

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 November 2020 17:32
To: wastecomments
Subject: Deposit Return Scheme - Consultation on Potential Models for Ireland
Attachments: Deposit Scheme Submission.docx
Categories: Consultation Submission

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Hi,

Please find attached my submission for the deposit return scheme.

Is mise le meas,

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The proposed scheme is certainly a good one for many reasons not least as it signals a real effort to reduce our carbon footprints as individuals and indeed as a state to tackle the climate crisis. The introduction of this scheme is one that has been long advocated by the Green Party and is currently running in many other EU states. I believe an Irish scheme should follow European best practice in this regard and take advantages of the lessons learned from such schemes. Indeed, the department should explore at a European level if a cross-continent system can be established ensuring not only a more efficient system but one which offers the best value for money due to economies of scale.

Rate of remuneration – The proposed rate of 20c seems like a good introduction rate as it is high enough to amount to a real saving for citizens. Similar schemes across Europe have varying rates which offer confusion as it varies not only by the material being recycled (eg plastic and aluminium are different rates) but by the size of the item being recycled. By offering uniformity of remuneration the scheme will see the best public uptake in usage.

Legislative framework – single use plastics have long been cited as one of the areas which Ireland (and indeed every country) needs to address as part of the process to tackle climate change. The introduction of this scheme offers a huge chance to end the production of single-use plastics. In of itself offering a monetary benefit for the return of reusable plastics and aluminium will shift market focus away from single use as market demand moves. On a legislative basis the department should push for harmonisation of sizing for plastic/aluminium containers thus offering a broad scope for the reusing of such containers across a broad array of businesses/sectors. Indeed, by co-ordinating with our European partners we can secure uniformity in production sizing across the EU which, in the case of alcohol, can have added health benefits with reductions in serving sizes. Likewise, if this scheme is to be successfully implemented there must also be a legal imperative for retailers to accept all items covered under the scheme, regardless of whether they sell that particular product or not. The WEEE system already offers a precedent in this regard.

Glass bottles – The exclusion of glass bottles from this scheme would be a major mistake. Pre-existing glass recycling centres already exist across our cities and state and adding a deposit machine to these centres could be done with minimal hassle as compared to including such machines in supermarkets etc. According to a 2019 report by Repak 86% of all glass is recycled as compared with 79% of metal and 33% of plastics. Including glass in the scheme therefore I believe increase this level to near 100%. This increase would also offer a safety benefit for animals and young children in particular as it would have the effect of removing bottles from our parks and public paths before they inevitably end up smashed to pieces.

Plastic trays – in similar systems (such as the Netherlands) plastic trays are also covered under the scheme. This would be also beneficial in an Irish scheme. These trays have taken the place of single-use plastic covers for many products (such as beer packs) and as such would offer a further environmental benefit to the scheme.

I believe by implementing these recommendations and examining EU best practice Ireland can truly be a world leader in recycling and offer examples for other countries to model their own systems on.

Patrick Costello TD – Dublin South-Central