



SINGLE-USE PLASTICS DIRECTIVE

and Extended Producer
Responsibility for litter
management

State of implementation of Article 8
by the Member States

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACR+ Policy Papers on Litter #1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



We are publishing the first of our Policy papers on litter in the aftermath of the Global Plastics Treaty, which ended without agreement. This failure to address the devastating plastic pollution is very concerning. The picture is ugly, and the outlook is grim. Despite millions of tonnes of plastic suffocating our land, rivers and the seas, some turning into microplastics, threatening all life on planet, our love affair with plastic does not seem to fade away. Recently, OECD has warned that without 'radical' action, the global production of plastics is set to triple by 2060.

Inevitably, the results of this excessive reliance on plastics are also experienced at local level. Every year, local authorities spent millions of Euros to clean up the pollution caused by plastics, mostly in the form of diffuse litter. Considerable financial means are devoted to collecting and treating litter, raising awareness among the citizens to reduce littering and understanding the issue for better policy making.

To alleviate some of these issues, the EU adopted the Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD) in 2019. Among other things, through article 8, the SUPD introduces mandatory extended producer responsibilities (EPR) systems for a number of single-use plastic products. Building on the polluters pays principle, it makes the producers responsible for covering the costs associated with litter management, including its collection, transport and disposal. Further, it also stipulates that producers should pay for prevention and awareness raising measures. As such, the SUPD has the potential of transferring the costs currently borne by public budgets to the manufacturers of these products. Such development is certainly welcomed by local and regional authorities who are responsible for managing litter on the ground.

However, the journey so far has been nothing but straightforward. It turns out this activity, always taken for granted by the citizens, and executed unceremoniously by the local authorities, does not have a clear price tag: how much does it cost to clean litter? How much of this cost can be attributed to the SUPD products? What does it mean to be effective when it comes to cleaning public spaces? Prior to the SUPD, very little research had been done on these questions. The short answer is: we know very little.

This is how we started to explore this issue more than a year ago. Our objective is to provide an overview of available information drawn from reliable primary and secondary sources to support the debate on litter costs. For each Member State (MS), we carried out research to understand the legislative basis of article 8 of the SUPD, as well as their progress in establishing and rolling out EPR systems for SUPD items. When available, we compiled the information on costs set in Member States to cover litter clean-up and management. Previous studies on litter costs conducted in a handful of Member States also helped to feed this study. We analyzed their methodologies in detail and tried to provide practical summaries which can help local authorities to make sense of this extremely complicated issue.

The findings show that only a handful of MS have started the implementation of the Art.8, establishing EPR systems with everything that the latter implies. The available information on these systems underpins a great variety, implying a continuation of the fragmentation of the EPR landscape in the EU. In most, the transposition is completed and there is a general governance structure in place. For some SUPD products, roles and responsibilities are defined, while some others are still in the process of establishing important elements, such as Producer Responsibility Organisations. While packaging-related SUPD products have a relatively easier process because of the already existing EPR systems, the new products such as balloons and wet wipes prove to be more difficult. However, the most challenging part of the implementation is the calculation of littering costs. Only few Member States have completed the calculation of these costs, and even fewer started to reimburse the municipalities. The tables below provide a quick overview of the situation in each MS looking at different components of the process of establishment of an EPR scheme.

This is the first output of the Policy papers on litter, focusing on the state of implementation in Member States. More outputs will follow, focusing on the cost calculation methods.

Table 1: Overall progress for SUP Group 1 products (packaging related products).

Member State	Responsible public authority	Compliance scheme in place	Product Registry In place	Registration of producers started	Producer fees established	Municipality reimbursements set	Website providing information	REMARKS
AT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System details mostly in place, some details missing
BE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System details mostly in place, some details missing
BG	●	●	○	○	●	○	●	Missing information and important elements, some information not clear
CY	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements with no easily accessible information
CZ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System details mostly in place
DE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some issues with the registration system not clear if municipalities are reimbursed
DK	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some issues with cost/product coverage, not clear if the municipalities are reimbursed
EE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Important elements could not be verified
ES	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some elements missing
FI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
FR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
GR	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements with no easily accessible information
HR	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Many missing elements with no easily accessible information
IE	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	System details mostly in place, some details missing
IT	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	System details mostly in place, some details missing
HU	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	Many missing elements with no easily accessible information
LT	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
LU	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	System details mostly in place, some details missing
LV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	-
MT	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
NL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
PL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	-
PT	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
RO	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
SE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
SI	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some elements missing
SK	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements , issues with correct transposition

The colours correspond to the following:

- Mostly complete without major problems/ready to function
- Some information, partial progress but lacking some details
- No information/major elements lacking

Table 2: Overall progress for SUP Group 2 products (wet wipes and balloons).

Member State	Responsible public authority	Compliance scheme in place	Product Registry In place	Registration of producers started	Producer fees established	Municipality reimbursements set	Website providing information	REMARKS
AT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
BE	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	Many missing elements
BG	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
CY	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
CZ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
DE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some issues with the registration system not clear if municipalities are reimbursed
DK	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
EE	●	○	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
ES	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
FI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
FR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
GR	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
HR	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	Some elements missing
IE	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
IT	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
HU	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	Some elements missing
LT	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	Many missing elements
LU	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
LV	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	Some elements missing
MT	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements
NL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some delays but system is largely in place
PL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
PT	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	Some elements missing
RO	●	○	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements , information can not be obtained
SE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
SI	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some elements missing
SK	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements

The colours correspond to the following:

- Mostly complete without major problems/ready to function
- Some information, partial progress but lacking some details
- No information/major elements lacking

Table 3: Overall progress for SUP Group 3 products (tobacco products containing plastics).

Member State	Responsible public authority	Compliance scheme in place	Product Registry In place	Registration of producers started	Producer fees established	Municipality reimbursements set	Website providing information	REMARKS
AT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System largely in place
BE	●	○	○	○	●	●	○	Some elements missing
BG	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements , information can not be obtained
CY	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some elements missing
CZ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
DE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some issues with the registration system not clear if municipalities are reimbursed
DK	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements (central state operator)
EE	●	○	●	●	○	○	○	Many missing elements , information can not be obtained
ES	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	Some missing elements
FI	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
FR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
GR	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements, information can not be obtained
HR	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	Some elements missing
IE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
IT	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	Some elements missing
HU	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
LT	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	Some elements missing
LU	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
LV	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
MT	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements
NL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some delays but largely in place
PL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements missing
PT	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some elements missing
RO	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Many missing elements, information can not be verified
SE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	System is largely in place, with no major missing elements
SI	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	Some of the information can not be verified, some missing elements
SK	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Some elements are missing, system seems to be on a voluntary basis

The colours correspond to the following:

- Mostly complete without major problems/ready to function
- Some information, partial progress but lacking some details
- No information/major elements lacking



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