

Europacable calls on the EU Commission to establish a robust framework for a Circular Single Market for power and telecommunication cables and to maintain the exclusion of these cables from the WEEE Directive

Brussels, 15th May 2026

Europacable urges the Commission to establish a robust framework for a competitive and harmonised Circular Single Market for cables, and to keep power and telecommunication cables excluded from the scope of the Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).¹

For European cabling system production, access to secondary materials will be essential to empower Europe's electrification and decarbonisation through cables made in Europe for Europe. This said, the WEEE Directive is not the right tool to recover materials from power or telecommunication cables due to complexities related to ownership, technical and environmental constraints and economic viability.

Instead, Europacable recommends supporting the scaling up of existing market systems into a competitive and harmonised Circular Single Market for cabling systems through a regulatory framework that supports innovation and circularity, while keeping a level playing field for manufacturers. This will significantly contribute to meet our industries' need for high-quality critical raw materials (CRMs), particularly for copper and aluminium. Furthermore, such market recovery and recycling systems allow to accommodate for the different cable types and their installation methods.

Europacable, the voice of Europe's leading wire and cable system manufacturers, strongly supports the European Union's ambition to accelerate circularity, enhance resource efficiency, and secure access to critical raw materials. The intrinsic value of copper and aluminium may provide an economic incentive for recovery, decided by asset owners on a case-by-case basis, considering technical feasibility, operational constraints and environmental impacts.

The current WEEE Directive aims to correct market failures at end of life by ensuring the proper collection and treatment of electrical and electronic equipment that would otherwise not be recycled, due to a low or negative residual value. This however does not apply to cables: cables typically retain a consistently positive residual value due to their high copper and/or aluminium content.

In other words, the typical "WEEE problem" does not apply to cables: they are pulled into recycling by value on a case-by-case basis and not pushed by legislation.

For that reason, including cables in WEEE is unlikely to deliver additional material recycling benefits. On the contrary, it would add technical, economic, financial, environmental, regulatory and administrative burden as well as affordability concerns. If the objective is to increase recycling rates where they are currently insufficient, policy should focus on product streams that lack such inherent economic value.

Europacable stands ready to closely cooperate with the European Commission and EU Institutions to create the right conditions to produce cables made in Europe for Europe.

For further information please contact: a.lampasona@europacable.eu

¹ Europacable does not object to the existing inclusion of power cables <1kV with a connector into the scope of the current WEEE Directive.