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DEAR READER,

Welcome to the spring edition of the EXPRA e-newsletter. As you already know, you can see its web version here.

After the stormy end of the last year, when the EC proposed to withdraw the Circular Economy Package, as well as other 73 legal acts, it seems that the withdrawal will be finalised officially. We are expecting in the coming days the 2015 Work Program of the Commission to be published in the EU Official Journal.

Since December last year we have been witnesses of the heated discussions on this topic, especially in the European Parliament and the exchange of statements and open letters from the major stakeholders. As we all know despite the strong opposition, the Commission did not change its decision. Of course now the most important question is how the Commission will move forward, what will be the scope of the new, broader and more ambitious proposal? While the Commission is deciding on its next steps, we will be even more active in our efforts to reiterate our beliefs how the future legislation should look like.

I am glad to say that EXPRA started successfully 2015. We had a prominent role in one of the most important forums for the packaging waste sector - Packaging Waste & Sustainability Forum 2015. I had the honour to chair a special seminar dedicated to the Extended Producer Responsibility, EPR Toolkit: Creating a level playing field for EPR across Europe. We were well represented during the two days of the forum as well: our President and members of the Board of Directors moderated or participated in the different panels. During the three days of the event, there were informative interventions on a wide range of topics – from EU policy developments on the future of circular economy to best practices in the field of material sustainability and ways to address packaging waste across the globe. The broad spread of participants from across the packaging value chain, the European Commission and NGO community, the engaging presentations and debates all contributed to making the event a success.

Enjoy your reading!
The EPR Toolkit seminar at the 22nd Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum

Joachim Quoden, Managing Director of EXPRA moderated the *EPR Toolkit Seminar - Creating a Level Playing Field for EPR Across Europe* that took place in Brussels on 24 February 2015 and preceded the Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum 2015. The seminar started with an overview of the EPR legislation on national level that was followed by a presentation of the obliged Industry’s point of view concerning the history of the EPR and packaging recycling development since 1988 and the current challenges in ensuring a fair competitive environment.

During the first panel of the Workshop, representatives of different EPR models: Duales System Holding GmbH, Germany, ETO, Estonia and Repack, Ireland discussed the European experiences of EPR legislation and the challenges, resulting from the different approaches. An interesting debate followed on who should be responsible for the collection of packaging waste – the municipalities or the EPR systems, in which participated representatives of the Waste Management Corporation Munich AMW, Germany and the Environment Exchange, UK.

During the second part of the Workshop the discussion was focused on the issues of transparency and competition with the participation of representatives of Altstoff Recycling AG, Austria, the Reclay Group, ACR+ and EKO KOM, the Czech Republic.

A special panel was dedicated to the EPR implementation outside Europe, with presentations from the Canadian Stewardship Services Alliance, the Global Product Stewardship Council (GlobalPSC), Australia and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), South Africa.

EXPRA also organised a well-attended dinner at the occasion of the forum, with Peter Börkey from the OECD’s environment directorate as guest speaker.

The GlobalPSC published a story about the seminar in its most recent newsletter, stating that the “seminar emphasized harmonising EPR rules and guidelines in Europe, learning from international experience and the roles of transparency and competition.”

Please see [here](#) for the GlobalPSC story.
The 22\textsuperscript{nd} Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum in Brussels, supported by EXPRA

The 22\textsuperscript{nd} edition of the Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum gathered a wide range of speakers and participants from the EU institutions, industry and NGOs. EXPRA supported the organisation of the event for the second year in a row, and various representatives from EXPRA’s management and members took part as moderators, speakers or participants.

The introductory speech was given by Karl Falkenberg, Director General at DG Environment, European Commission, who provided insights on the Commission’s next steps to follow the withdrawal of the Waste Targets Proposal. Falkenberg explained that the work on the new proposals – one waste legislative proposal as well as further initiatives to ‘close the circle’ of the circular economy - now kicks off.

The first panel of the Forum provided opportunity also to the business and NGO to discuss the practical measures to improve recycling, as well, as the financial responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the packaging value chain.

The Hon. Leo Brincat, Environment Minister of Malta provided the view of the Member States on the proposed changes to waste targets. Brincat outlined \textit{inter alia} that it is important to treat waste as a resource and that Malta is working to further increase their recycling levels. He added that the work that has been done on the current Waste Package needs to be taken into consideration in the preparation of the new proposals.

