

**Ms. Ursula von der Leyen**  
*President of the EU Commission*

**Ms. Ilze Juhansone**  
*Secretary General - EU  
Commission's Secretariat -  
General*

**Mr. Frans Timmermans**  
*Executive Vice President of the  
EU Commission - EU Green Deal*

**Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis**  
*Executive Vice President of the  
EU Commission - An Economy  
that Works for People*

**Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius**  
*Commissioner for Environment,  
Oceans and Fisheries*

**Mr. Thierry Breton**  
*Commissioner for Internal  
Market*

**Mr. Janusz Wojciechowski**  
*Commissioner for Agriculture*

**Ms. Stella Kyriakides**  
*Commissioner for Health and  
Food Safety*

European Commission - Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels

*Brussels, 14 November 2022*

**Subject: Revision of the Packaging and Packaging Waste legislation**

Dear President, First Executive Vice President and Commissioners,

The undersigned associations represent the large majority of the European beverage industry, its packaging value chain and the hospitality industry. Together we represent thousands of SMEs and startups, proud of their products and craftsmanship, as well as bigger companies which are active all across the Union market.

The beverage sector, in its variety and diversity, is a thriving market for Europe and represents in many cases our European way of life, in addition to being an ambassador overseas. Packaging, whether reusable or recyclable, allows European consumers to enjoy modern life by enjoying their beverage and food of choice on-the-go, seated with friends, at home, in a café, a bar, a restaurant, in a park, or in many other contexts. Packaging also allows us to share national food and beverage cultures with other EU member states as well as third countries.

The objectives set out in the EU Circular Economy Action Plan are to make “all packaging reusable or recyclable in an economically viable way by 2030”. With these objectives in mind, we would like to express our members’ utmost concerns with respect to some of the measures included in the draft text of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation and more specifically, the proposal on arbitrary and disproportionate reuse targets covering a variety of contexts in the beverage sectors. Simply put, the competitiveness of the food and beverage industry and its packaging value chain is at stake.

Our sectors have a long-standing track record in packaging sustainability. A drive for circularity, including re-use, recycling and refill, is already enshrined in our day-to-day activities. The launch of the EU Circular Plastic Alliance sent a strong supporting signal in that direction with the introduction of mandatory and voluntary recyclability, collection and recycled content targets. The adaptation of existing Deposit Return Systems (DRS) and roll out of new DRS, in many EU countries in the coming years, covering various types of packaging materials, are also a testimony thereof.

Such a drive in packaging circularity was backed by substantial investments to improve collection and recycling, enhancing the uptake of secondary raw materials and piloting systems for either reusable packaging or refill. All these efforts have continued, despite the difficulties, during challenging years that have included new legislation whilst living through the covid-19 crisis and the

ramifications of the war in Ukraine, with the resulting energy and materials crisis. As a result of the sustained investments made, beverage packaging is overall the best achiever in terms of separate collection and high-quality recycling and steadily progressing towards packaging circularity.

Now, the European Commission is asking us to make a full paradigm shift and move almost exclusively towards reusable or refillable packaging. Beverage producers acknowledge that reusable packaging should be part of their packaging portfolio. More is possible, but only with the right processes, policy measures based on scientifically verifiable data and timeframe in place.

However, the complete lack of a science-based approach on the impact of the leaked proposal on well-functioning circular packaging systems for recycling, is disturbing. Equally, we have not been made aware of any detailed analysis of environmental, economic and social impacts (including a consumer behavior analysis) of such an option.

Setting disproportionately high and discriminatory reuse targets would not only entail significant cost implications; it would greatly impact the complexity of our respective sectors and will also cause an existential threat, notably though not exclusively, to many SMEs and to the recycling systems in which they exist. The [latest Eurostat Report on the European food chain](#) indicates that in 2018 over 95% of beverage companies in the EU were small and micro and over 420,000 were employed in beverage manufacturing.

Implementing reuse is not only about costs. It means setting up whole new infrastructure and logistics networks, public and private, across the EU. It also requires that consumers come on this journey with us and drastically change their habits, shifting, for example, from sorting most waste at home to returning more reusable packaging. HoReCa establishments would have to set up reuse and refill cleaning and storage facilities as well as return logistics within their premises without compromising consumer choice, food safety and health of consumers and staff.

For all those reasons, we would like to urge the European Commission to reconsider the proposed measures and focus on establishing science-based processes to assess where and how reuse can be implemented in a safe, economically viable and sustainable way. This would then allow to define realistic reuse targets at EU level, together with effective and meaningful safeguards, including sufficient transition periods.

We thank you in advance for your attention and respectfully request the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,



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Signed on behalf of:

360° Foodservice

AIJN – European Fruit Juice Association

APEAL – Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging

The Brewers of Europe

European Aluminium

EVA - European Vending & Coffee Service Association

FEVE – European Federation of Glass Packaging Makers

HOTREC – Hospitality Europe

Metal Packaging Europe

Natural Mineral Waters Europe

Petcore Europe

Serving Europe

SME United

UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe

