

**Question for written answer P-001637/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Terry Reintke (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Disparity between the situation in Herne and European waste policy guidelines

The people of Europe may reasonably take the recitals to Directive 2008/98/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 as laying down guidelines for European waste policy. They indicate, for example, that human health and environmental protection are to be assigned priority over economic interests.

The reality facing people is quite different. Consider Herne, for example: regular waste imports come from Italy, Romania, Austria, Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and France; 47 101.2 tonnes of imported waste, including hazardous waste, some of it polluted with PAHs, PCBs and mercury, arrived in Herne in 2017.

People in Herne are concerned: cancer rates are above the national and European averages. Waste imports increase pollution.

Before transport, waste is packaged, then transported thousands of kilometres across Europe, which is damaging to the climate, instead of being disposed of or recovered at source. The disparity between this situation and the above guidelines could not be greater.

Individual Member States are certainly not self-sufficient in waste disposal, nor are disposal routes as short as possible (cf. Article 17 of Directive 2008/98/EC).

1. What measures is the EU taking in an attempt to reduce cross-border waste flows and help Member States to become self-sufficient in waste disposal?
2. Bearing in mind the principle of equal treatment of all EU citizens and the principle of environmental justice, what view does the Commission take of the fact that there are regions where people are compelled to live with a more polluted environment and are exposed to greater health risks?