

Germany introduces industrial electricity price for energy-intensive companies

Industry association criticises that paper makers cannot benefit from subsidy

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Germany has introduced its “industrial electricity price” to provide cost relief for energy-intensive companies for a period of three years. The state aid was approved by the European Commission in April and will apply retroactively as of 1 January 2026, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE) announced in a press release. The electricity subsidy was approved under the EU's Clean Industrial Deal State Aid Framework (CISAF).

Katherina Reiche, Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy, said this was the first time a framework had been created for an industrial electricity price that would specifically provide relief for Germany's key energy-intensive industries and strengthen the country's economic competitiveness. The legislation would soon be published in the German Federal Gazette and thus enter into force, the ministry said.

According to the press release, the industrial electricity price will ease cost pressure for companies from 91 electricity-intensive sectors. The instrument's target price is €0.05/kWh and will be determined based on the wholesale electricity price. BMWE said “several thousand companies” would potentially benefit from the measure, including large parts of traditional energy-intensive industries as well as sectors such as semiconductor manufacturing. Further (sub-) sectors are slated to be added to the scope at a later point in time, pending approval from the European Commission, provided they can demonstrate the necessary intensity of electricity consumption and trading.

Paper industry says measure provides no financial relief

German industry association Die Papierindustrie says the new electricity price will not provide any financial relief for the pulp and paper sector. According to the association, companies in the pulp and paper industry must decide between the existing electricity price compensation (SPK) or the new industrial electricity price, since a combination of the two is not allowed. As the SPK typically results in greater cost relief, choosing the industrial electricity price is unattractive, so most players in the industry will not make the switch, the association explains.

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp, president of Die Papierindustrie, commented: “This means that the new electricity price will not bring any additional relief for our members, as was initially hoped. Consequently, an important opportunity to noticeably improve

competitive conditions for the industry has been left untapped.”

The industry association also challenged the BMW's suggestion that a hygiene paper producer could benefit from lower costs as a result of the industrial electricity price. In a background paper, the ministry cited the example of a tissue manufacturer producing sanitary and household products (e. g., kitchen rolls, facial tissues and toilet paper) that consumes around 400 GWh of electricity and could receive cost relief of around €8.2m. However, Die Papierindustrie described this example as misleading, arguing that the scheme would not provide relief for hygiene paper producers or other paper manufacturers.

EU green lights state aid schemes

On 16 April, the European Commission announced it had approved the state aid schemes proposed by Bulgaria, Germany and Slovenia to provide temporary electricity price relief for energy-intensive companies. As the recipient companies will be subject to the condition that a significant share of the aid must be reinvested in decarbonisation measures, “these schemes will contribute to the transition towards a net-zero economy,” the Commission said.

The three countries had applied for the Commission's approval of programmes under the CISAF to support energy-intensive companies by compensating them for a share of their electricity costs in the coming three years. The budgets of the schemes are €334m in Bulgaria, €3.8bn in Germany and €90m in Slovenia.

“The measures will be open to companies active in sectors with a significant risk of activities moving outside the EU to locations where environmental measures are absent or less ambitious,” the Commission said.

The schemes were found to be in line with the conditions of the CISAF, including in particular the aim to “facilitate the development of economic activities in the eligible sectors and aim to preserve the economic viability of companies in these sectors.” Further conditions are that the discounted electricity price must be at least €50/MWh and the scheme may have a maximum duration of three years.

The German programme runs from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2028. Companies can apply for state aid payments after the end of each year, once their electricity consumption and the average wholesale market price are known.

Austria's paper industry records a steep drop in 2025 output

Austropapier warns that energy costs are creating a competitive disadvantage

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In late April, the Austrian pulp and paper industry association Austropapier took stock of developments in 2025 against a backdrop of a volatile economic climate. At its annual press conference, the association's president, Martin Zahlbruckner, described the country as facing a clear "competitive disadvantage" within the EU, primarily as a result of Austria's high energy prices.

All in all, the industry recorded a slump in production last year after a slight recovery in 2024. Two years of recession had put the dampers on demand for pulp and paper, the association noted. Austropapier members saw their sales revenues slide by 5.7 per cent to €4.4bn as a result. Paper production also fell sharply, dropping 7.6 per cent to 4.1 million t. Austropapier said that this represented a dive of almost 20 per cent compared with the peak year of 2021.

