

MM expands portfolio of GD 2 grades in Frohnleiten

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Austrian board and packaging producer Mayr-Melnhof (MM) has expanded the product portfolio at its Frohnleiten mill in Austria by adding the MCM Smart (GD 2) cartonboard, bringing production of this grade to three of its cartonboard mills. With the move, the company is also extending its multi-mill concept.

Until now, the group had produced MCM Smart in grammages of 250-500 g/m² at its site in Gernsbach, Germany and in grammages of 280-450 g/m² in Količevo, Slovenia. At the Frohnleiten mill, the cartoboard grade will be available in a basis weight range of 250-450 g/m², says the company.

By extending production to a third cartonboard mill, MM says it can offer customers greater supply security, shorter delivery distances and more flexible production planning. The central European location of the Frohnleiten mill enables close proximity to customers in Western, Eastern and Southern Europe, Mayr-Melnhof emphasises.

MCM Smart is used in folding cartons, for example in the food, beverage and personal care sectors, MM says.

In Frohnleiten, the company operates two board machines with a total capacity of 570,000 tpy. The mill's portfolio includes recycled cartonboard grades GD and GT. On BM 3, which was modernised in 2023, the company also produces barrier board.

VGP starts up expanded Latvian facility

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Van Genechten Packaging (VGP) has completed a €10m investment in its Latvian subsidiary, VG Kvadra Pak JSC. The project was completed according to schedule and became operational on 1 March 2026.

The expanded facility provides state-of-the-art technology, advanced converting equipment and expanded, energy-efficient storage space.

Roberts Vasiļevskis, General Director of VG Kvadra Pak JSC, said that the project further enhances the company's position in the Baltics and Scandinavia and complements VGP's network in Eastern Europe.

The construction works were carried out by UPB Nams, one of Latvia's leading industrial construction companies.

Turkish tissue producer Eruslu Sağlık expands capacities

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Turkish paper manufacturer Eruslu Sağlık has ordered six new tissue converting lines from Italian engineering company Futura and its subsidiary Plusline. The expansion is said to strengthen Eruslu's position on the sanitary products market. The "jumbo-to-pallet" configuration of the lines enables jumbo rolls to be converted directly into toilet paper or kitchen rolls. The companies did not provide any information on the machine capacities.

Eruslu Sağlık produces various tissue and personal care products including about 440 million baby diapers and 100 million sanitary napkins per month. The company employs 4,800 people and supplies its sanitary paper products to customers in over 150 different countries.

Repacar elects President and Board Members

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The Spanish association of paper and board recyclers and recovered paper operators, **Repacar**, has appointed a new Board of Directors. **Manuel Fernández Álvarez** was re-elected president and will serve until 2029. The newly elected board members are: Santiago Bañón Irujo (Bidasoa Ecogestión), Sergi Cardiel Gelabert (Llorens GMR), José Antonio García Portas (Cartón y Papel Recyclado), Julio García Martínez (Viguera Gestión de Residuos), Rafael Guerola Segura (Grupo Paprec-Reciclatges-Guerola), Iñigo Jalón Marijuan (Beotibar Recycling), José Andrés Martín Cubero (MC2 Recycling), Pedro Luis Martínez Garrigues (Martínez Cano Canarias), Jorge Merino Mochón (Irmasol), Sebastián Solís Ruiz de Lopera (S. Solis) and Carlos Ventós Parés (Saica Natur). The Board Membership is termed to three years.

Torsten Fleck new SCA sales director for Germany and Poland

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Swedish pulp producer **SCA** Pulp has appointed **Torsten Fleck** as Sales Director for Germany and Poland with effect from 1 March. He follows **Thomas Jürs**, who has been in charge of SCA Pulp in Germany and bordering countries since October 2017.

Changes at the helm of UPM

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

UPM's Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President, UPM Energy **Tapio Korpeinen** will retire from his positions and the UPM Group Executive Team at the end of 2026 after reaching his contractual retirement age and continue as Senior Advisor until mid-2027. The company has initiated the succession plans, and will search for successors for both the Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President, UPM Energy positions separately. **Risto Penttinen** has been appointed Executive Vice President, Transformation and member of the **UPM's** Group Executive Team as of 13 April 2026. He will report to Massimo Reynaudo, President and CEO. Before, Mr Penttinen has worked in various senior management roles at Fortum and Uniper.

Barem Ambalaj ramps up Konya containerboard mill

18 March 2026 | [Frauke Schmidt](#) | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Barem Ambalaj's new containerboard mill in the Konya Ereğli Organized Industrial Zone in Turkey has reached a capacity utilisation rate of around 60 per cent as of early March, according to a stock exchange filing by the company.



The facility completed trial production at the end of 2025 and began supplying customers on the last day of the year. Since the start of 2026, utilisation has been increasing month by month as production is expanded to different formats and quality specifications.

The mill was built with an investment of more than €100m and is designed to produce recycled containerboard grades such as testliner and fluting. Production capacity is estimated at around 260,000-300,000 tpy.

Johan Padel leaves Holmen

 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Holmen has announced that **Johan Padel**, Head of its Wood Products business area, will leave the company in the course of the year. After twelve years at the helm of the division, he will now assume the position of Chair at wood construction company Martinsons Byggsystem, which is also part of the Holmen Group. Mr Padel will be succeeded by **Karolina Svensson**, currently Head of Business Development for Wood Products. She will assume her new role as Head of the Wood Products business area on 1 June.

Arctic Paper completes rebuild of PM 9 at Grycksbo mill

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Arctic Paper has completed the rebuild of PM 9 for coated woodfree paper at its Grycksbo mill in Sweden. The rebuild includes the installation of new drives, safety improvements and measures to achieve substantial energy efficiency improvements.

Weak pulp prices edge Mercer into the red

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 3 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Earnings of Canadian pulp and wood products manufacturer Mercer International declined significantly in the 2025 financial year. Group sales fell by around 9 per cent to \$1.87bn mainly due to lower volumes and selling prices in the pulp business and in processed wood products. Higher sales revenues in the sawn timber business could only partially offset the setback, the company says in its annual report.

