

Circular economy package

Four legislative proposals on waste

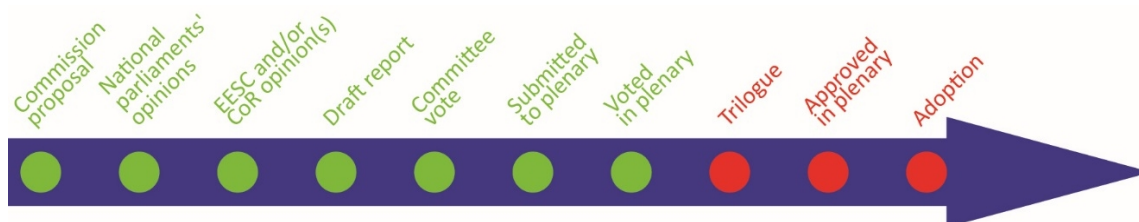
SUMMARY

Although waste management in the EU has improved considerably in recent decades, over a quarter of municipal waste is still landfilled and less than half is recycled or composted, with wide variations between Member States. Improving waste management could deliver positive effects for the environment, climate, human health and the economy. As part of a shift towards a circular economy, the European Commission made four legislative proposals introducing new waste-management targets regarding reuse, recycling and landfilling, strengthening provisions on waste prevention and extended producer responsibility, and streamlining definitions, reporting obligations and calculation methods for targets.

Proposals for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council

- amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste
- amending Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste
- amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste
- amending Directives 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles, 2006/66/EC on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators, and 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment

<i>Committee responsible:</i>	Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)	COM(2015) 593, COM(2015) 594, COM(2015) 595, COM(2015) 596 of 2.12.2015
<i>Rapporteur:</i>	Simona Bonafè (S&D, Italy)	2015/0272(COD), 2015/0274(COD), 2015/0275(COD), 2015/0276(COD)
<i>Next steps expected:</i>	Trilogue negotiations	Ordinary legislative procedure



This updates an earlier edition, of February 2017: [PE 599.288](#).

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Introduction

In July 2014, the European Commission put forward an initial [circular economy package](#). However, in March 2015 the Commission withdrew the [legislative proposal on waste](#) included in that package, to make way for 'a more ambitious proposal that will cover the whole of the circular economy'.

As part of a new circular economy package, in December 2015 the Commission presented an [action plan](#) for the circular economy, as well as four legislative proposals amending the following legal acts:

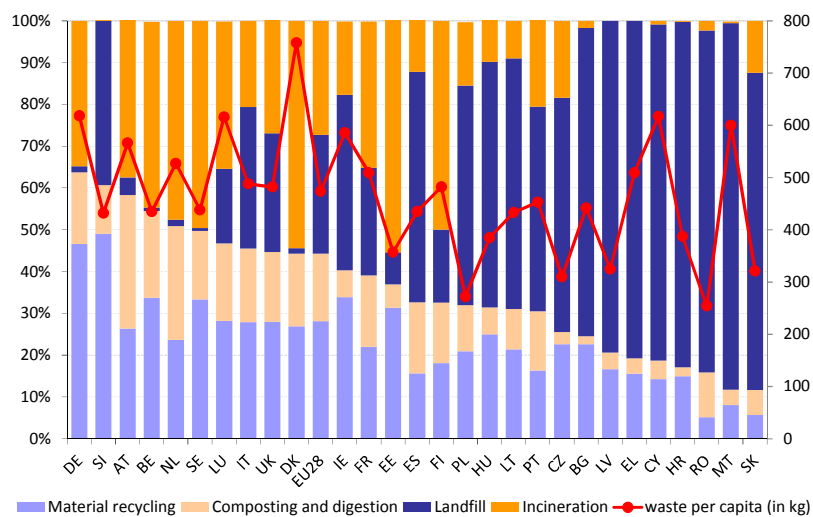
- [Waste Framework Directive](#);
- [Landfill Directive](#);
- [Packaging Directive](#);
- Directives on [end-of-life vehicles](#), [batteries and accumulators](#), and [waste electrical and electronic equipment](#).

Some proposals stem from legal obligations to review waste management targets. The Waste Framework Directive requires the Commission to undertake the following actions by the end of 2014: review the 2020 targets on reuse and recycling of household waste and on construction and demolition waste; set waste prevention objectives for 2020; and assess a number of measures, including extended producer responsibility schemes. The Landfill Directive requires the Commission to review targets by July 2014. The Packaging Directive requires the Commission to review targets by the end of 2012.

