



Plenary sitting

B8-0231/2019

27.3.2019

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 216(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on waste management
(2019/2557(RSP))

Cecilia Wikström
on behalf of the Committee on Petitions

**European Parliament resolution on waste management
(2019/2557(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste¹,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/850 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste²,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste³,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 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 equipment⁴,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by Member States from 2021 to 2030 contributing to climate action to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 (the Climate Action Regulation)⁵,
- having regard to Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products (the Ecodesign Directive),⁶ and to the implementing regulations and voluntary agreements adopted under that directive,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 September 2018 on a European strategy for plastics in a circular economy⁷,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2018 on the implementation of the 7th Environment Action Programme⁸,

¹ OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109.

² OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 100.

³ OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 141.

⁴ OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 93.

⁵ OJ L 156, 19.6.2018, p. 26.

⁶ OJ L 285, 31.10.2009, p. 10.

⁷ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0352.

⁸ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0100.

- having regard to its resolution of 6 July 2017 on EU action for sustainability⁹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 4 July 2017 on a longer lifetime for products: benefits for consumers and companies¹⁰,
 - having regard to its resolution of 31 May 2018 on the implementation of the Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC)¹¹,
 - having regard to the provisional political agreement reached by the co-legislators on 19 December 2018 on the proposal for a directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 26 January 2017 on the role of waste-to-energy in the circular economy (COM(2017)0034),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 16 January 2018 on the implementation of the circular economy package: options to address the interface between chemical, product and waste legislation (COM(2018)0032) and to the related staff working document (SWD(2018)0020),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 2 December 2015 entitled ‘Closing the loop – An EU action plan for the Circular Economy’ (COM(2015)0614),
 - having regard to the more than 60 petitions on waste management received from Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and the UK by the European Parliament during the last few years,
 - having regard to the fact-finding visits of the Committee on Petitions to Bulgaria, Greece and Italy in recent years on waste management issues, and in particular the conclusions and specific recommendations of the subsequent reports,
 - having regard to its resolution of 2 February 2012 on the issues raised by petitioners in relation to the application of the Waste Management Directive, and related directives, in the Member States of the European Union¹²,
 - having regard to Rule 216(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas progress has been made across the EU in reducing the impacts of waste generation on the environment and human health, yet many challenges remain and urgent measures need to be taken to ensure sustainable resource management, especially in relation to the relatively high amounts of untreated waste that are still landfilled in many Member States;
- B. whereas two of the key challenges for the future are to reduce levels of waste generation and to align waste management objectives with those of the circular economy, in particular by boosting reuse and recycling rates;

⁹ OJ C 334, 19.9.2018, p. 151.

¹⁰ OJ C 334, 19.9.2018, p. 60.

¹¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2018)0241.

¹² OJ C 239 E, 20.8.2013, p. 60.

- C. whereas prevention has been established as the top priority of the waste hierarchy through Directive 2008/98/EC on waste (the Waste Management Directive or Waste Framework Directive);
- D. whereas inappropriate waste management practices have a severe environmental impact in terms of soil, water and air pollution; whereas petitioners have pointed out that landfills and incinerators have been authorised and made operational in close proximity to residential and agricultural sites and in areas where geological and hydrogeological conditions have not been taken duly into account by the Member States' competent authorities, and represent a direct threat to public health;
- E. whereas more than 80 % of a product's environmental impact is determined at the design stage, which thus plays an important role in promoting waste prevention and all circular economy aspects, such as the durability, upgradability, reparability, reuse and recycling of a product;
- F. whereas in addition to making more sustainable and resource-efficient products, the principles of the sharing economy and the service economy can also serve the purpose of reducing waste generation in Europe;
- G. whereas the Commission has handled numerous infringement procedures concerning breach of EU waste management legislation in several Member States; whereas several of these cases have been referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union, some of them recently;
- H. whereas the latest report from the Commission on the implementation of EU waste legislation, including the early warning report for Member States at risk of falling behind in their preparations for reaching the 2020 reuse/recycling target for municipal waste, showed that there are serious gaps that must be swiftly addressed if Europe is to reap the environmental and economic benefits of the circular economy;
- I. whereas recent data accompanying numerous petitions have highlighted the fact that the waste management situation in several Member States and regions is still seriously problematic, providing strong evidence of the need to significantly improve the implementation of the Waste Framework Directive and the rest of the EU legislation related to waste prevention and treatment measures;
- J. whereas an economy that prioritises repair, reuse, remanufacturing and recycling of materials is more labour-intensive than one based on a philosophy of disposal, thus creating increased job opportunities; whereas the proper implementation of the existing legislation on waste prevention and management could unlock the job creation potential of the reuse and recycling sectors;
- K. whereas proper management of waste and waste prevention is essential for improving the quality of life in Europe and achieving a non-toxic environment;
- 1. Stresses that numerous petitions submitted on the failure of Member States to implement waste legislation point to various health and environmental problems linked to inappropriate waste management practices, such as poor air quality in urban areas, contamination of underground water resources, excessive noise levels and odorous

emissions;

