

## EU Parliament disappointed by Commission's circular economy package

Written by Julie Levy-Abegnoli on 2 December 2015 in News  
News

The European Commission insists its revised circular economy package is 'very ambitious', but MEPs beg to differ.



The European Commission has finally unveiled its long-awaited revised circular economy package. Commission First Vice President Frans Timmermans said he was "particularly proud" of the proposals, as they were, "one of the major political initiatives of this Commission." However, the package has not been met with the anticipated levels of praise.

The circular economy package was initially meant to be presented last year, but it was withdrawn from the college's work programme as it did not match team Juncker's 'better regulation' agenda. Unsurprisingly, this stirred much anger among MEPs, forcing the Commission to promise to return with a new and improved package.

Timmermans said the new proposals were, "about reinventing the European economy and generating

sustainable competitive advantages." He explained that, "making the switch to a circular economy is not just the right thing to do for the environment - it's also the smart thing to do. We can't compete on wage costs and cheap natural resources like other parts of the world, but with resource efficiency and leadership on green technology, we could build a competitive edge."

---

## RELATED CONTENT

- [Sirpa Pietikäinen: Circular economy is a win for the EU economy and environment](#) [1]
  - [Karl Falkenberg: Circular economy model key to boosting European economy](#) [2]
  - [Massimo Paolucci: Circular economy more than just an opportunity](#) [3]
  - [Mark Demesmaeker: EU needs circular economy that will work in practice](#) [4]
  - [Piernicola Pedicini: End of fossil fuel subsidies first step of circular economy](#) [5]
- 

The Dutch official is confident that the new circular economy package, saying it, "offers a very comprehensive set of measures to close the loop, with concrete steps covering the full life cycle of products and not just the waste phase."

Timmermans added that he would look more closely at the planned obsolescence of technological goods - when objects stop functioning shortly after their warranty period is over.

The revised proposal sets a common EU target for recycling 65 per cent of municipal waste and 75 per cent of packaging waste by 2030. It also calls for a binding target to reduce landfill to 10 per cent at most, with a complete ban on landfill for separately collected waste.

There are also plans to harmonise the way recycling rates are calculated across the member states.

The 65 per cent target has come under particular fire. Although the Commission is keen to stress that the new package is far more ambitious than its predecessor, former Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso's team wanted to introduce a 70 per cent target in 2014.

EPP deputy Karl-Heinz Florenz wondered whether this new proposal wasn't, "much ado about nothing." His colleague Peter Liese welcomed the new proposals but cautioned, "we have to carefully check the details."

Members from Parliament's S&D group, the other half of the so-called 'Grand Coalition', were equally nuanced in their reactions. Socialist Vice-Chair Kathleen Van Brempt praised the proposal, saying; "It sets an ambitious vision and roadmap in which a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach prevails."

Yet she stressed that; "This ambitious roadmap needs to be supported by specific targets, and our political group will try to build a consensus in the Parliament to introduce those targets, to make sure the roadmap is accomplished."

ALDE group shadow rapporteur on the circular economy, Gerben Jan Gerbrandy, slammed the new package, accusing the Commission of, "wasting months of work and many hours of parliamentary time. With a weakened waste proposal and an action plan copy-pasted from the 2010 roadmap to a resource efficient Europe, it's clear the European Commission is failing to deliver on this important agenda for growth and jobs."

His colleague, Catherine Bearder, added; "The only ambition shown here is for weakening targets."

Greens/EFA group Vice-Chair Bas Eickhout commented; "While we welcome the fact that the Commission has finally come forward with revised proposals on the circular economy, we are concerned that the plans are undermined by the reduced ambition. This is contrary to the commitment by the

Commission for a more ambitious proposal. A year on from the initial decision by the Commission to withdraw its original proposals, we have lost both time and ambition in the push to stimulate the circular economy at EU level."

Green environment spokesperson Davor Skrelc said; "It is a major shame that the Commission is not seeing to maximise the potential of the circular economy. We will seek to address some of the shortcomings in Parliament."

Reacting to criticism of the new package, Timmermans insisted it was, "much more ambitious than the previous package, because it's about the full circle - not just waste. It sets out a clear pathway, not just targets. We have set targets that we think are very ambitious yet realistic, and we will monitor progress over the next couple of years. If by 2020 or 2025 we are on our way to reaching our targets, we will increase them."

He also noted that the legally binding ten per cent cap on landfilling was, "completely new" and that the 65 per cent target for recyclables was, "an extremely ambitious goal, which for many member states will require a huge effort".

Given that MEPs have vowed to push for higher targets, and member states are expected to struggle to reach the Commission's proposed targets, it seems unlikely this new package will come into law any time soon.

## About the author

Julie Levy-Abegnoli is a journalist for the Parliament Magazine

## Tags

[Energy](#) [6]

[Environment](#) [7]

[European Commission](#) [8]

## Categories

[Energy](#) [9]

[Environment](#) [10]

## Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)  
[MonitoringDods](#)  
[ResearchDods](#)  
[EventsDods](#)  
[Training](#)

## Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)  
[HouseThe](#)  
[Parliament](#)  
[MagazineHolyrood](#)  
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)  
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)  
[Service](#)  
[World](#)  
[PublicTechnology](#)  
[Training](#)  
[JournalDods](#)  
[Parliamentary](#)  
[CompanionVacher's](#)  
[Quarterly The](#)  
[European Union and](#)  
[Public Affairs](#)  
[Directory](#)

## Dods events

[Westminster](#)  
[BriefingDigital](#)  
[Health & Care](#)  
[ScotlandMEP](#)  
[AwardsThe Skills](#)  
[SummitScottish](#)

[Public Service Awards](#)  
[Public Sector Procurement Summit](#)  
[Public Sector ICT Summit](#)  
[Cyber Security Summit](#)  
[Cyber Security 2017 Training Journal Awards](#)

**Partnership events**

[The Health and Care Innovation Expo](#)  
[Civil Service Live](#)  
[Civil Service Awards](#)  
[Chief Nursing Officer for England's Summit](#)  
[Women into Leadership](#)  
[The Youth Justice Convention](#)  
[Socitm Spring Conference](#)  
[NHSCC Annual Members' Event](#)  
[Dods at Party Conference](#)

---

[Privacy Policy](#)[Terms & Conditions](#)[Advertising](#)[Sponsorship](#) [Subscriptions](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/eu-parliament-disappointed-commissions-circular-economy-package>

**Links**

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/circular-economy-win-eu-economy-and-environment>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/circular-economy-model-key-boosting-european-economy>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/circular-economy-more-just-opportunity>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/eu-needs-circular-economy-will-work-practice>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/feature/end-fossil-fuel-subsidies-first-step-circular-economy>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/energy>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/environment>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/european-commission>
- [9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/energy>
- [10] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/environment>