



**Instituto para la
Sostenibilidad de los Recursos**

OVERVIEW ABOUT EXCESS PACKAGING IN EUROPE

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Overview about Excess Packaging in Europe

1. **WHAT IS EXCESS PACKAGING? HOW IS IT MEASURED?**
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STANDARD CEN 13428**
3. **MEASURES TO LIMIT EXCESS PACKAGING IN SOME
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1. WHAT IS EXCESS PACKAGING? HOW IS IT MEASURED?

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- Reducing the excess packaging is one of key measures to prevent waste packaging generation and limit resource consumption.
- However, there is no clear or harmonized definition about the concept of 'excess packaging', nor a precise methodology for its quantification (further than the lightly established criteria set in CEN regulation for packaging) that considers the diversity of the products out in the market.

- European legislation on packaging does not define what excess packaging is.
 - Only new packages will be commercialized when the producer has adopted every necessary measure to reduce the environmental impact to the minimum without endangering the package essential requirements’.

- In principle excess packaging could be defined as:
 - Every package not required to serve the essential functions of packages:
 - Contain the product and permit its manipulation,
 - Facilitate its transportation and storage, always avoiding its damage,
 - Keep the product in optimum conditions for the consumption and as a hygiene measure,
 - As a necessary information medium for the consumer.

- Every package unneeded to keep necessary security, hygiene and acceptance levels for both the product and the consumer.
- Or, every packaging that accompanies and/or exceeds, in weight and volume, the minimum appropriate package to keep necessary security, hygiene and acceptance levels for both the product and the consumer.

2. EVALUATION IN ACCORDANCE OF A PACKAGING: STANDARD CEN 13428

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- In agreement to this standard, the prevention to reduce in origin is *“process for the achievement of a minimum adequate weight and/or volume for identical requirements, of primary, secondary and or tertiary packaging, when performance and user acceptability remain unchanged and/or adequate, thereby minimizing the impact on the environment.*
- Minimum quantity of packaging weight or packaging volume have to safeguard:
 - Functionality of the entire distribution chain:
 - Safety and hygiene for products and consumers:
 - Acceptance by consumers

Performance criteria for packaging:

- product protection
- packaging manufacturing process
- packing/filling process
- logistics (including transport, warehousing and handling)
- product presentation and marketing
- consumer/user acceptance
- information
- safety
- legislation

3. MEASURES TO LIMIT EXCESS PACKAGING IN SOME MEMBER STATES

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GERMANY

The German Packaging Ordinance includes a measure to reduce generation of waste of secondary packaging. This measure lies in the fact that distributors providing goods in secondary packaging shall be obliged to remove such secondary packaging upon delivery of the goods to the final consumer or to give the final consumer the opportunity to remove and return the secondary packaging free of charge at the point of sale or on the premises of the point of sale.

AUSTRIA

The study of the Standards Institute resulted in a report that contains a selection of the packages contained in the study. It focuses on typical cases of waste packaging and gives possible packaging alternatives, which would be in conformity to the proposed limits. The quantitative criterion is based on a packaging surface to product volume ratio. The aim of this report is to promote the establishment of clear-cut and enforceable rules for the prevention of superfluous packaging.



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The parameter is defined for the ratio between the packaging surface and the product volume, and it's calculated according to the following formula (1):

$$\text{Factor (1)} = \sqrt[2]{\text{surface of packaging [cm}^2\text{]}} / \sqrt[3]{\text{volume of packed goods [cm}^3\text{]}}$$



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Example

	Product 1	Product 2
Size of packaging L * W * H	10cm * 10cm * 8cm	50cm * 50cm * 40cm
Surface of packaging	520 cm ²	13,000 cm ²
Volume of packaging	800 cm ³	100,000 cm ³
Size of product L * W * H	8cm * 8cm * 6cm	40cm * 40cm * 30cm
Volume of product	384 cm ³	48,000 cm ³
Ratio Surface/volume	1,35	0,27
Factor (1) according to formula 1	3,137	3,137



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FRANCE

The National Council for Packaging :

- a. Evolution of the product concept: to densify, miniaturization, concentration, dehydration.
- b. Modification of packaging process: removal of technical gaps, compaction, stacking.
- c. Another design of packaging: eco-recharging.
- d. Simplification of the packaging system: reallocate functions of each element, even remove some of them.



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FRANCE

The National Council for Packaging :

- e. Optimization of the size of packaging: changing the shape, reducing the volume.
- f. Use of technical evolutions of materials in one type, making the packaging lighter with identical or superior qualities.
- g. Better use of materials, entailing profit of material after manufacturing process of packaging, due to a better distribution, a reduction of the thickness.
- h. Optimization of the number of products transported by pallet.

FRANCE

France Nature Environment: Campaign to reduce the excess packaging, advices to avoid the purchase of products in the following types of packages

- “Unnecessary” packages : those whose utility is questionable, that is to say, those that don't complete any of the essential functions from the packages to which the norm in the matter makes reference (to protect the quality and the integrity of the product and to serve like support of information for the consumers). As example it makes an appointment the cardboard pack that contains the toothpaste.

