



EU issues new proposals for packaging and packaging waste

On February 27, 2023, the World Trade Organization (WTO) issued Circular G/TBT/N/EU/953, the content of which is the draft regulations on packaging and packaging waste issued by the European Parliament and the Council, aiming to harmonise the rules for placing packaging on the EU market while fostering packaging sustainability and circularity. It lays down sustainability requirements for placing packaging on the EU market related to its composition, design with the view to packaging minimisation, recyclability, use of secondary raw materials in plastic packaging, compostability and requirements on reusable packaging.

In order to reduce the generation of packaging waste, it restricts the use of some packaging formats and establishes obligations on economic operators and Member States, including packaging reuse and waste prevention targets. As regards recycling targets and the related rules on their calculation, it maintains obligations from the existing EU packaging legislation. The draft circular will be subject to a 90-day public consultation, with a comment deadline of May 28, 2023.

- Introduction to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive

The EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC) deals with the presence of heavy metals in packaging and packaging waste. The Directive limits the presence of certain heavy metals (lead, cadmium, mercury and hexavalent chromium) in packaging with the aim of protecting the environment from hazardous substances and materials. The EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive also requires member states to meet packaging waste recovery and recycling targets. In addition, the directive requires that in each EU member state, when a company acts as a producer, it needs to be registered, reported and recycled.

- Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive basic requirements

Packaging must meet certain requirements. The Commission therefore encourages the development of European standards. EU member states must ensure that packaging on the market meets the basic requirements of Annex II of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive :

- Limit the weight and volume of the package to the minimum necessary to meet the safety, hygiene and acceptability required by the consumer;
- Reduce the content of harmful substances and materials in packaging materials and their components, and the total amount of lead, cadmium, mercury and hexavalent chromium contained in packaging and packaging components shall not exceed 100 ppm;



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- Design reusable or recyclable packaging.
- Scope of Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive

This Directive covers all packaging placed on the market in the Community and all packaging waste, whether it is used or released at industrial, commercial, office, shop, service, household or any other level, regardless of the material used.

Original link : [G/TBT/N/EU/953](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31987L0093)

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