

**FERVER AISBL**

European Federation of Glass Recyclers
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FERVER urges immediate action to safeguard the European packaging glass recycling industry

For decades, packaging glass waste in Europe has been selectively collected, sorted, and processed through a well-functioning recycling system. The vast majority of this processed material—known as *furnace ready cullet (FRC)* — meets the end-of-waste criteria of the European Regulation 1179/2012 and is traded freely within the European Union as a product.

The use of recycled glass cullet instead of virgin raw materials such as sand and soda ash delivers significant environmental benefits. Glass cullet melts at lower temperatures, reducing energy consumption in furnaces and substantially lowering CO₂ emissions. Regarding the latter, the benefit is double as the melting process doesn't emit CO₂, in the contrary of the melting of the raw material soda ash (calcium carbonate is thermally generating CO₂ by chemical decomposition and reaction with Silicium). This has long created a win-win situation for the entire glass value chain, combining environmental performance with industrial efficiency.

However, this balanced system is now under serious threat.

Emerging risks for glass recycling

Two recent developments are converging and putting the European glass recycling industry at risk:

- rising collection volumes: member states with historically low glass collection rates are rapidly increasing their efforts to meet higher collection and recycling targets under the new packaging and packaging waste regulation (PPWR). This has led, leads and will lead to a sharp increase in the volumes of glass collected for recycling.
- Declining glass production capacity: at the same time, European glass producers are facing stagnating or declining demand for glass-packaged beverages, alongside a shift towards alternative packaging materials. As a result, glass furnaces are being shut down or operating at reduced capacity, limiting their ability to absorb recycled glass cullet.



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Consequences of inaction

If no corrective measures nor dedicated initiatives are taken, Europe risks facing a serious crisis in glass recycling, with far-reaching consequences:

- Municipalities will face difficulties to get the municipal glass waste correctly and timely collected, even to get the collection contracted;
- glass recycling companies may no longer be able to sell their recycled cullet;
- storage capacities for unsold recycled glass could be rapidly exceeded (permit problems);
- the most successful and mature recycling chain in Europe could collapse;
- member states may fail to meet the PPWR's collection and recycling targets.

FERVER's call to action

To prevent this looming crisis, FERVER urgently calls on European and national authorities to take coordinated action, including:

- targeted support measures for the glass recycling industry under the upcoming Circular Economy Act;
- shared responsibility across the value chain, ensuring that increased collection obligations are matched by viable recycling and end-market solutions;
- A combination of mandatory rules on the use of recycled glass in the production sector with fiscal incentives promoting it such as i.e. VAT deduction systems;
- fast-track approvals for the extension of storage capacities for recycled glass cullet.

Preserving a cornerstone of the circular economy

Europe cannot achieve its circular economy and climate objectives without a resilient and economically viable glass recycling industry. Significant investments have been made, ambitious targets have been set, and high environmental standards are in place. these efforts must now be matched by coherent policies that ensure recycled glass can continue to be effectively absorbed by European markets.

FERVER urges the European Commission to act swiftly and decisively to preserve Europe's glass recycling capacity, maintain regulatory credibility, and secure one of the continent's most successful circular economy models. Failure to do so would undermine both environmental ambition and industrial sustainability at a critical moment for Europe's transition.

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As the European federation of glass recycling companies, FERVER brings together industry leaders from 20 countries and its members are, amongst others, responsible for recycling around 70% of Europe’s packaging glass waste into high-quality cullet – a key raw material used to produce new glass products. FERVER members recycle both container glass and flat glass. FERVER therefore plays a vital role in closing the loop for glass and advancing circularity across Europe.