

Slow uptake for end of waste metal rules

By Valerie Flynn

ENDS Europe, 13 November 2014

End of waste (EoW) rules for aluminium, iron and steel scrap have had no negative effects on the market or on the environment, according to the first review of the scheme.

But uptake in most of Europe has been limited, with around 15% of steel scrap and 10% of aluminium scrap complying with the criteria three years after they were adopted, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) reported.



The review's findings have been awaited by advocates of EoW criteria for other waste streams, as it [may be used](#) as evidence of whether such schemes are economically and environmentally sound. EU policymakers' appetite for pursuing EoW criteria is widely perceived to have weakened after MEPs [blocked](#) paper rules last year.

The JRC report indicates very uneven use of the criteria, with uptake in Italy much higher than elsewhere. Of 1,100 companies estimated to be using the criteria, 1,000 are based in Italy. This is due in part to a specific legal framework on secondary raw materials already in place before the [criteria's] introduction, the researchers said.

The review was based on a survey of 250 companies, 15 industry associations and 25 national authorities.

Over 40% of participants felt that the quality of scrap on the market had improved for all scrap and particularly for EoW-compliant scrap, mostly due to the strict rules on maximum contamination and the wider introduction of quality management systems.

Survey participants felt the criteria had not greatly impacted on the market availability of scrap, although this was a view more widely held in the scrap generating industries than by the scrap consuming industries. The impact on prices was also generally held to have been limited so far.

Quite a number of the survey participants highlighted the perceived benefits of the introduction of end-of-waste for metal scrap. These include creating a simplified regulatory framework and offering companies greater flexibility and legal certainty. Some companies identified improved scrap quality and increased sales prices, the researchers found.

Interest groups back another review in two or three years given the relatively modest rate of uptake outside Italy, the researchers added.

There is no legal requirement to monitor EoW producers and fewer than half of national authorities are collecting any information, in some instances because there has been no uptake of the rules in their country.

The report was welcomed by the Bureau of International Recycling. The report is fair and demonstrates that EoW criteria do not damage the market, said Ross Bartley of BIS, adding that he hoped the report would help to make the case for the development of further EoW criteria at EU level.

valerie.flynn@haymarket.com

Follow-up:

[Report](http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/waste/documents/LF-NA-26884-EN-N.pdf) (<http://susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/waste/documents/LF-NA-26884-EN-N.pdf>)

© Copyright Haymarket Media Group Ltd. Please respect our terms and conditions and do not redistribute by email or post on the web. Email reprints@haymarket.com to buy additional rights.