



Press Release

Brussels, 1 October 2026

European paper recycling rate remains stable, confirming a balanced and resilient market

European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC) data shows that the recycling rate for all paper products, including graphic paper, packaging and tissue, remained stable at 76.4% in 2025, confirming the robustness and maturity of Europe's paper recycling system.

The stable recycling rate reflects the long-standing commitment of the paper industry and its partners to circularity. For decades, stakeholders across the value chain have worked together to build and maintain efficient collection, sorting and recycling systems, **creating the conditions for a well-functioning market for paper for recycling**, where supply and demand remain closely aligned. Consistent collection volumes and steady demand from paper mills have ensured a reliable circular flow of materials across the value chain.

The resulting '**recycling rate, which reached 76,4% in 2025**', is defined as the ratio between the recycling of used paper, including net trade of Paper for Recycling (PfR), and the consumption of new paper and board.

Year-to-year, the total amount of **paper and board collected and recycled in the paper sector decreased by 0.3% to 53.9 million tonnes, while consumption of paper and board decreased by 0.4% to 70.5 million tonnes**. As consumption and recycling volumes declined at a similar rate, the recycling rate remained stable.

Europe continues to lead globally in paper recycling, maintaining its position as the region with the highest recycling rates worldwide. The majority of European countries surveyed, sustain recycling rates above 70%. **Paper packaging in particular continues to achieve the highest recycling performance among packaging materials, reaching 86.6% as an EU average.**

Looking ahead, the EPRC highlights the importance of maintaining this equilibrium while continuing efforts to **improve collection systems, enhance recyclability, and promote eco-design**, something it will continue to monitor transparently. Innovation and cooperation across the value chain will remain key to sustaining performance and meeting future challenges. The European paper industry remains committed to maintaining high recycling rates and strengthening circularity across all paper products.

Download the [**EPRC monitoring report 2025**](#)

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For further information, please contact **Ulrich Leberle**, Secretary of the EPRC and Cepi Raw Materials Director at u.leberle@cepi.org.

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, eco-design and research and development.

[The 2023 recycling rate was 79.3%](#). As a rolling average of the 2021-2023 period, it was at 74.4%

In 2025, Members of the EPRC are [Cepi](#), the [International Confederation of Paper and Board Converters in Europe \(CITPA\)](#), the [European Moulded Fibre Association \(EMFA\)](#), the [European Tissue Symposium \(ETS\)](#), the [European Envelope manufacturers \(FEPE\)](#), the [Food and Beverage Cartons Alliance \(FBCA\)](#), the [International Association of the Deinking Industry \(INGEDE\)](#) and the [European Federation for Print and Digital Communication \(INTERGRAF\)](#). Supporters are Afera, EuPIA, FINAT, FEICA, IRLA and RadTECH Europe.

The environment (DG Environment) and industry (DG Grow) departments of the European Commission are permanent observers to the EPRC.

More info: <https://www.paperforrecycling.eu/>