

Question for written answer E-004972/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)

Subject: Sicily's separate waste collection system faces collapse amid plastic waste collection crisis

Press reports indicate that, prompted by the exhaustion of their storage capacity and the critical state of the plastic recycling industry, Italy's sorting facilities have, since 12 November 2025, either refused to accept any more plastic packaging waste or reduced their intake, leading many councils throughout Sicily to limit plastic waste collection. In addition, storage facilities are forced to stockpile these materials, a major fire risk. Far from being an isolated case, this issue concerns the country as a whole, as the insufficient number and uneven distribution of sorting centres in southern Italy has compelled councils there to pay to ship their waste to other regions.

This state of affairs could compromise the objectives set out by Directives 2008/98/EC, 94/62/EC and 2019/904/EU regarding waste, packaging and single-use plastics respectively and jeopardise the Union's extended producer responsibility (EPR) policies. While Italy has postponed the introduction of the plastic tax to 31 December 2026, the country's competition authority has highlighted that public funds are, at best, only covering 20 % of municipal plastic packaging waste collection costs, four times less than what was promised.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation, and has it discussed it with the competent Italian authorities?
2. What steps will it take to ensure that Italy can continue to collect and recycle plastic waste?
3. How will the Commission ensure that Italy complies with its EPR obligations and reimburses at least 80 % of municipal plastic packaging waste collection costs without increasing the national waste tax (TARI)?

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