Market requirements propping up growth in the packaging business

The association attributed this in part to developments in the graphic paper segment, where production tumbled by almost 20 per cent to approximately 1.2 million t. Among other factors, Austropapier pointed to the structural decline in demand and the conversion of a publication paper machine at Heinzl Group's Laakirchen Papier mill to recycled corrugated case material production. Heinzl had previously also retrofitted one paper machine in Steyrermühl from newsprint to kraft paper. Norske Skog still produces magazine paper on one machine at its Bruck mill. However, it has not made newsprint there since 2023. The former newsprint machine has been rebuilt to produce recycled corrugated case materials.

At the same time, packaging paper production headed lower, too, although volumes fell less than in the graphic paper segment with a 1.7 per cent decrease to 2.7 million t. The extent of this strategic shift is also reflected in a ten-year comparison, Austropapier added. Packaging paper production had swelled by roughly 37 per cent compared with 2015.

In this way, the product portfolio clearly reflects market needs and international developments. Both grades will remain an important and internationally valued part of Austrian paper industry, Austropapier said. The association's president Zahlbruckner, however, stressed that the Austrian industry had been unable to offset the ongoing downward spiral in the graphic paper sector by switching to packaging paper production.

Pulp production slightly higher in 2025 as paper recycling rate continued to climb

By contrast, pulp production enjoyed slight growth in 2025, although this did not correlate with demand from the paper industry.

Pulp output climbed by 2.5 per cent to 1.9 million t, something that Austropapier chiefly attributed to dissolving pulp. Market paper pulp volumes were stable at 1.4 million t.

At the press conference, Austropapier representatives pointed out that Austria was among the European leaders with a paper recycling rate of 88.1 per cent. Recovered paper remains the key raw material used in paper production, with the sector using more than 2.1 million t to make finished paper in 2025. The 9.7 per cent slump in recovered paper utilisation, however, was a little steeper than the decline in overall paper production, according to Austropapier.

Austropapier calls for measures to offset high energy prices

With energy prices high, the association's president said that Austrian companies were at a clear disadvantage structurally, especially in comparison with neighbouring Germany. The situation facing Austria's pulp and paper industry had continued to worsen in an EU comparison, said Harald Ganster, a member of Austropapier's board, noting that around 90 per cent of exports were destined for other EU member states.

Association sources noted that Austrian companies faced greater structural challenges from energy costs compared with competitors in neighbouring countries, which put growing pressure on investment and employment. The need for action was especially evident in the Austrian Site Safeguarding Act, the association pointed out, adding that the planned relief fell well short of the support granted to comparable industries in other EU member states.

Austrian mills stood in direct competition with sites that have significantly better starting conditions in terms of energy costs. Power price compensation is now being implemented in Austria but clearly remained below the level in Germany with Austrian companies paying 2.3 times as much for energy as sites in Germany, Mr Ganster said. Differences in energy costs of this order of magnitude determine where investment takes place and where employment is secured, he remarked.

The paper association is now pinning its hopes on the Austrian government's 2035 Industry Strategy. Rapid implementation was now crucial, managing director Sigrid Eckhardt stressed, adding, From the perspective of the paper industry, competitive energy prices were just as important here as the extension of the free allocation of CO₂ certificates in the ETS in order to support precisely those companies that have already invested in transformation and decarbonisation, according to Austropapier.

The association underscores its commitment to Austria as a production base where around €1.3bn had been invested over the past five years. In 2025 alone, member companies invested roughly €190m in modernisation, decarbonisation and security of supply.

