



PRESS RELEASE

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Circular Economy vote: MEPs prove their ambition by championing ‘real’ recycling rates

MEPs in the European Parliament’s Environment (ENVI) Committee have today signalled their Circular Economy ambition, by recommending that all EU Member States begin measuring ‘real’ recycling rates with a single methodology at “input to the final recycling process”.

The European metals industry welcomes today’s Waste Framework Directive vote as an important step towards keeping better track of waste materials throughout the recycling process. We also commend several MEP actions to ensure metals and their products get treated safely & efficiently, by recognised high-quality recyclers.

Guy Thiran, Eurometaux’s Director General, stated: *“Under current rules, EU recycling rates do not reflect exactly what happens to collected and sorted waste. MEPs have sent a strong signal that this situation needs to change. We support their call for Member States to start using a single methodology for measuring more realistic recycling rates, tracing how much waste actually gets recycled. Once the basic rules are right, Europe can take more targeted action to promote high-quality recycling of metals and other materials”*

At present, EU Member States use different methods for calculating national recycling rates, making comparison difficult. Some base their calculations on waste collected or sorted, while much of that waste will still be incinerated, landfilled or exported without guarantee of proper treatment. Today’s proposal would require all Member States to measure recycling rates at “input to the final recycling process”, without exception.

Guy Thiran continued: *“We also applaud MEPs for acting to ensure Europe’s metals get recycled safely and efficiently. A large number of valuable and critical metals can be recycled from Europe’s urban mine, but only when recyclers use high-quality processes. On the other hand, low-quality recyclers recover fewer metals from electronics waste and other products, while risking harm to the environment and human health. MEPs are right in tackling this issue, by proposing that final recycling operators meet minimum operating conditions”.*

“It’s also great that MEPs have championed materials with the potential for multiple recycling. Metals can be recycled again and again without losing their intrinsic properties. That makes them perfectly suited for a central role in Europe’s Circular Economy”.

In their adopted amendments to the Waste Framework Directive, ENVI Committee MEPs ask the European Commission to establish minimum operating conditions for final recycling operators. They also require that Member States take measures to improve the design of products, including their potential for multiple recycling.

Eurometaux will now work with Member States to encourage a similar level of ambition.

About Eurometaux

Eurometaux is the decisive voice of non-ferrous metals producers and recyclers in Europe. With an annual turnover of €120bn, our members represent an essential industry for European society that businesses in almost every sector depend on. Together, we are leading Europe towards a more circular future through the endlessly recyclable potential of metals.

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