



Commission refers Romania to the Court of Justice of the EU over illegal landfills

Brussels, 15 February 2017

The European Commission is taking Romania to the Court of Justice of the EU for its failure to close and rehabilitate 68 illegal landfills, which represent a serious risk for human health and the environment.

Despite earlier warnings from the Commission, **Romania** has failed to take measures against 68 non-compliant landfills, as required by EU Landfill Directive ([Council Directive 1999/31/EC](#)). Under the Directive, Member States must recover and dispose of waste in a manner that does not endanger human health and the environment, prohibiting the abandonment, dumping or uncontrolled disposal of waste. Romania was obliged to close and rehabilitate these substandard municipal and industrial landfills by 16 July 2009.

Due to insufficient progress in addressing the issue, the Commission sent an [additional reasoned opinion](#) in September 2015, urging the Romanian authorities to adequately deal with 109 uncontrolled sites, which – although not in operation – still posed a threat to human health and the environment. Some progress was made, but for 68 landfills the necessary measures - to clean them up and close them - had still not been completed by December 2016. In an effort to urge Romania to speed up the process, the Commission is bringing the Romanian authorities before the Court of Justice of the EU.

Background

Under EU law, only safe and controlled landfill activities should be carried out in Europe. [The Landfill Directive](#) lays down standards to protect human health and the environment, in particular surface water, groundwater, soil and air, from the negative effects caused by the collection, transport, storage, treatment and disposal of waste. It aims to prevent or reduce as far as possible negative effects of landfilling of waste over the whole life-cycle of landfills.

Similar measures have been taken against six other Member States: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Slovakia. The Court has issued already judgements condemning Bulgaria, Cyprus and Spain.

There are many different ways of disposing of waste. Burying it in the ground, known as "landfilling", is the least environmentally sustainable and should be kept to the absolute minimum.

For More Information:

- General information on infringements proceedings in the areas of [Environment](#).
- On the overview of implementation of EU environment policies and laws in Member States, see [Environmental Implementation Review](#).
- On the key decisions of the February infringements package, please refer to the full [MEMO/17/234](#).
- On the general infringements procedure, see [MEMO/12/12 \(an info graph\)](#).
- On the [EU infringements procedure](#).

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