

GLASS PACKAGING INDUSTRY MAKING THE EU CIRCULAR ECONOMY REAL

Brussels, January 21, 2015

The Container Glass sector in Europe brings value to Europe's social, environmental and economic welfare according to findings from an Ernst & Young study commissioned by FEVE ⁽¹⁾.

The capital intensive container glass sector is a fundamental part of Europe's packaging sector and has a longstanding contribution to Europe's heritage. Annually, it invests up to €610 million to innovate and maintain a network for 155 plants across the EU. This equals 10% of the industry's operational costs every year. The industry contributes €9.5 billion yearly to the EU GDP, and has a positive impact on Europe's trade balance of €21 billion for products primarily packed in glass.

Some 125,000 direct and indirect jobs are maintained by the sector supporting a wide range of other industries in local regions as glass plants deliver more than half of their products within 300km and more than 70% of raw materials travel less than 300km.

The container glass industry is the prime example of a well-functioning circular economy ⁽²⁾. We are reducing our environmental footprint thanks to the effective bottle-to-bottle closed loop recycling. This is what allows the sector to collect seven out of every 10 bottles for recycling - meaning one ton of recycled glass saves 1.2 tons of virgin raw materials and cuts CO₂ emissions by 60%. The E&Y study points out the environmental credentials of the industry due to the inherent properties of glass, but also underscores the fact that bottle-bottle recycling can deliver a true circular economy.

"Industries that help further a circular economy should be supported" commented Seb Dance, Member of the European Parliament with the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, at the dinner debate "Essentials of a European Circular Economy" ⁽³⁾ where the study was presented last night. *"In times of sluggish economic growth, we need to encourage long-term and sustainable business models that are able to turn waste into reusable resources and by doing so support the creation of stable, local jobs in the EU."*

"Closed loop bottle to bottle recycling is key to making the Circular Economy real," commented Adeline Farrelly, Secretary General of FEVE – *"Closed loop recycling decouples the demand for resources against much needed growth in Europe. This is a major opportunity for the European economy to get out of deep water."*

The container glass industry, NGOs and several groups in the European Parliament are calling on the European Commission to ensure that the Circular Economy Package remains on the EU agenda – as it is an important tool to reconcile Europe's environmental objectives with economic growth.

ENDS

- (1) Download the full Ernst and Young Study: *Environmental, social and economic contribution of the container glass sector in Europe – Final Report* [here](#).
- (2) EU Glass Packaging Industry: Making the EU Circular Economy Real in 7 steps Infographic [here](#).
- (3) Find more information on the MEP debate “Essentials of a European Circular Economy” [here](#).

About FEVE

FEVE is the Federation of European manufacturers of glass containers and machine-made glass tableware. FEVE has some 60 corporate members belonging to approximately 20 independent corporate groups. Manufacturing plants are located across 23 European States and include global blue chip and major companies working for the world’s biggest consumer brands. See more on www.feve.org

About Glass

As packaging, glass containers assure the preservation, safe delivery and attractive presentation of a vast array of consumer products, supplied to European and world markets. Whether used for drinks, food, cosmetics, perfumes or pharmaceuticals, glass plays a vital role in supporting European trade and commerce. Glass is 100 percent recyclable, virtually inert and preserves the original taste of the products it contains. Food and drinks need the protection of its container to preserve purity, because health is not only in the ingredients but also in the packaging that preserves these ingredients.

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