



WHAT is **REUSE**?

YOUR GUIDE TO THE
REUSE REVOLUTION



#wechoosereuse

Citizens, municipalities and businesses across Europe are calling for reusable packaging to be scaled up and for robust reuse systems to be put in place. Even though the concept of reuse is high on the public agenda, it is sometimes used interchangeably with other concepts such as recycling. So what is reuse?

HERE'S YOUR GUIDE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT EXACTLY REUSE IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT!

REUSE IS...

Reuse is a system in which products and packaging are conceived, designed and placed on the market to accomplish multiple trips or rotations within their life span.

Reuse products are designed to be returned to the producer and re-used for the same purpose for which they were conceived. **This comes in opposition to single-use products and packaging that are designed to be disposed of after one use.**

Successful reuse systems require infrastructures and reverse logistics (e.g. refill stations, collection points, storage, cleaning facilities, transport where required) to ensure the packaging or product can go back to the producer for reuse or refill. Alternatively, consumers can own the product and packaging and refill the product's container in the shop.

DID YOU KNOW THAT A REUSABLE GLASS BOTTLE GOES THROUGH 25 - 50 ROTATIONS?!



EXAMPLES OF REUSE

1

RESTAURANTS OFFER MEALS IN A REUSABLE CONTAINER THAT CUSTOMERS CAN BRING BACK THE NEXT TIME THEY VISIT, OR TO ANOTHER COLLECTION POINT.



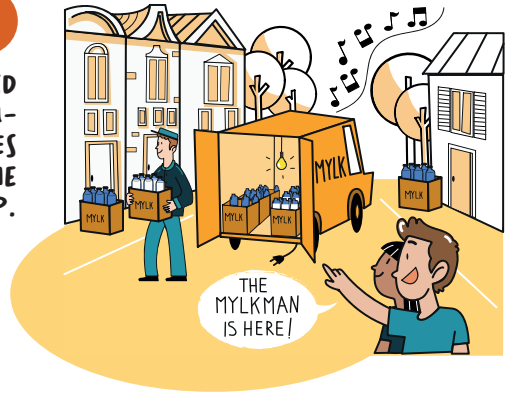
2

SHOPS AND SUPERMARKETS OFFER PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS AND CLEANING PRODUCTS IN REFILL STATIONS. CUSTOMERS CAN BRING THEIR OWN CONTAINERS, OR GET A REUSABLE CONTAINER AT THE SHOP THAT THEY CAN KEEP OR RETURN.



3

BEVERAGES CAN BE DELIVERED TO PEOPLE'S HOUSES IN REUSABLE BOTTLES. USED BOTTLES CAN BE LEFT OUTSIDE FOR THE PERSON DELIVERING TO PICK UP.



4

PACKAGING FOR PRODUCTS BOUGHT ONLINE CAN BE SENT BACK TO THE SELLER, TO BE REUSED FOR A FUTURE SALE.





DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEMES

A common element of reusable packaging systems is that most of them operate with a Deposit Return System (DRS) to guarantee the return of the packaging.

Deposit Return System (DRS), also referred to as Deposit Return Scheme, is a system in which consumers pay a small additional amount of money (a deposit) when they buy a product. This deposit is then reimbursed when consumers return the product or packaging to a collection point.

The deposit incentivizes consumers to return empty containers to ensure that they will be reused or recycled.

So far, DRS have mainly been used for single-use beverage bottles to support their collection and recycling. Yet, DRS is also a great tool to support reuse and refill, and make it more convenient for consumers. It can be implemented for many types of packaging beyond beverages containers, such as food containers and e-commerce!

REUSE IS NOT...

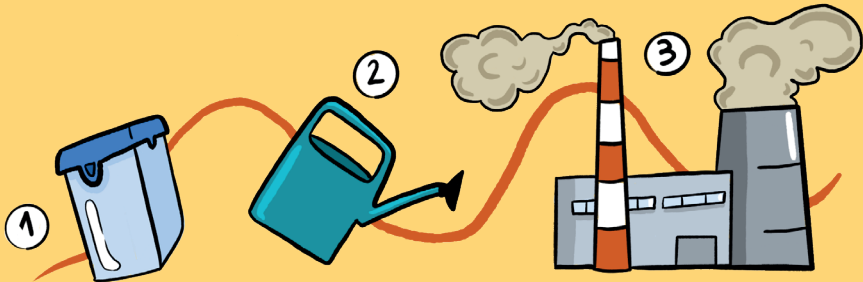
REUSE IS NOT ABOUT BUSINESSES RELYING ON CONSUMERS TO REUSE THEIR SINGLE-USE PACKAGING

e.g. reusing your single-use PET bottle for a few times before you put it in the recycling bin, or using your empty ice cream container as a container for your food.

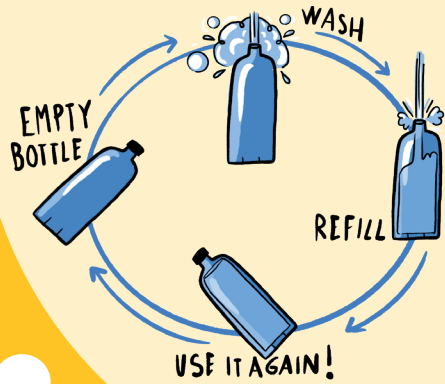


REUSE IS NOT THE SAME AS RECYCLING:

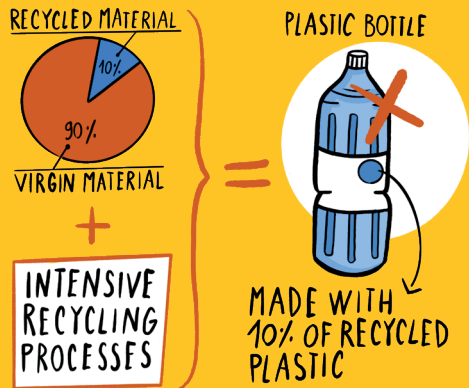
Plastics can only be recycled once or a few times, as the quality of the plastics degrades a lot after each recycling round. Only some plastic product packaging will be recycled in the same packaging, such as PET bottles. But most packaging is downcycled, i.e. recycled into a product with less value.



Reuse is about using the same durable products for a large number of rotations, without affecting the integrity of the material of the product. That is why reuse is higher than recycling in the waste hierarchy and should be prioritised.



REUSE IS NOT ABOUT INTEGRATING RECYCLED CONTENT into a new product. Integrating recycled content into new products reduces the amount of virgin material used for a product. Nonetheless, the material will have to go through intensive recycling processes and virgin material will still have to be added to create a new product. Integrating recycling content should not be considered as reusing materials.



Learn more about reuse systems at WWW.WECHOOSEREUSE.ORG

Show your support, sign the commitment **#WECHOOSEREUSE**

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