



**Környezetvédelmi
és Vízügyi
Minisztérium**

Collection and treatment of accumulators and batteries

- a snapshot from Hungary -

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I. EU ACCESSION (2004)

I.1 Legislative environment

EU

- ***Directive 91/157/EEC on batteries and accumulators containing certain dangerous substances***

Hungary

- ***Act XLIII of 2000 on Waste Management (basic definitions and obligations)***
- ***Decree No. 9/2001 of the Minister of Environment on batteries and accumulators and the treatment of their wastes (wide scope, collection and treatment obligation)***
- ***Act LVI of 1995 on Environmental Product Charges***

I.2 Collection and treatment of batteries and accumulators

Car Batteries

- Some 16.000 tonnes of waste generated yearly
- High charges under the Product Charge regime
- Almost 100% collection and recycling (in neighbouring countries: Slo, At, Sk)

Portable batteries and accumulators

- Some **2000** tonnes of waste generated yearly
- **Countrywide collection systems** for spent portable batteries
- **The rest is** disposed of in mixed municipal waste through landfilling or incineration



II. Problems and solutions

• Problems

- Toxic materials (Pb, Hg, Cd and aggressive electrolyte)
- Low quality products on the market (shorter lifetime: more waste)

• Solutions (legislative)

- Control (and sometimes ban) on heavy metals
- Better performance (batteries) - labelling
- Increase the collection and recycling rate of end of life products

I. The Product Charge Regime (car batteries)

- The Product Charge Regime (**modern eco-tax**) introduced in 1995 in order to promote the recovery of wastes originating from certain products (e.g. car batteries and similar high capacity products, but tyres, packaging etc.)
- The **amount of fee** is payable by the weight of the product (for car batteries: ~0,4 €/kg)
- The payment requirement is imposed on the „**producer**” i.e. the person first placing the product on the market
- Producers can be **exempted** from the payment requirement if they reach a collection/recovery target laid down by law individually or – more frequently – through coordinating organizations.
- Recovery or recycling rates for exemption depend on the type of the material (at the car batteries the exemption is at 100% collection and recycling, base of calculation is selling of the previous year)



- The recovery fee to be paid to coordinating organizations is much lower (half or less) than the product charge
- **Mode of payment:** Collected by the tax authority
- The whole process is supervised by tax authority (payment) and the environmental inspectorate(recovery)
- Organizations: Hungakku Kht (www.hungakku.hu) and Hungahab Kht. (www.hungahab.hu)

II. The New „Batteries” Legislation (horizontal scope)

- Directive 2006/66/EC – new requirements
- Government Decree No. 2005/109 on the take-back of waste batteries and accumulators (applies to all batteries and accumulators whether incorporated or not as well as to those that are simply attached to electronic equipment)
- The government decree imposes registration, take-back, collection and waste management (treatment) obligations on producers
- The producer is to be registered by the National Environmental, Nature Conservation and Water Chief Inspectorate
- Collection, take-back and treatment targets for producers are laid down by the decree (2005: 7%, 2006: 10%, 2007: 13%, **2008: 18%**)



- The producer may fulfill its obligations for take-back, collection and treatment (i) **individually**, it may conclude a (ii) **voluntary agreement** to confer these duties on an agent, or it may join (iii) a **coordinating organization**
- In the first two cases, the producer has to pay a **deposit** of ~ 2,2 €/kg which the Inspectorate unblocks after checking compliance. For coordinating organizations no obligation for deposit as they must have a minimum capital of 80 000 €
- Treatment today means „**safe disposal**”, as the obligations for recycling will only come into effect from 2009, following implementation of Directive 2006/66/EC. Hungary has no recycling facility for batteries
- In practice, producers chose **membership in a coordinating organization**. Two coordinating organizations have been established (“RELEM Kht.” and “REBAT Kht.” *Kht*~ „*non profit organization*” with **12,000** and 1,500 collection points, respectively. Both organizations have a so called collection point locator on their homepages (www.relem.hu and www.rebat.hu) which enables citizens to search for collection points. Collection points are exempted from the strict rules of the hazardous waste legislation