

"SUSTAINABILITY FOR DEMOCRACY, DEMOCRACY FOR SUSTAINABILITY"

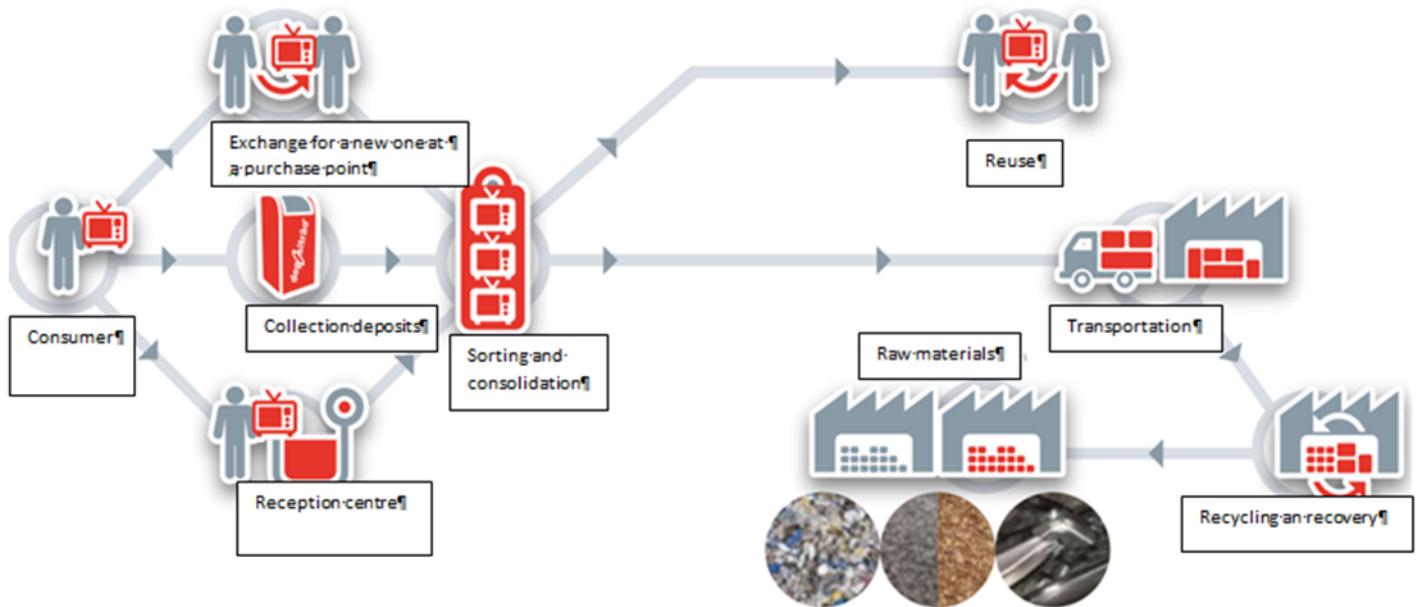
Waste Treatment and Economy

On the 29th of March, two speakers, Filipa Moita e Cristiana Santos, came to José Saramago Secondary School, to inform us in the matter of waste economy.

First, we were taught by the ERP (European Recycling Platform) delegate, Filipa Moita, about the recycling of electric and electronic waste and batteries in Portugal. For a better understanding of the recycling system we were introduced to the concept of circular economy. According to this way of thinking waste is seen as a resource. Almost nothing is wasted and the consumption of resources is decreased.



Secondly, we learned that for the recycling of electrical and electronic waste (WEEE) we have a chain where all members of the community contribute is needed. The part that concerns each of us is the delivery of the waste we produce. We can do this by leaving them at the place of purchase, at a depository, at an ERP collection point or by calling a collection center (for large appliances). Then the ERP does the consolidation and sorting, sending then the waste for reuse, recycling or recovery. Our role is of paramount importance for this to happen.



In the matter of our batteries, we were told we must leave them at a recycling deposit near us since they made from a number of toxic materials. These materials include acid, lead, nickel, lithium, cadmium, alkaline, mercury and nickel metal hydride. When batteries are not properly disposed of the casing can disintegrate and the toxic chemicals within can leach into the surrounding environment. The leaking material can contaminate the soil and water and some of the elements can accumulate in wildlife and humans'.