Austria's pulp and paper industry			
2025			
	2025	2024	Change in %

Industrial structure

Companies		21	21	0.0
Plants		23	23	0.0
Capital expenditure	million €	190	291	-34.7

Sales

Total	million €	4,370	4,635	-19.4
Domestic	million €	770	955	-5.7
Export	million €	3,601	3,680	-2.1

Pulp production

Paper pulp ¹⁾	tonnes	1,420,239	1,410,009	0.7
Dissolving pulp	tonnes	465,698	429,133	8.5
Total Pulp	tonnes	1,885,937	1,839,142	2.5

Paper production

Graphic paper	tonnes	1,163,871	1,440,604	-19.2
Packaging paper	tonnes	2,666,510	2,713,012	-1.7
Speciality paper ²⁾	tonnes	266,899	278,907	-4.3
Total Paper	tonnes	4,097,280	4,432,523	-7.6
Capacity	tonnes	5,050,000	5,130,000	-1.6
Machine utilisation	%	81.2	86.4	

Paper deliveries*

Graphic paper	tonnes	1,054,139	1,348,905	-21.9
Packaging paper	tonnes	2,333,471	2,256,778	3.4
Speciality paper	tonnes	238,733	245,530	-2.8
Total deliveries	tonnes	3,626,343	3,851,213	-5.8
Export rate	%	87.0	87.5	-0.5

Paper imports*

Graphic paper	tonnes	318,644	328,384	-3.0
Packaging paper	tonnes	685,401	687,349	-0.3
Speciality paper	tonnes	195,155	196,906	-0.9
Total imports	tonnes	1,199,200	1,212,639	-1.1

Paper consumption*

Graphic paper	tonnes	428,376	420,083	2.0
Packaging paper	tonnes	1,018,440	1,143,583	-10.9
Speciality paper	tonnes	223,321	230,283	-3.0
Total consumption	tonnes	1,670,137	1,793,949	-6.9
Consumption per capita	kg	185	197	-6.0

Consumption = Production + Import - Export

* Preliminary figures for 2025

¹⁾including mechanical pulp

²⁾including tissue

Source: Austropapier

Asia remains key market for recovered paper exports, energy crisis could trigger a setback

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Asia continues to set the pace in global recovered paper consumption and plays a key role in international trade in this secondary raw material. The consolidation of this trend and the prospect of future growth in Asian demand were highlighted by Kelly McNamara, Director of Custom Research and Recovered Fibre at Numera Analytics, in a presentation at this year's recovered paper conference organised by industry association Bvse on 14 April in Berlin. The long-term outlook for the recovered paper market remains fundamentally positive. However, the latest developments in the Middle East and their impact on the global economy could put a spoke in the wheel, weighing on both demand and prices, the analyst warned.

While North America, Europe, and also Japan generate more recovered paper than they consume, most Asian countries remain net importers of this material. The region is therefore regarded as a key trading hub for recovered paper exporters worldwide, particularly for shipments of old corrugated containers (OCC; 1.05 according to the EN 643 list of standard grades). Ms McNamara noted that the global trade in OCC had reached 17 million t in 2025, of which 15 million t were destined for Asian markets. China alone is reported to have consumed 50 million t of OCC last year, with another 5 million t consumed by India and 4 million t by Vietnam. By way of comparison, the US consumed 21 million t of OCC last year, Brazil 3 million t and Germany 9 million t.

In the presentation, the analyst said that demand for OCC was being mainly driven by the production of recycled corrugated case material (RCCM), which had risen in recent years, not least due to new capacities coming online. According to Numera Analytics, RCCM consumption increased by 3.2 per cent between 2008 and 2024, driving OCC consumption, which grew by an average of 3.3 per cent per year since 2005.

The majority of the new recycled corrugated case material capacity had been added in China in recent years, with a total of 17 million tpy entering the market between 2023 and 2025, Ms McNamara said. India, Malaysia and Vietnam had also boosted their RCCM capacity. In Europe, 4.4 million tpy of new capacity had been added, while 420,000 tpy had been removed from the market during this period, she added.

In the USA, a shift took place in recent years. The speaker pointed to a trend away from fresh to recycled fibre-based containerboard grades. Several kraftliner mills had closed in the US, while any new facilities that started up were focused on producing paper from recycled fibre, Ms McNamara said. Altogether, this resulted in a net reduction of 4.4 million tpy in corrugated case material capacity in the US between 2023 and 2025.

Vietnamese recovered paper demand set to grow

Investment appetite in the corrugated case material sector shows no sign of fading. A raft of new machines is scheduled to come on stream between now and 2028, not only in Europe but also in countries such as the United States, Chile and Saudi Arabia. However, as Ms McNamara pointed out, the lion's share of additional capacity is planned for Vietnam. Around 50 per cent of all announced new capacity in Asia is expected to be built there.

