



Press Release

Brussels, 9 September 2022

The Paper value chain reached a 71.4% recycling rate in 2021

A new report shows the progress made by the European paper value chain towards recycling objectives, which are some of the most ambitious in the world. It also highlights the activities which have allowed for it to stay on track.

By committing earlier this year to **recycle 76% of all paper consumed by 2030**, the European paper value chain renewed its pledge to contribute to the EU's transformation towards a new model of circular economy. The [2021 Monitoring Report](#), released today, marks the first report monitoring the paper value chain's recycling commitment under the new European Declaration on Paper Recycling 2021-2030. The report will be later published on a yearly basis to monitor progress towards this new commitment.

In 2021, 71.4% of all paper and board consumed in Europe was recycled. Both consumption of new paper and board and collection of Paper for Recycling (PfR) have increased. In a year-to-year comparison, the total amount of paper and board collected and recycled in the paper sector in 2021 increased by 2%, up to 57.1 million tonnes. This in part thanks to important new investments in paper recycling capacities in Europe.

Since 2000, the European paper value chain has been committed to improving the process and quality of recycling and to overcoming obstacles to paper recycling in Europe. To that end, the paper value chain has undertaken various **initiatives facilitating the recycling process and increasing recycling rates.**

Some of the activities undertaken by the paper value chain include the publication of collection and sorting guidelines and a roadmap to further increase the sustainability of packaging. Most important is also the value chain's **commitment to collection targets**, including projects assessing the quality of Paper for Recycling, and its collaboration with CEN, the European Committee for Standardisation, on technical specifications.

Also essential were initiatives to **make paper-based products recyclable by design**, including the publication of a Circularity by Design Guideline for fibre-based packaging, as well as information campaigns organised to support awareness and exchange best practices on recycling technologies within the industry.

Download the [European Paper Recycling Council 2021 Monitoring Report](#).

Quote

“Through our extensive monitoring, the industry, policymakers and all interested parties are informed regularly and transparently about the progresses in paper recycling made by the value chain, and what it undertakes to reach its targets.”

Annick Carpentier - Chair EPRC (European Paper Recycling Council)

--- ENDS ---

For press related enquiries, please contact

Piotr Pogorzelski, Cepi Media Relations Manager

at p.pogorzelski@cepi.org or (+32) 4 95 12 67 88.

Note to editor:

The [European Paper Recycling Council \(EPRC\)](#) was set up as an industry self-initiative in November 2000 to monitor progress towards meeting the paper recycling targets set out in the 2000 European Declaration on Paper Recycling. Since then the commitments in the Declaration are renewed every five years. In 2021 the EPRC committed to meeting and maintaining both a voluntary recycling rate target of 76% in the EU27 plus Switzerland and Norway by 2030 as well as qualitative targets in areas such as waste prevention, ecodesign and research and development. In 2022, Members of the EPRC are ACE, CEPI, CITPA, EMFA, ETS, FEPE, INGEDE and INTERGRAF. Supporters are Afera, EuPIA, FINAT, FEICA, IRLA and RadTECH Europe. The 2021 recycling rate was 71.4%. The environment (DG Environment) and industry (DG Grow) departments of the European Commission are permanent observers to the EPRC.