

EuRIC and a Commission delegation visit Belgian Scrap Terminal's recycling plant premises

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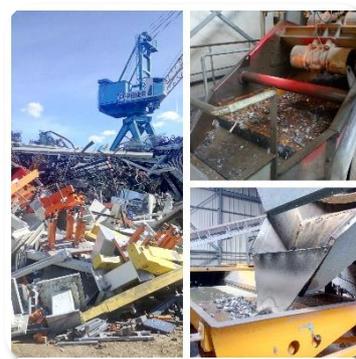


Our heart beats for recycling. That's the motto of Belgian Scrap Terminal (BST), one of the leaders of scrap metal, End of Life Vehicles (ELVs) and waste electrical and electronic appliances (WEEE) recycling in Belgium and a recycling business reference at European level. BST's CEO, Mrs. Caroline Craenhals, and all her team warmly welcomed a Commission delegation from the Waste Management and Secondary Materials in BST's premises in Willebroek last 25th September. Organised by EuRIC, this site visit offered an opportunity to discuss the challenges for the recycling industry and how the European institutions can support the work of the recyclers to boost the transition from a linear to a circular economy.

Belgian Scrap Terminal is a family-owned business that's been operative for four generations. BST mainly processes scrap, ELV and electrical and electronic waste, but they also take care of processing washing machines and consumption scrap collected from municipalities. In fact, BST processes 50% of the washing machines that are recycled in Belgium.

As Mrs. Craenhals exposed during her presentation, BST is very much committed to the recycling targets set by the European Institutions and they also have their own recycling goals: between 90% and 100% for ferrous and non-ferrous materials, 97% for ELV and 86% for WEEE. But these goals are more and more difficult to achieve due to the increase of the recycling targets as well as certain new measures and restrictions affecting the recycling legislation. Mrs. Craenhals pointed out that "the products that come to our plant are from the past, not from today", which means that imposing certain regulatory changes overnight without a transition period is bound to make the recycling of certain products very difficult or simply impossible.

In order to close the loop and guarantee a circular economy that has the recycling industry as its strongest ally, it's essential to have better financial support resources for the recycling industry so investments can be done. "We have a heart for recycling and we want to invest in it, but it feels like we're the ones being punished while producers are rewarded", explained Mrs. Craenhals. When it comes to circular economy, a holistic approach is much needed and making sure that all the actors of the value chain do their share would definitely ensure better conditions for recyclers and a higher quota of recycled products.



When dealing with the main challenges for the recycling industry in the short term, Mrs. Craenhals highlighted the importance of a harmonized waste classification and the need for harmonized legislation when it comes to recycling processes. Even though these challenges are bigger today than some decades ago, BST has succeeded to develop a business model that not only achieves the environmental recycling goals and complies with the recycling targets,

but that also supplies yearly an average of 1,5 million tons of ferrous and non-ferrous metals to the global market.