



European Commission

European Green Deal: New EU rules on waste shipments to support a clean and circular economy

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#EUGreenDeal



“Our waste is our responsibility. Letting waste pollute the environment, end up in illegal dumpsites or in our oceans is a real loss of resources, which are precious for the EU’s transition to a circular economy. This proposal is a decisive move to create the most advanced waste shipment system in the world, and bring this system to the digital era too. Our goal is to make sure that waste generated in the EU is managed in a sustainable way so that it does not harm nature and health but opens up new opportunities for green growth and innovation.”

Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

The new EU rules will boost the circular economy and ensure EU waste exports do not harm the environment or human health.

The proposal:



Establishes new rules for EU waste exports



Sets out new measures to better tackle illegal waste shipments



Makes it easier to transport waste for recycling or re-use in the EU

Why do we need to update the EU rules on waste shipments?

Addressing global trends:

International trade in waste is increasing. In 2018, global trade in waste reached **182 million tonnes** with a value of around **€ 80.5 billion**.

Closing loopholes:

Stricter EU rules can better address the **pollution challenges** caused by waste shipments across borders and result in improving the **state of our environment and health**.

Modernising:

A more **efficient and digital system** for waste shipments can facilitate **getting more value out of the waste** generated in the EU, contributing to the circular economy.

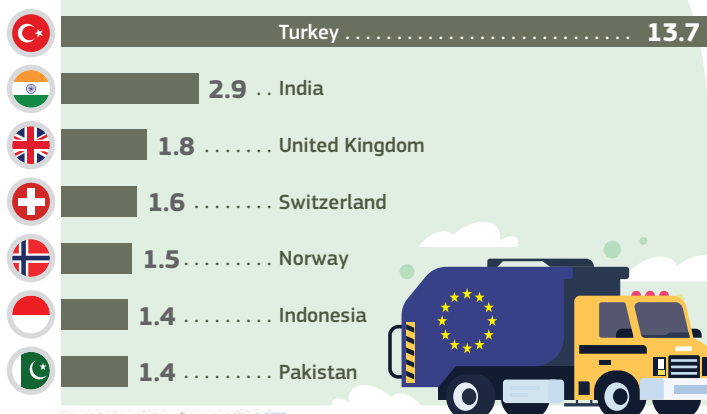
Key facts

Today only
12%
of raw materials
used in EU industry
come from
recycling

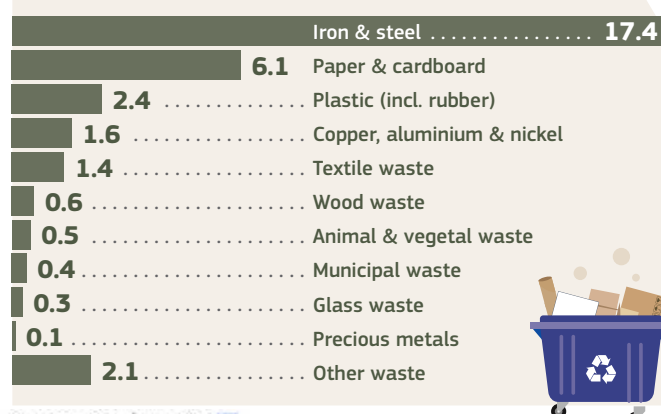
Between
15% and 30%
of waste shipments
might be illegal,
amounting to
€9.5 billion
annual revenues from
the **illicit waste market**
in the EU

EU waste exports
have increased
75%
since **2004** and
are now at around
33
million tonnes
every year

Main destinations for waste from the EU, 2020 (million tonnes)



Exports of waste from the EU, by waste category, 2020 (million tonnes)



The EU exported to non-EU countries around 32.7 million tonnes of waste

70 million tonnes of waste are shipped per year within the EU

Key actions in the proposal

- Laying down **stricter rules on the export of waste to non-OECD countries** and improving **monitoring and enforcement of rules** on waste exports to **OECD countries**. This will ensure they manage waste in an environmentally sound manner.
- Obliging all EU companies that export waste outside the EU to ensure that the facilities receiving their waste are subject to an **independent audit**.
- Strengthening current rules on **administrative penalties** against **illegal shipments** of waste to increase deterrence.
- Simplifying procedures to make it easier for **shipments of waste to re-enter the circular economy in the EU**, including fully **digitalising** waste shipments documentation.
- Stepping up action on waste trafficking**, the Commission will support investigations by Member States on transnational crime linked to waste trafficking, with the support of the EU Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).
- Promoting **actions at the international level** to improve waste management and sustainability in global waste trade.
- Establishing **stricter conditions for shipments for landfilling or incineration**, so that they are only authorised in limited and well-justified cases.