devices incompatible with the update**. The association estimates that over *850 million computers worldwide are still using Windows 10 and cannot upgrade to the next version*.

The situation appears particularly dire compared to previous upgrades: **upgrades from Windows 7 and 8 to Windows 10 did not have such limitations**. Furthermore, Windows 10’s lifecycle has proven to be shorter than its predecessors, which Euroconsumers **calls an artificial acceleration of the system’s decline**. In its latest letter, the organization also cites the results of its own survey: *22% of users continue to use laptops and PCs manufactured in 2017 or earlier. These devices*

remain functional, but do not meet Windows 11 requirements, effectively forcing owners to purchase new hardware.

The association promises to *continue the dialogue with Microsoft over the next year, seeking to extend the protection period for all users of older computers*. The company has not yet provided an official response to journalists' inquiries: **Microsoft's press office was confused in its comments and has not yet released a definitive statement.**

Redazione

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