Various EXPRA representatives were also among the high level speakers. EXPRA President William Vermeir moderated a session on EPR during which an analysis of the Disparity of cost responsibilities in EPR for packaging in Europe was presented by Paul Christiaens, Nedvang, speaking on behalf of Jan Storm,’s as well, as a presentation on the findings of the BIO IS Guidance on Extended Producer Responsibility.

During the panel on EU wide view on Regional perspectives for packaging waste legislation and targets, Liliana Nichita, EcoRom Ambalaje, presented the view of the EPR systems concerning the cooperation with local authorities.

High level speakers from industry and the EU Commission debated issues such as the importance of waste in the context of resource efficiency. Michele Galatola, Product Team Leader in DG Environment explained how the work is progressing in the field of Product environmental footprint (PEF) Pilots, and representatives from IKEA, Unilever, Tetra Pak International and Dow Europe discussed Industry led sustainability initiatives. They shared their experience in innovative product design and how packaging fits into broader waste, environment and efficiency strategies.
Together with a range of other speakers, *inter alia, Stephane Arditi* from the European Environment Bureau and *Virginia Janssens* from EUROPEN, the event provided a comprehensive overview of policies and initiatives in the field of packaging and packaging waste and plenty of networking opportunities.

Additional information about the forum can be found [here](#).
EXPRA calls for sound waste legislation to be re-tabled in 2015

Acknowledging the Commission’s formal decision to withdraw the waste target proposal under the Circular Economy Package (published in the EU Official Journal of Saturday 7 March 2015), the Extended Producer Responsibility Alliance (EXPRA) calls on the EU Executive to live up to its commitment of **delivering sound legislation setting new realistic recycling targets by the end of 2015**.

EXPRA serves as the alliance for non-profit packaging and packaging waste recovery and recycling systems that are owned by obliged industry. In light of the contribution that our sector can make to efficient waste management and green growth in the EU, we call for new legislation that:

- Safeguards and reinforces the **primary role that Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) has to play** in the transition towards a circular economy. EPR is a policy approach that gives producers improved incentives to guarantee that packaging recovery and recycling are carried out in the most economically competent and sound manner. In order to ensure a streamlined implementation of EPR across the bloc, it is important that the EPR principle is appropriately incorporated into EU waste legislation and that strong and clear minimum requirements for EPR schemes are set.

- **Clearly defines the roles of all stakeholders** taking part in the waste management chain.
- **Sets targets** on the basis of a **sound-based feasibility study**.
- **Harmonises calculation methods** for recycling rates and **proposes a comprehensive reporting methodology** that yields reliable waste management statistics in Europe.
- ** Defines a clear timeline for zero-landfilling of recyclable waste** alongside a clear set of measures that promote investment in alternative facilities.

EXPRA’s President, William Vermeer commented: “**EXPRA fully supports EU action to drive the Circular Economy forward through a new, more coherent proposal. EPR is a key tool to ensure both economically and environmentally sound waste management. This is why EPR minimum requirements should explicitly be integrated into the proposal for amending both the Waste Framework and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directives, and be made even more ambitious by outlining clear roles and responsibilities for the actors across the waste management chain**”.

EXPRA’s Managing Director, Joachim Quoden, concluded: “**Taking measures to improve waste management in Europe is fully in line with the new Commission’s priorities – this is a considerable commitment, which now has to be followed up with action. We therefore call on the Commission to come up as soon as possible with a proposal for the Waste Target Review, delivering realistic target levels, consistent recycling measurement and recognition of EPR**”.
News update

The European Environment Agency has published its five-yearly assessment 'The European environment – state and outlook 2015' (SOER 2015)

The report states that “waste management had improved, but Europe remains far from a circular economy”.

The positive developments include decrease of generation of municipal waste per capita by 4% between 2004 and 2012, falling to 481 kg. Looking beyond waste generation, there are also signs of improved waste management in Europe. Between 2004 and 2010, the EU-28, Iceland and Norway reduced the amount of waste deposited in landfills substantially, from 31% of total waste generated (excluding mineral, combustion, animal and vegetable wastes) to 22%. This was partly due to an improvement in recycling rates of municipal waste, from 28% in 2004 to 36% in 2012.

Concerning the 5–10 year trends, the Report states that less waste is being landfilled due to reduced generation of some wastes, increased recycling and greater use of waste for energy recovery, while for the 20+ year outlook it is pointed out that the total waste generation is still high, although implementation of waste prevention programs could alleviate this.

