

PPWR – Building a sustainable future for packaging in Europe

PRESS RELEASE

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Metal Packaging Europe (MPE) welcomes the European Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI) support for **ambitious circularity measures** in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), including the introduction of performance grades to assess the recyclability of packaging, a mandatory separate collection target of 90%, and a wider rollout of deposit and return systems (DRS) to foster beverage packaging collection, a pivotal step to support the roadmap target of 100% aluminium beverage can recycling by 2030. However, **measures that relate to reusable and highly recyclable one-way packaging must be complementary**. In the spirit of fair competition among all packaging materials and formats, an impact assessment is necessary to assess the true benefits of reuse.

Introducing a definition of 'high-quality recycling' is an important step. However, a key element is missing: **the ability of a material to retain its inherent properties after multiple recycling loops and to replace primary raw materials in future applications**. Certain packaging materials, such as metal, are valuable resources which can be infinitely recycled without losing key intrinsic properties. The omission of a reference to 'multiple loops' in the definition of 'high-quality recycling' may result in the inclusion of materials whose recycling performance is less sustainable than permanent materials (aluminium, glass, and steel).

The **PPWR contains some provisions that should be revised for clarity and consistency to avoid legal uncertainty**. For instance, according to the proposed regulation, industrial packaging formats such as steel pails, drums, canisters, and intermediate bulk containers are classified as transport packaging. However, this contradicts national legislation and guidelines of several EU Member States that classify these packaging types as sales packaging. **Therefore, these packaging types should not be subject to reuse targets for transport packaging**.

Packaging protects and preserves a product, conveys information, and makes it safe for consumers. **Packaging materials that extend shelf life are essential to reduce food waste**. Therefore, reduction targets should only address excessive packaging put on the market. Eurostat recently published waste generation statistics for packaging in 2021. The EU generated 84 million tonnes of packaging waste, of which 40.3% were paper and cardboard. Plastic represented 19.0%, glass 18.5%, wood 17.1% and **metal 4.9%**. Rigid metal packaging has a well-established collection and sorting infrastructure. The industry has achieved some of the highest recycling rates in Europe and contributes significantly to food waste prevention by protecting fresh products throughout the supply chain and providing a shelf life of up to five years without requiring refrigeration. **MPE considers that metal packaging should be exempt from any waste reduction targets**.

Rigid metal packaging is the perfect partner for a circular economy. MPE will continue to exchange with MEPs and Member States to share our perspective on this critical packaging regulation. The European Parliament will formalise its position on the PPWR in plenary at the end of November. Member States should adopt their position by the end of this year.

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Metal Packaging Europe is the voice of Europe's rigid metal packaging industry, bringing together manufacturers, suppliers, and national associations.

The European rigid metal packaging industry covers 760 companies, employing just under 180,000 people. Together they produce some 98 billion units annually for the beverage, food, health & beauty, household, and industrial markets.