

2019 Performance Audit Report – The Analysis and Diagnosis in Household Waste Management Summary

As the household waste management process is a complex one, the development of which requires several stages, its implementation is achieved by involving several public authorities at central and local level. The audit action was carried out in stages, in the first phase an assessment being made on the way in which the local public authorities implement their attributions from the national waste management plan, directly or by joining an intra-community development association. Subsequently, in the second stage, the activity of the central public authorities with attributions in the field was audited.

Main findings and vulnerabilities

Romania has fully transposed European waste legislation but, in some cases, excessive delays have been identified, both in adopting the necessary legislative framework and in monitoring the results. The national legislation applicable in the field of waste is vast and difficult to apply.

Regarding the implementing of waste management system, SAI Romania concluded that normative acts containing specific provisions in the field of sanitation are too little known and applied at the level of local public authority, where there is a lack of well-trained staff. In most cases, there was a misperception at the local public authority level that, together with the delegation of the management of the sanitation service, it also delegated any responsibility for the local waste.

Currently, out of the 32 SMID projects, only 8 are functional and only two counties can meet the Malagrotta criteria in the operation phase. The operation of all contracted SMIDs requires investments amounting to approximately 1.3 billion euros.

At national level, there is a low implementation of the separate collection of recyclable and biodegradable waste, which implicitly led to the predominant storage of waste. This aspect corroborated with the storage in non-compliant deposits (in most cases they are not provided with leachate and storage gas collection system) generates a significant impact on air, water and soil, biodiversity and last but not least on the health of the population. At the same time, there is a low percentage of economic recovery and thus not obtaining the necessary sources of income to cover the costs generated by waste management.

Moreover, Romania does not yet have a complete waste traceability system and the data needed for strategic decisions are obtained with a very long delay, which leads to slowing down the implementation of environmental policies and major risks in terms of strengthening border control and the elimination of risks associated with clandestine waste practices.

The activity of the National Waste Committee is sporadic, and in terms of municipal waste diagnosis there are a number of vulnerabilities or dysfunctions.

Although there is an intensification of the inspection and control activities of the measures, respectively the sanctions applied as a result, the efficiency of this activity has not reached its valences, so it becomes necessary to perform a thoroughly substantiated analysis taking into account the provisions of the strategy and national plan. The timely use of information resulting from the processing and validation of databases collected and managed by the national agency with responsibilities for environmental protection, in assessing risk indicators for the planning and execution of tax inspections would lead to the efficiency of these activities. However, the existence of the gap of more than a year and a half compared to the date on which the information is available and can be analyzed, makes it no longer useful.

So far no inter-ministerial commission was set up to manage the national waste management plan, and the audit team considered that the responsible entities were not aware of their role and did not act, either individually or together, to ensure the optimal exercise of their tasks.

In conclusion, the local public authorities have not exercised their role of main responsible for the implementation of public utility services, so as to ensure the premises for the use of the attribute of local autonomy in adopting the decisions necessary for joint waste management activities. At the same time, by not adopting a set of pre-established indicators in the household waste management plan as well as in the

absence of a correlated action of all responsible authorities, the premises of the efficiency and effectiveness of the national waste strategy were compromised.