According to the EEA’s executive director Hans Bruyninckx, the report puts pressure on the Commission to come up with an improved circular economy proposal. Bruyninckx stated: “We have done substantial work that illustrates the vital importance of the circular economy and resource efficiency for well-being and competitiveness, and that focusing on these elements contributes to European competitiveness, job creation and economic performance.” He added: “So we are looking forward to seeing the strengthened packages.”

Speaking at a press conference to launch the report, Commissioner for Environment Karmenu Vella made some statements on the new circular economy package and explained: “We are not being more ambitious only by setting targets, [...] we want to be more ambitious on the outward side, on the implementation side, on the results side”. Vella added: “We want future products to be durable, more reusable, more repairable, and more recyclable as well. We need to create a market for the recycled product. We do have a certain amount of recycling but most of that recycled waste is not finding its way into the production”.

Expra

Extended Producer Responsibility Alliance
The European Commission recently published its Communication for a Strategic Framework for an Energy Union, which is structured around five main dimensions of energy and climate policies (security of supply, the internal energy market, energy efficiency, decarbonisation and R&I). The Communication provides further details on the overall objectives of these dimensions and presents a list of concrete actions and initiatives that the Commission intends to undertake over the coming five years.

As part of the Energy Union the Commission will publish a Communication on Waste-to-Energy. In this context ENDS has published an article on 6 March quoting an EU official saying that “an EU waste-to-energy initiative will focus on energy recovery from non-recyclable materials without affecting the waste hierarchy”. He added that “the Commission’s paper will consider the role of energy recovery from non-recyclable waste that would otherwise end up in landfills, [...] whilst it will not change the low ranking of incineration in the waste hierarchy”.

For more information please see [http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/energy-union/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/energy-union/index_en.htm)
Since the beginning of 2015, the ‘Triman’ logo officially entered into force after some years of debates in France. The purpose of this new black stickman figure is to inform consumers whether or not a product is recyclable, and should apply to certain recyclable products placed on the French market that are subject to a system of EPR.

The original idea of the Triman dates back to the Grenelle environmental law, but there has been significant discussions since it was proposed, not least due to firm opposition and fierce lobbying of the industry. As a consequence, the text of the new decree has been significantly watered down and the government has introduced an increased level of flexibility regarding its application. For example, it will only apply to certain products while others are excluded (for example glass and WEEE).

Several environmental NGOs and organisations have reportedly commented that because of this flexibility, the original purpose to inform the consumer about a product’s recyclability and simplify legislation was not achieved, making its application and use even more complicated.
News from EXPRA members

Fost Plus (Belgium) 10 years of awareness raising activities in waste management in Belgian primary schools: 17 000 workshops organized and 300 000 students involved

The Recycling Initiation Module (RIM) teaches children about better waste management

Ten years ago Fost Plus decided to join forces with GoodPlanet Belgium and inter-municipal waste management associations with a view to making children aware of sorting, recycling and intelligent management of household waste. More than 17 000 interactive workshops have been organized for more than 300 000 pupils in Belgian primary schools. These are educational workshops during which the children learn how to manage better household waste and are given practical advice to also adopt good habits at home. This initiative, endorsed by the competent public authorities, has clearly borne good results: pupils are now more aware of the theme of waste, are careful to use the sorting bins with which the majority of schools are now equipped and, once back home, acquire a more responsible approach towards waste.

10 years of productions, worth celebrating

To celebrate 10 years of the RIM Fost Plus and GoodPlanet have set off on tour, from January to May. A dozen schools all over Belgium will benefit from special attention. As a matter of fact, pupils in these schools that have booked the RIM production will have the opportunity to celebrate this anniversary with (non-alcoholic) sparkling wine, some cake and a little gift, miniature sorting bins full of sweets. The press has also been invited to cover this event.

Workshops adapted to all ages

The RIM is designed for pupils from the 3rd to the 6th year of primary school and, since its launch, has been a continuous success. Each year, thanks to support from the promoting inter-municipal waste management associations, many schools sign up for the module www.animationmir.be with a view to taking part in the free workshops. Given the success of this project a follow-up initiative was launched in 2008. This was a workshop intended for students in secondary education, entitled "C'est du propre!" (literally translated "It's clean!" but it also means "Well, that’s nice!"). It is obvious that, while the RIM initiation was meant to work on aspects such as awareness raising, use of language and acquisition of scientific knowledge, the module for older students relied on debate, a critical sense and the faculty of reasoned thought. Finally, in 2012 the production "Pays pas propre" ("Not neat Country") was initiated, addressing the very youngest and based on an imaginary world to which
children are led away by a 'conteuse' - a ‘storyteller’. This way the children, throughout their school career, are broadly made aware of the necessity and importance of correct management of waste materials and, in particular, their sorting.
GreenPak (Malta) Record collection of plastic caps by GreenPak generates €15,000 for charity

A record number of 7,274,833 plastic caps were gathered in less than two months from over 90 organisations across Malta and Gozo and deposited at GreenPak for recycling. A Centre catering for individuals with special needs, The Helen Keller Resource Centre claimed the honour of being the highest contributor, with an average of 7,972 plastic caps per student. This collective effort led to the donation of a record €15,000 cheque presented by GreenPak Coop Society to the President of Malta, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, during I-Istrina 2014.

