

Press release

European local and regional authorities claim that the fundamental objectives of the European WEEE Directive must not be brought into question during its revision process

The WEEE Public Interest Network (WEEE-PIN)¹ held a second meeting on 25th April. It welcomed at this occasion a presentation by a representative from (EU Commission)] on the on-going works and timetable for the revision of the WEEE Directive.

At this occasion, WEEE-PIN members would like to remind that:

- the original aim of the WEEE Directive was to foster eco-design (including the reuse of products) in order to improve the environmental performance of WEEE management and to close the “resource-waste” loop. This would be done notably through : creating easy accessible selective collection, individual producer responsibility, reuse, recycling and recovery weight-based targets, treatment requirements, integrating all waste-related costs in the product price and the provision of information to end-users and treatment facilities...
- the Directive is based on article 175 of the EC Treaty which allows Member States to go further than the Directive in order to ensure better environmental protection and create tailor-made legislation for the specifics of each national situation.

WEEE-PIN members are now concerned by the facts that :

- the revision process only seems to take into account the producer’s point of view in order to make Producer Responsibility easier to manage
- the initial ambition and principles of the Directive (i.e. creating accessible collection systems, drive eco-design, prevention, reuse... and protect the environment) seem to be revised downwards and drowned in technical discussions

For WEEE-PIN members, problems are essentially in the way the WEEE Directive has been implemented in Europe. Solutions must be found in clarifying and giving more precisions to the existing framework – not in lowering the original ambition.

So that :

1) as far as environment is concerned :

- Prevention through better eco-design must remain a fundamental objective
- Quality reuse of appliances must be further investigated, associating the social economy enterprises networks
- Markets and environmental standards for collection and treatment of WEEE in Europe shall be developed in order to avoid eco-dumping and illegal exports

2) as far as society is concerned :

- Individual producer responsibility must remain; the different models of producer compliance schemes should be more transparent and aim at the complete internalization of costs in to products, and should be benchmarked in an open way according to their environmental, economic and social efficiency, including hidden costs.
- Citizens shall not pay twice for the management of their WEEE (once as consumers and another time for the management of their waste); they should get quality services for both the repair of their equipment and the management of their waste.

¹ The WEEE-PIN was created within ACR+ (Association of Cities and Regions for Recycling and sustainable Resource management) and represents local and regional public authorities on WEEE issues at European level. It aims to help to clarify the WEEE Directive, as the way it has been implemented in Europe is confusing and inconsistent.



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WEEE-PIN intends to gather data to strengthen the revision process and make Local and Regional Authorities' position heard in the debates. It will be cooperating on this with other organizations, representing the public sector and would like to follow actively the Directive's revision process in order to ensure especially that on-going studies and elements for revisions integrate also the various impacts of PR systems on municipalities and on waste management sectors in Europe.

For any further information:

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