



European Reusable Award 2021

Award Winner: **reCup GmbH**

Awarded for setting up a deposit system for reusable coffee-to-go cups and reusable takeaway food containers throughout Germany

Who is RECUP / REBOWL?

ReCup GmbH is a German company committed to providing a sustainable alternative to disposable takeaway packaging for on-the-go consumption, thus avoiding waste and conserving resources. In 2016, RECUP started to set up a deposit system for reusable coffee-to-go cups. By now, the deposit system comprises more than 8,200 RECUP return stations throughout Germany. For a deposit of €1, coffee lovers can buy their beverage in the RECUP at their local bakery, café or restaurant, consume it on their daily commute and then simply return the cup to the nearest participating shop.



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In 2019, the product portfolio was expanded with the introduction of REBOWL, an alternative for disposable packaging for take-away, delivery and convenience food. Further increases in packaging waste volumes during the Covid-19 pandemic prompted many restaurant and café owners to offer food in the REBOWL. Available with a €5 deposit, the sustainable take-away food packaging is more in demand than ever. ReCup GmbH acts as the system service provider, taking care of an even distribution of the cups and take-away bowls, the so-called deposit clearing, as well as the expansion and promotion of deposit systems.

Why are RECUPS and REBOWLS beneficial for the environment?

Germans generate more than 280,000 tons of waste per year from takeaway packaging only. That equals 32 tons per hour! At 58 percent, plates, containers, bowls and similar take-away food packaging make up the largest part. At the same time, every year 2.8 billion disposable cups for hot beverages are consumed in Germany - with a remarkably short lifespan of around 15 minutes. Takeaway food and beverages have become a symbol of our throwaway society. The large amount of waste generated by single use coffee cups and takeaway food containers leads to clogged trashcans in public spaces and, if disposed improperly, littering of streets, squares and parks. Reusable cups are a convenient solution for this pressing environmental issue.

ReCup GmbH has managed to transfer the climate-friendly principle of reuse to the hot beverage and food area for on-the-go consumption. The RECUP can be reused up to 1,000 times and is 100 percent

recyclable. In addition, the REBOWL is a sustainable solution for disposable food packaging. It allows for convenient transportation and safe consumption of hot and cold meals. It is microwave-safe, 100 percent recyclable, BPA-free, and can be reused up to 500 times. Both the cups and the bowls are manufactured and recycled in Germany. The frequent reuse of RECUPS / REBOWLS helps to conserve resources, protect the climate and prevent waste. Moreover, this deposit system is very consumer-friendly: In the participating shops, costumers have the option to use reusable cups or bowls at any time – even if they do not have their own reusable containers with them. The easy handling of the reusable cups and bowls allows coffee and food suppliers to act in an environmentally friendly and effortless way. The great success of this exemplary system for returnable cups and bowls in Germany not only proves its practicality, but also the great overall appeal of convenient low-waste solutions.

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