FRANCE

France Nature Environment: campaign to reduce the excess-packaging, advices to avoid the purchase of products in the following types of packages

- “Over- dimensioned” packages: those that, in spite of having a certain utility, their size or quantity could be reduced significantly. In most of the occasions these packages are used with advertising aims (promotions of products in the sector of the cosmetic one and the perfumery) or mentioning a bigger protection against the robbery of the product (for example, the “over- dimensioned” blister that accompanies to batteries, or stationery products)

FRANCE

France Nature Environment: campaign to reduce the excess-packaging, advices to avoid the purchase of products in the following types of packages

- “Defective” package: they are those that are stuffed in an inappropriate way, in many occasions to give the impression that they contain more quantity of product than they really take in their interior. These packages present a disproportionate volume regarding the weight of the material that they transport, without supposing an advantage for their transport or a bigger protection of the product. They could be considered as a type of “over-dimensioned” packages)

FRANCE

France Nature Environment: campaign to reduce the excess-packaging, advices to avoid the purchase of products in the following types of packages

- “Problematic Packages”: they are those that, still being able to be correctly dimensioned for their content, they are manufactured in non recyclable materials or whose recycling is very complicated. Those materials suppose a bigger impact when transforming into waste than those others that can be recycled more easily, as cardboard or glass. In this group would be included packages containing difficultly detachable different materials



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NETHERLANDS

In Netherlands, besides the effective legislation in the matter of packages, an Agreement exists, of character volunteer (well-known as Covenant) between the Government and the packers.

In the **Article 3 of this new Decree**, it settles down that it is the producer or importer who will take measures to promote the reduction of the quantity, in weight, and the danger of packaging waste for the environment, which should go, in any case, to:

- a. The use of the smallest quantity as possible in package material.
- b. The packages are designed so its use is facilitated.
- c. To use as much recycled material as it is possible in new packages.
- d. To avoid the generation of waste ("litter") as much as it is possible.

NETHERLANDS

QUANTITATIVE OBLIGATIONS OF PREVENTION (SVM-PACT)

- Reduce the package of the excess packaged products.
- Minimize the volume of the package (for example, eliminating the empty spaces existing between the product and the package).
- Modify the form of the products to assure that less package is used (increasing the concentration of the products, increasing its density, introducing more product in a single package, etc.).

NETHERLANDS

QUANTITATIVE OBLIGATIONS OF PREVENTION (SVM-PACT)

- Use less material to obtain the same functional result by adopting different methods of packaging (for example, in the case of transport packages).
- Discover if the specific packaging components are able to be reused.
- Find the way to reduce the packaging in the unitary packages, in which a relatively big quantity of packaging should be used.
- In packaging terms, try to make a distinction between the phase of transport and distribution, and the consumption phase (the call "concept of having refillable packaging" can be an option).



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NETHERLANDS

QUANTITATIVE OBLIGATIONS OF PREVENTION (SVM-PACT)

- Instruct the national and international buyers so that they insist their suppliers of packed products to facilitate them the packaging in an efficient way.
- If the products are not manufactured in Holland, try to convince the ones in charge of the production of the necessity to respect the requirements on packaging that gathers the Agreement.
- If it is possible, implant a joined project with the packaging suppliers, the buyers of products and the industries of the competition to use the material of packaging in a more efficient way.

4. POSSIBLE MEASURES TO LIMIT EXCESS PACKAGING

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Overview about Excess Packaging in Europe

- To reduce to the minimum the packaging is the maker's and of the Administration's responsibility. But between two presentations of the same product, to choose the "more naked" one is in the consumers' hands. The manufacturers are those that decide what packaging they use for their products, but on the consumer's decision it depends to buy them or not .
- The great challenge of the industry at this moment is to obtain an "optimal package" that uses the smaller amount as possible of resources, protecting the product against losses and adapting it to the peculiarities of the object that it will contain and to the consumer to whom it goes destined .

POSSIBLE MEASURES TO RESTRAIN EXCESS PACKAGING

1. Development of education and awareness activities to limit or to restrain the use and the commercialization of superfluous packages.

POSSIBLE MEASURES TO RESTRAIN EXCESS PACKAGING

2. Specific performances in the sale points:
 - a. Inclusion of informative posters directed to the consumer in the point of sale;
 - b. The sale points should give the option to those more sensitive consumers who wish to leave in the sale point the non indispensable packaging that they doesn't want; disposition of containers, clearly identified, so that the consumers deposit in them the secondary or superfluous containers that they don't want to transport.
 - c. Obligation to make available of the consumer, for each product, next to other packages, the one with smaller weight or volume among all those that complete the basic requirements on production and composition.

POSSIBLE MEASURES TO RESTRAIN EXCESS PACKAGING

3. Use of economic instruments and fiscal instruments for not to give an incentive to over-packaging. When superfluous packaging is used the integrated systems of management should establish them a penalization in the calculation of the amount that the packers are going to put in the market for each packed product.
4. Promotion of the eco-design (directed to make packages easily refillable)

5. CONCLUSIONS





Overview about Excess Packaging in Europe

- Necessity of harmonized indicators and precise methodology to differentiate the product with the minimum necessary packaging to complete the essential functions.
- Necessity of measures and requirements harmonized to be really effective.
- Study, case to case, of the different categories of products for determining the useless excess packaging, because a universal empirical solution for all the packages is impossible.



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- The question becomes also more complex because it is not only about weight / volume / n^o of units of the packages, but of its participation in other elements concerning to Sustainability, to the Energy Efficiency and the fight against the Climatic Change. (For example a package for dairy products that avoids the necessity of the refrigeration has a very positive impact in the storage, transport, distribution and consumption, although the package could overcome the weight of other equivalent not refrigerated).

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