The decline in earnings was much more pronounced. Operating Ebitda turned from a positive value of \$244m in 2024 to -\$22m in 2025. Earnings were impacted primarily by lower pulp prices, significantly higher wood costs, and negative currency effects as a result of a weaker US dollar. In addition, the company incurred higher costs for scheduled maintenance breaks at pulp mills and write-downs on inventories.

Mercer's cost-cutting and efficiency-enhancement program, which was launched in the second quarter of 2025, is to counteract the burdens. The goal is to achieve savings and operational improvements to the tune of \$100m by the end of 2026 (based on 2024 figures). In 2025, the company says it already realised around \$30m in cost savings and improved plant availability.

Production mix at the Peace River mill shifts towards softwood pulp

Given the difficult market environment for pulp, Mercer is also examining adjustments at its sites. The company is focussing on its Peace River pulp mill in the Canadian province of Alberta, amongst others.

The Peace River mill has a production capacity of 475,000 tpy of softwood as well as hardwood pulp. Mercer is currently working on shifting the mill's production mix more towards softwood pulp. While hardwood grades earlier accounted for 80 per cent of the mill's output, their share recently eased to around 70 per cent. By the end of the year, the ratio is to be adjusted to around 50 per cent each for hardwood and softwood pulp. Mercer explained this measure by saying that it is currently achieving higher margins for softwood pulp qualities.

In addition, Mercer is exploring other measures to improve the site's economic viability, including energy projects and, in the longer term, carbon capture initiatives. A demonstration project for CO₂ capture from the exhaust gases of the recovery boiler is already underway at the site.

Mercer committed to stable wood supply in Germany

In Germany, the company is also involved in the political discussion on long-term wood supply to the industry. Mercer operates two pulp mills in the country: the Stendal site with a capacity of around 740,000 tpy of hardwood and softwood pulp, and the Rosenthal pulp mill with about 360,000 tpy of NBSK capacity.

Mercer sees raw material availability exposed to increasing structural pressure in Germany, including changes in tree species structure, regional imbalances in softwood resources, and rising logistics and procurement costs. The company is therefore calling on politicians to provide reliable framework conditions for sustainable wood use, greater mobilisation of domestic wood resources and practical regulation along the value chain.

The background to this discussion is changes in German forestry, which are also visible in current forest development models. These show that the proportion of tree species will shift noticeably from softwood to hardwood in the long term with spruce and pine decreasing in the future. For the woodworking industry, this means greater pressure to adapt, for example due to changes in product portfolios, smaller dimensions and longer transport routes.

Mercer International results				
million \$	October - December		January - December	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Key figures				
Sales	450	488	1,868	2,043
Operating EBITDA	-20	99	-22	244
Operating result	-278	50	-398	15
Net result	-309	17	-498	-85
Selected business areas				
Pulp				
Sales	334	376	1,387	1,549
Operating EBITDA	-11	106	16	261
Production, in 1,000 t	460	466	1,834	1,843
Deliveries, in 1,000 t	472	452	1,829	1,900
Source: Mercer International				

Ahlstrom to install Yankee dryer from Andritz at Billingsfors mill

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Finnish fibre-based specialty materials producer **Ahlstrom** has ordered a new steel Yankee dryer from technology supplier **Andritz** for its Billingsfors mill in Sweden. The Yankee will be installed on PM 6, which produces machine-glazed (MG) and specialty papers. Start-up is scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2026. The order value has not been disclosed. The new steel Yankee will replace the machine's existing cast-iron unit and is intended to secure long-term drying performance, improve production efficiency and enhance operational stability, according to Andritz.

Ovol takes over distribution of Sylvamo brand Multicopy

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Paper wholesaler **Ovol Papier Deutschland** is taking over sales and service for the Multicopy office paper brand in Germany with immediate effect. The brand was earlier distributed by **Sylvamo**. Ovol is part of Japan Pulp & Paper Group and sells a wide range of graphic papers, packaging papers and office papers. Ovol employs over 450 people at 12 locations in Germany.

The Navigator announces price increase in overseas markets

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

The Navigator Company has announced an increase of its uncoated woodfree paper prices. The company said given the current trading situation, it would charge \$30-50/t more in its overseas markets. The new pricing is to be effective immediately.

Felix Schoeller to introduce temporary surcharge amid rising energy and logistics costs

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

German specialty paper producer **Felix Schoeller** will introduce a temporary surcharge across all business segments from 1 April 2026 in response to sharply rising energy, freight and raw material costs linked to the war in the Middle East. The company said disruptions to international transport chains and higher oil and gas prices were increasingly affecting long-term procurement and energy strategies.

Drewsen to hike prices for specialty papers and introduce energy cost surcharge

 **EUWID+** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Due to rising raw material costs, **Drewsen Spezialpapiere** plans to hike prices for its uncoated woodfree specialty papers by 6 to 9 per cent. The increases will apply to deliveries from 1 April 2026. In response to current developments in energy markets, the company has decided to introduce a temporary energy cost surcharge.

Jujo Thermal wants to up thermal paper prices

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Jujo Thermal has announced price increases of up to 10 per cent for its thermal and single-coated papers. With the surcharges, applicable to new orders from 1 April 2026, Jujo reacts to constantly rising pulp and energy costs, which have significant impacted overall production costs, the company explains.

Essity operates new biomass boiler at Kunheim tissue mill

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Essity inaugurated a new biomass-fuelled steam plant at its paper mill in Kunheim, France, on 12 March. Construction and operation of the 7 MW plant is handled by French energy company Dalkia, which is part of EDF group.

The plant will generate 42 GWh of steam per year and cover around 70 per cent of the mill's needs. This would reduce gas consumption by more than half and help reduce the carbon footprint of the mill's tissue machine by 53 per cent.

