PRESS RELEASE

Revised Waste Shipment rules threaten recycling in Europe

Brussels, 27 February 2024

Today, the European Parliament approved the revised Waste Shipment Regulation (WSR), a significant step towards modernising intra-EU waste shipments rules. EuRIC, the European Recycling Industries' Confederation, welcomes the objective of the revised rules, aimed at enhancing digital procedures to combat illegal waste shipments effectively. With a focus on distinguishing between waste and non-waste materials, EuRIC emphasises the importance of facilitating waste shipments as valuable resources, crucial for fostering an EU internal market for recycling.

However, EuRIC is deeply concerned about the uncertainty the new rules create for Europe's recycling industries, as export restrictions on trade with non-EU countries fail to differentiate between various streams, materials and markets. Recovered paper and recycled scrap metals for instance, are traded on global markets as commodities. With insufficient demand for these resources from recycling within Europe, recycling levels and activity threaten to decline in Europe.

Regarding plastic waste generated in Europe, EuRIC supports efforts to enhance its efficient management. However, a complete ban on plastic exports without outlet possibilities within Europe severely harms EU plastic recyclers and the domestic plastic recycling industry.

EuRIC Secretary General, **Emmanuel Katrakis**, stated:
"A coherent EU policy is urgently needed to align environmental, climate and industrial policy objectives towards economically and ecologically sustainable solutions – a necessity also showcased by the ongoing PPWR trilogue discussions."

The ambiguity surrounding revised export rules under the WSR creates uncertainty among market actors regarding outlets for recycled resources. Given the endorsement of the WSR agreement by co-legislators, EuRIC remains committed to actively contributing to legislative acts aimed at fostering recycling and substituting primary raw materials with recycled resources in Europe and globally.

Note to editor:
For press-related enquiries, please contact Zoi Didili, EuRIC Communication Advisor, by email at zdidili@euric.org or by phone at +32 (0) 489 09 46 02. The European Recycling Industries' Confederation (EuRIC) is the umbrella organisation for the recycling industries in Europe. Through its 75 members from 23 European countries, EuRIC represents more than 5,500 large companies and SMEs involved in the recycling and trade of various resource streams. They represent a contribution of 95 billion EUR to the EU economy and 300,000 green and local jobs. By turning waste into resources, recycling reintroduces valuable materials into value chains over and over again. By bridging circularity and climate neutrality, recyclers are pioneers in leading Europe's industrial transition.