

The European recycling rate for paper reached 72% in 2014 - that amounts to 2 tonnes of paper being recycled every second!

European Declaration on Paper Recycling, Monitoring Report 2014

The European paper industry is a leading recycler and, with local collecting systems improving, will increase its recycling rates even further.

In some regions, recycling rates range from 70-75%, which is likely the practical maximum recycling rate. Some paper products cannot be recovered for recycling because they are kept for long periods of time (books) or archived (records); others are destroyed or contaminated when used (e.g. tissue and hygienic paper).⁵

“Two Sides members support the implementation of effective recycling schemes and the minimisation and eventual elimination, of print and paper waste in landfill.”

Two Sides Membership Charter, 2016

Paper is recycled, on average, 3.5 times a year in Europe, while over 50% of the raw material for Europe’s paper industry is paper for recycling. Paper cannot be recycled indefinitely as fibres get too short and worn out to be useful in creating a new sheet of paper. More importantly, the production cannot be based on 100% recycled fibre as 100% of consumption cannot be collected and as Europe is also a global net exporter of paper which is consumed and collected outside of Europe. The cycle must therefore constantly be refilled with new fibres.²

Two Sides encourages responsible paper consumption. Double-sided printing in the office and separate collection schemes will reduce costs and improve sustainability.

Recovery of European Print and Paper waste products (CEPI statistics)

