

Packaging and packaging waste: resource efficiency. Circular economy package

2015/0276(COD) - 14/03/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 582 votes to 88, with 28 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste.

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations. The vote on the legislative resolution has been postponed to later session.

The main amendments adopted in plenary concerned the following issues:

Objective: Members stressed that the revision of the waste Directive offers an opportunity for waste management to be transformed into sustainable material management. They also stressed the importance of the Directive for the transition to a circular economy.

Prevention: the Directive obliges Member States to take measures to minimise the environmental impact of packaging.

Such measures shall include extended producer responsibility and incentives for the take-up of re-usable packaging and to achieve a reduction in consumption of packaging that is not recyclable and of excessive packaging. Furthermore, waste prevention efforts shall not compromise the role of packaging in preserving hygiene or safety for consumers.

Member States shall make use of adequate economic instruments and other measures to provide incentives for the application of the waste hierarchy. They shall encourage, where environmentally beneficial from a life-cycle perspective, the use of bio-based recyclable packaging and of biodegradable compostable packaging.

Promoting re-use: Parliament proposed a target for re-use of packaging of a minimum of 5% by weight of all packaging waste no later than 31 December 2025. No later than 31 December 2030, a minimum of 10% by weight of all packaging waste is re-used.

In order to encourage re-use operations, Member States may take measures such as the use of deposit return schemes for re-usable packaging products or the setting up of a minimum percentage of re-useable packaging placed on the market every year per packaging stream

Generation and recycling:

- no later than 31 December 2025 a minimum of 70% by weight of all packaging waste generated will be recycled. This shall increase to 80% by 31 December 2030;
- for packaging waste such as paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, ferrous metal, aluminium, wood, it is proposed to raise the minimum recycling targets with a target to be reached by 2025 for each material.

No later than 31 December 2030, the following minimum targets by weight for recycling will be 80% of wood; 90% of ferrous metal, aluminium and of glass.

Members called for specific measures for return and collection systems. Member States shall take the necessary measures to put in place the separate collection of at least packaging or packaging waste made up of paper, metal, plastic or glass.

Member States shall encourage the use of materials obtained from recycled packaging waste for the production of packaging and other products.

Essential requirements: in order to boost the prevention of packaging waste and reduce its impact on the environment while promoting recycling materials of high quality, the essential requirements of and Annex II to this Directive should be reviewed, and if necessary revised, to strengthen the requirements that will enhance the design for re-use and high quality recycling of packaging.

Lastly, the impact of the Directive on human health, the environment and the internal market shall be regularly evaluated to ensure that the essential elements of the Directive are fit for purpose.