"Vietnam has the potential to become the next big market for recovered paper exports," the analyst said. As local recovered paper collection was only increasing to a limited extent, additional demand for recycled fibre in Vietnam and in Asia as a whole would have to be met through imports, she added. Numera Analytics expects Vietnam's OCC imports to grow by around 13 per cent per year between 2025 and 2028.

According to Ms McNamara, the country sources its imported OCC – a total of 3.6 million t in 2025 – mainly from North America. The second and third largest suppliers are Japan and Europe. With new capacity slated to come online in Europe at Eren Group in Shotton (750,000 tpy) and DS Smith in Lucca (450,000 tpy), some of the European volumes might be domestically redirected and stay within Europe, the analyst said. Numera Analytics therefore expects the availability of OCC for export to Asia to decline in the years to come. In turn, this might lend some upward support to prices, Ms McNamara concluded.

In view of these market conditions, Numera Analytics was still expecting a positive trajectory for the recovered paper industry at the start of the year. In the long term, this assessment still holds, Ms McNamara noted, pointing to fundamentally solid demand prospects over the coming years and a tightening supply situation. The long-term trend for OCC prices in recent also pointed modestly upward. The current "energy shock" has, however, changed the parameters. It remained unclear how long this situation would persist and how energy prices would develop, Ms McNamara said. Should a global recession trigger a slowdown in economic activity, the analysts expect a marked decline in OCC consumption accompanied by falling prices.

Efforts by paper and board mills to raise prices continue in Germany

New calls for price hikes from May for brown recycled CCM

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Paper mills have pushed through more price hikes for recycled corrugated case material (RCCM) on the German market in April. As a result, parts of the second round of price hikes for brown recycled containerboard were also realised, manufacturers and buyers alike told EUWID. However, there is still no clear picture regarding any further price demands from suppliers for May.

EUWID Price Watch Germany			
April 2026			
Prices in € per tonne free delivered unless otherwise stated	April 2026	March 2026	April 2025
Fine paper			
Woodfree uncoated			
AI-C-grade, bleached paper	800 - 800	790 - 820	880 - 900
AI-C-grade, non-bleached paper	790 - 800	770 - 800	850 - 850
Other grades 80 g	900 - 900	890 - 900	900 - 1,110
Other grades 80 g	890 - 910	870 - 900	940 - 1,010
Woodfree coated			
Stone, double coated, 100 g	900 - 900	870 - 900	1,080 - 1,110
Stone, double coated, 150 g	900 - 910	850 - 900	920 - 960
Publication paper			
Newsprint 40 g (uncoated)	590 - 610	570 - 590	680 - 670
Newsprint 40 g (coated)	590 - 620	580 - 600	610 - 620
Newsprint 40 g (uncoated)	590 - 610	570 - 590	680 - 670
LWC offset 80 g	790 - 840	770 - 800	790 - 810
SC offset 80 g (AI)	670 - 690	660 - 670	680 - 700
SC offset 80 g (AI)	670 - 700	660 - 680	680 - 700
Corrugated case material			
Process fibre corrugated case material			
Unbleached fullfibre from Scandinavia 175 g	830 - 910	830 - 870	870 - 890
Stone thermal corrugated case material*	770 - 1,040	770 - 890	770 - 1,090
White top fullfibre 140 g	1,070 - 1,190	1,070 - 1,110	1,090 - 1,170
Recycled corrugated case material			
Skrause	440 - 450	380 - 390	430 - 430
Wellmann	470 - 480	430 - 430	440 - 440
Tiedtman	780 - 710	640 - 650	670 - 690
Tiedtman	690 - 690	630 - 630	630 - 670
White top recycled, coated	890 - 910	890 - 910	910 - 970
White top recycled, 140 g, 100/10/10	810 - 820	770 - 790	830 - 840
Cartonboard			
Unbleached chipboard	770 - 810	770 - 790	810 - 810
GD	870 - 940	850 - 900	890 - 900
SC	1,140 - 1,050	1,140 - 1,170	1,140 - 1,170

*Price movement reflects temporary surcharges of 40%.

*Prices at the upper end of the range represent transaction prices for grades, base and price are quoted for other European grades.

