RECYCLE NOW

A Single Market Revolution for Europe's Circular and Competitive Economy

A call for action.

Only a truly integrated Single Market can deliver the scale, efficiency, and investment needed for a competitive and circular European economy.

Europe must act boldly to remain globally competitive, and this manifesto demands that the upcoming Circular Economy Act (CEA) becomes a turning point: a political commitment to dismantle cross-border barriers, harmonise fragmented waste management practices, and unlock the full potential of Europe's circular industrial base, stimulating job creation across Europe and supporting SMEs and local actors who are essential to the circular transition.

We call on Member State Governments, Parliament and the EU Commission to:

01	Defend the Single Market, Europe's Circular Competitiveness Engine
02	Implement and Enforce Strong Collection to Deliver Circularity
03	Make EPR a Driver of Circularity and Close Europe's Recycling Gap
04	Build a 21st Century Circular Economy

01

Defend the Single Market, Europe's Circular Competitiveness Engine

Europe cannot compete globally with 27 fragmented waste and recycling regimes. The CEA must be anchored in a strong internal market legal basis to end fragmentation, level-up underperforming recycling systems, and deliver a genuine EU market for waste and secondary raw materials. A circular economy built on harmonised definitions, criteria, and procedures, is essential to scale recycling, reduce reliance on virgin inputs, and strengthen Europe's strategic autonomy.

02

Implement and Enforce Strong Collection to Deliver Circularity

A circular economy cannot exist without effective collection systems. Yet too many valuable materials continue to be landfilled or incinerated across EU Member States, undermining recycling performance and the availability of secondary raw materials. The CEA must close this gap by strengthening Member States' obligations on collection, supported by regular reporting on waste stream coverage, territorial and population coverage, public awareness measures, and tighter rules on the application of national derogations. By ensuring the consistent implementation and enforcement of collection across the EU, the CEA can unlock a reliable supply of secondary raw materials, delivering Europe's circular economy.

03

Make EPR a Driver of Circularity and Close Europe's Recycling Gap

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is Europe's main tool to finance and organise collection, sorting and recycling, but uneven performance and divergent national rules still limit its impact. To close the recycling gap, the CEA must turn EPR into a transparent, well-governed and consistently implemented circularity instrument. Clear and harmonised governance principles, producer-led decision-making, and transparent rules on fee allocation, eco-modulation and reporting are essential. EPR fees must be effectively directed towards the collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure needed to achieve EU circularity targets and deliver measurable recycling outcomes.

04

Build a 21st Century Circular Economy

Europe cannot build a circular economy on 27 different administrative systems. The CEA must replace today's fragmented registration, reporting and compliance landscape with a harmonised framework that removes barriers, including to the movement of waste, avoids duplications, and reduces burdens for operators in the Single Market, while leveraging digital solutions where they can further simplify compliance.

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EU CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACT