



## Press Release

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Brussels, 9 July 2023

# Paper value chain continues well on track to reach a 76% paper recycling rate by 2030

*Data compiled by the European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC) shows that, in 2023, the recycling rate for all paper products including graphic paper and packaging increased to reach the record high of 79.3%. This places the paper sector on track to reach its long-term commitments. The recycling rate is defined as the ratio between the recycling of 'Paper for Recycling' (PfR), including the net trade of 'PfR' and the consumption of new paper and board.*

In 2021, **the European paper value chain pledged to achieve a 76% recycling rate for paper overall, including graphic paper**, as well as packaging and other paper products. While this year's recycling rate is already higher, this is partially linked to temporary factors. It also points towards the exceptional commitment of an entire industry towards circularity and sustainability.

In contrast with a decrease in paper products' apparent consumption in 2023, the demand for 'Paper for Recycling' remained high, while **new investments in recycling mills were launched, showing the sector's confidence in a trend for more and more recycling**. Over the past three decades, recycling has supported the growth in global paper production while virgin pulp, and therefore wood use, has remained rather stable. The result of extensive investments by the industry over the years, valued several billion euros.

To further increase how much and how efficiently we recycle, the value chain actively works on achieving several 'qualitative targets' [outlined in a new EPRC report](#). These start with actively advocating for the implementation of separate collection of paper and board separate from other recyclables at local level. Further targets include improving the quality of secondary raw materials with the use of AI, and generally conducting research and development to improve recycling.

This work is also performed hand in hand with the cross-industry alliance 4evergreen ([link](#)), aiming specifically at boosting the contribution of fibre-based packaging in a circular bioeconomy.

Download the [European Paper Recycling Council 2023 Monitoring Report](#).

## Quote

“ Paper for Recycling is a valuable raw material and is key in the functioning of the paper value chain. Recycling is in our DNA.”

“A continuously high paper recycling rate is the mark of a truly circular material, but it also shows a high demand for Paper for Recycling despite a significant decrease in 2022 as a result of the energy crisis.”

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

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## 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 2022 recycling rate was 70.5%. The environment (DG Environment) and industry (DG Grow) departments of the European Commission are permanent observers to the EPRC.*