Context

Wide differences exist between Member States regarding the **treatment of municipal waste**, generated mainly by households, which represents around 10% of the total waste generated in Europe, measured by weight. As shown in Figure 1, the share of recycling and composting among waste treatment methods ranges from 64% in Germany to 12% in Malta and Slovakia (EU average: 44%); seven Member States landfill less than 10% of their municipal waste, while eight Member States landfill over 70% of their

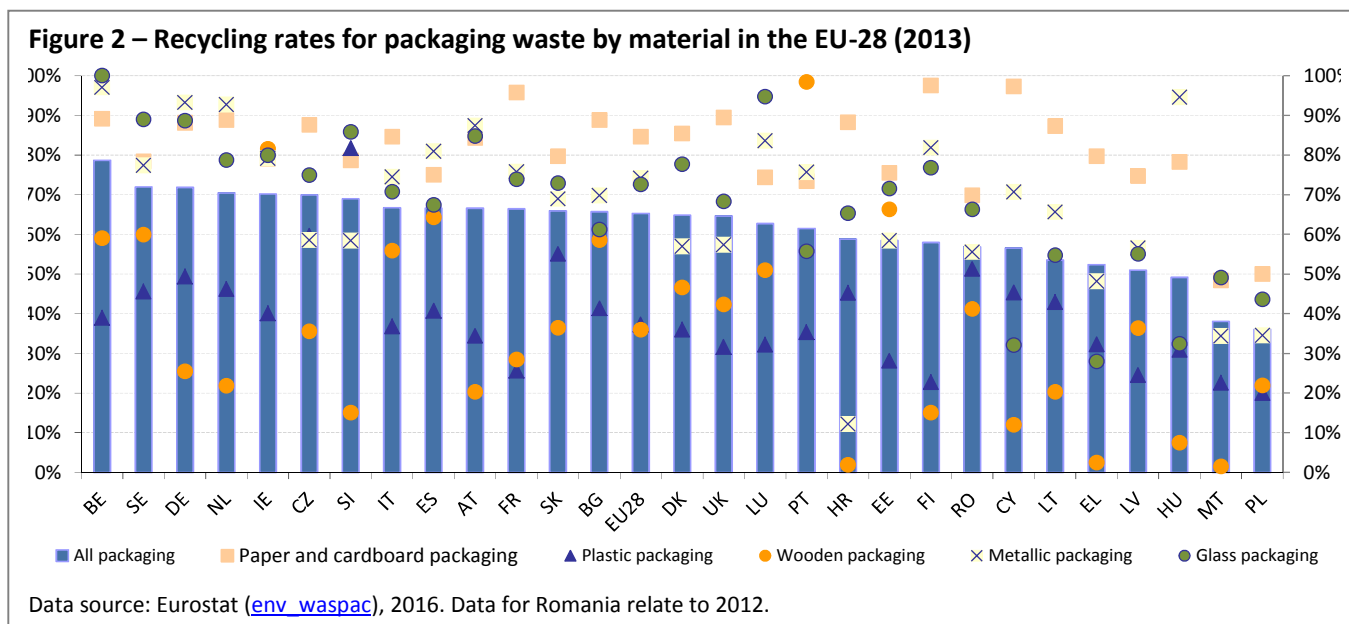
Figure 1 – Municipal waste treatment methods and waste per capita in the EU-28 (2014)



Data source: Eurostat ([env_wasmun](#)), 2016. Data for IE, EL and RO relate to 2013.

municipal waste (EU average: 28%); the amount of municipal waste per capita and per year varies from 254 kg in Romania to 758 kg in Denmark (EU average: 474 kg).

Packaging waste in the EU, measured by weight, is made up of paper and cardboard (40%), glass (20%), plastic (19%), wood (15%) and metal (6%), according to Eurostat [data](#). In 2013, 65% of packaging was recycled in the EU-28, although material-specific recycling rates varied a great deal: 85% for paper and cardboard packaging; 74% for metallic packaging; 73% for glass packaging; 36% for wooden packaging and 37% for plastic packaging. There are wide variations in recycling rates for specific packaging materials across Member States, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Every year, 8-9 million tonnes of **end-of-life vehicles (ELV)** are generated in the European Union. Eurostat [data](#) indicate that across Member States, from 80% to 100% of materials from ELVs collected through regular channels are recovered or recycled.

