

Environment and health: waste electrical and electronic equipment WEEE

2000/0158(COD) - 13/06/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste electrical and electronic equipment. **CONTENT :** the purpose of this Directive is, as a first priority, the prevention of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), and in addition, the re-use, recycling and other forms of recovery of such wastes so as to reduce the disposal of waste. It also seeks to improve the environmental performance of all economic operators involved in the life cycle of electrical and electronic equipment and in particular operators directly involved in the treatment of waste electrical and electronic equipment. The proposed Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment will contribute to the protection of human health and the environment as required by Article 174 of the Treaty. The principle objectives of this proposal are to protect the soil, water and air from pollution caused by current management of WEEE, to avoid the generation of waste, which has to be disposed of and to reduce the harmfulness of WEEE. It seeks to preserve valuable resources, in particular energy. Another objective of the proposed Directive is the harmonisation of national measures on the management of WEEE. The objectives are to be achieved by means of a wide range of measures, including measures on the separate collection of WEEE, the treatment of WEEE and the recovery of such waste. In addition, producers should take the responsibility for certain phases of the waste management of their products. This financial or physical responsibility creates an economic incentive for producers to adapt the design of their products to the prerequisites of sound waste management. Separate collection of WEEE has to be ensured through appropriate systems, so that users can return their electrical and electronic equipment. Furthermore, in order to ensure improved treatment and re-use/recycling of WEEE, producers have to set up appropriate systems. Member States shall ensure that any establishment or undertaking carrying out treatment operations obtains a permit from the competent authorities. The derogation from the permit requirement may apply to recovery operations concerning WEEE if an inspection is carried out by the competent authorities before the registration in order to ensure compliance with Article 4 of Directive 75/442/EEC. The inspection shall verify: - the type and quantities of waste to be treated; - the general technical requirements to be complied with; - the safety precautions to be taken. The inspections shall be carried out once a year.