

Council and Parliament reach provisional agreement on new EU waste rules

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In the early hours of 18 December 2017, the Estonian presidency reached a **provisional agreement** with representatives of the European Parliament on all four legislative proposals of the **waste package**. EU ambassadors will be briefed on the outcome on 20 December, but the final analysis and endorsement on behalf of the Council is planned for the first quarter of next year.

The agreed waste legislative proposals establish **binding waste reduction targets** and **updated rules** to decrease waste generation, ensure a better control of waste management, encourage the reuse of products and improve recycling in all EU countries.

These new targets and rules will promote a **more circular economy**. It will also boost growth and jobs, protect our environment, encourage sustainability and improve people's health and well-being.

In the EU, nearly a third of municipal waste is landfilled, with a limited share of the total being recycled. With this agreement, EU member states are committing to clear EU targets on reuse, recycling and landfilling and rules to improve the management of different waste streams. This will help accelerate our transition towards a circular economy and minimise our impact on the planet. I want to sincerely thank the previous Council presidencies, the Parliament and the Commission for their dedication to this file. I hope the member states can now endorse this well-balanced and thoroughly negotiated compromise.

Siim Kiisler, Minister for the Environment of the Republic of Estonia

This provisional deal comes after **lengthy and tough negotiations** with the Parliament since May 2017. It amends the following six pieces of legislation:

- Waste framework directive (considered the umbrella legislative act of the package)

- Packaging waste directive
- Landfill directive
- Directives on electrical and electronic waste, on end-of-life vehicles; and on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators

The **key elements** of the agreed text include:

- clearer **definitions** of key waste concepts
- **new binding targets** at EU level for waste reduction to be met by 2025 and 2030, and 2035. These targets cover the share of municipal waste and packaging waste recycling (with specific targets for various packaging materials), and also a target for municipal waste landfilled by 2035
- **stricter methods and rules to calculate the progress** made towards those targets
- stricter requirements for the **separate collection of waste**, reinforced implementation of the **waste hierarchy** through economic instruments and additional measures for member states to **prevent waste generation**
- minimum requirements for **extended producer responsibility schemes**. Producers under these schemes are responsible for the collection of used goods, sorting and treatment for their recycling. Producers will be required to pay a financial contribution for that purpose calculated on the basis of the treatment costs.

The European Commission presented a revised **circular economy package** on 3 December 2015. It consists of four waste legislative proposals (**waste package**) and an **Action Plan** in the form of a Commission Communication.

The **action plan** was discussed during the Competitiveness Council on 29 February 2016 and the Environment Council on 4 March 2016. Taking into account both discussions from an economic and environmental perspective, the Council adopted conclusions on the plan in the Environment Council of 20 June 2016.

On 19 May 2017, following intense work and the involvement of three Council Presidencies (The Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta), EU ambassadors agreed a **mandate on the waste package** paving the way for informal negotiations with the European Parliament. The co-legislator already had its position adopted on 14 March.

The first trilogue took place on 30 May and since then, five additional negotiation rounds have been taken place.

EU ambassadors will be **debriefed on the outcome** of the last trilogue on **20 December**. The final analysis of the text will take place under the incoming Bulgarian presidency with a view to confirm the agreement.

After formal approval, the new legislation will be submitted to the European Parliament for a vote at first reading and to the Council for final adoption.

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