I-Istrina is Malta’s Boxing Day charity campaign organised by the Malta Community Chest Fund.

GreenPak was presented with an official certificate from The Malta Records organisation in recognition for the record number of plastic caps collected in Malta. Originally launched by GreenPak in November 2011, the 4th edition of Irriċkla għall-Istrina (Recycle For Istrina) campaign saw the participation of primary schools and business organisations. GreenPak’s official waste educators, along with GreenPak’s mascot, Green Gary, visited various premises to supply recycling bags and explain the benefits of this initiative.

Ing. Mario Schembri, GreenPak Coop Society CEO, said: “The overwhelming response is a clear indication that our sustainable recycling practices message is being well received not only by the younger generations but also from private organisations. This further encourages us to continue providing recycling opportunities in a responsible manner.”
Ecoembes (Spain) Prevention Working Group Ecoembes-Public Administrations

Ecoembes set up in 2014 a working group on Prevention with the 17 Autonomous Communities and the Ministry of Environment. It has been created as a tool to share knowledge, experience and opinions to build a communication and working space to improve collaboration between Ecoembes and Public Administrations about Prevention and all the work done by licensees on this field.

As long as 2014 is the year in which we need to work in preparing our triennial (2015-2017) Prevention Plan with licencees, we focused all our efforts on this issue with very positive results. We were able to build a new Prevention Plan more robust that help fillers to continue working actively on Prevention and at the same time meet the needs raised by Public Administrations. Additionally, the working group allowed us to organize for the first time events during the European Prevention Week in cooperation with Autonomous Communities. In 2014 we put together 8 events aimed to spread out Design for recycling among a wide variety of audiences, from licensees to university students.

Queen Sofia of Spain with the children of the Cateura Recycled Instruments Orchestra and the children of the “Music of Recycling” social project

The Cateura Recycled Instruments Orchestra in a concert in Madrid.
CONAI (Italy) ANCI-CONAI Agreement: higher fees for the municipalities and a new plan for the territory

CONAI has signed a new agreement with ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities), lasting five years, from April 2014 to March 2019, establishing the amount of fees to be paid to the municipalities covering a part of the costs of packaging waste separate collection (steel, aluminium, paper, wood, plastic and glass).

The new agreement confirms the basic principles: the ANCI-CONAI Agreement is a voluntary tool for the municipalities, who can choose to join it and give their packaging waste to the consortia chain for recycling, or sell it elsewhere. CONAI also confirmed the guarantee for the take back of packaging materials in the whole country, in every part of Italy, even beyond the achievement of the recycling and recovery objectives, recognizing the full amount of fees to the municipalities.

The new agreement even establishes the increasing of the economic fees, plus 17% for all the materials, with particular increase for the glass, with 20% more than in the past. With the agreement it is confirmed, moreover, the priority of the quality of waste collection, as a prerequisite for the subsequent recycling process.
TAMIR's (Israel) EXTREME SHOTS VIDEO

On November 23rd, 2014, we uploaded an edited video to our Face book and YouTube page. Our main goal was to show other perspectives of recycling, a fun perspective.

The video presented its viewers with young acrobats, riders, and gymnasts with exceptional throwing capabilities, trying and succeeding to throw packages such as ketchup bottles, cans etc., into the orange bin (meant for recycling packages). One scene even included a milk carton thrown into a boat from the iconic bridge over the Yarkon Rive in TEL AVIV.

Within days this video had become viral, showing not only on Face book pages but also on mainstream national television, which helped it reach a wider audience, concluding with a whopping 1.22 million views within a week across mediums.

The success of this campaign is mainly attributed to the shift from digital media to traditional telecommunication. This was possible thanks to a combination of a perfect performance and editing, right timing and a strong digital strategy management. Once the video received references in the traditional media, it had become viral.

