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Press release

Optimism and concern about the Management of Waste Electrical and Electronic Appliances in Greece

Workshop of the Greek Committee of EERA
(European Electronic Recyclers Association)

The Greek Committee of EERA (European Electronics Recyclers Association) organized last Thursday, December 14, at the Museum of Cycladic Art, a workshop entitled: "**Management of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) in Greece**". Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) is the fastest growing waste stream worldwide.

The workshop presented the findings of the recent study on the Assessment of WEEE management in Greece, conducted by EUNOMIA Research & Consulting, on behalf of the Greek Committee of EERA, according to which:

- The WEEE Collection Target in the EU has been set at 65% of the average of the put on the market of electrical and electronic goods in the period of previous 3 years and Greece is among the countries that do not meet the Target.
- The most important problems of the collection and management system are:
 - a. free-riding and difficulty in identifying quantities entering the market (PoM);
 - b. the significant quantities that are being improperly treated are missing from the official data and their improper management results in environmental pollution,
 - c. the removal of valuable components from the materials (scavenging) before they reach the legal treatment plant, thus negatively affecting the final quality of processing and causing problems to public health,
 - d. the complexity of the classification process, and
 - e. the high actual operational cost of treatment.

The picture was completed by the recommendations on best practices in other European countries.

The results were analyzed in two panels, in which important executives from the EU and Greece participated.

In the first panel, on developments in European legislation, the head of the Waste Management and Secondary Materials Unit (DG Environment), Mattia Pellegrini and Gen. Director of the WEEE Forum, Pascal Leroy, exchanged views with MEP, member of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament Mr. Nikos Papandreou and the CEO of EERA, Mrs. Julie-Ann Adams with excellent moderator the editor-in-chief of Recycling International, Martijn Reintjes.

In the second panel, which was successfully coordinated by the President of SEPAN Mrs. Elena Belsi, the new CEO of the National Recycling Organization (E.O.AN.), Mrs. Alexandra – Sofia Togia, the Chief Operating Officer of the main takeback system APPLIANCES RECYCLING S.A., Mr. Haris Angelakopoulos, the General Manager of ECORESET S.A. Mr. Spyridon – Dionysios Karamoutsos and the President of the Greek Solid Waste Management Association (E.E.D.S.A.), Mr. George Iliopoulos, highlighted the importance of recycling waste electrical and electronic appliances for the environment, the public health and the national economy. The challenges and failures in the recycling of WEEE in Greece were highlighted, as well as the significant successes, such as the first for Europe, entirely digital tracking of the appliances (refrigerators, air conditioners and heaters) recycled under the "Change Appliance" program by APPLIANCES RECYCLING S.A. At the same time, the planning of EOAN for fighting free riding, through the interconnection of the National Registry of Waste Producers with General Commercial Registry, is progressing.

The discussion with the attendees, including the President of EERA, Mr. Kurt Kyck, representatives of large companies producing and trading electrical and electronic goods and important WEEE Recycling Industries in Greece, confirmed that open and positive communication between stakeholders leads to better understanding of the problems and the joint effort to solve them.