



News release

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Electronic-waste: Commission launches new tool to help Member States meet Circular Economy targets

New calculation tool for e-waste collection rates will help increase recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) – one of the fastest growing waste streams.

Today the European Commission has adopted common "WEEE Calculation Tools" to be used by Member States in the calculation of the WEEE collection rates. It will help standardise the treatment and recycling of materials like gold, silver, copper and rare metals in used TVs, laptops and mobile phones. The common methodology will ensure uniform conditions in the calculation of the WEEE collection rate which the Member States have to reach under new [EU rules on electrical and electronic waste](#).

Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, said: *"Recycling of electronic waste contributes to recovery of precious materials used in electrical and electronic equipment, like gold, silver and copper. More than 1 million tonnes of plastic waste generated in the EU in 2014 came from WEEE. Recycling of this plastic waste is very low, only 19%. We have to increase that average – to limit the potential environmental and health risk of hazardous substances in electronics. This will contribute to a circular economy, promoting the smart use of scarce and expensive resources. Improving the collection, treatment and recycling of electronics at the end of their life is essential, and this is where the new tools and methodologies come in."*

WEEE is one of the fastest growing waste streams, with some 9 million tonnes generated in 2005, and expected to grow to more than 12 million tonnes by 2020. Its safe and environmentally sound treatment is both a necessity and brings important benefits in a circular economy.

Under the new WEEE Directive, which was transposed by all Member States only in 2016, Member States are obliged to increase the level of WEEE collected: from 45% of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) placed on the market in the three preceding years in 2016, to 65% of EEE placed on the market or 85% of WEEE generated in 2019.

Member States are free to measure the collection rate either with regard to EEE placed on the market or with regard to the waste generated from such equipment. The [implementing Regulation](#) adopted today establishes a methodology for both options.

Responding to a legal requirement, the Commission also reviewed the WEEE Directive – its scope, deadlines and options for collection rates, and recovery targets. The results confirm the Directive's approach, clarifying that changes are not necessary. At the present stage where Member States are adjusting to the new scope and targets, priority is to be given to ensuring that the Directive's becomes fully effective.

To this end, the Commission will help Member States in meeting the new ambitious collection and recycling targets. This will help to identify and exchange good practices in the implementation of the WEEE Directive.

Next Steps

Member States will use the new methodologies in order to calculate the collection rate achieved and report to the Commission on the achievement of the collection targets starting from the reference year 2016. Reports have to be submitted to Eurostat by 30 June 2018.

Under the compliance promotion initiative the Commission will visit eight selected Member States in spring/summer 2017 and will organise a workshop in Brussels in autumn to discuss the outcome of this initiative with all Member States and stakeholders concerned.

Background

The new [WEEE Directive](#) entered into force on 13 August 2012. It obliges the Commission to adopt a common methodology for the calculation of EEE placed on the national market in each Member State and of WEEE generated.

The collection target until 2015 was 4 kg per capita of WEEE coming from households, representing about 2 million tonnes per year, out of around 10 million tonnes of WEEE generated annually in the EU. By 2020, it is estimated that the volume of WEEE will increase to 12 million tonnes. The collection target of 65% of equipment sold, or 85% of total WEEE generated set for 2019 will ensure that in 2020 around 10 million tonnes of WEEE, or roughly 20kg per capita, will be separately collected in the EU.

The WEEE Directive also requires the Commission to present to the European Parliament and the Council Reports adopted today on:

- (a) [The review of the scope of the Directive;](#)
- (b) [The re-examination of the deadlines relating to the collection rates and on possibly setting individual collection rates for one or more categories set out in Annex III;](#)
- (c) [The re-examination of the recovery targets and its calculation method;](#)
- (d) [The exercise of the power to adopt delegated acts conferred on the Commission pursuant to WEEE Directive.](#)

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm