

1) The sustainability of reusable packaging must be tested against real-life scenarios to assess cost-benefits. It is, in fact, only by testing the environmental benefits of reusable solutions against real-life conditions, that we can determine whether or not it comes at a more sustainable price for the environment. At this stage however, no impact assessment has been carried out to assess costs and benefits.

2) Reusable packaging would require a standardised choice of boxes, which would increase overpackaging at best. Household products come in a variety of shapes and sizes. So the same package can only be reused for the same product in the same model and from the same brand. Because reusable packaging would include a standardised choice of boxes, overpackaging would increase along with additional costs and increased CO2 emissions due to inefficiencies in loading and transport.

3) There is no such a difference between transport and sales packaging for our sector. From the production line to your doorstep, home appliances maintain their original packaging. Due to their size and weight, the packaging is carefully designed to ensure the product can withstand mechanical and climatic conditions that products may encounter during transportation and storage, before being delivered to the final consumer. Transport and sales packaging both serve the same purpose in our sector.

4) Packaging is an essential part of product design. Home appliance engineers and designers collaborate to ensure that packaging not only protects the product during transport but also meets sustainability targets, reduces waste, and complies with applicable legislation. Size, shape, and structure of the packaging are optimised to ensure efficient logistics and storage, while minimising material usage.

5) Packaging is extensively tested to replicate mechanical and climatic conditions products may encounter during transport. These include crush tests on all edges, drop tests from different heights, shunting, stacking, compression, vibration and humidity tests among others. This allows experts to identify appropriate protection levels and assess the amount of packaging materials needed to protect the product, based on the outcome of the testing.

6) Reusable packaging would lead to +10 to 40% emissions. In a reusability setup, packaging needs to be collected and returned after each rotation, adding more emissions costs. The packaging of a washing machine shipped from a factory in Germany to a retailer or consumer in Malta, would need to be collected and make its way back to Germany, generating emissions along the way.

7) Reusable packaging would lead to increased use of resources. After unboxing by the consumer, the package needs to be collected, inspected, cleaned and repaired for reuse before being shipped back to the manufacturing centre, with an increased use of resources including water, energy and CO2 emissions.

8) Not all parts in reusable packaging can be reused. When the package arrives at retailers or consumers homes, some parts may get damaged in the unboxing and can no longer be used. Examples include wrappings and straps, which are normally scratched from the box and are technically impossible to reuse.