2. Underlines that in order to support the transition towards a more circular economy, public financing of waste management, whether at national or EU level, should be consistent with the goal of shifting upwards in the implementation of the waste hierarchy; therefore believes that funds should be directed towards prevention, reuse, separate collection and recycling plans and projects;
3. Calls on the Member States to make more progress in setting out effective plans and projects for prevention, reuse, separate collection and recycling as being crucial for reducing the environmental burden of waste, reaping the economic benefits of the circular economy and improving resource efficiency; urges the Commission to support Member States in their implementation efforts, including through technical assistance and EU funds; suggests adopting adequate economic instruments as laid down in the Waste Framework Directive and implementing efficient and cost-effective extended producer responsibility schemes to boost the transition towards the circular economy;
4. Calls on the Member States to take measures to clean up litter and improve waste management (collection, sorting and recycling), and to adopt economic instruments and awareness-raising campaigns to prevent littering;
5. Welcomes the Commission's willingness to undertake high-level circular economy/waste visits to Member States which are at risk of not meeting the 2020 municipal waste targets and to engage with relevant stakeholders, including associations of local and regional actors and Europe-wide organisations that are genuinely promoting a zero waste culture and associated policies;
6. Stresses that the Member States need to mitigate the environmental impacts of waste generation, in particular by reducing the amount of municipal waste generation; calls on the Member States, to this end, to take waste prevention measures as set out in the revised Waste Framework Directive;
7. Highlights that national, regional and local actors have a crucial role in waste management and in policy development and implementation on the matter; recalls that a coherent policy, together with advancement of the appropriate infrastructure in line with the waste hierarchy, can only be established by coordination and cooperation at all levels in the EU; asks the Commission to reward best practices at all levels and facilitate their exchange, as well as to concretely and adequately support pioneering projects;
8. Calls on Member States and industries, as key partners in the waste management sector, to improve their engagement in promoting circular supply chains, in order to gain access to high-quality secondary raw materials, often at competitive prices, that should be recovered for further use and production;
9. Calls for the provision of training and the promotion of a range of types of employment, including financial support for high-level skills training and social jobs, in particular in the areas of repair and preparation for reuse;
10. Believes strongly that new business models focused on waste prevention, reuse and recycling must be adequately promoted and supported with a view to boosting more

effectively the transition towards a circular economy;

11. Underlines that the proper implementation of the circular economy package provides opportunities throughout the EU, including investment, which will help rationalise the use of natural resources;
12. Highlights that raising resource productivity by boosting efficiency and reducing resource waste through measures such as reuse, recycling and remanufacturing can greatly reduce both resource consumption and GHG emissions, a goal which is at the heart of the circular economy; underlines that in a circular economy the resources are retained within the economy and remain in productive use when a product has reached the end of its life, thus reducing resource consumption; believes, in the context of the waste legislation, that improved circular product design will help close the production cycles and bring about a switch in production and consumption patterns, thereby reducing the levels of toxic substances and the overall amount of waste;
13. Invites the Member States to ensure full transparency over the volume and end destination of residues from different waste treatment options, especially in respect of those communities that are potentially affected by sites and new projects, and to consult them in the decision-making process; urges the Member States, moreover, to implement fully and thoroughly the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive)¹³ and other relevant EU legislation aimed at protecting the environment and public health;
14. Considers that door-by-door separate collection of waste is an effective way to raise awareness across the population of the strategic importance of a circular economy, and to more effectively achieve a collective engagement to this end; underlines that such systems allow better accounting regarding the types and amounts of household waste produced and their related processing needs, with a view to maximising preparation for reuse and recycling, as well as enabling the introduction of fairer incentivising/de-incentivising economic measures;
15. Recalls that incineration remains second only to landfilling at the bottom of the waste hierarchy;
16. Recalls that hazardous waste poses specific treatment challenges which cannot be overlooked and should be specifically addressed; calls on the Member States to fully implement the provisions of the Waste Framework Directive relevant to the management of hazardous waste;
17. Supports the Commission in its ongoing infringement procedures against Member States not complying with the waste legislation; calls on the Commission to use the full potential of the early warning system as laid down in the revised waste directives; suggests that penalty fines collected by the Commission should be reinvested in projects that are consistent with the highest levels of the waste hierarchy;

¹³ OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1.

18. Regrets the fact that, according to petitioners, landfills have been authorised and located in close proximity to residential and agricultural sites; calls on the Member States' competent authorities to ensure full protection of human health and to adopt structural measures aimed at finding a solution to groundwater contamination;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.