The new biomass plant is already the second installation of its kind implemented by Essity and Dalkia in France. Towards the end of last year, Essity France had inaugurated a 5.8 MW biomass boiler at the Theil-sur-Huisne mill, reducing gas consumption by 40 per cent. The investment volume for the project for the two biomass power plants exceeded €110m.

The two installations are part of Essity's Net Zero strategy, aimed to drive decarbonisation. Tissue paper production is a major emissions source and was responsible for around 80 per cent of the company's emissions, Essity says.

At the Kunheim mill, Essity produces 52,000 tpy of tissue paper and products and has 393 employees.

Ence Navia invests €11m during maintenance shutdown

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Spanish pulp and energy company Ence Energía y Celulosa (Ence) has started the annual technical and maintenance shutdown at its Navia pulp mill. The measures are slated to last until 20 March and will involve an investment of around €11m.

In addition to the routine maintenance of facilities and equipment, the work would mainly focus on projects to make the site more competitive and resilient, the Madrid-based company announced. Among other things, the pulp manufacturer is planning improvements in digitalisation and cybersecurity, enhanced thermal efficiency in processes as well as measures to reduce the use of fossil fuels.

The downtime will also be used to implement a decarbonisation project and install a new line in the wood yard. The measures “will improve the plant’s competitiveness and increase its flexibility in the production of specialty pulps,” the company said in a press release.

The Navia pulp mill is located in northern Spain and has a production capacity of 685,000 tpy of bleached eucalyptus kraft (BEK) pulp. At the end of 2025, Ence also started up a new production line for fluff pulp at the site with a capacity of up to 125,000 tpy.

Fibre Excellence's Saint Gaudens pulp mill goes offline as well

 18 March 2026 |  ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

After recently announcing downtime at its Provence pulp mill in Tarascon, Fibre Excellence has now reported that its second pulp mill in Saint-Gaudens will also be temporarily shut down. Production will be stopped for two weeks, from 16 to 30 March, the French company informs. The mill in Tarascon has already been offline since 2 March and has restarted production as scheduled on 15 March.

The Saint-Gaudens mill produces bleached softwood and hardwood kraft pulp with a capacity of 280,000 tpy. Fibre Excellence had already taken a five-week downtime at the same site in October/November 2025.

As in the case of the Provence pulp mill shutdown, Fibre Excellence cited tensions in the French industrial timber market and difficulties in securing wood supply as the reasons for the latest measure at the Saint-Gaudens site. Wood stocks were too low to allow production to continue, the company said.

In the context of its current financial difficulties, Fibre Excellence recently cited the significantly increased wood prices as one of the main challenges facing the company. Fibre Excellence Saint-Gaudens operates a biomass-fuelled cogeneration plant, using black liquor, bark and sawdust to generate process steam and electricity for the mill. Excess electricity is fed into the national grid. The company criticised the fact that the state-regulated tariff for its renewable electricity had not been adjusted to reflect the surge in biomass costs, putting the company in a strained financial situation.

Conciliation procedure extended until mid-April

Fibre Excellence is currently in talks with the French government and needs to find a solution soon, as the company is facing serious difficulties and the risk of insolvency is growing. Fibre Excellence is currently undergoing a conciliation procedure – a preventive measure that can be initiated prior to insolvency to prevent bankruptcy. The procedure was originally scheduled to end in mid-March but has now been extended until 15 April, Fibre Excellence reported on 16 March. This gives the company a little more time to assess the different options.

At the start of March, the French government offered state aid of €150m, subject to certain conditions which are currently under discussion.

France: New organisation for wood and paper industry

 **EUWID +** 18 March 2026 |  ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

France has a new industrial umbrella organisation for the entire value chain from wood to paper and wood products. At the end of February, the Comité Filière Bois Française (French Forestry and Wood Industry Committee) was established, which sees itself as a permanent body for coordination and joint expression of opinion at the level of the entire value chain.

The new association is based within the France Bois Forêt association and “represents common positions on strategic, economic, climate-related and industrial issues in the forestry and timber industry”. The association explained that it was established in response to long-standing demand.

The founding members come from three sectors: the wood processing industry is represented by the French association of pulp, paper and board manufacturers Copacel, alongside the furniture manufacturers’ association L’Ameublement français and the association of building material manufacturers and timber merchants UICCB. In addition, the new umbrella organisation has five other members from the forestry and wood processing sectors: Communes Forestières France, Fransylvana, ONF, UCFF and FNB. Decisions by the new umbrella organisation are to be taken unanimously by the three sectors in order to ensure consensus.

Anne Duisabeau, President of France Bois Forêt, is the head of Filière Forêt Bois Française, while Maxime Chaumet, General Director of France Bois Forêt, holds the position of secretary.

German paper mills see no way around cost-driven price hikes

Price negotiations underway for fine paper, publication paper and kraftliner

 **EUWID** + 18 March 2026 |  ~ 7 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Uncertainty is the prevailing theme in the German paper industry these days. Due to the global crises, market players are cautious about the development of the energy situation going forward. Producers and converters are also closely watching other cost factors, such as shipping and chemicals. In the chemical sector, there are concerns about the availability of feedstock.

Against this backdrop, high-pressure price negotiations are taking place in the German market for fine paper and publication paper. Paper mills and merchants have both announced price hikes, which they believe are necessary and implementable. Kraftliner producers also approached the market in the second week of March with their own calls for higher prices. According to EUWID respondents, they are targeting various figures ranging from €80-100/t, with starting dates between April and May.

Conflict in Iran leads to further price hike announcements for graphic papers

Over the past weeks, there have been numerous price hike announcements from mills active in the German fine paper market. Some players had already announced mark-ups in February, and by the first weeks of March, all major paper merchants in Germany had also announced adjustments. Increasingly, these are being attributed to the surging energy and transport costs in the wake of the war in Iran.

These effects will ultimately cause production costs in the paper industry to rise, too. High fuel prices, which are prompting logistics companies to apply additional “war-related surcharges” in some cases, are having an adverse impact throughout the entire supply chain. Some players also report rising costs for chemicals, dyes and fillers, which make production even more expensive. At the same time, advertisers are trying to save money in the current economic environment. Spending on commercial printing is declining, in part because certain retailers have disappeared from the market.

