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The early warning report for Slovakia

Accompanying the document

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**on the implementation of EU waste legislation, including the early warning report for
Member States at risk of missing the 2020 preparation for re-use/recycling target on
municipal waste**

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1. Introduction

This early warning report is part of the Commission's overall implementation report and aims to assist Member States at risk of failing to meet the 2020 target of 50 % preparation for re-use/recycling of municipal waste set out in Article 11(2)(a) of Directive 2008/98/EC. It builds on previous support provided by the Commission to help Member States comply¹ with EU law in the area of municipal waste management. This resulted in country-specific roadmaps² being drawn up for the relevant Member States.

The assessment underpinning the early warning report is based on a collaborative and transparent process involving the Member States concerned and an in-depth analysis of their most recent policy developments. This also involved extensive consultation with the authorities in charge of waste management.

The possible actions identified during this process are based on the existing best practices and aim to help Member States in meeting the 2020 municipal waste preparation for re-use/recycling; they therefore focus on policy measures that can be taken forward in the short term. These actions should be seen as complementary to those recommended in the roadmaps that were drawn up as part of the preceding compliance promotion activities and to the recommendations made in the Environmental Implementation Review³.

2. Key findings

In 2016, Slovakia's municipal waste recycling rate (including composting) reported to Eurostat was 23 %, while its landfilling rate was 65 %. Based on an analysis of existing and firmly planned policies in the area of waste management, Slovakia is considered at risk of missing the 2020 target of 50 % preparation for re-use/recycling of municipal waste.

The assessment⁴ that underpins the early warning report concludes that:

- the separate collection of recyclables, including bio-waste, is not yet being carried out effectively;
- economic incentives for households to separate waste are lacking;
- the extended producer responsibility schemes in Slovakia do not fully cover the costs of separate collection; and
- more investment is needed in projects higher up the waste hierarchy (e.g. recycling) that go beyond treatment of residual waste,.

The table below lists possible actions to support Slovakia's efforts to improve its performance in waste management.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/support_implementation_1st_phase.htm

² Roadmap for Slovakia: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/framework/pdf/SK_Roadmap_FINAL.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/country-reports/index2_en.htm

⁴ Eunomia Research & Consulting *et al.* (2018) 'Study to identify Member States at risk of non-compliance with the 2020 target of the Waste Framework Directive and to follow-up phase 1 and 2 of the compliance promotion exercise. The early warning report: Slovakia.'

OVERVIEW OF POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Economic incentives for municipalities

- 1) Development of national minimum service standards for waste collection (including bio-waste) to specify, for example, the type and volume of containers, minimum and maximum frequency of collection and type of vehicle used, taking into account the type of housing stock, typical climate, etc.
- 2) Revision of the Waste Act to stipulate the use of such standards while setting penalties for failing to meet these standards to incentivise compliance.
- 3) Cascading down recycling targets to municipal level accompanied by penalties, fiscal or otherwise, that are punitive, with adequate time for the municipalities to improve their performance.
- 4) Revision of the spending under the operational programme for cohesion policy funds to ensure funding is available to support implementation of the service standards (see point 1).
- 5) Revision of the landfill tax to ensure other residual waste treatment and disposal techniques (such as incineration) are also covered, so as to more effectively push waste up the hierarchy to the 'preparation for reuse and recycling' level, rather than just to the 'recovery' level.

Extended producer responsibility schemes

- 6) Revision of the roles and responsibilities of the extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes and how they integrate with municipal services, to ensure that the approach aligns with the new service standards, and that producers fund the full cost of the parts of the system that they are responsible for.
- 7) Introduction of a requirement for packaging producer data to be reviewed by third-party auditors to ensure the accuracy of data on packaging placed on the market, and consequently of the recycling rates under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.

Engagement from municipalities

- 8) Setting up of a national forum on municipal waste recycling to facilitate a good working relationship between the national government institutions, municipalities and producer responsibility organisations. This should help improve communication between the national government and the municipalities, and could lead to a shared understanding of the problems and solutions.

Spending of EU funds

- 9) Linking disbursement of EU funds to funding criteria matched to implementation of the minimum service standards, while giving municipalities incentives to work together to procure waste systems across multiple municipalities, thus improving efficiency.

Incentives for households

10) Research to determine the minimum level of local fees needed to achieve high levels of recycling performance and to subsequently increase the fees accordingly. This minimum level should be set based on a detailed analysis of the likely minimum cost of implementing the minimum service standards, from which the contribution from producers under the EPR schemes should be deducted.

Management of bio-waste

11) Removal of all exemptions enshrined in law related to the requirement to sort kitchen waste. This is to ensure that the uptake of food waste collection is not limited.

12) Clarification within the minimum service standards which types of collection method are suitable for bio-waste (including specifying the need for separate containment for food and garden waste); and which approaches should be ruled out due to likely high levels of contamination (e.g. unrestricted access to on-street bins).

13) Consideration of using the design-build-operate contracts for procuring biogas (or other) treatment plants to ensure appropriate facilities are developed.

14) Support to the roll out of home composting by implementing economic support measures (e.g. allowing less frequent and cheaper residual waste collections, or simply reducing householder waste fees for home composters).

15) Support to the development of community/on-farm composting in more rural areas with support from EU funds.

16) In order to facilitate the marketing of good quality compost, an end-of-waste standard that gives output of appropriate quality 'product' status would be desirable.

17) Setting up a dedicated national support programme on bio-waste collection and composting to help develop the standards and markets, and to ensure economically efficient development of bio-waste collection and recycling.

Technical support to municipalities

18) Development of a system at national level that provides technical support for local councils, specifically in the following areas:

- a. choosing collection services;
- b. service procurement;
- c. service management;
- d. communication campaigns;

coupled with active sharing of good ideas and practices that can improve efficiency in terms of cost reduction and improvement in performance.

Improving data quality

19) Improvements to the national waste data system following adoption of the revised Waste Directives, including covering all municipal packaging waste under municipal waste reporting.

