

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY



SPAIN

Agenda – Promoting the responsible disposal of electronic and hazardous waste.

E-waste is a major concern for European Union (EU) environmental policies focused on reducing its ecological footprint and promoting a circular economy model of economic growth. According to the European Commission (2020), e-waste is growing at 3% to 5 % per year, three times faster than the average waste stream, and EUROSTAT shows that only 38.9% is properly recycled. In this context, it should be noted that households are the main source of e-waste in all EU countries . This is the case in Spain, where 87% of e-waste collected in 2018, i.e. 279,100 tons, came from households, while the amount from other sources was 41,522 tons . Furthermore, between 2008 and 2018, 7.172 million tons of electrical and electronic devices for households were put on the market , which indicates the potential e-waste available from Spanish households in the coming years. Furthermore, increasing levels of e-waste is a major challenge for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations 2015), particularly those related to 3.9, 8.3, 8.8, 11.6, 12.4, and 12.5 specific targets.

Improving e-waste separate collection rates is of the utmost importance to achieve the environmental targets set in the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, this paper aims to identify the factors influencing the intentions of Spanish households to separate their e-waste for proper disposal. To this end, we carry out an econometric analysis revealing that the preoccupation with environmental issues is an endogenous regressor, so a bivariate model is required to avoid inconsistent results. The analysis shows that environmental concern and the origin of the individuals are relevant factors that influence the e-waste separation decision. Additionally, we observe an interaction between age and city size, so the effect of one of these factors on the probability of separating e-waste depends on the other factor. Another important result is that several socio-economic variables and knowledge of environmental issues only indirectly affect attitudes, by way of environmental concern. In summary, this study offers a useful methodology to policymakers who have to deal with e-waste management, allowing them to identify the priority groups on which should be focused, as well as to design specific measures tailored to their characteristics.

Vastly increasing amounts of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) are being produced in Europe. Researchers have taken an in-depth look at how Spain has dealt with its electronic waste over recent years, and provide some guidance to other countries developing their own management practices. The responses of producers, governments and recycling plants in Spain to legislative changes; from the first draft of the European WEEE Directive in 1998, to its full implementation in 2003. It suggests that Spain's WEEE management was initially weak, but has been improved by legislation. Its aim was to identify the most important factors in the development of waste management practices in Spain; from this, the researchers hoped to provide advice to EU countries trying to meet the requirements of the Directive. To achieve this, it analysed data gathered from experts in the fields of manufacturing, recycling, metal management, research, WEEE management and politics who attended the Technical Conference on Electrical and Electronic Equipment Recycling between 2000 to 2009. In addition using data from reports issued by public authorities, websites and annual reports of integrated management systems (IMS) responsible for collecting and disposing waste.