



Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) In Strasbourg, environmental NGOs join at the EP, packaging in hand

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[Photos and videos of the happening here](#)

A happening to raise MEPs' awareness before the vote

On Tuesday 21 November, members of various environmental NGOs join next to Strasbourg's European parliament building with packaging waste in hand to urge them not to give in to the siren calls of industry lobbying as they vote this week on the European Regulation on packaging and packaging waste.

After an initial vote in the European Parliament's ENVI Committee – the lead committee on this file - at the end of October, a plenary vote is scheduled on 22 November at 12:00. Following the EP plenary vote, member states need to agree on the Council position under the Spanish presidency before trialogue negotiations are supposed to start in early 2024. EU officials aim to adopt the legislation during this Commission mandate still.

Crucial regulation to reduce packaging

This text represents a major opportunity for the transition of packaging systems and distribution models, at a time when it is crucial to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and the use of resources in all sectors. The European Commission's intention was for 100% of all packaging to be recyclable or reusable by 2030, with the definition of criteria for recycling on a large scale, the elimination of unnecessary packaging and over-packaging, and targets for reusable packaging broken down by sector.

When adopted, this regulation will apply directly to the entire European Union. If it is less ambitious than the French law, then there is a very real risk that the progress achieved through the AGEC law will be called into question. This is why it is essential to be very ambitious and to allow countries that have already made progress to go beyond the targets set, in particular, by formulating targets that are minimum targets.

Powerful industrial lobbies helped weaken the EP position

The stakes are high: The packaging, paper-cardboard and fast-food industry lobbies are waging an intense campaign to water down the text, revise its objectives downwards and obtain exemptions.

Following the examination of the text by the European Parliament's ENVI Committee, several measures have been weakened:

- The targets for the reuse of beverages and transport packaging are maintained, but with sometimes watered-down wording, deadlines and the possibility of exemption on the basis of "access to infrastructure" or "peer-reviewed studies", etc.
- The wine and takeaway reuse targets have unfortunately been dropped.
- The provisions of Article 7 remain worrying: Zero Waste France, Surfrider Foundation Europe, and their European partners oppose the use of bio-based plastic to meet the recycled content target for plastic packaging, as well as the use of a credit-based system for plastic.

A few improvements

Other important measures have been retained or added:

- Prevention of unnecessary packaging and packaging formats, with restrictions on single-use food and drink packaging for on-site catering in the hotel and restaurant sector, as well as on certain packaging formats offering individual portions (single-dose condiments for catering, hygiene and care products in hotels)-;
- Chemicals in products, with a ban on the intentional addition of PFAS and Bisphenol A to packaging within 18 months of the regulation coming into force;
- "Free" tap water: a provision has been added to ensure that Member States allow customers to request free or low-cost tap water in restaurants, canteens, bars, cafés, etc.

This week's vote: a key milestone

Given the way the vote in the ENVI committee went (with amendments to delete the text tabled but fortunately not adopted), the vote in plenary, scheduled for 22 November, will be a key milestone. The lobbying efforts of industry, which have been intensively deployed over the last few months of negotiations, have reduced the ambition of the text without proposing a credible alternative to tackle the growing problem of packaging waste. The latest [Eurostat data](#) revealed: EU citizens created an average of 188kg packaging waste per capita, this is a 10kg increase in just 2 years.

The Parliament's current position is significantly weaker than the Commission's proposal and the text under discussion in the Council, particularly as regards reduction and reuse. Ahead of the vote, many MEPs tabled amendments to further water down provisions on **unnecessary packaging and reuse**. The risk is the adoption of new derogations from the re-use targets for the drinks sector for example, dragging down re-use in Europe. It is essential that the Parliament maintains as much ambition as possible to ensure that the packaging waste crisis can be contained.

¹List of NGOs present: The European coalition Rethink Plastic Alliance represented by Surfrider Foundation Europe, Zero Waste Europe, Zero Waste France, European Environmental Bureau.

The French NGO On est prêt also joined the event.

A propos de Rethink Plastic Alliance

Rethink Plastic is an alliance of leading European NGOs, with thousands of active groups, supporters and citizens in every EU Member State.

We bring together policy and technical expertise from a variety of relevant fields, and work with European policy-makers to design and deliver policy solutions for a future that is free from plastic pollution.

We are part of the global Break Free From Plastic movement, made up of 11,000 organizations and individual supporters from across the world who are demanding massive reductions in single-use plastics and to push for lasting solutions to the plastic pollution crisis.

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