

Report Luxemburg

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1. Description of status quo on reuse packaging

Reuse primary packaging are only available for beverages in Luxembourg.

1.1 Reuse system for beverages:

The following data originates from a statistical investigation from 1995, which was carried out for the „Confederation du Commerce du Luxembourgeois“

Table 1:
Volume of liquid foods which are sold on the Luxembourg market
(estimates, volumes in million litre)

Beverages	Volume in reuse		Volume in one		Total in Mio litres
	in Mio litres	percentage	in Mio litres	percentage	
wine	12,6	41,6%	17,6	58,4%	30,2
beer	34,1	81,8%	7,6	18,2%	41,7
fruit juices	6,6	55,3%	5,4	44,7%	12,0
soft drinks	13,5	35,1%	25,0	64,9%	38,5
water	46,1	51,5%	43,4	48,5%	89,5
Total	112,9	53,3%	99,0	46,7%	211,9

Source: Confederation du Commerce Luxembourgeois

1.1.1 Reuse system for beer

The quantitative relationship between reuse and one way for beer is comparable to the other Benelux countries. The trends are comparable. The total capacity of canned beer is still relatively small, however, the quantity of fillings increases by two-digit percentages each year (2).

A few years ago the breweries ran a PR campaign promoting reuse. However, this hardly had any effect because one way does not cost enough (2).

The 0,33 l-bottle dominates the beer market. This bottle has become a kind of 'standard bottle'. It is exchangeable between the different producers.

1.1.2 Reuse system for soft drinks and water

The share of reuse within the group of soft drinks and water is a little higher than in Belgium. Almost all of the reuse packaging offered in Luxembourg is glass reuse bottles.

REF-PET is not on the market yet. Gerolsteiner (D) plans a PR campaign for the market launch of reuse-PET to the Luxembourg market.

An experimental introduction of reuse-PET some years ago by the Belgian SPA failed, among other things the deposit of 8 BFR (0.205 ECU) was not accepted in the market.

A mineral water producer who has a market share of about 50% in Luxembourg is Rosport. Rosport puts 95% of its water (carbonated), into reuse, 5% into one way glass bottles (mainly flat water). They do so above all, for ecological reasons.

The 1-l-bottle of Rosport makes up to a total of 35 trips (4,6 trips per year during an average lifetime for the bottles of 7,6 years).

The 0,5 l bottle reaches even more circulations.

Rosport states that their own company will proceed, within the next 5 years in the direction of REF-PET. The required modifications of the filling line are not very great. The 'sniffer' which will test the bottles for impurities might require the greatest investment.

There may be a development too in the direction of recycling of packaging waste. The trend toward one way, even at Rosport, turns up everywhere. Since January 1, 1998, the shareholder majority of Rosport is owned by the Coka-Cola Company what will certainly affect the packaging structure.

1.1.3 Reuse system for milk

The classical food retailers do not offer reuse packaging for dairy products. Green shops offer eco-milk in 1-l-glass-bottles, but this is very small and occurs in a closed market. The organisation which trades all of the products is Biogros Luxembourg.

Another interesting initiative is the which is taking place at the supermarket Cactus where milk is being offered from dispensers. Cactus is a family-owned company, whose profile shows that it is concerned with ecological topics. At the beginning of the campaign, tapped milk made up about 30% of the total sales at Cactus. The actual information available about Cactus shows, that sales have declined slightly (4).

The milk is supplied by the dairy, in two kinds of bulk containers:

1. 140 l reuse tank, metal;
2. 20 l one way plastic bag (Bag-in-Reuse-Box-System).

The consumer taps the milk and puts it into a 1-l-glass-bottle, with a resealable cap which they have bought along. The tapped milk is about 1 FR (0,03 ECU) cheaper than the one which can be bought in one way beverage cartons. Hygiene problems are rare, and the consumers complain rarely. Of course, during the summer, „if the customer does not go home immediately after shopping and goes to have a cup of coffee and chat, then the milk if left in the hot car might turn sour" (4).

