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Circular Economy Newsletter | March 2024

It's no joke-, our monthly newsletter is here, and it's back with a twist, featuring a brand new layout!

We have summarised for you all the latest news on the EU files affecting the recycling industry, highlighted events you cannot miss, recommended must-read articles and provided a recap of our advocacy efforts for the recycling industry's interests.

Before you scroll down,

register for EuRIC's tyre recycling event!

The European Commission's Director of Circular Economy, **Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea** will be there to deliver the keynote speech! **A unique opportunity for networking and insights from the EU's top officials.**

REGISTER NOW

A promotional banner for an event. The background is a vibrant orange and yellow with a pattern of small white dots. In the top left corner is the EuRIC logo. The main text reads 'Reinventing the Wheel: Advancing tyre recycling' in white. Below this is a call to action 'REGISTER NOW' in white text on an orange diagonal banner. In the bottom left, it says '15 APRIL 2024' and 'BluePoint Brussels, 14:00 - 18:00'. In the bottom right, there is a stack of four black tires and the hashtag '#EuRICMTR'.

| EuRIC's EU policy monitoring



E-waste

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) amending Directive has been published in the EU's Official Journal. It will enter into force on 8 April 2024 and Member States will have until 9 October 2025 to transpose the Directive into national law.

Earlier in March, the Council of the European Union had **adopted amendments** to WEEE legislation, which includes a range of products such as computers, fridges and photovoltaic panels. The amendments aim to bring the WEEE directive into line with a 2022 EU Court of Justice judgment on the partial invalidity of the directive owing to unjustified retroactive application of extended producer responsibility to waste from photovoltaic panels placed on the market between 13 August 2005 and 13 August 2012.

News from the Member-States

Starting from 1 January 2025, Belgium will be the first in the EU to ban the sale of disposable e-cigarettes (vapes), federal Health Minister Frank Vandenbroucke announced, with a royal decree soon to follow. Disposable e-cigarettes are classified as “Electric and Electronic Equipment” (EEE) under EU, UK, and EEA producer responsibility regulations. However, many producers and distributors don't register them, leading to a lack of contribution to the WEEE treatment system. This is primarily due to awareness issues, free-riding, and weak enforcement.

EuRIC has urged the European Commission to impose restrictions under REACH and impose an EU-wide complete ban on single-use e-cigarettes by the end of 2024, due to their negative impact on health, the environment, communities, and the circular economy.

[Read our call in our statement](#)



Critical Raw Materials

the Commission to adopt delegated acts supplementing this Regulation and set minimum recycled content targets for certain materials in permanent magnets. Recycling and processing projects will receive their permits faster than extraction projects, within 15 and 27 months, accordingly.

Read more in our statement

The European Commission has **signed** a new strategic partnership agreement with Norway on sustainable land-based raw materials and battery value chains. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Maroš Šefčovič, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight of the European Commission, and Jan Christian Vestre, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Kingdom of Norway.



Textiles

During the Environmental Council of 25 March, the delegations of France, Denmark and Sweden **urged** the Commission to subject textile waste to the control mechanisms of the Basel Convention in an effort to address the issue of increasing textile waste.

The three countries requested the EU Executive to put forward a draft Council Decision for a common EU proposal before the 17th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, scheduled for next spring. The delegations asked for provisions similar to the regulation of e-waste under the Basel Convention. This would mean:

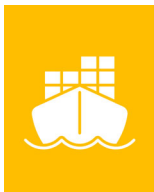
- requiring prior informed consent to be obtained for the import and export of textile waste
- banning the export of hazardous textile waste (e.g. stained with chemicals or paint) altogether

On 13 March, the European Parliament adopted its **position** on the revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD). EuRIC's Textiles Branch welcomed the vote as a step forward, regretting, however, the fact that no concrete targets for textile collection, reuse and recycling were set. A prompt entry into force is now essential.

Read more in our statement

news of Renewcell, the Swedish textile recycling company, and a valued partner of our Textiles Branch, which filed for bankruptcy in late February. **This news raises critical questions about the future of textile recycling companies** and the lessons to be learned from such situations. It serves as a sobering reminder that even leaders in sustainability can face challenges amidst market forces and business complexities.

[Read more in our statement](#)



Waste Shipments

On 25 March, the Council adopted the revised [waste shipment rules](#), which marks a significant step towards modernising intra-EU waste shipments rules and tackling illegal shipments. The measures aim to ensure that waste is only sent to destinations where it is properly treated in an environmentally sound manner, and updating shipment procedures to reflect the objectives of the circular economy and climate neutrality. EuRIC welcomed the updated rules facilitating intra-EU waste shipments with the explicit goal of achieving a circular economy, and clarifying that unintentional administrative errors do not render a whole shipment illegal. Yet, concerns remain.

