

From October 10, 2007 Report of E.U. Environmental Agency on Europe's environment: Recycling and WTE are complementary:

“Recycling of municipal waste and incineration with energy recovery are used as complementary tools to divert waste away from landfills and to recover some economic value from waste. However, it should be recognized that strict technical standards of incineration must be observed to avoid detrimental effects on public health and the environment.

When comparing waste disposal options, it is sometimes argued that incineration of waste with energy recovery hinders the development of recycling. However, there is no evidence to support this. Figure 6.26 on municipal waste shows that those countries with the lowest level of landfilling of municipal waste (less than 25 %) also have the highest levels of both recycling and incineration with energy recovery. In contrast, countries with a medium level of landfill (25–50 %) have a medium rate of recycling and limited incineration with energy recovery. Lastly, countries with a high share of landfill (greater than 50 %) have neither much recycling nor incineration with energy recovery.

More details about the “State of the environment report No 1/2007”, please go to:
http://reports.eea.europa.eu/state_of_environment_report_2007_1/en