

Packaging and packaging waste

1992/0436(COD) - 23/06/1993 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In rejecting by 172 votes to 108, with 22 abstentions, amendments 10 and 70 of the ENVI Committee under which that Member States were authorised to maintain in force legislative provisions or agreements between the public authorities and industry intended to ensure a higher level of protection of the environment than the provisions of this Directive ... 'provided that such provisions comply with the Treaty and are clearly in the interests of better protection of the environment', Parliament came out against national measures stricter than Community measures, of the type applied, for instance, in Denmark. Commissioner Bangemann pointed out during the vote that the Commission would reject amendment 70. He noted that the Member States had to notify the Commission of national provisions stricter than the Community legislation to enable him to ascertain whether or not they hampered the freedom of movement of goods. Parliament also adopted the part of amendment 76 from the ENVI Committee under which Member States, within a maximum of five years from the entry into force of the Directive, were to take measures to limit the concentration of heavy metals in packaging: lead: 150 ppm, cadmium: 1.5 ppm, chromium: 100 ppm, copper: 100 ppm, nickel: 50 ppm, mercury: 1 ppm, zinc: 400 ppm (151 votes to 138). It adopted the part of the amendment under which intermediate targets were to be set in order progressively to reduce materials containing halogenated or chlorinated components (i.e. all PVCs), but rejected the part of the amendment under which this packaging was also to be prohibited within ten years. Parliament rejected the part of amendment 83 under which the concentration levels of heavy metals did not apply to crystal. Parliament also adopted the first part of amendment 106 under which the recovery and management systems introduced in Member States were recognised as equivalent throughout the Community, given that account needed to be taken of the particular problems of SMEs. As regards the objectives of upgrading and promoting reusable packaging, Parliament adopted amendment 37 of the ENVI Committee under which, in particular for recovery, 60% by weight of the production of packaging waste would be taken from the waste stream for recovery within five years. In addition, 40% by weight of each material included in packaging waste would be taken from the waste stream for recycling. Re-filling and/or re-use systems existing in the Community would be maintained. Packagings would contain a minimum percentage of recycled materials.