Even considering those activities exist, the market share of milk in reuse packaging is estimated to be around 5%.

1.1.4 Reuse system for wine and juices

It is noticeable that there are a lot of wine and fruit juices in reuse. This deviates strongly from the other Benelux countries. In this case it is probably the trade relations to German wholesalers which are the deciding factor. Valuable data for that market sector in the Luxembourg market has not been found.

2. Legal basis concerning reuse packaging

One remark should be stated before beginning: Waste prevention does not seem not to have a high importance in the Luxembourg Ministry of Environment. The environmental department did not cooperate very much during this research. Bills which have been promised were not sent, and the author was referred to the Mouvement Ecologique (!), departments were inaccessible and so on.

In Luxembourg, the EU packaging directive was more or less made part of the national laws word for word. After it was signed by the Grand Duke, the law was set into force on January 1, 1999. This regulation takes the place of former 'agreements' which were made with industry and trade. The proposals for eco-taxes and reuse quotas which were part of the discussion within the agreement are now completely gone(5).

Therefore, the legal situation is now comparable with the one in Belgium. More severe legal instruments (eco taxes) and ecological advanced targets (support of reuse systems) have been replaced by recovery systems promoting recycling and incineration (FOST PLUS, Valorlux). Now there isn't much pressure on one-way packaging at all.

As a reason for the refusal of the eco-taxes for packaging, it was argued that it would be difficult to calculate the eco-tax and it was eliminated out of the index fixing of the wages and salaries.

3. Distribution / Redistribution of reuse packaging

In Luxembourg, the share of 'home service' delivery is still relatively high (Depositair). They are mainly supported by small breweries. The market share is unknown (6).

Current research on Rosport which examined the 'facing' in supermarkets (facing: how one can recognise reuse from the shelves) came to the following conclusion:

- 43% water in reuse (CACTUS and MATCH);
- 17% water in reuse (AUCHAMPS).

Especially the French producers and retail companies like AUCHAMPS are highly fixed on one way (3).

When referring to all supermarkets in Luxembourg, (106 references) the following allotments occur:

- 43 % glass reuse;
- 48 % one way PET
- 5 % glass one way
- 4 % cans.

The precise sales quantities in the different sales channels of all drinks and the corresponding redistribution of empties is not known for Luxembourg. The redistribution for empties of reuse bottles for mineral water are (3):

- 40% of the empties is redistributed by wholesalers;
- 40% comes from Coca Cola owned distribution ;
- 20% is picked up directly at the retailers by ROSPORT.

4 Constraints and support for reuse packaging

4.1 Constraints

The following are some short remarks, quotations and key terms for the problems and appraisals in regard to reuse packaging:

- The displacement of 'corner shops' (neighbourhood shops) and the increasing influence of supermarkets which have a well-known effect on reuse can also be seen clearly in Luxembourg.
- The influence of tourism: almost every source considered this aspect to be especially important. Tourists, even those who are just passing in transit cause a great deal of one-way packaging waste especially during the summer. Although statistical data is missing, the influence of tourism is estimated to be very high.
Especially the role of petrol stations has become larger and larger. Because they have lower gasoline prices, the "tank tourism" from the three neighbour countries is very big. Luxembourg's service stations have the world's biggest sales. Service stations in Luxembourg, as in many other countries prefer one way packaging.

4.2 Support

Support for reuse packaging mainly comes from the service oriented home services, as well as through individual initiatives from environmentally oriented retailers.

Some interesting and successful ideas are:

- The introduction of a beverage drive in shops (CACTUS). The customer can drive in with his car and load the reuse crates directly into the trunk.

5. Sources

- (1) Confederation du Commerce Luxembourgeois
- (2) Mr Bofferding, personal information, November 1998.
- (3) ROSPORT, Mr G. Schaas, personal information. November 1998.
- (4) CACTUS department Cremerie, Mr Gomez, personal information, November 1998.
- (5) Ministry for environment Luxembourg; Mr. C. Franck, personal information, November 1998.
- (6) Mouvement Ecologique. Mr P. Ruppert, personal information, November 1998.