Link to the video on TAMIR's You Tube page: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R552n3w8-B4

Link to some television stories about the video:
The kids channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8xUcqXWklk
Channel 2 – the news https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikms7-Wt4fA
Channel 2 – the morning show https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjUFs4dKZQg
PYR (Finland) Take-back network for consumer packaging in Finland starting up

The producer run take-back scheme for consumer packaging should be in place on 1 January 2016. Careful planning and the acquisition of the right partners through an invitation to tender for the various operations are essential to attaining an efficient end result.

Take-back and recycling of glass

The first phase of extended producer responsibility for packaging will begin in May. At the time of writing, the search for glass recycling partners is at an advanced stage. Reception terminals for glass packaging waste will open their doors and recycling will commence on 1 May in accordance with the agreement between Suomen Keräysliyhdistys, the Finnish producer organisation for glass packaging, and PYR. The quantity of waste glass take-back will amount to some 15,000 tonnes per year. This is where it begins with the first steps towards extended producer responsibility now being taken.

http://info.pyr.fi/aiheet/in-english/
H.E.RRCO (Greece) Pan-Hellenic survey regarding Packaging Recycling

H.E.RRCO commissioned one of the most reliable research companies for public opinion, to undergo a Pan-Hellenic survey regarding Packaging Recycling. The survey’s findings were very encouraging for the future of packaging recycling and the operation of the System of the Blue Bin in our country. Specifically:

- 96% believe that recycling is important
- 73% state that recycling is a stable priority in their daily lives
- 94% endorse that Packaging Recycling is identified with Blue Bins

When questioned about their recycling of packaging in the blue bin, 88% replied positively. On the other hand, even if they do not recycle packaging, they state in the majority (61%) working or practical reasons for not doing so, without doubting though the operation process of the Packaging Recycling.

From the overall assessment is shown that packaging recycling in Greece has become a daily practice and that subconsciously Recycling is synonymous with the System of the Blue Bin.
VALORLUX (Luxembourg) 10 years eco-bag: a positive environmental balance

At the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the eco-bag Madam the Minister Carole Dieschbourg, explained that Luxembourg with 18 plastic bags per inhabitant per year, is already well under the number desired by the EC. The reusable “eco-bags” has a lot to do with it.

Indeed, since its launch in Luxembourg in 2004 and the introduction of a priced one-way plastic bag in 2007, consumer habits have changed dramatically. Today, over 85% of customers use reusable bags for shopping. This avoided since 2004 the use of more than 560 million one-way shopping bags, representing a saving of 3,700 tons of plastic. The eco-bag project has reduced the total weight of one-way plastic bags of 89.8%. In September 2012, the EC designated the eco-bag project as an example of best practice in the field of waste prevention.

The eco-bag is a part of an environmental agreement on packaging waste prevention and is based on a voluntary agreement between the Ministry, VALORLUX and the Luxembourg Trade Confederation (clc).
Green Dot (Cyprus) Hot news

- Green Dot Cyprus is engaged as a major partner in a European Project entitled "Rethink (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) Awareness Raising Campaign for the promotion of waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling in Cyprus". The project’s total budget is €2,181,960, its duration is 34 months and it is co-funded by 46% by the LIFE + Environment Policy and Governance of the European Union. The project aims to bring about notable changes in perceptions, awareness and habits of the general public and targeted groups through the utilisation of the RRR concept. [www.rethink.com.cy](http://www.rethink.com.cy).

- Green Dot Cyprus has been selected as one of the ten most dynamic and exciting businesses for The Award for Environmental & Corporate Sustainability in the 2014/15 European Business Awards. These Awards are Europe’s largest and most significant cross-sector business recognition programme and this year has engaged with over 24,000 businesses across Europe. [www.businessawardseurope.com](http://www.businessawardseurope.com)
FTI (Sweden) Webcast and text messaging were appreciated at Customer Days in Sweden

In the beginning of February we held our yearly seminars for customers in Sweden. This year, we also offered them to participate online by live webcasting our seminar in Stockholm. Both the webcast and the opportunity to submit questions to the speakers via text messaging were highly appreciated saving many of them both time and money. FTI presented among other things the new ordinance as of November 1, 2014 and our new affiliation agreement from April 1, 2015.

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency participated at each meeting to speak about the new legislation and the new tasks of the Agency as a consequence thereof.

Our head of marketing ended the seminar by talking about the new affiliation agreement and on how to easier find the documents on our Extranet. In the evaluation we got a rating of between 7 and 9 on a 10 point scale.