



BIR
Bureau of International Recycling

BIR is the international trade association of the recycling industries. More than 50 countries are represented through their national trade associations and individual companies which are involved in recycling. BIR comprises four commodity divisions: iron and steel, non ferrous metals, paper and textiles, and has committees dealing with stainless steel and special alloys, plastics and rubber. BIR's primary goals are to promote recycling and recyclability, thereby conserving natural resources, protecting the environment and facilitating free trade of secondary raw materials.

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**BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions
Vienna, 27th-28th October 2003**

**Tyres Committee:
Chairman Ten Bruggencate steps down**

The European Union used tyre recovery rate leapt from 63% to 73% last year, according to the very latest statistics compiled by BLIC. These were summarised at the BIR Tyres Round-Table in Vienna by Barend Ten Bruggencate of Vaco in The Netherlands who, after chairing the BIR's Tyres Committee since the mid 1990s, announced that he was stepping down from the post.

The BLIC figures revealed that the material recycling rate for used tyres had averaged 24% in the EU last year compared to only 19% in 2001, while the EU average for energy recovery from tyres had jumped from 21% to 27%. In decline last year were the EU averages for tyre reuse and retreading: the former slipped to 5% from 6% in 2001, while the latter dropped from 13% to 11%, Mr Ten Bruggencate explained. The BLIC figures also confirmed that landfilling and unidentified uses of tyres had fallen back sharply in the EU last year from 33% to 27%.

All of the above averages were based on a slight increase in tyre arisings - from 2.617 million tonnes in 2001 to 2.631 million tonnes the following year.

Based on his extensive recent travels across Eastern Europe, Mr Ten Bruggencate gauged that it would take 'decades' rather than years for many of the EU accession countries to bring themselves into line with existing EU nations. Through Taiex meetings, Mr Ten Bruggencate had been in a position to explain the implications of EU legislation to Eastern European parliamentarians, high-ranking officials and

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municipal representatives among others; many of these were 'extremely afraid' of the potential impact of environmental legislation and faced a major challenge in implementing EU directives on, for example, end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), packaging and landfill.

According to Mr Ten Bruggencate, the Taiex meetings had been providing an opportunity to educate Eastern European nations about the EU's legislative framework. The Round-Table Chairman also believed the BIR might have a role to play in ensuring that these countries benefited from Western European expertise.

Still on the subject of Eastern Europe, Mr Ten Bruggencate suggested that cheap new tyre imports from the region had been adding to the 'suffering' of Western Europe's retreading industry. Operators in a number of countries - notably Germany, The Netherlands and the UK - had been struggling to make profits, although the truck tyre retreading industry in parts of Southern Europe had been faring somewhat better, he said.

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