

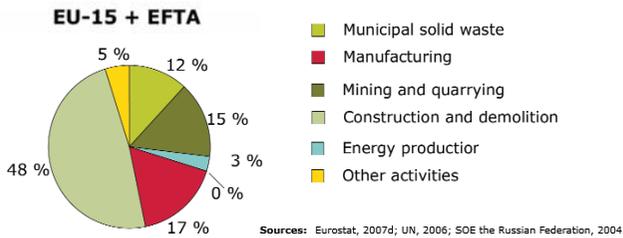
# A NEW STUDY COMMISSIONED BY EEB AND FOOE EXPLAINS HOW MUCH RECYCLING BENEFITS OUR CLIMATE

## Why is recycling important?

Recycling allows the efficient use of materials, reducing the environmental impacts of producing virgin materials and transporting them long distances to be used in products bought on our European shop shelves. For example, making aluminium from recycled materials uses around 85% less energy than making it from virgin materials.

## Every opportunity to recycle!

Although the new study focuses on municipal or household waste, the chart below shows that most of the waste generated in the EU and EFTA comes from industrial, commercial, construction and demolition sources. Once systems are in place, these types of waste are even easier to recycle than household waste and could provide big climate benefits.

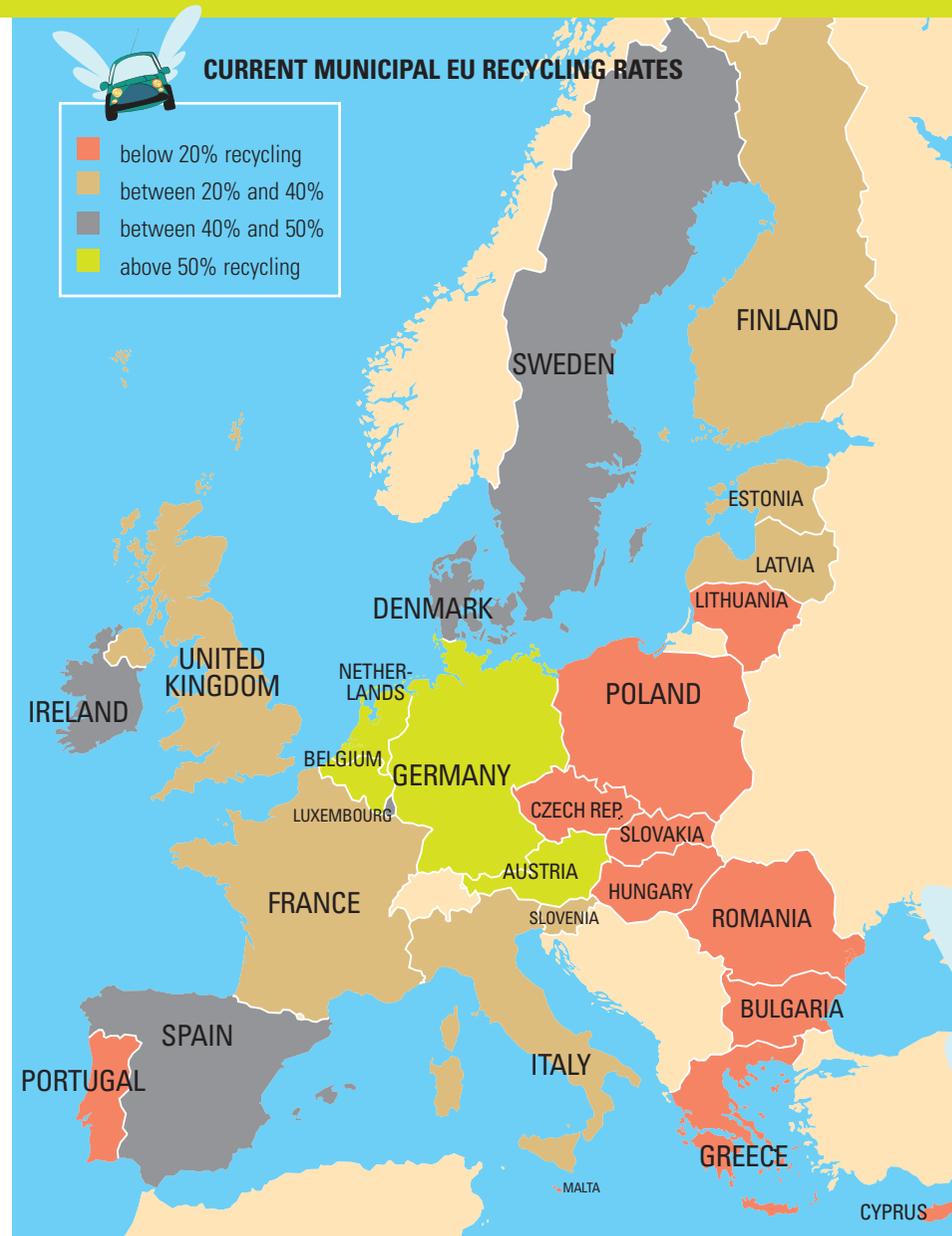


## How can recycling benefit our climate?

Energy is needed to mine, extract and produce primary materials, and to transport them to production facilities, resulting in greater energy use for virgin materials than recycled materials. **Creating a materials loop with recycling is therefore more beneficial for the climate than simply burning waste or putting it in landfill.**

## Prevention even better than recycling

If recycling is a good option, preventing waste in the first place is even better for the climate. Preventing the use of materials saves on energy costs in extraction, manufacture and transport, all with big climate benefits. Unfortunately, the amount of waste we create in Europe keeps increasing, so we need to start by at least setting a target of stabilising our waste generation. **Stabilisation would save us around 1.1 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases emissions (in CO2 equivalent) between now and 2020.**



## Key NGO demands for the Waste Framework Directive

### VOTE FOR A RECYCLING SOCIETY BY ENSURING THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE:

- includes an EU objective of **50% minimum recycling levels** for municipal solid waste **and 70% for industrial**, manufacturing and construction and demolition waste by 2020
- includes a clear waste prevention objective, starting with stabilisation of waste generation by 2012 and a mechanism for setting with further reductions in the future
- does not allow for the re-classification of municipal **incinerators as a 'recovery' operation**
- establishes a **Waste Consultation Forum** to allow all stakeholders to work together to improve the implementation of EU waste legislation
