

FEAD celebrates European Parliament's vote on a revision of the Waste Framework Directive

Brussels, 14 March 2024 – Yesterday, the European Parliament voted in plenary on a revision of the Waste Framework Directive to make the textile industry more sustainable. It is estimated by the European Environment Agency, that the textile industry is the fifth industrial sector for primary use of materials and greenhouse gas emissions. Clearly, a step change is needed, and today we celebrate that the co-legislator voted in favour of introducing an EU-wide Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for textiles. This will promote sustainable textiles and textile waste management in accordance with the waste hierarchy and will support handling the expected increase in textile collection volumes from 2025.

When we envisage the future of textile waste management, it is essential that all separately collected textiles are considered waste until they have undergone a sorting operation by trained operators. While the EPR implementation will provide the needed incentives to scale up and enhance sorting, preparation for reuse and recycling, the waste status of the separately collected textiles will mean the application of EU environmental legislation, which guarantees traceability and environmentally sound management. This was already rightly proposed by the Commission. However, to achieve our goals, we must also ensure that all involved actors will equally apply the new rules and procedures. It is crucial, on the one hand, that all textile producers, regardless of their size, are covered by the EPR, and on the other hand, that all operators handling waste fall under the same rules. This is not the case in the text voted today in Parliament as it was not the case in the Commission's proposal from July.

Claudia Mensi, FEAD President commented: *'only a small part of discarded textiles is today reused and recycled. If the separate collection is well implemented in 2025, we will have big amounts available in the EU, but we also need the capacity to sort, prepare for reuse and recycle this waste. The private industry is ready to invest but needs to see some signals that the framework that will be in place will offer a level playing and the right market conditions, where no actors are privileged or enabled to hold dominant positions.'*

Finally, it is important that the co-legislators consider and reduce as much as possible the gap between the mandatory separate collection of textile waste and the implementation of the new rules from the revised Waste Framework Directive. FEAD will continue its engagement with policy makers and stakeholders, advocating for a level playing field and for adequate waste management rules to ensure a more sustainable textile industry in alignment with the waste hierarchy.

FEAD is the European Waste Management Association, representing the private waste and resource management industry across Europe, including 19 national waste management federations and 3,000 waste management companies. Private waste management companies operate in 60% of municipal waste markets in Europe and in 75% of industrial and commercial waste. This means more than 320,000 local jobs, fuelling €5 billion of investments into the economy every year. For more information, please contact:

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