

# ZVEI Proposal for ATEX Guideline

## Digital Instructions

Presently Directive 2014/34/EU does not explicitly specify the form of the instructions, safety information, EU declaration of conformity or attestation of conformity. A requirement regarding the paper format can only be derived by the detailed ATEX Guidelines<sup>1</sup>. The document in its present revision requires the documents to accompany products in two locations, §74 and §151.

Taking into account the development in current EU harmonization legislation, namely regulation (EU) 2023/1230 on machinery and addressing growing demand to enable sustainability in the industry, as well as a change of availability of access to the internet, it is proposed to rework the current edition of the ATEX guidelines to give permission for digital instructions and safety information.

Looking closer into regulation (EU) 2023/1230 on machinery a distinction is made between providing instructions and safety information to non-professional and professional users, i.e. allowing a digital printable format for professional users. Considering that the scope of Directive 2014/34/EU excludes domestic and non-commercial environments, a permission for a digital printable format can further be justified.

This would not only reduce product costs, but also benefit the environment. A digital format of instructions and EU declaration of conformity would save a lot of logging and energy in paper production further supporting the European Union's Green Deal and Sustainable Product Initiative.

## The two paragraphs below highlight the proposed changes:

### § 151 Instructions

The ATEX Directive 2014/34/EU prescribes that equipment and protective systems must be accompanied by instructions, covering a wide range of contents. [...]

EHSR 1.0.6 does not specify the form of the instructions. ~~It is generally agreed that all health and safety related instructions must be supplied in paper form, since it cannot be assumed that the user has access to the means of reading instructions supplied in electronic form or made available on an Internet site.~~

**Instructions and other relevant documentation may be provided in a digital printable format. However, the manufacturer should ensure that distributors can provide, at the request of the user at the time of the purchase, the instructions for use in a paper format free of charge. The manufacturer should also consider providing the contact details where the user can request the instructions to be dispatched by mail.**

**When the instructions for use are provided in digital format, the manufacturer shall:**

- a. mark on equipment and protective systems, or, where that is not possible, on its packaging or in an accompanying document, how to access the digital instructions;**
- b. present them in a format that makes it possible for the user to print and download the instructions for use and save them on an electronic device so that he or she can access them at all times, in particular during a breakdown of the equipment and protective systems; this requirement also applies where the instructions for use are embedded in the software of the equipment and protective systems;**
- c. make them accessible online during the expected lifetime of the equipment and protective systems and for at least 10 years after the placing on the market of the equipment and protective systems.**

**However, at the request of the user at the time of the purchase, the manufacturer shall provide the instructions for use in paper format free of charge within one month. [...]**

<sup>1</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/52840>

## § 74 Obligations of manufacturers

~~[...] For the purposes of market surveillance the EU declaration of conformity and, when applicable, the written attestation of conformity must accompany the information given with each single product, or each batch of identical products delivered for the same end user. These documents, as well as the translations according to the language requirements in national legislations transposing the Directive, need to be provided on paper, in a similar way as for safety information that also must accompany the product according to the ATEX Directive. While safety information needs to be provided in paper copy, the other non-safety instructions can be provided on electronic or other data storage format.~~

Manufacturers shall ensure that equipment and protective systems is accompanied by the EU declaration of conformity set out in Annex X or by the attestation of conformity, or alternatively, manufacturers shall provide the internet address or machine-readable code where that EU declaration of conformity or attestation of conformity can be accessed in the instructions for use.

Digital EU declarations of conformity or digital attestations of conformity shall be made accessible online for the expected lifetime of the equipment and protective systems and in any event for at least 10 years after the placing on the market or the putting into service of the equipment and protective systems. [...]

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