DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on resource efficiency: moving towards a circular economy
(2014/2208(INI))

Rapporteur: Benedek Jávor
**SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Believes that, in order to tackle global challenges and the EU’s resource dependency, it is essential that energy and resource efficiency form the basis of European industrial renewal so that the EU can maintain its competitiveness in the future, recreate manufacturing capacity and generate jobs for highly skilled workers;

2. Stresses that better design, waste prevention, reuse and recycling could bring substantial net savings for EU businesses, estimated at EUR 600 billion, or 8 % of annual turnover, while also reducing total annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2-4 %1; emphasises that increasing resource productivity by 30 % by 2030 could boost GDP by nearly 1 % and create 2 million additional jobs;

3. Points to the Commission’s analysis which shows that adopting new waste targets would create 180 000 jobs, make Europe more competitive and reduce demand for costly scarce resources2; strongly regrets the withdrawal of the legislative proposal on waste3, and calls for a more ambitious legislative proposal, addressing not only municipal but also industrial and commercial waste streams, to be put forward by 2015 as part of a more ambitious circular economy package (CEP), as announced by Vice-President Timmermans in Parliament’s plenary part-session of December 20144;

4. Calls for the CEP to establish, in line with the recommendations of the European Resource Efficiency Platform5, a comprehensive policy framework which includes concrete policy objectives and better integrates and streamlines existing policy tools; insists that tools and measures must ensure real opportunities for, and active participation of, SMEs in the circular economy;

5. Calls for the CEP to introduce a sustainable materials management policy at EU level, taking a life-cycle approach and aiming for eco-efficient and environmentally responsible use of materials, including during the extraction, design, production, consumption, and waste management phases;

6. Highlights the potential of reuse and repair policies for quality job creation, resource savings and the development of the social economy and social enterprises; calls for further

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incentives and other support for reuse, the consolidation of reuse, and repair infrastructures and networks;

7. Points to the direct economic impact on businesses and consumers of food waste, owing to the costs of waste disposal and the economic losses caused by throwing away saleable or edible food; recalls that one euro spent on fighting food waste could prevent 250 kg of food, worth EUR 500, from being wasted; urges the Commission to address the issue of food waste within the CEP;

8. Stresses the importance of creating industrial synergies for recycling and of helping companies to discover how their energy, waste and by-products can serve as resources for others; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote approaches such as those taken in the UK as part of the National Industrial Symbiosis Programme;

9. Stresses the role of environmental tax reform (switching taxation away from labour and towards pollution and resources) in providing the right signals for investment in resource efficiency, and calls for progress in this area to be pursued by the Member States as part of the European Semester process;

10. Calls on the Commission and the European Investment Bank to ensure that the Investment Plan for Europe is underpinned by resource and energy efficiency objectives, provides support for eco-innovative SMEs in particular, and strengthens advisory services on resource efficiency; calls for funding for the EU Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (COSME) and Horizon 2020 to be more focused on developing eco-innovative solutions and improving product design and process performance.