In the 19 Member States for which information is available, **waste portable batteries and accumulators** in 2013 amounted to 40% of portable batteries and accumulators placed on the market, again according to Eurostat [data](#). Batteries and accumulators not collected separately enter the municipal waste stream and are either landfilled or incinerated.

Electrical and electronic waste, also referred to as 'waste electrical and electronic equipment' (WEEE), or 'e-waste', is one of the fastest growing waste streams, increasing at 3-5% per year. In 2012, 9 million tonnes of electrical and electronic products were put on the EU market, and 3.5 million tonnes of e-waste were collected through regular channels for treatment – of which 2.5 million tonnes were later recycled or reused. Electrical and electronic waste which are not collected separately are either kept by consumers in their homes, collected outside regular channels or disposed of with mixed ordinary waste (going to landfills or incinerators).

Adverse effects from waste treatment methods can include the following:

Quality of waste statistics

Figures on waste management ought to be treated with caution, especially as regards comparison between Member States, because of varying data collection methods, the lack of recent data, the wide spectrum of waste types, and the complexity of waste-treatment streams. However, they can provide a rough picture of the situation.

- impacts on the **environment** (in particular biodiversity and ecosystems): landfills may contaminate, depending on the way they are built, soil and water with chemicals contained in waste; littering can have severe consequences for wild animals, especially through ingestion of microplastics; more generally, if waste is not recycled or recovered, the raw materials extracted and transformed to manufacture a product are lost;
- impacts on the **climate**, as landfills release methane, a powerful greenhouse gas;
- impacts on **human health**, primarily associated with landfilling, due to the release of air pollutants in the atmosphere and to the possible contamination of freshwater sources and agricultural soils;
- impacts on the **economy**, as valuable materials are lost.¹

However, a number of **improvements** in waste management have been recorded in recent years:

- **Municipal waste per capita** in the EU decreased from 523 kg per person in 2007 to 474 kg per person in 2014, in part as a result of the economic downturn.
- The share of **recycled or composted municipal waste** in the EU-28 increased from 31% in 2004 to 44% in 2014. According to the [European Environment Agency](#) (EEA), trends in the past decade also include a shift away from landfilling and a 56% drop in net greenhouse-gas emissions from municipal waste management between 2001 and 2010.
- As regards **packaging**, the recycling rate for all packaging materials in the EU15 increased from 55.6% in 2004 to 67.8% in 2013.²

What is a circular economy?

In a [circular economy](#), products and the materials they contain are valued highly, unlike in the traditional, linear economic model, based on a 'take-make-consume-throw away' pattern. In practice, a circular economy implies **reducing waste to a minimum** as well as re-using, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products. Moving towards a more circular economy could deliver **benefits**, among which reduced pressures on the environment, enhanced security of supply of raw materials, increased competitiveness, innovation, and growth and jobs. However, it would also face **challenges**, among which finance, key economic enablers, skills, consumer behaviour and business models, and multi-level governance.

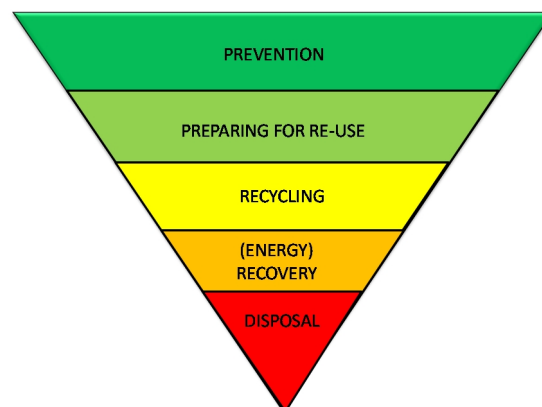
Existing situation

Waste Framework Directive

The 2008 [Waste Framework Directive](#) sets the overarching legislative framework. It defines the main concepts linked to waste management, including the 'polluter pays principle' (ensuring that the costs of preventing, controlling and cleaning up pollution are reflected in the cost of goods), the 'waste hierarchy' (a priority order set among waste prevention and management options, pictured in Figure 3) and the 'end-of-waste status' (i.e. when waste ceases to be waste after recovery). The Directive sets binding targets to be achieved by 2020: preparing for reuse and recycling of 50% of certain waste materials from households and similar sources, and preparing for reuse, recycling and other recovery of 70% of construction and demolition waste. It also requires Member States to set up separate collection of at least paper, metal, plastic and glass waste by 2015 where 'technically, environmentally and economically practicable', and to draw up [waste management plans](#) and [waste prevention programmes](#).

