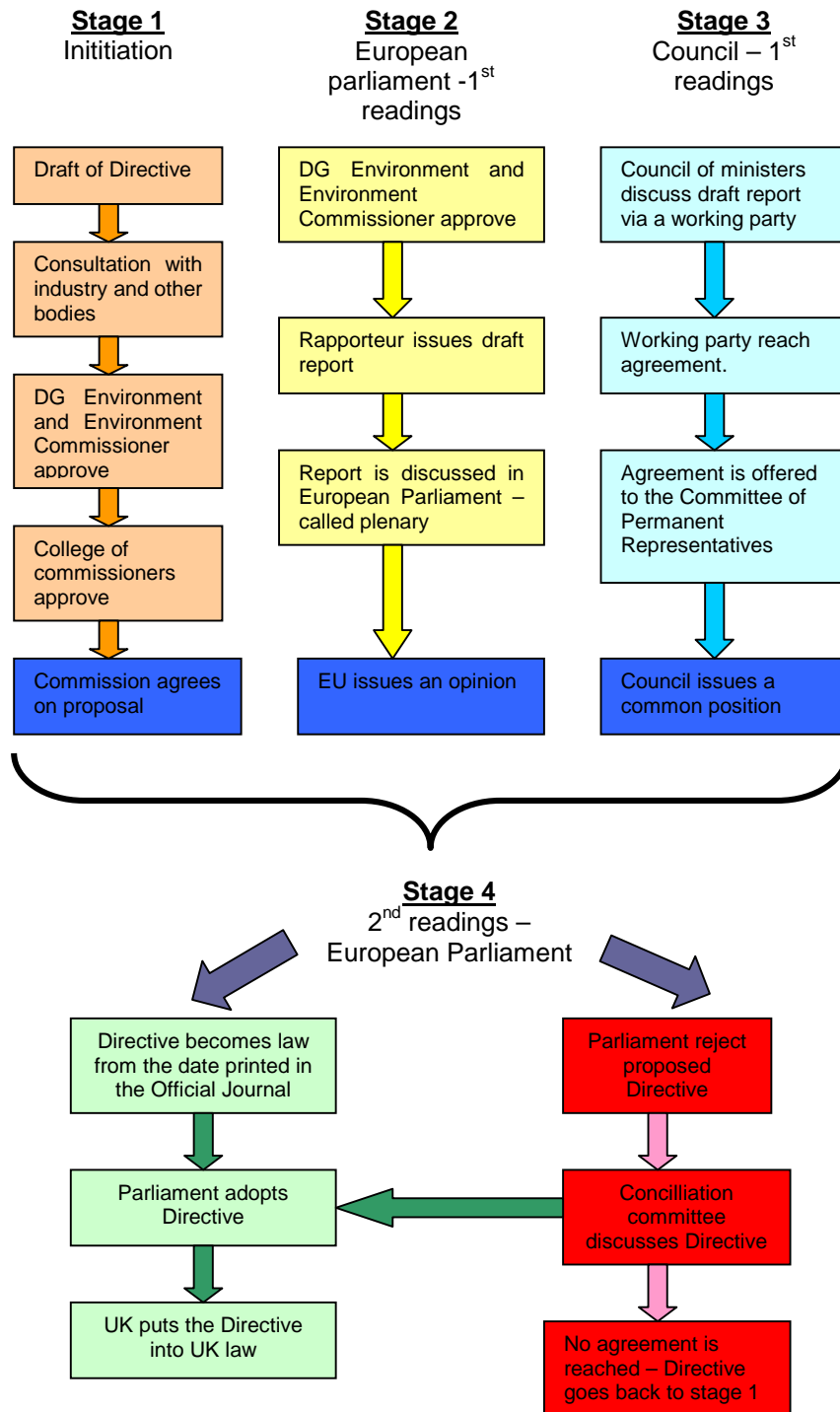


recycle-more school factsheet

Packaging recycling in Europe

This summarises how a European Directive is implemented in EC member states. The flowchart below briefly describes how a Directive passes through the EC before it becomes law in the UK.



recycle-more school factsheet

When an EC Directive becomes UK law – the UK's packaging waste regulations

The packaging waste regulations were introduced in the UK, in 1997 following the EC Directive on packaging waste. The Directive sets out minimum recycling targets for packaging waste which have to be met by all member states. The UK regulations require businesses, which meet BOTH the following criteria to recycle packaging:

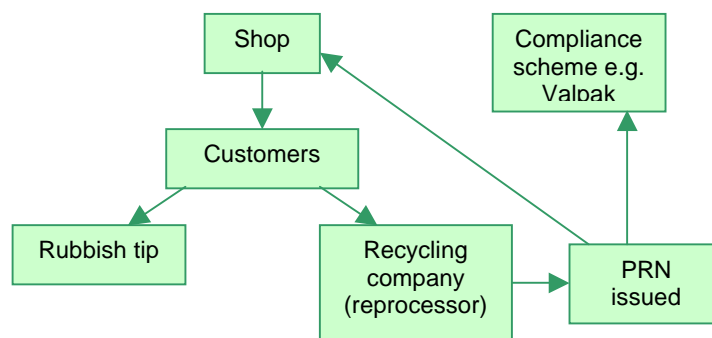
- Over £2 million annual UK turnover
- Over 50 tonnes of packaging handled per year.

Obligated businesses have to acquire 'evidence of compliance' in the form of a certificate to prove that rubbish packaging has been recovered or recycled.

This evidence of compliance is called a 'packaging waste recovery note (PRN)', and is issued by companies who recycle (called reprocessors). Obligated businesses can buy PRNs themselves or they can join a packaging compliance scheme such as Valpak.

The objective of this is that the amount of packaging which ends up in rubbish tips (landfill sites) is reduced.

The diagram below explains what happens to packaging when you buy it from your local shop.



Companies join Valpak because buying PRNs can be expensive and take a lot of time. They also get a number of benefits such as advice on the packaging waste regulations. Being part of a large scheme also means that companies can benefit from 'economies of scale' - For example, if you want to buy a chocolate bar, you would go to your local shop, and pay the normal price. However, if you had 100 friends who all wanted to buy the same chocolate bar, you might find it cheaper to buy them in bulk from the chocolate bar manufacturer. In this way you would be benefitting from 'economies of scale'.