The price increases announced by fine paper producers are between €30-€60/t, depending on the grade, while the adjustments targeted by merchants are within the range of 5-8 per cent. The prices paid for C-grade unbranded A4 copy paper averaged around €800/t in February, while the highest quotes for branded paper were roughly €850. Industry watchers confirm that February prices for folio offset sheets 80 g in February were €900-960/t. Quotes for woodfree coated sheets were around €900, according to

insiders. Offset reels 80 g were changing hands at prices of between €870-900/t, while the figures for coated reels could also be lower. Respondents say that special deals with special prices still exist for all grades in March.

In the coming weeks, players surveyed by EUWID expect that paper supply in Europe will remain stable despite the global crises, as the European market offers sufficient capacities, and because individual segments are still experiencing shrinking demand. However, it is unclear how global disruptions to logistics and energy markets will affect the supply and prices of paper from Asia, market experts say.

Overall, players on the German fine paper market are feeling considerable uncertainty: Energy prices, which could rise further in the near future, are a “major unknown” with open questions about the impact on production costs and effects on demand.

Despite the many problematic developments, observers do not anticipate a shortage of woodfree papers: Inventories range from sufficient to good and production capacities are there, especially for seasonally strong products, they say. Moreover, market experts expect that the price hikes will go through, which could help to offset the additional financial strains on paper suppliers caused by the current crises.

Paper mills demand price hikes for LWC and SC paper

On the market for LWC and SC paper, the price round for deliveries as of 1 April has begun. Paper mills are apparently targeting mark-ups of €30-40/t in most cases for coated magazine paper. Producers have also informed their customers about rising prices for uncoated magazine paper grades, but the figures envisaged here are lower. In both segments, short-term delivery agreements as well as separate energy surcharges are being discussed in some cases.

Paper producers point to increasing expenses for raw materials, logistics and energy. The paper industry is once again at a tipping point due to the latest cost crisis, representatives say. They note that paper mills have been eyeing “necessary price increases” for some time, but these have been stymied by weak market environment.

However, the ripple effects of the war in Iran have now given their efforts new and relatively strong momentum, say experts. For one thing, energy costs have a massive effect on paper companies’ profitability. Moreover, the crisis is affecting global supply chains. In particular, experts point to changing availability (and prices) of the chemicals necessary for paper production.

Buyers criticise that – in a structurally contracting and oversupplied market – some players in the paper industry are using the Iran war to justify higher paper prices. Thanks to energy hedging and the fact that many a paper mill is burning biomass or residual derived fuels at their power plants, paper producers should not yet be feeling the full impact of the current high prices for natural gas and electricity on the spot market, though direct cost increases are expected in future, EUWID was told. Instead, critics say, the market for LWC and SC paper is still shaped by excess capacity.

Given the announced price increases for paper, printing companies fear that the situation on the demand side could be negatively affected again. These mark-ups come at a time when sentiment in the print sector is already uncertain due to the sluggish

economy and downbeat consumer sentiment. Publishing houses and print customers might feel compelled to economise further and reduce the volumes of print objects, experts warn.

Paper industry representatives make the counterargument that the current scenario will likely lead to cost-driven cutbacks in paper production, which will reduce supply. There are reportedly plans to reduce output on paper machines. Although this would increase the fixed cost per tonne of paper produced, it would also avoid “unsustainable energy costs.”

Kraftliner slated to rise by €100/t as of 1 April

Since the outbreak of war on Iran and the escalating crisis in the Persian Gulf region, there are new developments almost daily on the market for fibre-based packaging papers and materials.

Early in the month, producers of recycled corrugated case material had been able to slightly raise their prices on the market in Germany as of 2 March – a step achieved before the outbreak of war – and kraftliner producers were still uncertain whether they would follow suit. Some players from the kraftliner market expressed a bit of relief that the price gap to recycled corrugated case material had narrowed. The difference between the grades had become too large and was encouraging substitution, they said. Other EUWID respondents saw the first adjustment for recycled grades on the German market as a starting signal that would enable producers of primary fibre-based corrugated case materials to approach the market with their own price increases.

However, following the outbreak of war in Iran, there was a flurry of price hike announcements in the paper industry within a few days in early March, citing dramatic cost increases. Now, producers of kraftliner are attempting to raise prices as well – but their announcements do not mention energy costs as the reasoning. In the early days of this initiative, the companies’ targeted amounts and timing still vary, respondents in the market report.

Kraftliner producers describe their activity levels as good. But it is still too early to tell whether the announcement of upcoming price hikes caused an uptick in incoming orders.

It is clear, though, that following the events of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent shocks, a number of paper buyers now place far more emphasis on supply security, explains one respondent.

