

Brussels, January 2026

Draft Commission delegated decision supplementing Regulation (EU) 2025/40 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning exemptions from reuse requirements for pallet wrappings and straps

Business & Science Poland position

This position refers to the European Commission's initiative supplementing Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on packaging and packaging waste (PPWR). Pursuant to Article 29 of the PPWR, operators placing goods on the Union market are required to ensure that, from 2030, at least 40% of packaging consists of reusable packaging operated within reuse systems, increasing to 70% from 2040.

The draft delegated act provides for the removal of the obligation to ensure 100% reuse of certain transport packaging in selected logistics flows, as laid down in Article 29(2) and (3) of the PPWR. The proposed exemption from the requirements set out in Article 29(2) and (3) of the PPWR should be assessed positively.

At the same time, the purpose of this position is to demonstrate that pallet wrapping films and strapping tapes, which have not been excluded from the scope of packaging taken into account for the achievement of the general targets set out in Article 29(1) of the PPWR, should not be subject to those targets due to persistent technical, operational, environmental and legal barriers.

We hereby set out the key arguments substantiating the necessity of such an exemption.

1) Lack of viable and scalable alternatives to single-use plastic pallet packaging

Stretch films and strapping tapes ensure cargo safety, stability and flexibility while using a minimal amount of material. According to Deloitte analyses, reusable solutions are not available at an industrial scale and entail significant efficiency losses, lack of automation, and substantial logistical and operational constraints.

2) High implementation costs of reuse and risks of supply chain disruptions

Estimates by Belgian consulting agency RDC Environment indicate additional costs of approximately EUR 5 billion per year for key sectors of the economy, resulting, inter alia, from the need to maintain parallel systems for single-use and reusable packaging, increased labour costs, reverse logistics, storage, and manual handling. This would lead to a loss of competitiveness of EU undertakings, in particular vis-à-vis operators outside the Union that would not be subject to comparable requirements.

3) Lack of environmental benefits resulting from the reuse of the packaging formats concerned

Studies conducted by the German Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (Institut für Energie- und Umweltforschung) indicate that the production of reusable packaging is associated with significantly higher greenhouse gas emissions, while their greater weight and lower flexibility lead to increased transport-related emissions and reduced logistical efficiency. These effects occur irrespective of the target level of reuse and are not limited to the 100% reuse scenario.

4) Lack of a clear and binding methodology for calculating reuse targets

Until the adoption of the delegated act pursuant to Article 31 of the PPWR, economic operators and Member States lack legal certainty as regards the calculation of “equivalent units” and the demonstration of compliance with the targets, in particular in the case of mixed transport packaging systems.

About BSP

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