



Resolution 1543 (2007)¹

Management of municipal solid waste in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Proper management of solid waste is one of the pillars of far-sighted, sustainable environmental policies. Inadequate management of municipal waste results in considerable public health hazards and additional costs in both the short and the long term.
2. Every European generates approximately 1 kg of solid household waste every day and the figures show an upward trend. Management of solid waste is therefore one of the major challenges currently facing local authorities, especially in large conurbations.
3. In this connection, the Parliamentary Assembly supports [Recommendation 189 \(2006\)](#) and [Resolution 213 \(2006\)](#) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on local and regional waste management and the siting of landfills, and wishes the necessary measures to be taken at local and regional level in terms of the management of municipal solid waste.
4. Collecting, sorting, processing and recycling solid urban waste in an environmentally friendly manner while taking account of the needs of urban development demands a coherent approach and solutions that are sustainable in the medium and long term.
5. The issue of municipal solid waste involves both aspects relating to the services which municipal authorities must provide for the public in terms of hygiene, health and living conditions and also management-related aspects concerning decentralisation, private-sector involvement and instilling responsible attitudes among the public.
6. If their design and siting do not meet the relevant environmental and health criteria, municipal landfills can cause pollution (for example, contamination of groundwater, air pollution, odours) that may have serious consequences for public health and the environment.
7. Waste that piles up or is not collected on time and illegal dumping present serious risks for health and the environment. As far as waste processing is concerned, unless strict standards are complied with, there is a risk of high-pollution emissions (in particular of dioxin) occurring during incineration.
8. There are significant differences between Council of Europe member states regarding solid waste management standards and practices. Countries with no minimum standards for solid waste management face negative consequences for their environment and economic development.
9. The Assembly therefore urges member states to develop an integrated approach to municipal solid waste management in order to contribute to sustainable urban development in Europe, in particular by:
 - 9.1. ensuring compliance with occupational health and safety standards during the collection, processing and landfilling of all types of waste, in particular by banning any barehanded operations and any recovery of waste from landfills without proper protection and regular health checks for the persons involved;

1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 16 March 2007 (see [Doc. 11173](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Preda).



- 9.2. establishing regular waste collection systems for all urban, suburban and rural areas (exceptions should only be granted for remote locations with approved, safe individual waste disposal facilities) and including in the relevant legislation phased targets for the provision of municipal solid waste collection systems in accordance with the requirements of European Union [Directive 1999/31/EC](#) on the landfill of waste;
 - 9.3. enforcing compliance with strict standards for landfilling, for instance:
 - 9.3.1. landfills must be fenced and patrolled;
 - 9.3.2. waste accepted at landfills must be recorded;
 - 9.3.3. waste placed in landfills must be regularly covered with suitable material (for example, construction debris) in order to reduce odour, windblown litter and the proliferation of vermin;
 - 9.3.4. adjacent groundwater must be monitored;
 - 9.3.5. depending on local hydrogeology, suitable measures for groundwater protection (such as landfill liners and leachate collection) must be put in place;
 - 9.4. planning waste management through the development of strategies including the gradual reduction/phasing out of the landfilling of specific types of waste, given their recyclability and/or the impact related to their disposal (for example, biodegradable waste);
 - 9.5. assigning municipalities responsibility for managing waste from households, businesses, institutions and construction and demolition activities within their territory and enabling municipalities which are too small to provide the relevant services to set up intermunicipal consortia for solid waste management;
 - 9.6. facilitating co-operation between European towns and cities to allow information exchanges so that the best solutions in terms both of administrative management of municipal solid waste and of processing technologies are disseminated and used Europe-wide;
 - 9.7. encouraging research and development in the field of solid waste processing and recycling.
10. The Assembly urges the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to follow up its work on local and regional waste management and to encourage initiatives by local and regional authorities in this area.