Progress towards the target to recycle 50% of household waste by 2020 has been uneven. A 2013 [report](#) by the EEA indicates that, while five Member States have already achieved the target and another six will achieve it if they continue to improve their recycling rate at the current pace, the majority of Member States would need to make an extraordinary effort in order to achieve the target of 50% recycling by 2020.³ The overall increase in the recycling rate appears to be mainly driven by materials such as glass, paper/cardboard, metals, plastic and textiles. In contrast, increases in bio-waste recycling are much more modest.

Figure 3 – Waste hierarchy



Source: [European Commission](#).

Extended producer responsibility (EPR)

Extended producer responsibility schemes imply that producers take over the financial and/or organisational responsibility for collecting or taking back used goods, as well as sorting and treatment for their recycling.

The Waste Framework Directive sets principles regarding the implementation of EPR schemes in Member States. Three stream-specific directives (end-of-life vehicles, batteries and accumulators, waste electrical and electronic goods) introduce EPR as a policy approach. It is also used for packaging and other waste streams at varying levels in Member States. According to the Commission and stakeholders, EPR schemes are the main driver for reaching the targets set in the Packaging Directive, although in the absence of requirements, their effectiveness varies a great deal. A 2016 [report](#) by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes that while EPR schemes have helped to reduce landfilling and increase recycling, they have had limited effects on promoting eco-design.

Although EPR is in theory an individual obligation, in practice producers often exert this responsibility collectively through 'producer responsibility organisations' (PROs). A [report](#) published in 2014 by the European Commission looks at differences in performance between PROs across Member States and six waste streams. It concludes that, in most cases, the best performing schemes are not the most expensive ones, and that no single EPR model emerges as the best performing and the most cost-effective.

Landfill Directive

The 1999 [Directive on the landfill of waste](#) bans landfilling of untreated waste⁴ and sets targets. Compared to 1995, the base year, the share of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfills may not be greater than 75% in 2006, 50% in 2009 and 35% in 2016, with derogations granted to 16 Member States.⁵

The reduction of biodegradable waste going to landfill mandated in the Landfill Directive is progressing, albeit at varying speeds. The above-mentioned EEA [report](#) indicates that, while almost all of the 12 Member States without derogation are on track to meet the 2016 targets, just seven of the 16 Member States with derogations are estimated to have achieved the 2010 target. The report cites significant increases in the generation of municipal waste as an important factor explaining slow progress in some countries, since reduction targets are set compared to the total amount of municipal waste generated in 1995. In addition, illegal landfills remain a problem in some Member States.⁶

Packaging Directive

The 1994 [Directive on packaging and packaging waste](#) aims to protect the environment and to safeguard the functioning of the internal market. It requires Member States to take measures to prevent packaging waste and to develop packaging reuse systems. The original 1994 Directive, and the amended version from 2004, set targets with regard to recovery and recycling of packaging waste. Targets set in 2004, to be met by 2008 (except for Member States with a derogation),⁷ relate to the overall recovery and recycling rates (60% and 55-80%, respectively) and to minimum recycling rates for specific materials: glass (60%), paper and board (60%), metals (50%), plastics (22.5%), and wood (15%). The Directive was modified in 2015 to introduce requirements on [lightweight plastic carrier bags](#).

In its 2014 [report](#) on the 'fitness check' of five waste stream directives, the European Commission concludes that targets have generally been [met](#), with a large number of Member States over-achieving on targets, and only a few Member States lagging behind, although there are some uncertainties about the quality of data provided by Member States. The report highlights, however, that the market share of reusable household packaging is decreasing and identifies potential conflicts between packaging reuse schemes and recycling schemes.

Directives on end-of-life vehicles, batteries and accumulators, and WEEE

The 2000 [Directive on end-of-life vehicles](#) aims to ensure appropriate management of end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) in the EU. It encourages manufacturers and importers to limit the use of hazardous substances and to develop the integration of recycled materials. The Directive sets [targets](#) for recovery and recycling to be met by 2006 and 2015. In its 2014 'fitness check' report, the European Commission indicates that although Member States are on track to meet the 2015 targets,⁸ the collection and treatment by illegal operators and the illegal shipment of ELVs remain major implementation challenges.

