

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004495/25
to the Commission
César Luena (S&D), José Cepeda (S&D), Hana Jalloul Muro (S&D)
(12 November 2025)**

Subject: Enlargement of the Pinto landfill site and possible non-compliance with EU environmental legislation

The Community of Madrid has been paving the way for expansion of the Pinto landfill site by removing protection from 80 hectares of the Southeast Regional Park, which is protected by autonomous community legislation and part of which is in the Natura 2000 network. According to Copernicus and the UN, the Pinto and Valdemingómez landfills sites are among the biggest methane emitters in Europe.

The Community of Madrid's own 2024 environmental health report points out that life expectancy in the north of the region is two years longer than in the south, while respiratory and cardiovascular diseases are 25% more common and cancer-related illnesses 8% more prevalent in the south, particularly in Pinto, San Martín de la Vega and Parla.

1. Does the Commission believe that the expansion meets the requirements in Directive 1999/31/EC with regard to distance from residential and recreational areas, urban centres, groundwater, nature protection zones and methane emissions?
2. Will the Commission look into whether this operation could contravene Directive 2024/2881 on air quality and other EU health protection rules?
3. What consequences could the Community of Madrid's potential breach of EU environmental legislation entail?

Submitted: 12.11.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(27 January 2026)**

The Landfill Directive ⁽¹⁾ aims to reduce landfilling and prevent pollution of air, soil, surface- and groundwater and resulting health risks.

A permit may not be granted unless the characteristics of the site or the corrective measures to be taken indicate that the landfill does not pose a serious environmental risk ⁽²⁾.

The location of the landfill must consider distance to residential areas or urban sites; and existence of nature protection zones in the area ⁽³⁾. The national authorities are better placed than the Commission to assess conditions on site and risks involved.

Member States must ensure that the standards of the Ambient Air Quality Directives ⁽⁴⁾ are met. If limit values are exceeded, measures shall be taken to keep it as short as possible.

Directive 2024/2881 ⁽⁵⁾ shall be transposed by 11 December 2026 and requires air quality roadmaps to meet the new limit values set therein.

The municipality of Pinto is part of air quality zone ES 1309 Urbana Sur where nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (PM)₁₀, PM_{2.5} and Ozone are measured. No limit value ⁽⁶⁾ was exceeded in 2024 in this zone, according to information from Spanish authorities.

National authorities, including judicial, are primarily responsible to ensure compliance with EU law. The consequences of a breach depend on national law, provided penalties are effective, proportionate and dissuasive ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Council Directive 1999/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste, OJ L 182, 16.7.1999, p. 1-19, amended by Directive (EU) 2018/850 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018, OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 100-108.

⁽²⁾ Article 1, 7-11 and Annex I, Section 1.2 of the Landfill Directive.

⁽³⁾ Annex I, Section 1.1 of the Landfill Directive.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2004/107/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air, OJ L 23, 26.1.2005, p. 3-16; Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1-44.

⁽⁵⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/2881 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (recast) OJ L, 2024/2881, 20.11.2024.

⁽⁶⁾ Of those established in Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1-44.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 36(2) of the Waste framework 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, applicable by analogy.

In its role as guardian of the Treaties, the Commission will continue monitoring the situation and may decide to take appropriate action. In line with its strategic approach on enforcement, the Commission focuses on systemic non-compliance ⁽⁸⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ As set out in the communication of 19 January 2017: EU law: Better results through better application — C/2016/8600, OJ C 18, 19.1.2017, p. 10-20 and in the communication of 13 October 2022: COM(2022) 518 final — Enforcing EU law for a Europe that delivers.