

EN  
E-005782/2018  
Answer given by Mr Vella  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(9.1.2019)

The proposed directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment is not banning single-use straws. It proposes to restrict the placing on the market of the plastic, single-use versions of straws that are a major contributor to marine litter.

Such restrictions have only been proposed where alternatives are already widely available: either plastic multi-use, or non-plastic. In principle, reusable straws made of steel, glass or bamboo, or single-use paper straws, offer the same functionality as a single-use plastic straws, including for people with disabilities in public and private spaces. The Commission is also aware that the industry is seeking to find innovative solutions that could be on the market when the restriction enters into force.

The Commission is confident that the Directive once agreed by the co-legislators will exempt straws intended and used for medical purposes.

Medical purposes are defined by Council Directive 90/385/EEC<sup>1</sup> of 20 June 1990 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to active implantable medical devices or Council Directive 93/42/EEC of 14 June 1993 concerning medical devices or Directive 98/79/EC<sup>2</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 1998 on in vitro diagnostic medical devices, as applicable.

With these exemptions included in the directive single-use plastic straws for medical purposes will continue to be available to people with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 189, 20.7.1990, p. 17–36

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 331, 7.12.1998, p. 1–37