The 2006 [Directive on batteries and accumulators](#) aims to improve the waste management and environmental performance of batteries and accumulators, as well as to ensure the functioning of the single market by establishing rules for their collection, recycling, treatment and disposal. It also sets limit values for certain hazardous substances (in particular mercury and cadmium) in batteries and accumulators. The Directive provides for the creation of extended producer responsibility schemes and sets recycling and collection [targets](#) to be met by 2010, 2012 and 2016. In its 2014 'fitness check' report, the European Commission provided an overview of the [implementation of collection rate targets](#) in Member States and indicated that four Member States did not comply with the Directive.

The [Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment](#) (WEEE Directive), updated in 2012, sets incremental targets on several aspects: minimum rates for separate collection, recovery and recycling/preparing for reuse.⁹ Official data on the implementation of the updated Directive are not yet available. However, the European Commission recently launched court proceedings against [Poland, Slovenia](#) and [Germany](#) for failure to transpose the WEEE Directive.

Changes the proposals would bring

The [proposal](#) amending the **Waste Framework Directive** sets **targets** regarding the share of municipal waste prepared for reuse and recycling to be met by 2025 and 2030 (see figure 4). Seven Member States which recycled less than 20% of their municipal waste in

2013¹⁰ are granted five additional years to reach the targets. The proposal requires the Commission to examine, by the end of 2024, whether a more ambitious target for 2030 can be set.

The proposal also defines general **requirements for extended producer responsibility schemes**. It requires in particular financial contributions paid by producers to EPR schemes to be modulated based on the costs necessary to treat their products at the end of their life.

In addition, the proposal requires Member States to use economic instruments to implement the waste hierarchy, to take measures to prevent waste generation and to ensure the separate collection of bio-waste where 'technically, environmentally and economically practicable'.

The [proposal](#) amending the **Landfill Directive** introduces a landfilling ban for separately collected waste and limits the share of municipal waste landfilled to 10% by 2030. To ensure consistency with the targets set in the Waste Framework Directive, the proposal grants the seven Member States mentioned above five additional years to reach the target. The proposal requires the Commission to examine, by the end of 2024, whether a more ambitious target can be set.

Table 1 – Proposed waste management targets

	2025	2030
Share of municipal waste prepared for reuse and recycling	60%	65%
Share of municipal waste landfilled	/	10%
Share of all packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	65%	75%
Share of plastic packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	55%	/
Share of wood packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	60%	75%
Share of ferrous metal packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	75%	85%
Share of aluminium packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	75%	85%
Share of glass packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	75%	85%
Share of paper and cardboard packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling	75%	85%

Data source: [European Commission](#), 2015.

The [proposal](#) amending the **Packaging Directive** sets targets for the share of packaging waste prepared for reuse and recycling to be met by 2025 and 2030, with specific targets for various packaging materials (see Table 1 for details). Although no 2030 target is proposed for plastic packaging, the Commission may propose one at a later stage, based on a review of progress towards the target, the evolution of the plastic packaging market and the development of recycling technologies.

Other **changes are put forward in several of the proposals:**

- aligning definitions and introducing an early warning system for monitoring progress towards the targets (Waste Framework Directive, Landfill Directive, Packaging Directive);
- clarifying methods used to calculate progress towards targets (Waste Framework Directive, Packaging Directive);

- simplifying and streamlining Member States' obligations as regards reporting; improving the quality and reliability of statistics; aligning provisions to Articles 90 and 291 TFEU on delegated and implementing acts (all four proposals).

The proposals are expected to deliver economic and environmental **benefits**. According to the Commission, the four legislative proposals put forward would create over 170 000 direct jobs in the EU by 2035; avoid greenhouse gases emissions (over 600 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent between 2015 and 2035); increase the competitiveness of the EU waste management, recycling and manufacturing sectors; reduce the dependency of the EU on raw material imports; and reduce the administrative burden. In addition, the proposals would reduce the impacts on environment and human health described earlier.

The proposals would also generate **costs**, which would most likely fall on public authorities, businesses and ultimately consumers. A 2015 Ellen MacArthur Foundation [report](#) calculates, extrapolating from UK government estimates, that the cost of creating a fully efficient reuse and recycling system in the EU could be about €108 billion. The Commission indicates however that the proposals will not have an impact on the European Union budget.

