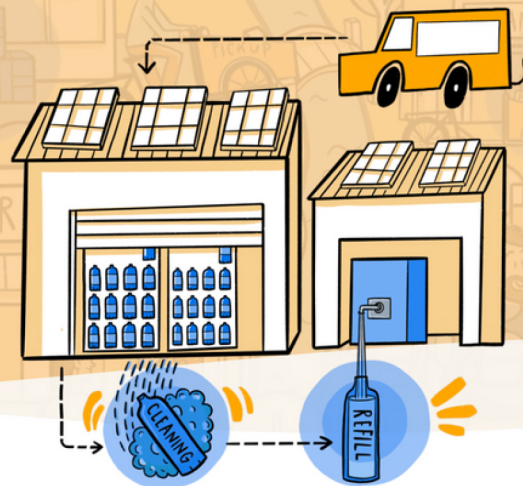


Municipalities for reuse

Calling for robust systems change at the community level.



To those with the responsibility to act,

We, the local authorities and officials who have signed this letter, representing a diverse group from across Europe, demand further action from those with the responsibility to act to help us achieve our vision of a sustainable future.

We are a group of local authorities who have decided not to sit back and let others do the work, but to play a leading role in helping shape our future societies and achieving a circular economy.

And that is why #WeChooseReuse - pledging to choose and prioritise reusables over single-use products.

Single-use plastic products are flooding our streets and green spaces when littered or carried away by the wind, polluting our air when burnt or disturbing our collection systems when non-recyclable. This not only is bad for our environment but also for our citizens whose cities are flooded by a never-ending wave of packaging waste.

Together with our waste companies, we are, of course, playing our role in designing and implementing local systems which reduce the volume of waste our communities produce. This includes effective separate collection of recyclable materials, supporting local businesses who offer reuse options and facilitating more available refillable and reusable alternatives, such as integrated deposit return schemes for example. All of which helps to create an enabling framework locally that encourages and facilitates similar business models to be established. We are also prioritising awareness-raising activities with citizens, to help embed a reuse mindset within our communities.

However, as effective and ambitious as we can be with our policy implementation, there will always remain a certain limit to the effectiveness of our policies if single-use and largely non-recyclable materials continue to flood the market. This is why we are asking all companies, no matter what their size, to put reusables (back) on the menu. Businesses have the ability to transition away from single-use and towards reusable products and systems, playing a critical role in helping us all to achieve our vision of zero waste.

In addition, the establishment of a regulatory framework that incentivises reuse, and holds accountable those who continue to pollute, is urgently needed and can contribute significantly to this transition. This is why we are asking our decision makers at the national and European levels to create an enabling legal framework for reuse to flourish.

This includes:

- Setting reuse targets per sector (e.g. beverage containers, food containers, e-commerce packaging)
- Specific requirements for the HORECA sector and retail sector (e.g. reusable foodware, bulk section)
- Adopting harmonised formats across Europe for containers (E.G beverage & food) to create pools of reusable products to support the scale-up of reuse systems
- Promoting systems such as deposit-return schemes and the growth of packaging-free shops, as well as other economic incentives that support reuse
- Embedding reusable packaging into the Essential Requirements of the EU's Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive (PPWD), which are about to be revised,
- Designing and implementing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes that prioritise reusables, by creating a fee system that places greater responsibility and costs back onto the producers who continue to put non-recyclable, single-use products onto the market

Municipalities are stepping up across Europe, enacting strategies and policies that are reducing waste whilst saving costs too. But we can only do so much with our limited jurisdiction. Now it's time for businesses to do the same. Supported by the right policies set by our European and national decision makers, we can get reusables back on the menu and at the heart of Europe's transition to zero waste.