- **avoids any loopholes** such as a loose definition of 'by-products' - materials that will escape any regulation under waste laws. Such decisions should be taken at EU level to reduce risks to public health and the environment.

Recycling and prevention play a key role in the sustainable management of resources and the fight against climate change. The EU is committed to becoming a "recycling society", which requires clear targets on waste prevention and recycling.

In 2008,

## STOP THE WASTE! VOTE FOR RECYCLING!

For more information, visit the EEB and FOEE websites at:

<http://www.eeb.org/activities/waste/Index.htm>

[http://www.foeeurope.org/activities/waste\\_management/](http://www.foeeurope.org/activities/waste_management/)

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## RECYCLING IS AT THE INTERSECTION OF WASTE, CLIMATE AND RESOURCE POLICY AREAS.

- Recycling enables diversion from residual **waste** treatment technologies (such as landfill and incineration), reducing emissions involved in these technologies.
- Recycling reduces **climate** emissions through avoiding the need to extract and process new raw materials – with the significant benefits outlined in this leaflet.
- Recycling ensures that the **resources** remain in the economy. For example recycling aluminium in Europe provides a reliable, local supply of aluminium for EU businesses.

### Recycling also has other important benefits:

- It is an effective way of creating jobs
- It is a popular way to involve the public in environmental action, something that is becoming extremely important as we all need to unite to tackle the climate challenge.

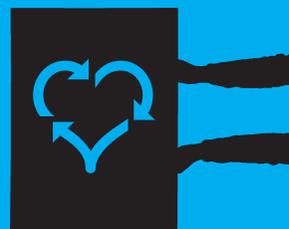
It is surprising that, with all the benefits of recycling, the EU has not yet set any overall recycling targets for household or business wastes.

**EEB and Friends of the Earth believe that the Waste Framework Directive revision provides a perfect opportunity to make such changes.**

### EEB

The EEB is a federation of over 145 environmental citizens' organisations based in EU Member States and most accession countries.

[www.eeb.org](http://www.eeb.org)



### FoEE

Friends of the Earth Europe campaigns for sustainable and just societies and for the protection of the environment, unites more than 30 national organisations with thousands of local groups and is part of Friends of the Earth International.

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# How recycling can fight climate change

