#RecycleItRight

# Deposit Return Scheme: Unintended consequences

British Glass

British Glass is committed to improving recycling rates and reaching Net Zero by 2050. We have set an industry target of achieving a 90% glass collected for recycling rate by 2030, which we believe can be achieved through consistent household collections, a national recycling campaign and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). However, including glass in a DRS could have many unintended consequences, which stand against the concept of a truly circular economy.

## Including glass in a DRS would:

- **Incentivise a switch to plastic packaging** at the expense of glass, a material that is 100% recyclable and holds an already excellent collected for recycling rate of 76.5% in the UK. The additional cost of including glass in a DRS means brands and retailers will pay a higher fee to use it, creating a cost advantage to using plastic containers. Also, a flat deposit as planned in Scotland will incentivise consumers to switch from multipacks of glass bottles or cans to upsize to large plastic bottles.

- **Increase the use of raw materials and carbon emissions**. Making new glass from recycled glass reduces emissions and energy use, saving 580kg of $CO_2$ emissions with every tonne of glass re-melted. A DRS would crush glass to a point where it could not be colour sorted for re-melt, leading to the use of more raw materials in production.

## A DRS encourages a switch to plastic:

### Croatia

Since introducing a DRS in 2006, 2L PET containers have become the market leader (23.9% share) and 25cl glass bottle sales have dropped **from a market share of 40.6% in 2006 to 3.5% in 2018.**

### Estonia

When a DRS was introduced in 2005, around 136 million units of glass packaging were sold each year. **This declined to around 90 million units in 2017.** In comparison, PET remains relatively stable at around 120 to 130 million units sold each year.

### Finland

When PET was introduced into the DRS in 2008, the quantity of single use PET increased from around **50 million units in 2007 to 375 million units in 2017,** whilst total glass sales declined from around 250 million units in 2012 to 150 million units in 2017**.**

## Keeping glass out of a DRS improves recycling rates:

### Norway

Norway achieves one of **the highest glass recycling rates in Europe (89.4% in 2016) using EPR,** bottle banks and bins closer to home. This operates alongside a DRS for cans and plastic, capturing an impressive 97% of plastic bottles.

### Sweden

Sweden operates a DRS for plastic and cans and achieves recycling rates of 85%. **Glass packaging is collected through EPR and maintains a recycling rate of 92.8%.**

## To cut plastic pollution we need to keep glass out of a DRS

**International evidence shows that including glass in a DRS will increase the use of plastic packaging and boost plastic pollution. For example, a flat deposit DRS – such as in Croatia – has encouraged consumers to upsize from glass containers to plastic. By contract, the success of mixed systems in Norway and Sweden, where a DRS for plastic runs alongside EPR for glass, has created high recycling rates for both plastic and glass.**

**Improve** household collections. **Increase** glass recycling. **Create** a truly circular economy.

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