The European Commission said on Thursday that it wants a single type of charging port to be used for all smartphones and tablets, as well as equipment such as cameras, headphones, portable speakers, and handheld video consoles.

The EU is hoping to pass a law that would **standardize** the charging port, with the EU's industry chief Thierry Breton saying that with more devices, more chargers were sold that weren't **interchangeable** or necessary, and the EU wanted to end that.

The law would target companies like Apple whose iPhones and other products use the company's own lightning charging port. The EU hopes that the standardization will cut waste and be more convenient for people who own multiple devices. However, an Apple spokesperson said that strict laws requiring just one type of connector **stifles** innovation rather than encouraging it.

Annually, EU consumers spend more than 2.4 billion euros on charging accessories for phones that actually don't come with devices. The law could save consumers 250 million euros a year by cutting the cost for buying those new chargers.

Difficult words: **standardize** (to make one thing the same as others of the same type), **interchangeable** (able to be exchanged with each other without making any difference or without being noticed), **stifle** (to prevent something from happening or continuing).

Discussion Questions

Topic Talk

1. Define the following words: *standardize, interchangeable and stifle*

2. What is the new law the EU hopes to pass all about?

3. Why does the EU industry want to end the use of different chargers for different devices?

4. Would the new law be beneficial to consumers? Why?

5. Why do companies like Apple think that this strict law would just stifle innovation?

Express Your Thoughts

1. What is your view on the new EU law - the standardization of charging port?

2. Would you be glad if your government applied this new law in your country? Why?

3. Do you think companies in your country would approve of it?