

For immediate release

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PRESS RELEASE

Plastics Recycling Grows in Europe

The installed capacity for recycling flexible polyethylene (PE: PE-LD, PE-LLD PE-MD & PE-HD) has been increasing significantly over the last years.

Since 2015, the installed capacity for recycling flexible PE has grown approximately from 1.5 M tonnes per year to 2.3 M tonnes per year. Giving that Europe has an extrusion capacity of 7.4 M tonnes of flexible PE¹ it can be assumed that the EU recycling rate for these materials is roughly 20%. 174 plastics recyclers have been analysed across Europe. Five countries, Spain (18%), Germany (17%), Italy (13%), Poland (10%) and France (6%) represent nearly 2/3 of the installed recycling capacity. The sources of the flexible PE plastics waste are Commercial and Retailer Waste (43%), Production Waste (23%), Agriculture waste (17%), and Household packaging (13%).

Ton Emans, PRE President and Chairman PE Working Group said *“the plastics recycling sector has been very dynamic in the last few years. This shows that the industry is paving the way to enhance the circularity of plastics. In addition, the Circular Economy Package and the Plastics Strategy give clear targets to reach. On the other hand, China’s ban on import is further driving investments in sorting and recycling plants.”*

He added: *“The Plastics Strategy of the Commission and the Chinese import ban have already a positive impact as we see an acceleration of new projects across Europe. This is especially the case for household flexible plastics waste. The latest technological developments enable efficient sorting, washing, extrusion and filtering of the plastics. Nonetheless, much effort is still needed in terms of Design for Recycling. Multilayers materials remain unrecyclable and thus there is a need to move to monomaterial alternatives which can be recycled. This will enable further developments in recycling of flexible plastics in Europe.”*

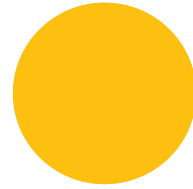
Plastics Recyclers Europe will continue analysing the plastics recycling capacities for all plastics waste streams to monitor the progress towards circular economy.

¹ Polyethylene film extruders in Europe, 2017, AMI

Press contact:

Emilia Tarlowska: Communication Manager, Plastics Recyclers Europe, Avenue de Cortenbergh 71, 1000 Brussels – Belgium
T: +32 27396376, F: +32 2 732 63 12, emilia.tarlowska@eupr.org
www.plasticsrecyclers.eu





About Plastics Recyclers Europe

Plastics Recyclers Europe is the professional representative body of plastics recyclers in Europe. PRE promotes plastics mechanical recycling and conditions that enable profitable and sustainable business, while offering a service platform to its members.

Our members constitute 80% of the European recycling capacity, processing more than 3 million tonnes of collected plastics per year

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www.plasticsrecyclers.eu*