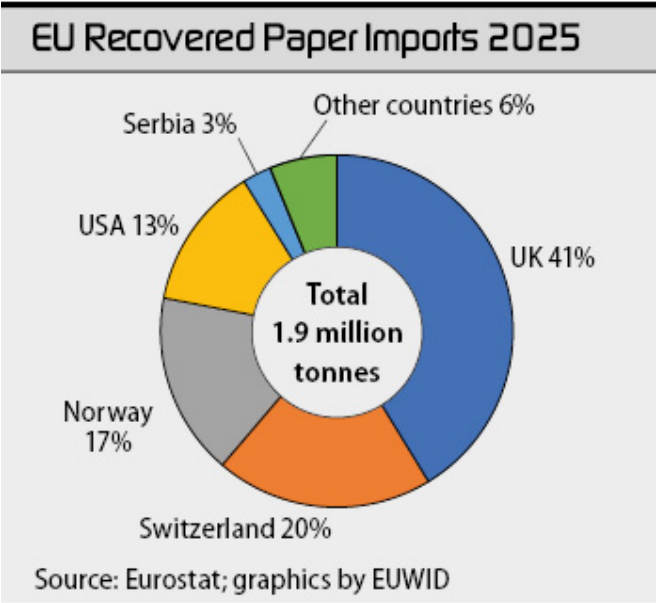
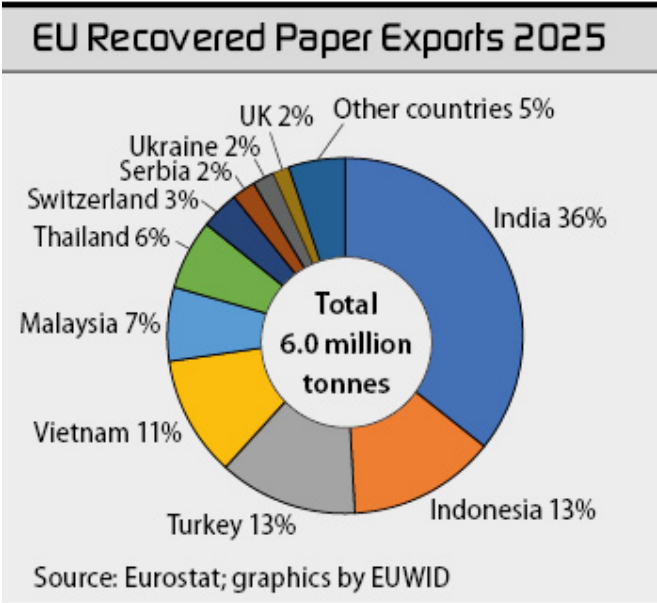
The price demands, which reportedly range from €80-100/t, apply to unbleached kraftliner as well as semi-chemical fluting and white-top kraftliner.

EU recovered paper exports to third countries up by 9 percent in 2025

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The European Union's 27 member states exported more recovered paper to countries outside the EU last year. According to Eurostat, shipments to third countries rose by 9 per cent year-on-year to 6.0 million t. At the same time, recovered paper imports into the EU fell by 3 per cent to 1.9 million t. Overall, the EU therefore remains a net exporter of recovered paper.

Despite the increase in 2025, EU recovered paper exports still remain well below the levels seen in earlier years. Shipments reached an all-time high in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2009, when almost 10 million t of recovered paper left the EU. During the following decade, exports fluctuated between 6 and 8 million t per year before plunging to just over 4 million t during the Covid pandemic. Since then, export volumes have again trended higher.



Exports to India rise by 60 per cent

Shipments to India increased particularly strongly last year. EU countries exported a total of 2.1 million t of recovered paper to the country, almost 60 per cent more than in 2024. Exports of “paper or board for recycling” to Turkey also rose sharply, climbing by more than a third to 753,000 t. As a result, Turkey overtook Vietnam to become the third-largest destination for European recovered paper exports.

Indonesia was the second-largest buyers in 2025, although it imported 6 per cent less recovered paper from the EU than in the previous year, at 802,000 t. EU-27 exports to Vietnam and Malaysia fell even more sharply, dropping by 30 and 25 per cent respectively.

The value of recovered paper exports also increased last year, rising from €809m to €836m. On average, a tonne of exported recovered paper sold for €171/t, compared with €165/t in 2024.

Italy remains largest exporter of recovered paper

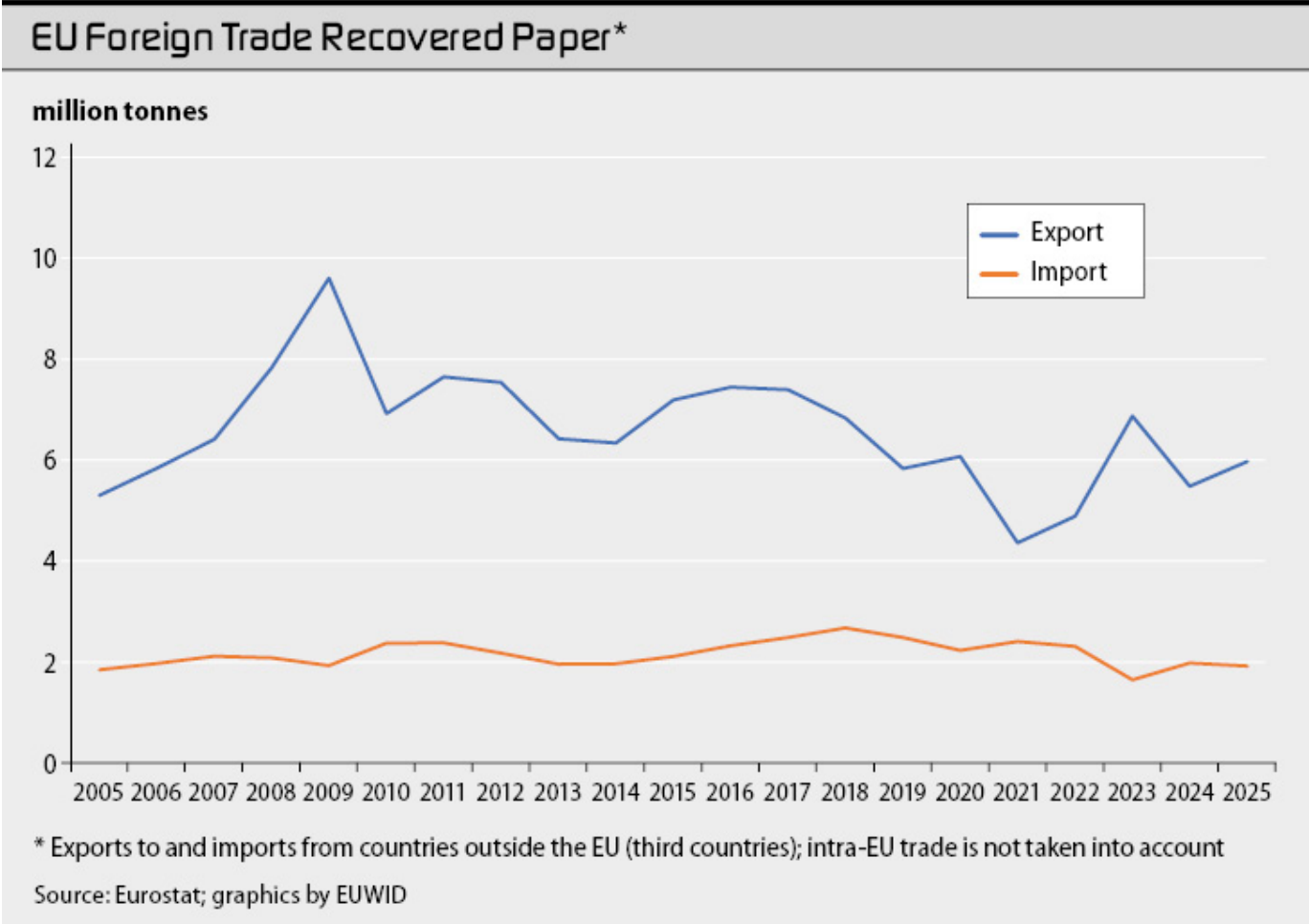
Italy remained the EU's largest exporter of recovered paper in 2025. According to the Eurostat figures, Italian shipments to third countries totalled around 1.33 million t, a slight increase of 3 per cent compared with 2024. Spain's recovered paper exports rose far more strongly, increasing by a quarter year-on-year to 858,000 t.

