



UNESDA statement

European Parliament's IMCO, ITRE and AGRI Committees voted on amendments to the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation

Brussels, 19 July 2023: This week, three European Parliament's Committees – the Committees on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) and on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) - voted on their amendments to the proposal for a Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). UNESDA, representing the European soft drinks sector, considers that the votes represent a good first step towards improving the proposal but further work is needed to fully support beverage packaging circularity.

Nicholas Hodac, director general of UNESDA, comments: *"We welcome the Committees' efforts to develop an ambitious, yet more realistic EU PPWR. This week's votes are a step in the right direction and we look forward to the European Parliament's ENVI (Environment) Committee's vote in September to secure the enablers of fully circular beverage packaging. In particular, we call for a high level of ambition to put an end to the downcycling of our PET bottles and to further support high collection rates of beverage packaging."*

UNESDA welcomes the ITRE's inclusion in art. 6 of a **mechanism of preferential access to the feedstock for recycling which would prioritise recycling in closed loops**. This is an essential condition to reduce the downcycling of beverage packaging in non-food applications and to provide beverage producers with the necessary amount of high-quality materials to meet the recycled content targets laid out in art. 7. We **call on the ENVI Committee to follow ITRE's lead and promote closed-loop recycling of PET beverage bottles in its report**.

Then, UNESDA welcomes the support of both the ITRE and IMCO Committees to **exempt packaging covered by a Deposit and Return System (DRS) from the new material composition label** proposed in art. 11. This is paramount to avoid consumer confusion on the most appropriate way to dispose of their waste. Indeed, for packaging covered by a DRS, the only relevant information for appropriate sorting is the DRS label or marking itself.

When it comes to DRS, UNESDA is **concerned with the amendments adopted in the ITRE and AGRI Committees which would make the establishment of a DRS a voluntary measure**. If we are serious about reducing litter, improving collection of beverage packaging and increasing the recycled content in beverage packaging, this is simply not acceptable. UNESDA therefore **calls on MEPs in the ENVI Committee to maintain the Commission's proposal, which already addresses concerns raised by some thanks to an exemption from the obligation to set up a DRS if very high collection rate can be achieved through a traditional EPR**.



Finally, UNESDA notes the various amendments to art. 26 adopted in the ITRE and AGRI Committees which are aimed at ensuring the complementarity of recycling, reuse and refill. **Complementarity is key to provide beverage producers with the necessary flexibility to invest in the best packaging mix, and to ensure reusable packaging is only used when it makes the most sense for our environment.**

The forthcoming vote in the ENVI Committee will represent another crucial moment in the decision-making process on the EU PPWR. UNESDA asks MEPs to seize this opportunity and provide their support for a circular future for beverage packaging.

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Note to Editors

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About UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe

Established in 1958, UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe is the Brussels-based trade association representing the non-alcoholic beverages sector. Its membership comprises 10 companies and 25 national associations from across Europe. UNESDA members are involved in the production and/or distribution of a wide variety of non-alcoholic beverages including still drinks, carbonated drinks, energy drinks, iced teas and sports drinks.

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