Preparation of the proposal

The current proposal is largely based on preparatory **work for the 2014 proposals**. Studies were carried out on [climate benefits from better waste management](#), [waste management and generation modelling](#), and [extended producer responsibility](#). The European Commission consulted key stakeholders and the wider public in 2013 in the context of an external consultation.

The Commission carried out an [impact assessment](#) with the support of a [preliminary assessment of options](#). In July 2014, the Commission published, on the basis of an [external study](#), an [ex-post evaluation](#) of five waste stream Directives¹¹ in the context of the regulatory fitness and performance programme (REFIT).

In order to prepare the **2015 proposals**, the European Commission consulted Member States and stakeholders in the course of 2015. The Commission also published a short [supplementary impact assessment](#) focusing on potential impacts of new policy options.

Parliament's starting position

In its [resolution of 9 July 2015](#) on 'Resource efficiency: moving towards a circular economy', Parliament urged the Commission to put forward an ambitious proposal by the end of 2015, as it had announced. On the legislative proposal on waste, Parliament advocated, inter alia, strictly limiting incineration of recyclable and biodegradable waste by 2020; gradually implementing, by 2030, a ban on landfilling (except for certain hazardous waste and residual waste); and increasing targets for recycling and preparation for reuse to at least 70% of municipal solid waste and 80% of packaging waste by 2030. Parliament called for EU and national targets to increase resource efficiency by 30% by 2030 compared to 2014 levels, and for a 'dashboard' of indicators to measure various aspects of resource consumption.

Stakeholders' views

Business associations generally welcomed the proposals, while making specific comments, both supportive and critical. **Sectors manufacturing (packaging) materials** generally called for better definitions and calculation methods to ensure high-quality recycling, for measures to facilitate shipments of waste and secondary raw materials, and

for improved performance of EPR schemes. [Euroopen](#), representing the packaging supply chain in Europe, called for the introduction in the Packaging Directive of explicit provisions, not least on EPR. Non-ferrous metals association [Eurometaux](#) called for ambitious targets and harmonised implementation. [European Aluminium](#) advocated phasing out landfilling and recognising the role of energy recovery. Both Eurometaux and European Aluminium called for the introduction of separate targets for the reuse and recycling of construction and demolition waste. Paper packaging industry body [PPCG](#) noted that the proposed targets for paper were ambitious but achievable, called for restrictions on the incineration of recyclables and welcomed the recognition of the role of biomass and bio-based products. Container glass federation [FEVE](#) advocated recognising the superior value of permanent materials and making separate collection of packaging mandatory across the EU. [Plastics Europe](#) called for the phasing out of landfilling and voiced concerns about 'extremely ambitious' plastic packaging recycling targets. [Eurochambres](#), the Association of European **Chambers of Commerce and Industry**, underlined the need to optimise rather than maximise waste targets and to focus on implementation to close the performance gap between Member States; it also warned that EPR rules, as defined in the proposal, bore the risk of a substantial administrative and financial burden.

Stakeholders from the **waste sector** also generally welcomed the proposals, nevertheless issuing a combination of positive and negative comments. Waste management federation [FEAD](#) welcomed the binding waste management targets, called for a greater regulatory pull to help generate markets for secondary raw materials and advocated including commercial and industrial waste within the scope of the proposals. [Municipal Waste Europe](#), representing municipalities and publicly-owned companies responsible for waste management, expressed satisfaction with the waste management targets, the requirements for EPR schemes, and the new definition of municipal waste; and also highlighted the need for waste-to-energy (incineration). Waste-to-energy sector association [CEWEP](#) called for more ambition on landfilling and highlighted the role of waste-to-energy in a circular economy. [Plastic Recyclers Europe](#) criticised the lack of concrete action on plastics recycling, especially as regards sorting and exports. [EXPRA](#), representing EPR organisations for packaging, called for enhanced requirements regarding EPR schemes and for their inclusion in the Packaging Directive.

Association of **local and regional authorities** [ACR+](#) welcomed the proposals and called for tighter requirements on prevention, more streamlined calculation methods, and specific targets on bio-waste and food waste.

NGOs were generally critical of the proposals. A coalition of [11 environmental NGOs](#), including the [European Environmental Bureau](#), called for the introduction of targets related to waste prevention, food waste and marine litter, and for the tightening of the proposed targets; it also advocated making separate collection of all recyclables mandatory and introducing a ban on the incineration of untreated waste. On food waste, a coalition of [nine NGOs](#) called for a reduction target of at least 30% and for measures based on the food waste hierarchy.

