



## Press Release

---

Brussels, 31 July 2023

# The Paper value chain reached a 70,5% recycling rate in 2022

The latest [report by the European Paper Recycling Council \(EPRC\)](#) shows that paper value chain is still on track to reach a 76% paper recycling rate by 2030. Already outperforming every other material on recycling, and setting the standard for the rest of the world.

In 2021, the European paper value chain pledged to **recycle 76% of all paper consumed by 2030**, or a 76% 'recycling rate'. The recycling rate is defined as the ratio between the recycling of used paper, including the net trade of Paper for Recycling and the consumption of new paper and board.

Paper recycling is a 'made in Europe' industry, as collection, sorting and recycling takes place more than ever locally. This is the result of **extensive investments by the industry over the years**, valued several billion euros.

The recycling rate decreased compared to 2021, albeit by less than one percentage point. This evolution is explained, in addition to lower production, by the record high electricity and gas prices which have disproportionately affected paper recycling mills. The current recycling rate of 70,5% still places **Europe well ahead of the rest of the world**, with an average global recycling rate of 59,9% in 2021.

To further increase how much and how efficiently we recycle, the **value** chain actively works on achieving several 'qualitative targets' outlined in the new EPRC report. These include guidance documents on how to implement **separate collection of Paper for Recycling which would be the best way to improve recycling**, ecodesign projects to enhance paper products' recyclability, and educational campaigns for the public.

Another initiative is the cross-industry alliance 4evergreen, offering guidelines to the industry on both [collection practices and ecodesign](#). Its aim is to boost the contribution of fibre-based packaging in a circular bioeconomy and represent **some of the largest companies worldwide**, showing Europe's potential for global leadership in recycling and the current transition to a more climate-compatible economy.

Download the [EPRC's monitoring report 2022](#).

### Quote

*"Considering the impact that the energy crunch has had on our value chains, the current recycling rate reflects enormous efforts and investments undertaken during the last decades. The recycling rate in 1991 was only 40%! With this report released on a yearly basis, it is easy for policymakers to understand how we got here but also what it would take to achieve our ambitious goals."*

**Andrea Orallo** - Chair EPRC (European Paper Recycling Council)

--- ENDS ---

For press related enquiries, please contact

**Piotr Pogorzelski**, Cepi Media Relations Manager

at [p.pogorzelski@cepi.org](mailto: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.*