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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

The early warning report for Latvia

Accompanying the document

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

on the implementation of EU waste legislation, including the early warning report for Member States at risk of missing the 2020 preparation for re-use/recycling target on municipal waste

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1. Introduction

This early warning report is part of the Commission's overall implementation report and aims to assist Member States at risk of failing to meet the 2020 target of 50 % preparation for re-use/recycling of municipal waste set out in Article 11(2)(a) of Directive 2008/98/EC. It builds on previous support provided by the Commission to help Member States comply[1] with EU law in the area of municipal waste management. This resulted in country-specific roadmaps[2] being drawn up for the relevant Member States.

The assessment underpinning the early warning report is based on a collaborative and transparent process involving the Member States concerned and an in-depth analysis of their most recent policy developments. This also involved extensive consultation with the authorities in charge of waste management.

The possible actions identified during this process are based on the existing best practices and aim to help Member States in meeting the 2020 municipal waste preparation for re-use/recycling; they therefore focus on policy measures that can be taken forward in the short term. These actions should be seen as complementary to those recommended in the roadmaps that were drawn up as part of the preceding compliance promotion activities and to the recommendations made in the Environmental Implementation Review[3].

2. Key findings

In 2016, Latvia's municipal waste recycling rate (including composting) reported to Eurostat was 25 %, while its landfilling rate was 64 %. Based on an analysis of existing and firmly planned policies in the area of waste management, Latvia is considered at risk of missing the 2020 target of 50 % preparation for re-use/recycling of municipal waste.

The assessment[4] that underpins the early warning report concludes that:

- the separate collection of recyclables, including bio-waste, is not yet being carried out effectively;
- economic incentives for households to separate waste are lacking;
- the extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes in Latvia do not fully cover the costs of separate collection; and
- more investment is needed in projects higher up the waste hierarchy (e.g. recycling) that go beyond treatment of residual waste.

The table below lists possible actions to support Latvia's efforts to improve its performance in waste management.

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation_1st_phase.htm
[2] Roadmap for Latvia: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/pdf/LV_Roadmap_FINAL.pdf
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/country-reports/index2_en.htm
[4] Eunomia Research & Consulting *et al.* (2018) 'Study to identify Member States at risk of non-compliance with the 2020 target of the Waste Framework Directive and to follow-up phase 1 and 2 of the compliance promotion exercise. The early warning report: Latvia.'.

OVERVIEW OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Economic incentives

1) Assessment of the levels of the landfill tax rate and gate fee to conclude whether these are sufficiently high to act as financial incentives for separate waste collection and to shift waste away from disposal.

2) Support to municipalities in their implementation of pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) schemes to encourage households to segregate waste. This will involve sharing best practice examples from both Latvia (taken from the ongoing PAYT trial) and abroad, and carrying out pilots of PAYT schemes specifically for apartments/multi-occupancy buildings.

Mandatory recycling targets for municipalities

3) Adoption of national law cascading the 50 % recycling rate target to municipalities accompanied by a monitoring of implementation and concrete consequences or penalties for missing these targets.

Separate collection

4) Setting out in national law minimum municipal waste collection standards, including the minimum number of collection points and minimum criteria on density of civic amenity sites.

5) Development of national minimum service standards for waste collection (including bio-waste) to specify, for example, the type and volume of containers, frequency of collection and type of vehicle used, taking into account the type of housing stock, how rural the area is, typical climate, etc.

6) Implementation of a mechanism that would require municipalities to rectify their schemes if the minimum standards are not met, and apply penalties/consequences for failing to meet the standards.

7) Introduction of compulsory bio-waste collection, and adoption of legislation on compost standards to ensure uptake of compost and digestate. Promotion of best practice in bio-waste collections, particularly for apartments/multi-occupancy buildings.

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes

8) Setting up by law a clearing house to coordinate the producer responsibility organisations (PROs) in Latvia, while stipulating how municipalities are remunerated by PROs for the management of the relevant waste material(s). This should include suitable checks to ensure that municipalities are not carrying out these collections in an inefficient manner.

  a. The clearing house would: (i) coordinate the PROs; (ii) collect, audit and validate data for the materials collected, both by the PROs and municipalities; and (iii) set up arrangements for channelling funding to municipalities in a fair manner (i.e. covering the cost necessary to provide a cost-efficient waste collection service).

9) Mandating the audits of data collected by the clearing house while ensuring that all parts of the market are covered (i.e. including the internet sales, etc.) to identify gaps or shortcomings in the data, and to ensure that these are addressed and that improvements are made.

10) Managing the collection infrastructure so that it complements rather than duplicates municipal collection arrangements.

Spending of EU funds

11) Prioritisation of projects higher up in the waste hierarchy, such as PAYT trials and separate collection, including of bio-waste. Channelling the available funding into suitable bio-waste treatment infrastructure.

Improving data

12) Publication of annual waste statistics for all municipalities, clearly stating recycling performance by municipality, and address any issues or gaps with respect to data on the collection of commercial waste.

13) Extension of data collection to cover collection, treatment and disposal, including robust data collection from waste operators, with a clear understanding of the end destinations of materials (i.e. recycling or disposal route).

Communication and awareness raising

14) Development of a set of national communications materials addressed to the public for use at local level, with clear and consistent messages, and with particular focus on bio-waste. These materials should be used as part of awareness-raising campaigns, in leaflets and at civic amenity sites.

Technical support to municipalities

15) Development of a system at national level that provides technical support for municipalities, specifically in the following areas:
- **a.** choosing collection services;
- **b.** service procurement;
- **c.** service management;
- **d.** communication campaigns;

coupled with active sharing of good ideas and practices that can improve efficiency in terms of cost reduction and improvement in performance.