

Brussels, 26 January 2017

The stronger the Internal Market, the better for the Circular Economy

On 24 January 2017, the European Parliament ENVI Committee voted on the draft reports of Rapporteur Bonafé on the Commission proposals for amending the Waste Directive and a series of waste stream specific Directives, including Directive 2012/19/EU on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE). Both of these are core pieces of legislation for the manufacturing sector that Orgalime represents, which today provides employment to nearly 11 million people.

Orgalime appreciates the clear progress made on this complex piece of legislation, which aims to allow a Circular Economy to develop bottom up. *“We are pleased that the Environment Committee under the lead of its Rapporteur Simona Bonafé has seen fit to adopt a stricter approach to landfill and recycling targets, more investment to be directed into waste infrastructure improvements, better reporting of data from all actors collecting or treating Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and an appropriate definition of ‘preparation for reuse’,”* states Adrian Harris, Director General of Orgalime. *“We also warmly welcome a number of important improvements made in the interest of preserving a functioning internal market for products. This is fundamental,”* states Harris, and continues: *“building the Circular Economy at the expense of the Internal Market, one of the EU’s major achievements, would clearly undermine manufacturing investment in the Circular Economy and in the EU.”*

Notwithstanding this, there is still some way to go to arrive at a final Directive that will be supportive of both the Circular Economy and the Internal Market. Areas of concern for Orgalime remain the newly proposed article 9a on “reuse”, which, since reuse takes place before a product becomes waste, clearly treads into the area of product policy. Also, product-related aspects remain prominently placed in articles 8, 8a and 9, which need to be carefully checked, especially as these are extended to the level of components and since other legislative work is already ongoing. *“It would not make sense to double regulate or create contradictions or inconsistencies if other policy tools are already existing or underway,”* explains Harris, explicitly referring to the just relaunched harmonised product design work under the Ecodesign Directive, the new Ecodesign Working Plan, as well as the work on developing generic standards to cover ecodesign requirements related to material efficiency aspects in European Standardisation Organisations, and of course the ongoing implementation of EU chemicals legislation (REACH and RoHS) as well as the sector-specific Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE).

Regarding the latter, several EP proposals, such as on financing obligations of producers, subject to Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes (EPR), the inclusion of WEEE in the definition of “municipal waste” or the establishment of harmonised product criteria for modulated fees and related creation of a new platform remain an issue. We call upon the Council and European Commission to particularly resolve these points.

European manufacturers represented by Orgalime remain committed to providing further input to the debate so that a final Directive reconciles environmental ambition and economic realities.

Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 41 trade federations representing the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 24 European countries. The industry employs some 10.9 million people in the EU and in 2015 accounted for more than €1,900 billion of annual output. The industry accounts for over a quarter of manufacturing output and a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.

www.orgalime.org

ORGALIME aisbl | Diamant Building | Boulevard A Reyers 80 | B1030 | Brussels | Belgium
Tel: +32 2 706 82 35 | Fax: +32 2 706 82 50 | e-mail: secretariat@orgalime.org

Ass. Intern. A.R. 12.7.74 | VAT BE 0414 341 438