German recovered paper exports to countries outside the EU also increased in 2025, rising by 11 per cent to 250,000 t. However, it should be noted that these figures include only direct exports to third countries. The volume of German recovered paper ultimately sold to third-country consumers is likely to be considerably higher, as large quantities of material – 1.5 million t in 2025 – typically pass through intermediaries in neighbouring European countries. These companies subsequently re-export the paper, often to Asia. These transhipments are not captured in the official statistics.

EU recovered paper imports down slightly

According to Eurostat, recovered paper imports into the EU totalled 1.92 million t in 2025, with a value of €338m. In the previous year, imports amounted to 1.98 million t worth €349m. Once again, the United Kingdom remained the most important source. However, British recovered paper exports to the EU fell by 8 per cent during the reporting year to 793,000 t.

As in the previous year, Switzerland and Norway ranked second and third among the most important countries of origin for recovered paper imports into the EU in 2025, with trade volumes of 384,000 and 323,000 t respectively. A further 253,000 t of recovered paper came from the US.



Reno de Medici suspends bond interest payment amid recapitalisation talks

 **EUWID** + 17 March 2026 | [Igor Dugandžić](#) | ⌚ ~ 2 min | Published in issue 12/2026

Italy's recycled cartonboard producer Reno de Medici (RDM), which is owned by US investment firm Apollo Global Management, has entered into a forbearance agreement with a majority of bondholders of its €600m Floating Rate Senior Secured Notes (FRSSNs) after deciding not to pay interest due in March.



The company announced on 16 March that it would not proceed with the payment of the March coupon. The step was taken in agreement with the majority of holders of FRSSNs due in 2029 representing more than 70 per cent of the outstanding bond volume, who have committed to refrain from taking enforcement action for a limited period while negotiations continue, [RDM said in a press release](#).

Reno de Medici emphasised that the measure is not expected to affect its operations. The group's production and deliveries will continue normally without business disruption, the company stated.

RDM described the move as a temporary and precautionary measure aimed at stabilising its financial position. The company said the decision was taken "to further enhance the group's liquidity position" while discussions on a broader recapitalisation are ongoing. Under the agreement, bondholders will not pursue claims related to the missed interest payment until either the forbearance period expires in mid-June 2026 or a recapitalisation agreement is reached at an earlier stage.

The interest deferral reflects what RDM described as "the shared intention of all parties to proceed in an orderly manner towards a structured and definitive agreement". The group is currently working on a comprehensive review of its capital structure in response to challenging market conditions. According to RDM, the European paper industry is facing "a period of profound structural change", marked by declining demand after the Covid period and [significant overcapacity](#).

RDM operates eight board mills in Italy, Germany, Sweden, Spain and the Netherlands, as well as four sheeting centres. The group produces recycled fibre-based cartonboard grades, mainly white-lined chipboard (WLC) and solid board, with a total capacity of approximately one million tpy. In a reaction to the challenging situation on the recycled board market in Europe, RDM had closed two board mills in [Blendecques, France](#), and [Barcelona, Spain](#), with a combined production capacity of more than 300,000 tpy in

the last two years.

RDM states it will remain focused on completing the recapitalisation process while maintaining business continuity. The recapitalisation process is intended to ensure the group's "long-term financial sustainability" and safeguard "business continuity in the interests of its key stakeholders, in particular customers, suppliers, employees and financial creditors," the company explained.

Apollo Global Management has been Reno de Medici's controlling owner since October 2021 when it acquired a 57.6 per cent equity in RDM previously held by Cascades. At the end of 2021, RDM was delisted from the stock exchanges in Italy and Spain and the company went private.

According to a [recent reporting by Bloomberg](#), Apollo is playing a central role in the group's ongoing restructuring and has been conducting talks with investors including Arini and M&G, over control of Reno de Medici.

Apollo Global Management to acquire sole control of Lecta

 **EUWID** + 17 March 2026 | [Igor Dugandžić](#) | ⌚ ~ 3 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

US investment firm Apollo Global Management plans to acquire sole control of fine and specialty paper manufacturer Lecta. The transaction was notified to the European Commission in mid-February and, following review under the simplified merger control procedure, was cleared by the competition authorities on 10 March.

According to the Commission, the transaction does not raise competition concerns due to the limited overlap between the market positions of the companies involved.



Woodfree coated paper production and finishing at Lecta's Cartiere del Garda mill in Italy.

As stated in the corresponding EU merger notice, the takeover will take place in the form of a debt-to-equity swap. Apollo had already been invested in Lecta through several investment vehicles and, by converting debt into additional share capital, will obtain a controlling stake in the company.

