

Question for written answer E-003752/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
Elsi Katainen (Renew)

Subject: Reuse obligations and effective recycling systems under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation

The aim of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) is to promote the reuse of packaging, reduce packaging waste and promote a circular economy. However, those objectives need to take into account the different waste management systems in place in the Member States, as well as the environmental and economic impact of existing return and recycling systems.

Finland's deposit and return system works very efficiently and packaging recycling rates are high. Finland has also mostly switched from washable glass bottles to lighter aluminium and PET packaging, which is less energy-intensive when it comes to transport and recycling. Life-cycle assessments of packaging show that reusable packaging is therefore not automatically a better option for the environment.

The reuse obligations set out in the PPWR may result in significant new investment and logistics costs for businesses, and SMEs in particular, for example in the form of wash lines and heavier packaging. Existing and effective return and recycling systems should be taken into account.

Under Article 29(18) of the PPWR, exemptions can be assessed in situations where existing arrangements are more environmentally and economically efficient.

With the above in mind:

1. How will the Commission ensure that the reuse obligations under the PPWR take into account effective deposit and return systems in place and high recycling rates in the Member States?
2. On the basis of what scientific, environmental and economic criteria does the Commission assess the exemptions under Article 29(18) so that more efficient recycling solutions are not replaced by more cumbersome and more energy-intensive reuse arrangements?

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