

Waste framework directive: Council set to start talks on its revision

The Council adopted its position ('general approach') on the targeted revision of the waste framework directive, with a focus on food and textile waste.

The general approach aims to prevent waste from fast fashion and to facilitate re-use. It also sets ambitious targets to significantly reduce food waste by 2030. Given the food and textile sectors are the first and the fourth most resource-intensive respectively, today's agreement represents a crucial step towards a more sustainable and circular European economy.

Alain Maron, minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for climate change, environment, energy and participatory democracy

Food sector

Less food waste by 2030

The proposed directive sets binding targets on food waste reduction by 2030:

- - 10% in processing and manufacturing
- - 30% per capita in retail, restaurants, food services and households

The general approach agrees with the targets as proposed by the Commission and provides for the possibility to set targets for **edible food** by 31 December 2027, when the Commission will review the 2030 targets.

Reference year and correction factors

The food reduction targets will be calculated in comparison to the amount generated in 2020, since it was the first year for which data on food waste was collected according to a harmonised method. Member states are allowed to use a reference year **prior to 2020**, if adequate data collection methods were in place at national level.

The general approach allows member states to also use **2021, 2022 or 2023** as reference years, as the data for 2020 may in some cases not be representative because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ministers further agreed that **correction factors** need to be developed, in order to take into account fluctuations in **tourism** and **production levels** in food processing and manufacturing in relation to the reference year.

Textile sector

The current waste framework directive, already in force since 2008, obliges member states to ensure the separate collection of textiles for re-use, preparation for re-use and recycling by 1 January 2025. According to the general approach, by the end of 2028 the Commission will consider setting specific targets for waste prevention, collection, preparing for re-use and recycling of the waste textile sector.

Extended producer responsibility

The proposal for the revision of the waste framework directive provides for harmonised **extended producer responsibility (EPR)** schemes that would require fashion brands and textile producers to **pay fees in order to help** fund the textile waste collection and treatment costs. These schemes will be established up to 30 months after the entry into force of this directive and ministers agreed to include microenterprises in their scope.

The level of those fees will be based on the circularity and environmental performance of textile products (known as **eco-modulation**). As preventing waste is the best option, the general approach sets out that member states can require higher fees for companies following 'fast fashion' industrial and commercial practices.

The general approach also contains specific provisions for member states where there is a higher share of textile products assessed as fit for re-use on the market. Those member states can ask **commercial re-use operators** to pay a (lower) fee when making those products available on their market for the first time.

Social economy entities

The general approach acknowledges the **key role** of social economy entities (including charities, social enterprises and foundations) in the existing textile collection systems. It allows them to maintain and operate their own separate collection points. According to the Council's position, member states can **exempt them from certain reporting** requirements to avoid disproportionate administrative burden.

Next steps

The Council's general approach reached today allows the rotating presidency to start talks with the European Parliament on the final text, which will take place under the new legislative cycle. The European Parliament adopted its position in March 2024.

Background

Over **58 million tonnes of food waste** (i.e. 131 kg per inhabitant) are generated in the EU each year, representing an estimated loss of €132 billion. Moreover, food waste accounts for around 16% of the total greenhouse gas emissions from the EU food system.

The EU also generates 12.6 million tonnes of textile waste per year. Clothing and footwear alone account for 5.2 million tonnes of waste, equivalent to **12 kg of waste per person every year**. Currently, only 22% of such waste is collected separately for re-use or recycling, while the rest is often incinerated or landfilled.

On 5 July 2023 the European Commission presented a proposal to revise the waste framework directive, specifically targeting the **food and textile sectors**. The overall aim of the proposal is to reduce the environmental and climate impacts associated with textile and food waste generation and management.

- [General approach on the revision of the waste framework directive](#)
- [Reducing food loss and food waste \(background information\)](#)

[Food waste: prevent, reuse and recycle \(infographic\)](#)

Food waste: prevent, reuse and recycle (infographic)

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