

## Position paper

# Towards a Circular Economy for Construction and Demolition Waste

April 2019

**Construction and Demolition Waste represents about 30% of the waste produced in Europe. Hence, developing legislation promoting good practices for this waste stream is essential. Unfortunately, there is no re-use & recycling target for Construction and Demolition Waste today, but only an overall “recovery” target. The problem with the overall recovery target is that waste that is used for backfilling and not re-used or recycled further, is taken into account by Member States to reach their target equally to waste that is actually re-used or recycled, such as metal scrap. This overall recovery target is not supporting the circular economy as much as it could, as well as being unfair to metals.**

Today, the current Waste Framework Directive<sup>1</sup> (WFD) includes backfilling in the recovery target of ‘70% by 2020’ for Construction and Demolition Waste (CDW). It is therefore not a ‘re-use and recycling’ target but an overall ‘material recovery target’. Backfilling is neither re-use nor recycling, as clearly stated in the ‘re-use’ and ‘recycling’ definitions<sup>2</sup> of the WFD. Backfilling does not support the circular economy since it is the permanent placement on a particular site of waste that is not intended to be returned to the economic material cycle. This means that under the current WFD, metals which are collected from demolition or renovation sites and recycled without any loss of properties are accounted for in the same way as crushed debris which is used for backfilling. This shows that differentiation is needed in the target to boost a true circularity from CDW.

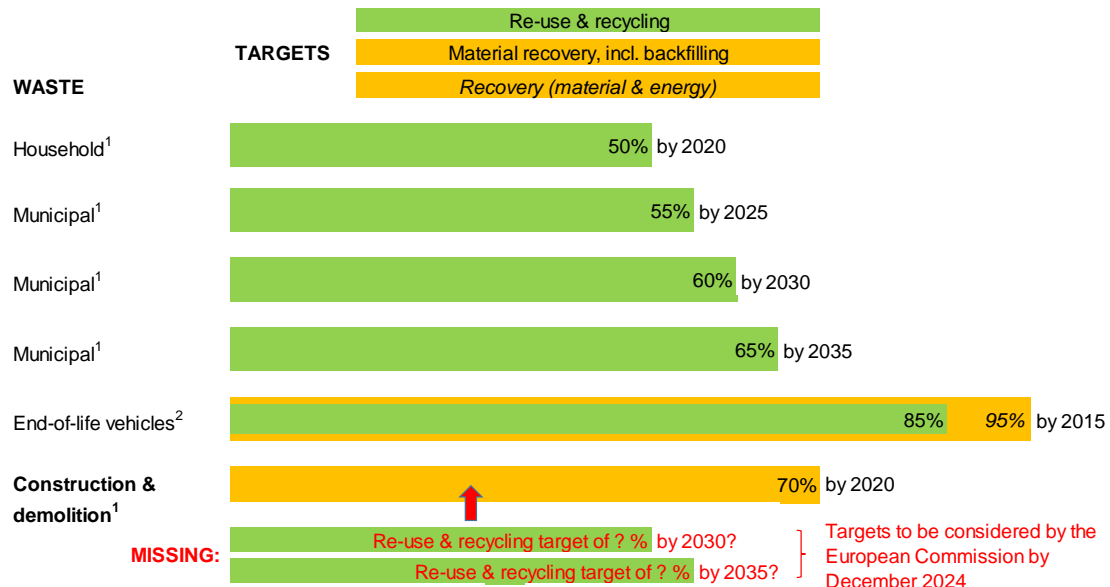
For this reason, METALS FOR BUILDINGS asked EU Institutions to set a re-use and recycling target for construction and demolition waste, the only waste flow for which such target is still missing today. Differentiation in the target for CDW would then also be more consistent with the End-of-Life Vehicles Directive<sup>3</sup> that includes the overall recovery target of 95%, and a sub-target for ‘re-use and recycling’ of 85%.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2008/98/EC amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851

<sup>2</sup> Directive 2008/98/EC, Art. 4, §13: ‘re-use’ means any operation by which products or components that are not waste are used again for the same purpose for which they were conceived; and §17: ‘recycling’ means any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes. It includes the reprocessing of organic material but does not include energy recovery and the reprocessing into materials that are to be used as fuels or for backfilling operations.

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2000/53/EC



**METALS FOR BUILDINGS therefore welcomes the revision clause (Art. 11, new §6 of Directive (EU) 2018/851) that asks the European Commission to consider setting re-use and recycling targets for CDW by December 2024, and urges the European Commission to do so for the whole CDW flow.**

Once set, additional ‘re-use and recycling’ targets for material-specific fractions could make sense when relevant, but this should only come as a complement to an overall ‘re-use and recycling’ target for the entire CDW flow and not as a substitute for it.

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