



# From Targets to Transformation: Can Europe Deliver on Its Circularity Targets?

7th Go Circular 2026 – Mannheim

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*Emmanuelle Maire, European  
Commission*



# A strong commitment to the Circular economy: Why?

**Using limited natural resources in a circular way is essential for enhancing economic security, boosting competitiveness and reducing GHG emissions**

**1. Economic security**: Recent JRC evidence finds that additional circular solutions can improve the EU's trade balance by €35 billion per year (equivalent to 4% growth in our trade surplus)

**2. Competitiveness**: Recent JRC evidence finds that additional circular practices can reduce production costs by reducing the use of metals (-10%), electricity (-7%) and fossil fuels (-6%)

**3. Decarbonisation**: Circular solutions are necessary to reach climate neutrality by 2025, at least 20-25% of the GHG emissions reduction needed can be achieved through circular practices

As outlined in the Competitiveness Compass, the EU aims to be the global leader in the circular economy by 2030. **This will not happen without systemic cooperation.**

# Boosting the circularity of plastics: The Circular economy I package

- Communication on 'Accelerating Europe's transition to a circular economy: boosting the circularity of plastics' adopted on 23 December 2025
- First set of pilot actions to accelerate Europe's transition to a circular economy
- Particular **focus on plastics sector** with **concrete and specific short-term actions** to support the circular economy
- Major potential for emission reductions and improvement of trade balance through circularity in plastics sector

## Challenges in the Plastics Sector

- Market fragmentation
- High energy costs
- Volatile virgin plastic prices
- Competition from imports of cheap plastics
- Lack of demand for recycled plastics

# Measures

## Overcoming market fragmentation

- Creating EU-wide end-of-waste criteria for plastics under the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) and thereby enabling the building of a more integrated single market for plastic recyclates
- Harmonised rules for the calculation, verification and reporting of chemically recycled plastic content under the Single Use Plastics Directive (PET bottles) to provide greater legal certainty for chemical recycling investments

Measures	Timeline
<b>Set the rules for chemically recycled plastic content under the Single Use Plastics Directive (PET bottles) - transmission to Member States for vote</b>	Presented with this Communication
<b>Finalise the work on Union-wide end-of-waste criteria for plastics with the launch of the public feedback process for the implementing act laying down Union-wide end-of-waste criteria for plastics</b>	Launched with this Communication

# Other Measures

## A fairer market

- The Commission will **monitor imports** of plastic both under its newly created Import Surveillance Task Force
- The Commission will also take measures to help the uniform application and support enforcement by the **customs and national market surveillance authorities**
- For **food contact materials**, the forthcoming amendment of Regulation (EU) 2022/1616, intends to introduce **stricter compliance documentation requirements** for recycled plastics imported into the EU
- The Commission will also work towards creating **separate customs codes for recycled polymers** relevant for other sectors
- Additional actions will support the **practical enforcement of EU rules for plastics imports**, as part of the upcoming import control mechanism.

Measures	Timeline
Amendment of <b>Regulation (EU) 2022/1616 on recycled plastics for food contact.</b>	Q2 2026
<b>Launching the request to create separate custom codes based on the amendment of Regulation 2022/1616 and work towards creating additional separate customs codes for other recycled polymers.</b>	Q2 2026
<b>Carry out dedicated audits for food contact materials including PET</b>	2026
Support control laboratories and organise a <b>TAIEX seminar</b> to enable the national market surveillance authorities fulfil their control function	Q1 2026
<b>Assessment</b> to determine the need for additional measures to ensure a <b>level playing field</b> for the EU plastics value chain	Throughout 2026

# Boosting circular plastic through the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation

## Objectives

**Reduce generation of waste**

**Promote circular economy**

**Remove internal barriers to trade**

## Challenges

Entry into application:  
**12 August 2026**

**Many key provisions will take effect later.**

European Commission received multiple **questions** regarding the interpretation.

## Implementation

**Facilitate the entry into application**

Adoption of a Commission Guidance document

Publication of Frequently Asked Questions

**Guiding principle:** Pragmatic and simple application of PPWR

# Main priorities for 2026 – upcoming deadlines

*Art. 29(18)*  
Delegated Act on  
**100% Reusable  
straps and  
wrappings**



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*Art. 44(14)*  
Implementing Act on  
harmonised  
registration and  
reporting formats for  
the **extended  
producer  
responsibility**.



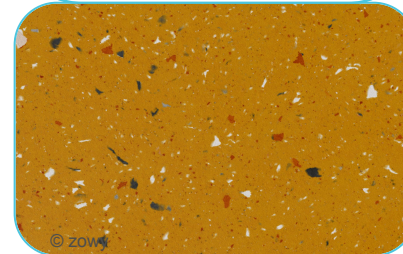
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*Art. 12(6) & Art.  
13(2)*  
Implementing Acts  
on **Labelling** (waste  
sorting by  
consumers;  
reusable packaging,  
DRS, recycled  
content, bio-based  
content).



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*Art. 7(6) & Art. 7(9)*  
Implementing and  
delegated acts on  
**plastic recycling  
and recycled  
content**.



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*Art. 9(6)*  
Standardisation  
request on  
**industrially  
compostable  
packaging** and  
home-compostable  
packaging.



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# Art. 7: Minimum recycled content in plastic packaging

30 % for PET contact sensitive packaging and single use plastic beverage bottles

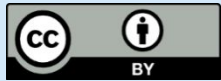
10 % for contact sensitive packaging (**not PET**)

35 % for other plastic packaging



- Targets apply as of **2030**; **exemptions** for < 5%, for pharma
- Measured as an 'average of recycled content incorporated in packaging format and type by the manufacturing plant over a year'
- **Mirror clause:** equivalence of EU legislation for recyclates coming from third countries

# Thank you



Emmanuelle MAIRE

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