

Preventing plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution

2023/0373(COD) - 23/10/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution **approving** the Council's position at first reading with a view to adopting a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventing plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution.

The overall objective of the proposed regulation is to set up obligations for the handling of plastic pellets to prevent losses at all stages of the plastic pellet supply chain, with the aim of achieving zero plastic pellet losses. The obligations focus on prevention of losses or spills, containment and clean-up operations and they apply to economic operators, carriers and sea-going vessels.

Subjects covered and scope of application

The regulation applies to the following natural and legal persons:

- **economic operators** (i) having handled plastic granules within the Union in quantities equal to or exceeding a threshold of five tonnes during the previous calendar year; (ii) operating installations in the Union for the cleaning of tanks and containers of plastic pellets;
- **EU carriers and non-EU carriers** responsible for transporting plastic pellets into the EU; and
- **shippers, operators, agents and masters of seagoing vessels** are concerned when leaving or calling at a port of a Member State.

Obligations are set for the transport of plastic pellets by sea (in freight containers), including ensuring good quality packaging and providing transport and cargo-related information, following the guidelines of the International Maritime Organisation.

General obligations

Economic operators, EU carriers, and non-EU carriers must ensure that losses are avoided. In the event of losses, they must take immediate action to contain and clean up these losses in accordance with environmentally sustainable practices.

A clear framework sets out obligations for cases of accidental losses focusing on **clean-up operations**. A clear set of measures will be included in a risk management plan, prepared by each installation handling pellets. Such measures would concern, among others, packaging, loading and unloading, staff training, as well as necessary equipment.

Non-EU carriers

To provide for a level playing field between the EU and non-EU carriers and to ensure accountability and transparency for all carriers of plastic pellets, non-EU carriers will have to designate an authorised representative in the EU.

Threshold applicable to companies

The threshold for enterprises, on basis of which certain obligations are determined, is set to **1500 tonnes** of plastic pellets handled. Above this threshold, the certification for small, medium and large enterprises applies. Small enterprises will be subject to a lighter regime – they will have to obtain a certificate at least once and after that can choose between renewed certification or a self-declaration of conformity.

Furthermore, all economic operators will be able to use permits, the Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) or an environmental management system (EMS) to comply with certain obligations under this Regulation.