

Clean Europe Charter

As promoted by the Clean Europe Network (May 2024)

Preamble

Litter is any item that is carelessly discarded outside the confines of a controlled waste management system. It is the result of thoughtless or deliberately anti-social behaviour by citizens and organisations or may occur as a result of inadequate waste management systems.

The growth in use of single use items and more mobile lifestyles has exacerbated the litter problem in recent decades.

Littering can leave urban areas untidy and dirty, the countryside unsightly, and the natural environment and wildlife compromised, both on land and in the waterways and seas.

Clean communities, on the other hand, contribute to improved quality of life, to safer societies and a better, healthier environment.

Research shows that areas that are clean and free of litter are likely to remain that way.

No matter how efficient we are on the road to creating a European circular economy, there will always be a need to combat littering as it is “leakage” from the circular system.

To achieve a culture of cleanliness in Europe, the key to success is behaviour change by all relevant stakeholders, as explained in the Network’s Clean Europe Strategy, sharing responsibility for reducing and eliminating litter.

Our Ambition

To build and strengthen a culture of cleanliness in Europe, the undersigned is committed to play its part (according to its own role and responsibilities in society) in a shared ambition to promote a Europe where:

- there is better understanding of the nature and extent of the litter challenge and concerted action to prevent littering;
- best practice and expertise in dealing with the challenge of littering is identified and shared across Europe;
- there is improved public awareness and understanding that littering is unacceptable and illegal;
- products are designed to reduce the risk of littering, lifestyles are more sustainable and all actors in society are mindful of behaviour that avoids litter;
- involuntary littering or littering as a result of inadequate or insufficient disposal facilities becomes the exception;
- action to clean up litter is well-managed and effective right across the continent;
- local players develop and implement solutions to the littering problem which are well-adapted to local needs and conditions;
- adequate and appropriate penalties are available and imposed on deliberate litterers;
- and, to these ends, partnerships are created and developed to promote cleaner communities in general.

Signature:

This Charter has been signed by the following organisations:

Mooimakers & BeWaPP (Belgium), **Hall Sverige Rent** (Sweden), **Hold Danmark Rent** (Denmark), **Hold Norge Rent** (Norway), **Keep the Estonian Sea Tidy** (Estonia), **IGSU** (Switzerland) **Verpact** (The Netherlands), **Paisaje Limpio** (Spain), **Gestes Propres** (France), **Keep the Archipelago Tidy** (Finland), **An Taisce** (Ireland), **Limpeza Urbana** (Portugal), **Act For Tomorrow** (Romania)

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The ELPA is the managing body behind the Clean Europe Network

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