

France to create a Solidarity Re-use Fund (and other re-use friendly measures)!

Member States have until the 4th of July 2020 to transpose the updated Waste Framework Directive. After a final vote in the Senate on the 30th of January, France is now the first to validate its [transposition law](#). Among other ambitious proposals, the text will trigger the creation of a Solidarity Re-use Fund, a re-use and preparing for re-use target, a ban on the destruction of unsold goods, re-use corners in municipal waste collection points and access to more information on the reparability and durability of electric and electronic products. RREUSE hopes that these measures will inspire other Member States.

A Solidarity Re-use Fund

To support the creation of 70.000 jobs for the most disadvantaged groups by 2030¹, the *Fonds pour le Réemploi Solidaire* will be set up. It will guarantee that 5 % of the fees collected via Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes covering re-usable waste streams (such as textiles, furniture and WEEE) are used to finance re-use and preparing for re-use activities conducted by social enterprises. This very welcome tool will hopefully ensure that EPR schemes do not only finance recycling activities – a phenomenon the RREUSE network previously noticed during the introduction of such systems². This fund was proposed and supported by several French environmental and social organisations including RREUSE member Emmaüs.

A combined re-use and preparing for re-use target

Re-using or preparing for re-use only 2% of EU generated waste could help reduce CO2 emissions in the EU by 5%³, all the while supporting about 400 000 jobs⁴. Two re-use or preparing for re-use targets have already been implemented in Spain and Flanders⁵, with France now joining the movement. The level of this target will be determined later by decree for the period 2021-2025, and then renewed every 5 years. RREUSE consistently advocates for the establishment of such a target at EU level as it

¹ REFER (2019), *Fonds pour le Réemploi Solidaire : le Sénat vote à l'unanimité LA mesure sociale du projet de loi économie circulaire* (available [here](#))

² RREUSE (2013), *Position Paper on the Role of Extended Producer Responsibility in Promoting Product Reuse and Preparation for Reuse Activities* (available [here](#))

³ Calculated via a tool developed by AERESS (for which the consumer friendly option is available [here](#)), as well as data from [Eurostat](#) and our [2018 Activity Report](#)

⁴ RREUSE (2015), *Briefing on job creation potential in the re-use sector* (available [here](#))

⁵ RREUSE (2019), *Re-use targets* (available [here](#))



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would help secure partnerships between re-use operators, EPR schemes and municipalities. The Commission will have to consider this measure by December 2024⁶.

A ban on the destruction of unsold goods

According to the French Environment Ministry, 630 million euros of non-food products are destroyed every year⁷. To end this shameful practice, the French law will force retailers to donate or at least recycle their unsold goods. However, only first necessity products such as toothpaste, soap and sanitary products, will have to be donated to associations. For other types of products such as textiles and electronics, retailers will retain the ability to prioritise recycling. This is clearly a missed opportunity.

A re-use corner in municipal waste collection points

According to a recent study conducted in Germany, “between 13% and 16% of waste electric and electronic equipment (WEEE), furniture and leisure goods disposed of at household waste collection centres are in excellent working condition and could easily be prepared for re-use”⁸. Collecting recyclables is often the only purpose of many waste collection points. This has to change. Many examples of strong partnerships between social enterprises and municipalities exist. This allows social enterprises to access more material while municipalities decrease the amount of waste they generate. France will encourage this behaviour by forcing municipal waste collection points to partner with "legal persons from the social, solidarity and circular economy" and dedicate areas to the collection of reusable goods.

More information for consumers on products’ reparability and durability

According to a 2014 [Eurobarometer survey](#), 77% of EU consumers would rather repair their goods than buy new ones. However, this desire is often restricted by the price of repair operations or lack of access to spare parts. From 2024, information on the reparability and durability of products will have to be displayed for electric and electronic products via a scoring system (from 1 to 10). The Commission is currently considering introducing such a [scoring system for reparability at EU level](#). Hopefully, this will raise the quality of products reaching the second-hand market and prevent them from becoming waste too early. In line with the development of a [right to repair](#) in the EU, RREUSE strongly supports this measure.

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⁶ RREUSE (2018), RREUSE position on the updated EU Waste Framework Directive (available [here](#))

⁷ The Local (2019), France announces 'world first' ban on destruction of unsold non-food products (available [here](#))

⁸ European Commission (2019), Waste potential: more of our refuse electronics, furniture and leisure goods could be re-used, suggests German study (available [here](#))



RREUSE is an independent non-profit organisation representing social enterprises active in the field of re-use, repair and recycling, with 27 members across 25 countries in Europe and the USA.

Our main vision is for Europe to support the role of social enterprise in a circular economy, providing meaningful work opportunities to thousands of vulnerable members of our community through innovative economic, social and environmentally beneficial activities.

RREUSE's primary mission is to help tackle poverty, social exclusion and a throwaway culture by promoting policies, best practices and partnerships that support the professionalism and development of social enterprises working in environmental services with high potential for local and inclusive job creation, notably re-use and repair.