Advisory committees

In its [opinion](#) of 27 April 2016, the **European Economic and Social Committee** welcomed the proposals and issued a series of recommendations, including: reinstating the targets of the 2014 proposals, further clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the various actors

in EPR schemes, and making separate collection mandatory for bio-waste and other fractions (unless a specific exemption was granted).

In its [opinion](#) of 15 June 2016, the **Committee of the Regions** calls among other things for increasing the ambition level of waste management targets; introducing new targets regarding municipal waste generation, food waste and re-use; reinforcing the obligation for separate collection of bio-waste; and strengthening minimum requirements for EPR schemes.

Council

At a Council [meeting](#) of Environment Ministers on 16 December 2015, Member States generally welcomed the new circular economy package as an improvement on the initial one, although two expressed concern that the targets were extremely ambitious.

National parliaments

Several national parliaments have submitted comments on the proposals.¹² In reasoned opinions, the [French Senate](#) and the [Austrian Federal Council](#) have indicated that some aspects of the proposals (for instance on delegated and implementing acts, on reporting mechanisms, and on a harmonised definition of municipal waste) go against the principle of subsidiarity. The [Czech Senate](#), the [Polish Senate](#), the [Italian Senate](#) and the [Romanian Senate](#) have issued opinions covering all the proposals, while the Romanian Chamber of Deputies has issued separate opinions on each of the four proposals ([waste](#); [landfill](#); [packaging waste](#); [ELVs, batteries and WEEE](#)).

Parliamentary analysis

The European Parliamentary Research Service published **appraisals** of the [initial Commission impact assessment](#) in October 2014 and of a [specific impact assessment on food waste](#) in November 2014. It also completed a briefing on the [additional impact assessment information](#) in February 2016.

Parliamentary services have produced several publications on **waste policy**:

- implementation appraisals on EU waste policy were published in [September 2014](#) and [March 2016](#);
- a briefing on [waste management](#) describes EU waste policy, including challenges linked to toxic substances, downcycling and weaker norms outside the EU;
- a briefing on [waste streams](#) describes in detail the state of material-related streams (including metals, glass, paper, plastics, bio-waste) and product-related streams (including packaging, electronic waste, batteries, end-of-life vehicles);
- a briefing on [waste to energy](#) underlines the challenges and the opportunities linked to waste incineration, in particular in relation to recycling;
- a briefing on [food waste](#) puts this issue in a global perspective and describes initiatives to address it at EU, national and local level;

and more specifically on the **shift towards a circular economy**:

- a comparison of the [2014 and 2015 circular economy legislative proposals](#);
- a briefing on the new [circular economy](#) analyses, the 2015 action plan and the opportunities and challenges related to a shift towards a circular economy;
- a study on [resource-efficiency indicators](#) summarises the presentations made and discussions held at a workshop on this topic held in April 2015;

- a study on the [recovery of rare earths from electronic waste](#) highlights opportunities for high-tech SMEs in this field.

Legislative process

The European Parliament adopted its first reading positions ([waste](#); [landfill](#); [packaging](#); [ELVs, batteries and WEEE](#)) on the proposals on 14 March 2017. Their main features include:

- **raising the ambition level of targets** for municipal waste **reuse and recycling** (at least 70% by 2030, with a 5% sub-target for reuse); for municipal waste **landfilling** (maximum 5% by 2030); and for **packaging waste**, with separate targets for reuse (5% by 2025 and 10% by 2030) and recycling (70% by 2025 and 80% by 2030); while making derogations to individual Member States subject to stricter conditions, and introducing a single calculation method;
- **introducing aspirational targets** for **food waste** and **marine litter** (30% reduction by 2025 and 50% reduction by 2030, compared with a 2014 baseline) as well as **waste oils** (85% regeneration by 2025), and introducing a specific food waste hierarchy;
- **strengthening the implementation of the waste hierarchy**, for instance by applying it when allocating all EU funds; by broadening the scope of measures required from Member States on waste prevention; by introducing provisions to avoid the contamination of secondary raw materials and to promote re-use and sharing platforms; and by prohibiting the incineration of separately collected waste;
- **making extended producer responsibility schemes mandatory** at least for packaging, electrical and electronic equipment, batteries and accumulators, and end-of-life vehicles (with a view in particular to improving product design to enhance resource efficiency, reparability and recyclability); and extending minimum requirements for extended producer responsibility schemes;
- **strengthening requirements related to separate waste collection**, in particular by narrowing the scope of exemptions to the rule; by requiring separate collection for all packaging materials and, by 2020, for textiles and hazardous waste from households; by mandating the sorting of construction and demolition waste; and by promoting sorting systems for commercial and industrial waste;
- **highlighting the need for a more circular economy** and listing possible policy instruments to promote a transition;
- **requiring action from the Commission**, in particular examining, by end-2018, the possibility of introducing targets on waste prevention, as well as on re-use, recycling and landfilling of non-municipal waste streams; examining, by end-2020, the possibility of introducing binding food waste reduction targets to be met by 2025 and 2030; as well as reviewing the directives on end-of-life vehicles, batteries and accumulators, and electronic waste (by 2018) and the directive on packaging waste (by 2024).