This good management of this materials brings a lot of benefits such as the obtainment of raw material, avoiding the extraction; extending the time of utility of the objects; reducing the carbon emissions; treating of toxic and noxious substances; saving water and oxygen and a boost to economy and jobs.

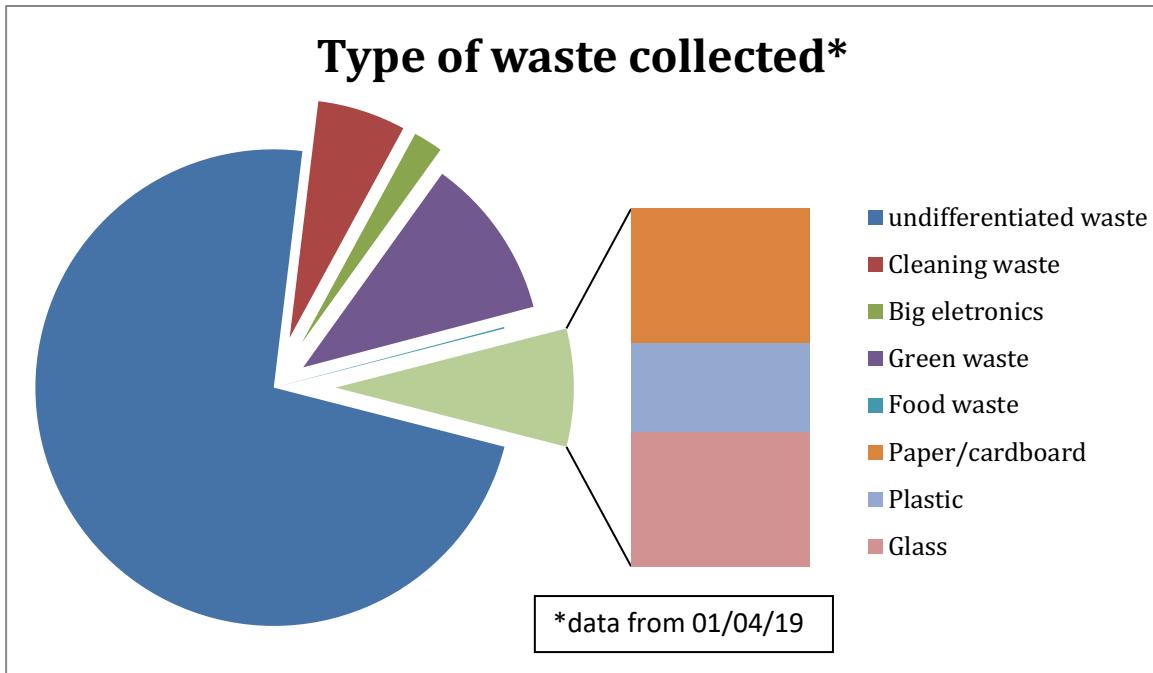
She also taught us about the Project "Generation Depositrão", the result of several campaigns carried out by ERP Portugal, with the school target, since the beginning of 2007. Under the philosophy that "children are excellent influencers of the behaviour of today's adults and, simultaneously, they should know how to behave in the future. The depositrão generation project works in partnership with the blue flag association of Europe, through the eco-school program. It has recycling contests with prizes, in which students or teachers can inscribe their school. We can find more information at: <https://geracaodepositrao.abae.pt/index.php?p=premios>.

The second speaker, Cristiana Santos, explained the operation of Tratolixo a company owned by the Association of Municipalities of Cascais, Mafra, Oeiras and Sintra for the Treatment of Solid Waste. It is responsible for the public service of treatment of Urban Waste produced by the more than 800,000 inhabitants of the municipalities of this Waste Management System, for the last 30 years.

As a result of their hard work, rigorous and efficient, this amount results in several recyclable products that are sent for valorization, electric energy and composting. In Portugal, more than 5 million tons of garbage are produced per year of which half a ton goes to Tratolixo. It recycles 47% of the waste that arrives there and aims at 52%. It could reach 75%, if everyone recycled everytime.

The electrical energy produced from the waste reaches 21 GWh, enough to supply about 5523 families.

Some waste has to be sent to an incinerator, which is not part of the structures they have, so they have to be sent to Valorsul.



Our job as consumers is helping this management by respecting the 3 Rs policy (Reducing, Reusing and Recycling).

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