(English version)

Question for written answer E-000156/25
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(15 January 2025)

Subject: Inadequate progress by Greece on waste recycling and risk of not meeting the European targets

Greece is lagging significantly behind in waste recycling, with a rate of just 16%, compared with the European average of 50%. At the same time, it has a high proportion of waste going to landfill (79% compared with the EU-wide 20%). These data cast doubt on the attainment of the 2025 European targets for municipal waste reuse and recycling, as well as the 2035 landfill target. In addition, Greece exceeds the EU average for production of waste, with 524 kilos per resident (the average is 502 kilos).

Boosting recycling and reducing landfill use are of vital importance for environmental protection and public health. Efforts must focus on using European funding instruments, developing infrastructure and promoting sustainable practices.

In view of this:

1. What is Greece's progress on recycling?

2. Which European funding instruments has Greece made use of?

3. Which opportunities has Greece not yet used?

Submitted: 15.1.2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(24 March 2025)

1. In 2021, Greece generated 509 kg/per capita of municipal waste, close to the EU average of 527 kg/per capita. The recycling rate was 17%, significantly below the EU average of 49%. The rate of composting and anaerobic digestion also remains very low at 2%. Landfilling is still the dominant treatment method for municipal waste, at 80%. Separate collection currently delivers only moderate capture rates, but the legislative framework aims to improve the situation, including via pay-as-you-throw schemes.

2. & 3. Under its Recovery and Resilience Plan ([1]) (reform measure 'Waste management law for the implementation of sustainable landfilling and recycling'), Greece adopted law 4819/2021, providing, *inter alia*, for the application as of 2022, of a landfill tax whose tariffs progressively increase until 2027, and established a regulatory authority for waste management. The Early Warning Report ([2]), recommended that Greece should increase the landfill tax (set at EUR 20/tonne as of 2022) and to use its revenues to finance waste prevention, separate collection and recycling actions of municipalities and waste management bodies. This report also recommended financing incentives to help reduce the amount of mixed waste ([3]).

For the 2021-2027 period, Cohesion Policy ([4]) supports Greece with EUR 853 million to support the collection and treatment of separately sorted waste, aiming to enhance recycling performance and meet the EU recycling and landfill targets in the coming years.

([1]) https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/recovery-and-resilience-plans_en
([2]) https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b7434520-0350-11ee-87ec-01aa75ed71a1/language-el
([3]) e.g. pay as you throw schemes.
([4]) https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/what/investment-policy_en