

THE NEW PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION (PPWR)

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1. OVERVIEW AND SCOPE

- Official name of the initiative: Regulation (EU) 2025/40 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2024 on packaging and packaging waste (“PPWR“)
- Type: **Regulation** (a "Regulation" is a binding legislative act of general application that is binding in its entirety, directly applicable in all Member States, and ensures uniform rules across the European Union).

The text of the PPWR was published on 22nd January 2025 and contains progressive targets for reducing packaging waste, requiring Member States to achieve, as compared to 2018, a 5% reduction by 2030, a 10% reduction by 2035 and a 15 % reduction by 2040.

2. WHAT DOES IT APPLY TO?

PPWR will apply to all types of packaging placed on the EU market and across all product sectors.

The regulation’s requirements further cover the **packaging’s full life cycle**, from the design stage (e.g. composition requirements, recyclability, recycled content), through the use stage (e.g. reusability, empty space minimization) up until the waste stage. Hence, the regulation will affect the **whole packaging supply chain**.

The Regulation applies to all economic operators who make packaging available on the EU market. This includes manufacturers, suppliers of packaging, importers, distributors, authorized representatives, final distributors and fulfilment service providers.

3. HOW IS THE EVENTS INDUSTRY DIRECTLY AFFECTED?

The EU PPWR will directly impact the events sector because it governs the entire life cycle of packaging—from design to end-of-life management. This is particularly relevant for events that generate large volumes of packaging waste, such as festivals, trade fairs, conferences, and sporting events, where single-use packaging is widely used for catering, merchandising, accreditation, and promotional materials. From 2030 onwards, many of these formats will need to be reusable, recyclable, or eliminated if they do not comply with the new requirements.

In practice, the most visible changes will involve the reduction and replacement of single-use packaging, especially in food and beverage services within venues (cups, bottles, food containers), as well as in promotional items and attendee or exhibitor kits. Reuse and return systems—such as deposit schemes for cups or bottles—will become more common. New rules on labelling, recycled content, packaging minimisation, and restrictions on certain plastics will also affect event logistics, merchandising, and supplier operations.

Overall, the events industry will face additional compliance, administrative, and cost pressures, as organisers and suppliers will be subject to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) obligations, financial contributions, and stricter reporting requirements. This will require changes in procurement, supplier contracts, and operational planning.

4. MAIN PROVISIONS OF THE LEGISLATION

The PPWR introduces a series of new rules to ensure that all packaging is reusable or recyclable in an economically feasible way by 2030.

Recyclability (Art.6): From 1 January 2030, **all packaging placed on the EU market** must be recyclable, according to three performance grades: A, B and C.

Packaging minimization (Art. 10): By 1 January 2030, manufacturers and importers will have to ensure that the weight and volume of the packaging placed on the market are reduced to the minimum.

Re-usability for packaging (Art. 11, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31): Specific reusability targets are also foreseen for certain sectors such as the e-commerce and hospitality sectors from 2030 (with an increase as of 2040), with repercussions also on the transport packaging. The hospitality sector is also targeted by way of refill requirements: they must provide a system for consumers to bring their own containers to be filled.

EU conformity declaration (Art. 15): Packaging manufacturers will be required to prepare an EU declaration of conformity to demonstrate that packaging complies with the sustainability, labelling requirements and standards required under PPWR.

Extended producer responsibility (Art. 45, 46, 47): The PPWR introduces extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging producers in the form of financial contributions which cover costs of labelling, collecting, sorting and recycling packaging waste. Producers may decide to appoint an authorized representative, which shall then assume the EPR obligations of the producer in the Member State where the packaging is made available. They can also decide to entrust a producer responsibility organisation to carry out the EPR obligations on their behalf.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

On 30 March 2026, the European Commission published an official Guidance Document on the implementation of the PPWR; and a complementary set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

The Guidance covers over 30 areas, including definitions, recyclability, compostability, labelling, reuse, Deposit Return Scheme, minimisation, EPR and interaction with other EU environmental legislation.

6. STATE OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Date of entry into force: 11th February 2026

New rules will apply on a gradual basis with the first obligations applicable from 12 August 2026.

7. LINKS

PPWR: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/40/oj/eng>

European Commission – Guidance Document on PPWR (30 March 2026):

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/guidance-document-packaging-and-packaging-waste-regulation-ppwr_en

European Commission – PPWR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (30 March 2026):

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/faq-packaging-and-packaging-waste-regulation-ppwr_en