ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS IN PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE POLICY
Economic Instruments in Packaging and Packaging Waste Policy

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EUROPEN — The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment — is an EU industry association in Brussels presenting the opinion of the packaging supply chain in Europe on issues related to packaging and the environment, without favouring any specific material or system. EUROPEN members are comprised of multinational corporate companies spanning the packaging value chain (raw material producers, converters and brand owners) plus six national packaging organizations. EUROPEN members are all committed to continuously improving the environmental performances of packaging and packaged products, in collaboration with their suppliers and customers.
Dear Reader,

Within Europe's all-encompassing ambition to move towards a more resource-efficient and a Circular Economy, Economic Instruments intended for economic operators and consumers will remain important policy drivers to achieve more sustainable production and consumption and greener packaged products.

Against the backdrop of the ongoing EU packaging waste legislation review, EUROPEN - The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment - has commissioned a paper for its members on the economic instruments applied in packaging and packaging waste policies in the EU Member States, EEA/EFTA members Iceland and Norway and EFTA member Switzerland. It presents a comprehensive overview of the existing economic instruments and provides an assessment of their implications for the packaging supply chain operating in Europe. In addition, it provides the necessary context to related EUROPEN views and recommendations for a revised EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.

While we have assessed each individual Economic Instrument in this paper, it is more difficult to make a general assessment on the use and effectiveness of Economic Instruments as 'it depends'... Their effectiveness in changing behaviours and/or to raise money for environmental improvements, as well as their implications for the packaging supply chain will depend among other things on the type(s) of instrument(s) used, the national policy framework, packaging waste management culture and infrastructure. Overall, EUROPEN favours a combination of economic instruments, carefully weighed against national conditions and responsibilities, which are not intrusive to the free circulation of packaging and packaged goods in Europe and do not discriminate between the marketing and use of packaging materials and/or packaged goods without clear and proven environmental motivations.

As one of its main goals, EUROPEN promotes harmonised European and national packaging/packaging waste regulations that are transparent, effective, and proportionate for a resource-efficient, competitive and sustainable packaging and packaged goods industry in Europe. Therefore and to this end, I trust this paper will help members and other stakeholders evaluate the effectiveness, trade-offs and implications of existing and future Economic Instruments in national packaging and packaging waste policies.

Best wishes,

Virginia Janssens
Managing Director
EUROPEN

EUROPEN Corporate Members:

National Organizations:
Bosnia and Herzegovina: Association for Packaging & Packaging Waste Management (BiHPAK), Czech Republic: Czech Industrial Coalition on Packaging and the Environment (CICPEN), Romania: Romanian Association for Packaging and the Environment (ARAM), Russia: Russian Packaging and Environment Committee (RusPEC), Slovakia: Slovak Industrial Coalition on Packaging and the Environment (SLOICPEN), Sweden: Trade and Industry Group (MILJÖPACK)
ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS IN PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the 2014 EU waste legislation review, EUROPEN-The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment - has commissioned a paper on the economic instruments in packaging and packaging waste policy in place in the EU, EEA/EFTA members Iceland and Norway and EFTA member Switzerland. It presents an assessment of their implications for the packaging supply chain in Europe and in particular it provides the necessary context to the EUROPEN positions in the EU waste policy review.

For the purposes of this paper, an economic instrument is defined as a mechanism designed to change behaviours and/or to affect the relative cost of various forms of packaging, packaged products or packaging waste management so as to discourage packaging, products and activities deemed to carry higher environmental burdens than certain alternatives.

Article 15 of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (PPWD) says that the EU may adopt economic instruments to promote implementation of the objectives set by the Directive. It adds that in the absence of EU-level measures, member states may adopt such measures, provided they do not conflict with EU environmental policy (including the polluter-pays principle) and the internal market obligations arising out of the EU Treaty.

No economic instruments have been adopted at EU level, but they have proliferated at national level. As policy moves away from end-of-pipe recycling provisions towards overall resource efficiency and a circular economy with greater emphasis on sustainable production and consumption, we can expect continued emphasis on economic instruments to guide the decisions of economic operators and consumers.

1 Similar measures are however in place in the Balkan countries which aspire to future EU membership.
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