The [Council](#) adopted its general approach on 19 May 2017. Although the Council position has not been made public, press reports suggest it proposes to lower the ambition level of the targets. Trilogue negotiations are scheduled to start on 30 May 2017.

References

Resource efficiency. Circular economy package: [Waste](#); [Landfill of waste](#); [Packaging and packaging waste](#); [End-of-life vehicles, batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and](#)

[accumulators, waste electrical and electronic equipment](#), European Parliament, Legislative Observatory (OEIL).

[Circular economy in Europe: Developing the knowledge base](#), European Environment Agency, January 2016.

[Closing the loop: new circular economy package](#), European Parliamentary Research Service, January 2016.

[Growth Within: a circular economy vision for a competitive Europe](#), Ellen MacArthur Foundation, June 2015.

Endnotes

- ¹ A 2015 Ellen MacArthur Foundation [report](#) estimates that by 2030, a shift towards a circular economy could reduce net resource spending in the EU by €600 billion annually, bringing total benefits estimated at €1.8 trillion per year once multiplier effects are accounted for.
- ² EU-28 data is only available as of 2012. In 2013, 65.3% of all packaging materials were recycled in the EU-28.
- ³ Nine Member States would need to increase their recycling rate yearly by 2-4 percentage points until 2020, a rate that only three Member States achieved between 2001 and 2010. A further seven Member States would need to achieve an unprecedented increase of more than four percentage points annually up to 2020.
- ⁴ Examples of treatment include sorting of waste.
- ⁵ Twelve Member States (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, United Kingdom) have been given a four-year derogation, meaning that they must meet their targets by 2010, 2013 and 2020. A further four Member States have been given specific derogations: Ireland has to meet the 2006 and 2009 targets by 2010 and 2013; Portugal has to meet the 2009 and 2016 targets by 2013 and 2020; Slovenia has to meet the 2016 target by 2020; Croatia must meet the targets by 2013, 2016 and 2020.
- ⁶ The Court of Justice fined [Italy](#) in December 2014 for failure to bring 218 landfills into conformity with EU waste legislation. In 2015, the Commission launched court proceedings against [Greece](#) and [Spain](#) over illegal landfills.
- ⁷ Sixteen Member States have derogations to meet the 2008 targets. For more details, see an [overview of targets and derogations](#) by Eurostat.
- ⁸ However, the Commission initiated court proceedings against [Poland](#) in 2014 for failings in its ELV legislation and against [Romania](#) in 2015 for failure to transpose the Directive on ELVs.
- ⁹ [Minimum rates for the separate collection](#) of WEEE are to be met by the end of 2015, between 2016 and 2018 and as of 2019, with derogations granted to 10 Member States. [Recovery targets](#) as well as [recycling/preparing for reuse targets](#) for individual product categories are to be met by August 2015, and between August 2015 and August 2018. [Recovery and recycling targets as of August 2018](#) have also been set.
- ¹⁰ Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Romania and Slovakia.
- ¹¹ Including the Directive on packaging and packaging waste, the Directive on end-of-life vehicles, and the Directive on batteries and accumulators.
- ¹² For more details, see the full list of comments and opinions by national parliaments on the proposals relating to the [Waste Framework Directive](#), the [Landfill Directive](#), the [Packaging Directive](#), and the [ELVs, batteries and WEEE Directives](#).

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eprs@ep.europa.eu

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank> (internet)

<http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)

