

# EU plastics policies & chemical recycling



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# Circularity of Plastics

## Plastics in EU 27+3 in 2022

58.7 MT produced

29.5 MT waste collected & sorted (2020)

10.8 MT sent for recycling

7.7 MT recycled into new plastics

*Plastic recycling 13X  
higher when collected  
separately*



Maintaining the value of products, materials and resources in the economy for as long as possible & minimising the generation of waste



*Improving the economics and quality of recycling & curbing plastic waste & littering*



# Boosting recycled content

## Aim of the Plastics Strategy:

**10 million tons of recycled plastics** in new products on the EU market by 2025



**Mandatory requirements** for key products: packaging, construction materials, textiles & vehicles

Part of Ecodesign of products regulation



# Single use plastics Directive: *Calculating Recycled Content*

## Targets:

- PET bottles:  
25% by 2025
- All bottles:  
30% by 2030

! Average per MS

## Implementing Decision in SUP beverage bottles:

Step 1: for mechanically recycled PET (published in Nov)

Step 2: amendment to introduce controlled blending & **Mass Balance Accounting** (allocation method: Fuel use excluded, with third party verification)

- Under discussion, adoption planned for this year
- Completely **free allocation is not admissible**: processing waste into **fuels is excluded** in the definition of recycling in Waste Framework Directive



# Chemical Recycling

Advantages	Disadvantages
recycled material of virgin-like quality	low yield
process some mixed and contaminated plastic waste streams	energy-intensive/GHG emissions
lower environmental impacts than incineration	risk of using input waste that could also be recycled mechanically

- **Chemical recycling should complement mechanical recycling if it causes less environmental burden than incineration and virgin plastic production.**
- This seems to be the case, general rule: mechanical recycling > chemical recycling > incineration (see also JRC, [Environmental and economic assessment of plastic waste recycling](#) (2023))

Agreed

# Regulation on packaging & packaging waste

- All packaging recyclable by 2030
- Recycled content targets of packaging formats at production site for: e.g. contact sensitive non-PET: 10% (2030), 25% (2040)
- By 31 December 2026: Methodology for calculation & verification of % recycled content
  - Secondary raw materials of sufficient quality to substitute primary raw materials
- + sustainability criteria for plastic recycling technologies



# Way forward

## Circular economy of plastics

keeping products, **plastics** & resources in the loop, and their value, for as long as possible

## Chemical recycling

Part of the mix

Need to contribute to decarbonisation / defossilisation



refuse



share



reuse



return  
&  
collect



sort



recycle



*Learn more about the plastics and the circular economy:*

[Circular economy action plan \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu) & [Plastics \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)



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