[Read more in our statement](#)



Packaging

On 15 March, COREPER signed the deal on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), marking a significant milestone for the European recycling industry and circular value chains. The deal reached is likely the best outcome, given the trade issues that caused delays and the fact that it was only reached after any condition of origin for plastics accounting for recycled content was removed. EuRIC applauds the milestone deal, but also highlights that challenges remain. Earlier in March, the Parliament and

Read more in our statement

The trilogue deal included a mirroring clause mandating that recycled plastic originating from third countries meet stringent EU environmental standards to be allowed to account for mandatory recycled content in plastics packaging. EuRIC and FEAD teamed up to highlight the need for robust recycling infrastructures and a strong market for European recycled plastics. With the upcoming ban of plastic waste exports, meeting EU recycling targets will depend on these conditions.

Read more in our statement



Net-Zero

The latest European Parliamentary Research Service briefing on the Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA) is available [online](#)! According to media reports, the European Parliament plenary is tentatively scheduled to debate and hold a vote on the text of the provisional agreement on the Commission's NZIA proposal during the 22-25 April plenary session.



Other EU files

Green Claims Directive:

On 14 March, the European Parliament [adopted its position](#) on the Green Claims directive, a significant step in fighting greenwashing and ensuring a level playing field for responsible companies in the EU. The directive would oblige companies to provide robust and verifiable scientific evidence for their environmental marketing claims before labelling products as “biodegradable”, “less polluting”, “water saving” or having “bio based content”. It also extends to environmental claims on products sold via online platforms. While this marks progress in combatting greenwashing, attention is still needed on labelling, verification, and addressing hazardous substances.

Our Annual Report for 2023 is out!



2023 has been a dynamic year and our advocacy efforts brought us one step closer to achieving EuRIC's vision of a circular economy and preserving resources for future generations. Our annual report summarises the collective achievements of EuRIC members and partners, sponsors and the secretariat in 2023 in the fields of metals, ewaste & packaging, plastics, paper, tyres, textiles, ELVs and CDW.

[Explore our Annual Report](#)

| EuRIC EVENTS

Upcoming events

APRIL 15 EuRIC Tyres - Reinventing the Wheel: Advancing Tyre Recycling

APRIL 19 Innovation Forum 4 Plastics

JUNE 3 EuRIC WEEE - Plug Into Sustainability: E-waste Recycling

REGISTER NOW

Make sure you join the conversation at key EuRIC events taking place in the coming months!

 15 April - **EuRIC's upcoming Tyres Event:**  Reinventing the Wheel: Advancing Tyre Recycling! Register here  euric.link/pdb

 3 June - **EuRIC WEEE - Plug Into Sustainability: E-waste Recycling!** Register here
 euric.link/4vq

Register now and be part of the conversation!

Discover our events & register

| Highlights



Full house at EuRIC's last General Assembly under the leadership of Emmanuel KATRAKIS! From the leadership transition to structural preparations for next year's elections, and from expanding our advocacy to unveiling EuRIC's annual report for 2023, our agenda was packed! A heartfelt thank you to all our members for joining us in Brussels and for their continuous support!



EuRIC along with representatives from DG ENV and DG GROW of the European Commission, **visited** TSR Recycling GmbH & Co. KG's state-of-the-art steel recycling facility in Duisburg. It was a unique opportunity to witness circularity in steel recycling, particularly within the automotive sector.

| Interesting reads

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economy in Europe stresses the need to i) prioritise resource reduction and shift towards a less material-intensive economy given the inherent impact of resource extraction, ii) enhance existing products utility through increased intensity of use and extended product lifetimes, iii) scale up the utilisation of high-quality secondary raw materials for a successful circular economy, iv) recognise the need for a robust global governance framework to address unsustainable resource use beyond Europe's borders. Read the report online [here](#).



Could we have a steel recycling plant without carbon emissions?

Kuusakoski Recycling, a true pioneer in recycling and a member of EuRIC's metals Branch, says YES and plans to invest €25 million in building a steel recycling plant that will operate 100% carbon free. Read more [here](#).

| Updates from the CIMPA Project



EuRIC will organise, with the support of the Commission, the **Innovation Forum 4 Plastics** that will take place on 19 April in Brussels, in line with the WCEF. This is a clustering event that will gather EU funded projects and plastic recycling stakeholders to

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| Sponsored content

IARC 2024 agenda is out!

The program for IARC 2024 is now live!

Two days of dynamic presentations and debates covering topics directly influencing the industry's present and future. Profit from the early bird until April 30, 2024 and register now!

Discover the agenda [here](#).

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