

## **EXPRA study warns of negative effects of proposed legislative changes on packaging recycling**

**A feasibility study on *The effects of the proposed EU packaging waste policy on waste management practice*, developed by the Data and Reporting Working Group of the Extended Producer Responsibility Alliance (EXPRA), concludes that the increased recycling targets proposed by the European Commission would lead to collect more packaging waste from households than the amount of packaging that is put on the market. Besides, the costs for collection, sorting and sale of packaging waste will more than double under the proposed legislation.** The study, released on 3 October, analyses the impact of the legislative proposals published by the Commission in July, as part of the Circular Economy Package. Based on data from 11 EU member states<sup>1</sup>, the research focuses on the amendments to packaging recycling, in particular the new approach to recycling measurement and the revised recycling targets.

Recycling is currently measured through the weight of packaging waste that enters a recycling process, i.e. what is prepared for recycling, without suffering significant losses. The Commission proposes to measure recycling at the output of the recycling process, unless the losses to the waste that is recycled are 2% or less. The examples in the study show that losses in the sorting and recycling process can be substantial. Depending on the material the net loss could reach up to 40%.

The expected levels of packaging waste collection under the proposed approach will also prove difficult or impossible to reach. With the exception of glass packaging waste in 2025, more packaging waste from households would have to be collected than the packaging that is put on the market.

With regard to costs, an increase of 35%, 132% and 141% should be expected across the system in 2020, 2025 and 2030 respectively. The annual cost per inhabitant in EU countries where EXPRA has members is estimated to increase from €6,65 to more than € 15.

Administrative burden, complexity of traceability of by-products of the recycling process and risk of lower quality recycling are additional shortcomings illustrated in the study.

EXPRA President William Vermeir said: “We would like to point out the need for realistic target levels and keeping the measurement point where the sorted material is put into recycling. All of these proposals were made after detailed analyses, based on our long term experience and proven with concrete examples”.

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<sup>1</sup> Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Luxembourg and Malta.

The study was presented on 22<sup>nd</sup> September during a high level policy dialogue on *The role of Extended Producer Responsibility in the transition to a circular economy*, organised by EXPRA.

**About EXPRA**

Founded in 2013, is the alliance for packaging and packaging waste recovery and recycling systems which are owned by obliged industry and work on a not-for-profit basis. EXPRA acts as the authoritative voice and common policy platform representing the interests of all its member packaging recovery and recycling organizations founded and run by or on behalf of obliged industry. For additional information, please visit [www.expra.eu](http://www.expra.eu)

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