Since a debt restructuring in 2020, Lecta has been majority-owned by various creditors and bondholders. As shown in an official filing with Companies House, the UK company register in January last year, in addition to Apollo (15.48 per cent) other major investors were represented in Lecta's shareholder base either directly or through vehicles and funds. These included the British investment firm Cheyne Capital (28.44 per cent), the French investment company Tikehau Capital (17.97 per cent), the Royal Bank of Canada (6.74 per cent), and the Luxembourg investment firm Centauro Investments (4.75 per cent).

The acquisition of sole control by Apollo approved by the European Commission forms part of a new financial and corporate restructuring of Lecta that has been underway since September last year. The restructuring process, which is expected to be completed by the end of April, aims at substantially reducing Lecta's debt position and establishing independent, separate business units.

At the beginning of 2026, Lecta signed a lock-up agreement with its key financial creditors and shareholders, securing the necessary support for the planned restructuring. In the latest restructuring documents published on 18 February this year, Lecta reported financial debt of at least €541m. This consisted of a highly secured Super Senior Facility (SSFs) credit line worth €100m, €122m in New Money Notes (NMNs), and €319m in older Senior Secured Notes (SSNs). Accrued interest and additional debt

facilities were not included in these figures.

As part of the creditor-backed restructuring, Lecta is said to reduce its debt burden by about €400m. To achieve this, €319m of SSNs will be fully released, while €122m of NMNs will be converted into 30 per cent of the pro forma shareholding of the new holding company. The holders of the highly secured SSFs, who provided the company with an immediate €100m credit facility during the critical phase of the restructuring, will be allocated 55 per cent of the shares in the new holding company.

Lecta continues with new holding structure and three independent business units

Lecta group employs around 2,700 people and produces woodfree coated and uncoated paper, label paper, self-adhesive materials, flexible packaging paper, thermal paper and other specialty grades at seven paper mills in Spain, Italy and France. The group reports a total production capacity of 1.6 million tpy of paper. In addition, Lecta runs its own distribution business in southern Europe operated by the group's subsidiaries Torraspapel and Polyedra.

As part of the ongoing corporate restructuring, Lecta has reorganised the group along its existing business lines and established three separate business areas. The Fine Paper and Distribution segment consists of the Italian mill Cartiere del Garda as well as the merchandising business with four distribution entities in Spain, France, Portugal and Italy. The Self-Adhesive business unit includes the Spanish mill at Almazán, while the Specialties business unit comprises the Spanish mills at Leitza, Motril, Sant Joan les Fonts and Zaragoza.

The French company Condat with its specialty paper mill is no longer part of the Specialties business unit. Condat filed for insolvency in October last year and initiated a sales process for the specialty paper mill. It was recently decided that the French holding company Société de Participation de la Braye (SPB) will take over the site on 1 April and develop a technopark there.

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German RCP prices fairly stable amidst growing unrest over war in the Middle East

 **EUWID** + 16 March 2026 | ⌚ ~ 5 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Trading on the German recovered paper market got off to a relatively calm start in March. Supply and demand were again mostly in balance, leaving prices for the bulk grades largely stable. Likewise, insiders reported little movement in March prices for medium and high grades.



Prices on the German recovered paper market remained mostly unchanged in March.

However, unease is growing in light of recent geopolitical developments. "If the Iran war had not broken out, March would have been a rather dull month," one expert told

EUWID. The crisis in the Middle East has further heightened uncertainty in the recovered paper market, as higher energy costs are pushing up paper production expenses and surging diesel prices are increasing logistics costs. Sharply higher sea freight rates are also casting doubt over exports to the Far East.

Most prices for the various recovered paper grades altered only minimally in February. An analysis of pricing information reported by recovered paper suppliers and consumers showed that mixed paper (1.02) increased by €1.00/t in February. Supermarket paper and board (1.04) fetched as much as €5.50/t more. Used corrugated kraft II (4.03) became €4.00/t more expensive. In contrast, prices for sorted graphic paper for deinking (1.11) dipped by €1.00/t. Coloured letters (2.05/2.06) prices dropped by as much as €3.50/t in February, while multi printing (3.10) cost €3.50/t more than the previous months. White newsprint/magazine paper (3.14/3.15) prices dipped by €0.50/t. White woodfree uncoated paper (3.18.01) became €3.00/t cheaper.

Germany's recovered paper market was initially generally quiet in March. Many market players viewed this as rather surprising, since in some cases they had anticipated substantial price increases based on previous year's experience. However, such hikes failed to materialise.

Instead, most EUWID contacts quoted unchanged prices for the commodity grades of 1.02 and 1.04. Just a few insiders reported slight hikes, attributing these to regional variations and different starting prices. What's more, one waste management company source said that market activity had picked up after a quiet start to the month, making higher prices possible.

Overall, supply and demand have been largely balanced in March so far. Waste management companies continue to report relatively low collection volumes, even though arisings were seasonally higher in March than in February. Inventories are said to be manageable, supported by stable and uninterrupted offtake. The sharp increase in fuel prices due to the war in the Middle East is putting upward pressure on logistics costs, but this is not expected to have any direct impact on recovered paper prices this month.

The situation facing Germany's paper industry remains strained. Mills continue to operate at poor capacity utilisation. Although workloads were a little better than expected at the start of the year, this fragile recovery had been halted by the crisis in the Middle East, one EUWID source remarked. The sharp rise in energy costs since the start of the war has already eaten up the recently implemented increases in recycled containerboard prices. The paper industry is therefore aiming to secure further substantial hikes for finished paper in the weeks ahead.

With paper producers reporting thin order books, demand for recovered paper is also rather subdued in March. Insiders repeatedly told EUWID that stoppages at a few paper mills had contributed to the relaxed supply situation. Recovered paper inventories were described as comfortable, especially at the beginning of the month. As a result, a few paper mills remain fairly relaxed for the time being, even with the Easter holidays approaching. In addition, sources expect a number of paper producers to use the holiday period for shutdowns and maintenance work.

