

# France to ban destroying unsold goods, targeting Amazon, luxury brands

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France Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said that a ban on the destruction of unsold goods, which will affect online retailers like Amazon, would go into effect within four years

France's prime minister on Tuesday announced a crackdown on the

destruction of unsold or returned consumer products, a move that will affect online retailers such as Amazon and luxury goods brands.

Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said that a ban on destroying non-food goods—such as clothes, electrical items, [hygiene products](#) and cosmetics—would come into force within the next four years.

The announcement came after Green parties surged across Europe in last month's European elections, not least in France where the EELV party came third with 13.5 percent of the vote.

According to the French premier's office, over 650 million euros (\$730 million) worth of new [consumer products](#) are thrown away or destroyed in France every year, five times more than donations of the same products.

The measure would make it compulsory to hand in such products for re-use or recycling.

"It is a waste that shocks, that is shocking to common sense. It's a scandal," said Philippe, as he launched the measure at a discount store in Paris.

The measure is part of a draft bill on the economy which is due to be discussed by the cabinet in July. It would apply by between 2021-2023.

France's junior environment minister Brune Poirson promised a law to tackle waste in January after a television documentary showed Amazon destroying millions of products that had been returned by consumers.

Based on hidden camera footage, the documentary on the M6 channel showed containers of unsold or returned products at an Amazon warehouse being sent for destruction under agreements signed between

the online giant and third-party retailers.

British fashion firm Burberry also caused a furore last year by acknowledging that it had burned unsold clothes, accessories and perfume worth £28.6 million (\$35.5 million) annually to prevent them being sold off cheaply.

The aim was to maintain the exclusivity and luxury mystique of the brand and it later became clear that the practice was relatively commonplace in the industry.

The French PM's office said special arrangements are anticipated for the luxury sector which would be encouraged to recycle the goods.

This would avoid the risk of the copyright problems the luxury brands fear were the goods to be simply given away to third parties, an official at the French premier's office said.

Products which are not usable after a certain date would have exceptions.

President Emmanuel Macron has sought to portray himself as a friend of the Green movement, especially in the fight against climate change.

But his image was tarnished when prominent campaigner Nicolas Hulot, who Macron had named as environment minister, spectacularly quit the government last August, saying that his cabinet colleagues were doing too little to tackle climate change.

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