

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001986/25
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(17 May 2025)

Subject: Mismanagement of waste and the recycling thereof in Thessaloniki

Directive 2008/98/EC ⁽¹⁾, as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851 ⁽²⁾, which establishes the legal framework for waste management in the EU, sets the objectives of preventing waste generation, increasing recycling rates and phasing out landfilling, as part of the transition towards a circular economy.

In Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece, recycling rates are seriously inadequate — remaining below 20 % ⁽³⁾ — while issues such as the illegal dumping of waste or an insufficient number of recycling bins ⁽⁴⁾ are recorded in many municipalities. The implementation of separate collection systems is limited, and landfilling remains the main waste management method, which is at odds with the hierarchy set out in European legislation.

In light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. Does it have data on the compliance of the municipalities of the agglomeration of Thessaloniki with the requirements of Directive 2008/98/EC, in particular with regard to recycling targets and separate waste collection?
2. What steps does it intend to take to enhance the implementation of the directive and promote the circular economy in the Thessaloniki metropolitan area to ensure that the 2025 targets are met?

Submitted: 17.5.2025

Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(30 July 2025)

The Commission is aware of the challenges Greece is facing in implementing the waste management legislation ⁽¹⁾. Member States are primarily responsible to ensure compliance with the EU rules.

In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission monitors the application of the relevant legal provisions and, where appropriate, may decide to take appropriate action.

The Commission has initiated an infringement procedure (INFR(2021)2166) ⁽²⁾ concerning the non-compliance with EU law of 84 Greek landfills and the insufficient capacity of installations for treatment of mixed municipal waste before landfilling. A reasoned opinion was sent on 16 December 2024 ⁽³⁾.

The Commission has no data on the compliance of municipalities with regard to recycling targets and separate waste collection as Directive 2008/98/EC requires Member States to report on national level. Information and data on compliance of municipalities can be found in the Greek Waste Management plan, which is publicly available.

The recycling rates of Greece suggest that it will not meet the targets for 2025. The Commission closely monitors the situation in Greece and may decide to launch an infringement procedure, if appropriate.

It also assists Member States by providing EU funding for investments into waste recycling infrastructure, for instance via the EU programme for the environment and climate action on Circular Economy (LIFE-IP CEI-Greece) ⁽⁴⁾.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2008/98/oj/eng>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/851/oj/eng>.

³ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/many-eu-member-states/greece>

⁴ https://ypen.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Final-Report_A1.1_Separate_Collection_20200624_final_GR.pdf.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3-30, as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May, OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109-140.

⁽²⁾ [https://ec.europa.eu/implementing-eu-law/search-infringement-decisions/?langCode=EN&version=v1&typeOfSearch=byDecision&refId=INFR\(2021\)2166&page=1&size=10&order=desc&sortColumns=decisionDate](https://ec.europa.eu/implementing-eu-law/search-infringement-decisions/?langCode=EN&version=v1&typeOfSearch=byDecision&refId=INFR(2021)2166&page=1&size=10&order=desc&sortColumns=decisionDate).

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/inf_24_6006.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/LIFE18-IPE-GR-000013/circular-economy-implementation-in-greece>.