

## **BETTER FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS FOR THE RECYCLING OF WASTE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (WEEE)**

*Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Brno (24/11/2023)*

### **Recognizing that:**

1. Electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) has become an increasingly integral part of our society. According to the latest data from the United Nations, 53.6 million tonnes (Mt) of this waste were generated worldwide in 2019. Estimates suggest that by 2030, 74.7 Mt of electrical and electronic waste will be generated, almost a doubling of e-waste in just 16 years.<sup>1</sup>
2. Europe as a continent generated 12 Mt of e-waste in 2019, of which 42 percent is documented as being formally collected and recycled. 1.8 Mt are exported, as compared to 1.2 Mt of imports, rendering Europe a net exporter. With 16.2 kg per capita (2020), Europe has the highest e-waste generation per capita compared with all the other continents.<sup>2</sup>
3. In 2006, the European Union transposed the Basel Convention of 22 March 1989 and the OECD Council Decision of 2001 concerning transboundary movements of recyclable waste into European regulation with the European Waste Shipment Regulation.<sup>3</sup>
4. Worldwide, less than 20% of WEEE is disposed of in a controlled manner. In the European Union, as of 2019, the minimum collection rate to be achieved annually will be 65% of the average weight of EEE placed on the market in the preceding three years in the Member State concerned, or alternatively 85% of WEEE generated on the territory of that Member State. Some member states are entitled to a derogation.<sup>4</sup>

### **Acknowledging that:**

1. the exponential increase of e-waste in recent years and the environmental damage that can result, the need to find innovative solutions to recycle e-waste has exponentially

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<sup>1</sup> The Global E-waste Monitor 2020

<sup>2</sup> The Global Transboundary E-waste Flows Monitor 2022

<sup>3</sup> REGULATION (EC) No 1013/2006 OF THE EU PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 14 June 2006 on shipments of waste

<sup>4</sup> DIRECTIVE 2012/19/EU OF THE EU PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 4 July 2012 on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)

increased.

2. The share of recycled E-waste throughout the union has wide gaps from country to country from the 15,43 kg/inhabitants of Austria to the 3,96 kg/inhabitant in Cyprus.<sup>5</sup>
3. The laws that globally regulate e-waste recycling vary widely. In Japan the Act on Promotion of Recycling of Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment of 2013 promotes accountability on the part of end users (payment of an end fee) and retailers (Collection of used home appliances). In Switzerland and in Norway a “take back” system has been introduced. Specifically, since 1998, the Swiss legal code has contained an ordinance on the return, take-back and disposal of electrical and electronic equipment (ORDEE). According to this ordinance, manufacturers, dealers and importers are obliged to accept electrical and electronic equipment that is similar to their product range free of charge and to hand it over for professional recycling.<sup>6</sup> The financing of collection and disposal of WEEE is provided by the private sector through four non profit organizations (SENS, SWICO Recycling and SLRS) through an advanced recycling contribution (ARC), allowing to finance eRecycling at the time of purchase.<sup>7</sup>
4. Studies shows that end-users are willing to accept to share the costs of the waste management if a correct management of the disposal is guaranteed
5. The EU directive on WEEE of 2012 requires a rate of separate collection of at least 4 kilograms on average per inhabitant per year of WEEE from private households. Some member states are entitled to a derogation.<sup>8</sup>
6. European Union Member States exported some 133,000 metric tons of waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in 2020. European Union Member States exported some 133,000 metric tons of waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in 2020, most of which hazardous.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> European Parliament - Spokesperson: Jaume Duch Guillot, *E-waste in the EU: facts and figures (infographic)*, February 2024, 20201208STO93325

<sup>6</sup> Ordinance on the Return, Taking Back and Disposal of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (ORDEE)

<sup>7</sup> Nitin Koshta, Sabyasachi Patra, Surya Prakash Singh, *Sharing economic responsibility: Assessing end user's willingness to support E-waste reverse logistics for circular economy*, *Journal of Cleaner Production* 332 (2022) 130057

<sup>8</sup> DIRECTIVE 2012/19/EU OF THE EU PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 4 July 2012 on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)

<sup>9</sup> Global e-waste flows monitor 2022, UNITAR

**YEPP calls on:**

1. The European Commission to ensure a rapid alignment of the multinationals outside the EU with the provisional deal on the right-to-repair directive recently reached by the Council and by the European Parliament, key to reach the European Green Deal's goals.
2. The European Commission to make the WEEE Directive more effective by making online platforms responsible for recycling of WEE sold as well.
3. The European Commission to prevent the illegal transboundary movements of WEEE by developing one single system of penalties for entities that fail to comply with the requirements of the Basel Convention.
4. The European Commission and the European Parliament to introduce regulations requiring retailers, manufacturers, and importers to mandatorily accept and sort used electrical and electronic equipment for recycling without charge. Emphasizing the compulsory nature of product take-back schemes, associated costs for recycling could be integrated into the purchase price, aligning with the "polluter pays" principle. This strategy ensures accountability for waste management lies with those who create and distribute the goods, prompting them to prioritize sustainable practices and optimize resource efficiency.