

## Serbia: EU bank drops Belgrade incinerator, citing impact on recycling: EBRD and other banks press on

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has refrained from financing the planned Vinča municipal waste incinerator in Belgrade, Serbia, according to a letter sent to the Ne Davimo Beograd initiative that campaigns against the project.

The EIB said that both its appraisal and an opinion from the European Commission on the project found that the incinerator would prevent Serbia from achieving its environmental targets on recycling and the circular economy as part of the EU accession process.

In contrast, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Austrian Development Bank (OeEB) have recently signed loans for the project .

Ne Davimo Beograd and Bankwatch have recently filed an official complaint to the EBRD about the Vinca project. The groups claim that the bank breached its own policies by failing to avoid negative environmental impacts from the project. This could have been achieved by supporting more sustainable practices like waste prevention, re-use, composting and recycling, which are at an extremely low level in Belgrade.

The complaint also highlights the fact that incinerators tend to crowd out waste prevention and recycling measures due to lengthy contracts that require city authorities to deliver consistent amounts of waste. In the groups' view, the EBRD did not adequately respond to the concerns raised on this issue.

Pippa Gallop from CEE Bankwatch Network said, "The EBRD and IFC have persistently claimed that the incinerator would not affect recycling, without providing any evidence. Now the EIB and Commission say the opposite. The EBRD and IFC have a lot of explaining to do."

Aleksa Petković from Ne Davimo Beograd said, "We welcome the EIB and the Commission's recognition that Belgrade should not be prioritising incineration. We are already suffering from low recycling levels and dire air quality. The last thing we need is another source of pollution and another diversion from setting up a functional recycling system. The EBRD, IFC and OeEB need to withdraw from this project while they still can."

Source: [bankwatch.com](http://bankwatch.com)