Beat: Politics

European Parliament adopted its negotiating position about waste shipments

Calls for intensify control

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USPA NEWS - On Tuesday, January 17, European Parliament adopted its negotiating position for talks with EU governments on a new law to revise EU procedures and control measures for waste shipments. The revised legislation should protect the environment and human health more effectively, while taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by waste to achieve the EU's goals of a circular and zero-pollution economy.

With the adopted text, MEPs support explicitly banning shipments of all wastes destined for disposal within the EU, except if authorised in limited and well-justified cases. EU exports of hazardous waste to non-OECD countries would also be prohibited. Exporting non-hazardous waste for recovery would be allowed only to those non-OECD countries that give their consent and demonstrate their ability to treat this waste sustainably. MEPs also want to ban the export of plastic waste to non-OECD countries and to phase out its export to OECD countries within four years. Parliament calls for the creation of an EU risk-based targeting mechanism to guide EU countries that carry out inspections to prevent and detect illegal shipments of waste.

On November 17, 2021, the Commission tabled a proposal to reform the EU rules on waste shipments, laying down procedures and control measures for the shipment of waste, depending on its origin, destination and transport route, the type of waste shipped and the type of waste treatment applied when it reaches its destination. In 2020, EU exports of waste to non-EU countries reached 32.7 million tonnes, representing about 16% of global trade in waste. In addition, around 67 million tonnes of waste are shipped between EU countries every year.

This week, following the plenary debate on Monday evening, the report was adopted Tuesday with 594 votes in favour, 5 against and 43 abstentions.

Rapporteur Pernille Weiss (EPP, DK) said: "Our ambitious position in the coming negotiations with member states has just been endorsed by a broad majority in plenary. We must turn waste into resources in the common market, and thereby take better care of our environment and competitiveness. The new rules will also make it easier for us to combat waste crime inside and outside EU. And, with the export ban on plastic waste that we suggest, we are pushing for a much more innovative and circular economy wherever plastic is involved. That is a true win for the next generations."

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