However, waste management companies report that buyers were increasingly requesting additional volumes in the second week of March and were more frequently insisting on the delivery of the agreed tonnages. At some mills, stocks of recovered paper are already said to have fallen noticeably. With possible logistics bottlenecks around Easter in mind, nervousness among buyers could therefore increase again, pushing recovered paper prices up sharply in the coming weeks. Likewise, the paper industry has indicated that ensuring sufficiently large inventories is proving challenging, especially in the run-up to Easter, and that companies are therefore "on alert".

War raises uncertainty for paper industry and export markets

Overall, the outlook for the recovered paper market remains highly uncertain at present, not least due to the potential impact of growing geopolitical tensions on the paper industry. It is unclear how long energy costs will stay at elevated levels and how the crisis in the Middle East will affect the industry's sales channels, international supply relationships, and consumer spending patterns.

Many questions remain unanswered about recovered paper exports from Europe to the Far East, as well. Prices offered by Asian paper mills had recently not been competitive with those in Germany, suppliers said. Even so, the war in the Middle East might still have ramifications for supply within Germany if exports from other European countries to the Far East decline markedly.

This could happen quickly given the rapid surge in freight costs, a few sources told EUWID. They report that more material from the Netherlands is up for grabs in Germany, something that they interpret as a sign of cooler export demand from Asian buyers.

Other experts pointed out that most recovered paper shipments from Europe to Asia continued to go around the Cape of Good Hope in Africa rather than the Red Sea even before the start of the Iran war, meaning that transit times are unlikely to change, at least for the time being. The impact of the war on container availability and container ship capacity is also currently viewed as limited, since the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz was primarily affecting tankers.

Little change for medium and high grades in March

For the other recovered paper grades, most market participants expect prices in the German market to remain unchanged in March. The availability of sorted graphic paper for deinking had continued to decline, but this was also consistent with dwindling demand for this grade. The shutdown of a paper machine in Germany for conversion work at the beginning of March also had a short-term impact on the market.

A few sources also reported price cuts of roughly €5/t for coloured letters and multi printing in March. Market players told EUWID that this segment was still experiencing a supply surplus, primarily because of persistently subdued demand from packaging markets, coupled with decent supply on the market.

Recovered Paper Germany February 2026				
Monthly changes in €/t	Feb 2026	Jan 2026	Dec 2025	Feb 2025
Mixed paper and board (1.02)	+ 1.00	- 2.50	- 4.00	+ 3.00
Supermarket corrugated paper and board (1.04)	+ 5.50	- 1.00	- 6.00	+ 8.00
Used corrugated kraft II (4.03)	+ 4.00	± 0.00	- 5.00	+ 6.50
Sorted graphic paper for deinking (1.11)	- 1.00	- 4.50	- 7.00	- 7.50
Coloured letters (2.05/2.06) ¹⁾	- 3.50	+ 0.50	- 10.00	- 1.50
Multi printing (3.10)	+ 3.50	+ 1.50	- 16.00	+ 4.00
White newsprint/magazine paper (3.14/3.15)	- 0.50	- 3.00	- 6.00	+ 2.00
White woodfree uncoated shavings (3.18.01)	- 3.00	- 2.00	- 5.50	- 1.00
¹⁾ From January 2026, price reports for grade 2.05 will also be included in the assessment for coloured letters. Changes based on free delivered prices within Germany.				
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SCA wants to increase kraftliner prices from 1 April

12 March 2026 | [Frauke Schmidt](#) | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Swedish forestry company SCA has announced plans to increase prices for all its kraftliner grades in Europe by €100/t.

The new price is valid from 1 April 2026, the company said.

SCA operates kraftliner mills in Obbola and Munksund with a total design capacity of more than 1 million tpy.

The Obbola mill was started up in November 2022 and is considered to be the largest kraftliner machine in the world. It is expected to reach its [design capacity of 720,000 tpy](#) this year.



SCA's Obbola mill is one of the largest kraftliner mills in Europe and operates the world's largest kraftliner paper machine

Metsä Fibre plans temporary layoffs at Joutseno NBSK pulp mill

11 March 2026 | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Metsä Fibre will initiate change negotiations on temporary layoffs at its Joutseno softwood pulp mill as it plans to suspend production at the site from the end of March, citing continued uncertainty in pulp market conditions.



Metsä plans temporary layoffs at its Joutseno pulp mill

The change negotiations regard potential temporary layoffs of up to 90 days and cover the entire mill personnel, Metsä Fibre says.

Metsä Fibre's Joutseno mill has a workforce of 170 and produces up to 690,000 tpy of northern bleached softwood kraft (NBSK) pulp.

[Last week the company announced that it will take commercial downtime starting 31 March.](#)

Last year, pulp production at the Joutseno mill had been standing idle for six months.

Akarton joins Progroup packaging park in Schüttorf

10 March 2026 | [Frauke Schmidt](#) | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 12/2026](#)

Corrugated packaging group Progroup has secured a new partner for the packaging park at its corrugated sheet feeder plant PW05 in Schüttorf.



Progroup's packaging park in Schüttorf, where Akarton will take over converting activities.

In future, the site will be operated together with Akarton, Progroup announced on 10 March.

Akarton will take over converting operations in the hall

directly adjacent to the PW05 plant, which is connected to the corrugator via an intralogistics system. The space had become [available after the previous cooperation partner ended its activities at the site](#). The partnership with Akarton is reportedly intended to strengthen Progroup's network of independent packaging manufacturers and support further growth at the site.

Akarton and Progroup have already been linked since the beginning of the year. In January, JH Holding GmbH, the owner of Progroup AG, announced that it had [taken a minority stake in the company](#). The corrugated packaging site in Schüttorf is now to be operated jointly with Akarton.

Headquartered in Landau in the southwest of Germany, Progroup is one of Europe's leading producers of containerboard and corrugated formats. The company operates production sites in six countries in Central Europe, including three paper mills and 14 corrugated sheet feeder plants, as well as a logistics company and two waste-to-energy power plants. Progroup employs around 1,780 people and generated sales of approximately €1.3bn in 2024.

This article was updated on 11 March 2026.

