

Ingka Group | IKEA

Improving recycling processes for a circular economy for mattresses

At IKEA, we have a single guiding vision: **to create a better everyday life for the many people**. Climate change is impacting this and threatens everyday life for people today and for generations to come. That is why we are transforming into a circular business. It is one of our biggest ambitions and challenges for the future contributing to our commitment to become climate positive by 2030 while growing the IKEA business.

Prolonging the life of products and materials and putting an end to our reliance on virgin fossil-based materials is a big part of our circular transformation. **We want to help shift old systems into new and invest in green technologies and solutions that will support the European Green Deal and the transition to a net-zero society that is circular.**

We know that mattresses are a key product group where we can have an impact on reducing reliance on virgin materials and CO₂ by improving recycling. That is why we have invested in a leading mattress recycling company, RetourMatras in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, roughly 1.5 million mattresses were disposed throughout last year. With the support of RetourMatras' recycling solution, this year 1 million mattresses will be recycled with up to 90% of the material being recovered. By diverting mattresses from incineration, RetourMatras saved 48,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions in 2020 in the Netherlands.

We are now looking at expanding the solution to other IKEA Retail countries with an initial focus on Belgium, France, Sweden and Switzerland. Given most of the countries we want to expand to are located in the EU, **we see an important role for the European Green Deal in enabling a circular economy for mattresses.**

In order to deliver this positive impact at scale in a cost-efficient manner, we need the right enabling framework including:

- **Improving collection infrastructure:** Increase reach of public waste collection depots including disallowing curb side collection, thus ensuring that collected mattresses remain dry and clean and that transportation distance is limited.
- **Making EPR schemes supportive:** Streamline harmonised EPR schemes across EU Member States and their regions in support of circular principles that result in higher recycling rates through material recoverability. EPR schemes should benefit pan-European investments in mattress recycling.
- **Increasing recycling targets:** Set national recycling targets (and criteria) at least in line and if not exceeding the EU Waste Framework Directive of at least 55% by 2025, to 60% by 2030 and to 65% by 2035.
- **Disincentivising mattress incineration:** Phase in a ban on landfilling and incineration of mattresses when possible to encourage recycling processes.
- **Improving the free movement of waste:** Mattresses should be able to cross borders when becoming waste. The revision of the EU Waste Shipment Regulation is an opportunity to ensure consistent implementation by Member States and transboundary movements of waste within the EU.

- **Design and knowledge sharing:** Products should be designed using a set of harmonised design principles enabling convenient reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing and at the very end of life, recycling. Exchanging information and knowledge on design between producers and recyclers would enable better recyclability for mattresses and help inform customers about correct disposal.

At IKEA we want to continue to play our part in improving recycling processes for mattresses, but we cannot do this alone. **We need collaboration** from government, businesses and citizens to improve the circular economy for mattresses and achieve a climate positive future.