

Position Paper

July 2024

EU Waste Shipment Regulation revision

Amending Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 and Regulation (EU) 2024/1157 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards changes on shipments of electrical and electronic waste agreed under the Basel Convention

Introduction

Bitkom welcomes the revision of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation. The Waste Shipment Regulation is an important regulation to reduce risks for the environment and human health and to advance to a circular economy and to implement the Basel Convention and the OECD Council Decision regarding transboundary movement of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).

In 2022 the parties to the Basel Convention amended the Convention to apply trade bans and prior informed consent (PIC) procedures (referred to as “amber list” controls in the OECD) to all transboundary movements of WEEE between Convention Parties beginning 1 January 2025. It is our understanding, that the OECD countries have not reached consensus on applying this amendment to shipments between OECD countries, so its members retain flexibility to apply the current OECD listings, adopt the amendments to the Basel Convention or pursue a different approach for intra-OECD shipments.

Retaining green list classification

To establish a circular economy in the EU, it is important to have a single market for secondary raw materials, allowing valuable waste materials moving efficiently from countries without facilities to treat WEEE properly and recover resources in the best way possible.

Maintain Green List classification for intra-EU shipments of non-hazardous e-waste destined for recovery.

Retaining the current non-hazardous waste codes for WEEE and the related green list classifications for low-risk shipments between EU Member States still provides transparency and assurances of environmentally sound treatment of WEEE and the recovery of critical resources necessary to increase the use of recycled materials in new products as the shipments would still underlie the general information requirements under Article 18 of the Waste Shipment Regulation.

Applying prior informed consent (“amber list”) requirements to all shipments of non-hazardous WEEE within the EU instead would introduce implementation challenges and trade frictions especially for countries that do not have highly specialized facilities for all WEEE categories, leading to an increased risk of lower treatment quality, mismanagement, accumulation of waste materials or improper storage.

Electronic system for PIC notifications essential

Bitkom welcomes the initiative to develop an electronic system for PIC notifications. An electronic system will help ensuring a more efficient control system enabling faster and more reliable movement of materials within the European Union.

Such a system should be available before the EU removes green list classifications for all low-risk shipments within the EU and we strongly recommend to at least delay the introduction of amber list controls to all kinds of WEEE Shipment until such a system is available and functioning to accommodate the dramatically higher volumes of PIC requests caused by such a fundamental change.

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