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Higher prices for recycled and fresh fibre-based cartonboard also took effect in April. While producers of white-lined chipboard (GD) and unlined chipboard (greyboard) pushed through higher base prices, GC producers mentioned a temporary surcharge on existing list prices. Recycled cartonboard manufacturers are enjoying unusually strong demand and capacity utilisation, with lead times sometimes stretching up to six weeks.

RCCM producers table first calls for higher prices for brown grades from May

As April drew to a close, another round of price increases had materialised across the board in Germany for brown recycled corrugated case material. Sources on both sides of the market confirmed that brown recycled paper grades had become €60/t more expensive. According to market participants along the supply chain, this brought the cumulative increase since March to €100/t following two separate rounds of hikes.

As of the end of April, there was still no clear picture regarding any further price demands from suppliers effective from May. A few producers are said to have sought additional mark-ups for deliveries of brown paper grades in May. EUWID learned that companies are eyeing increases of up to €80/t. That being said, paper industry insiders noted that just a handful of mills have got on board with these plans, while sources from the corrugated board industry reported that no concrete additional demands had landed on their desks yet.

The previously reported picture of mixed trends has been confirmed for white-top testliner grades: Paper producers as well as buyers from the corrugated industry interviewed by EUWID both reported that uncoated white-top testliner typically cost €40/t more in April. On the other hand, prices for coated white-top testliner remained unchanged, with paper mills saying that they plan to raise their prices from May onwards.

Sheet feeders now feel compelled to pass on higher paper prices down the supply chain as costs continue to climb. The cumulative triple-digit growth in prices for buying brown recycled corrugated case material was already a significant additional burden, one observer stressed. At the same time, corrugated board and packaging manufacturers told EUWID that capacity utilisation still left room for improvement, and competition in the corrugated board segment remained fierce in April.

On the other hand, EUWID sources in the paper industry reported that machines making recycled corrugated case material were largely busy, something that is reportedly reflected in slightly longer lead times – a picture that buyers confirm too. That being said, insiders stressed that they saw no signs of a paper shortage yet.

Higher prices take hold for GD board, temporary surcharges reported for GC

The primary fibre-based board is currently the only segment within the cartonboard markets surveyed by EUWID where manufacturers are working with temporary (energy) cost surcharges. Sources said that these surcharges were limited to a one-month term and did not represent changes to the base prices agreed in contracts. The first surcharges reportedly took hold on the German market in April, with others set to follow in early May. According to most sources, the temporary surcharges for April amount to €30/t and apply to all contracts, regardless of their duration.

The price increases announced in March and primarily implemented in April for GD board and unlined chipboard are not temporary surcharges but an adjustment to base prices with effect from the start of the respective month or quarter. The sometimes sharp spikes in energy costs are only one factor behind the price demands, and recycled cartonboard producers had already been informally indicating to customers that hikes were inevitable even before the outbreak of Iran war. The conflict in Iran and the Gulf region has merely added to the urgency of the situation, EUWID contacts pointed out.

Recycled cartonboard manufacturers' attempts to charge more were helped by solid demand, which has pushed lead times out to as much as six weeks or sometimes even longer, as confirmed by both manufacturers and converters. However, this strong machine utilisation is not mirrored in order intake from the packaging industry, where only a handful of companies report good or satisfactory demand for folding cartons.

The reasons for the strong machine utilisation remain a matter of speculation. Converters suspect that producers may be trying to exert pressure and create room for price adjustments by tightening supply. Some cartonboard producers pointed to market talk and rumours surrounding one competitor as the trigger for volumes being shifted to other mills. Other EUWID contacts doing business in Germany cited the effects of stronger demand on other European markets, and quite a few market players even believe that a degree of panic buying could also be at work.

Free weekly newspapers holding their ground in Germany's local markets

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Free weekly newspapers continue to play a key role in Germany's local media market despite a difficult economic climate, the latest figures published by the Federal Association of Free Weekly Newspapers (BVDA) show. Despite consolidation in the newspaper and advertising market, the segment remains present across the country and firmly embedded in people's lives. Sebastian Schaeffer, Managing Director at BDZV with responsibility for free weekly newspapers and spokesperson for BVDA, "A print run of 42 million copies shows that free weekly newspapers are a powerful local medium for citizens and a reliable advertising platform for the retail sector. At the same time, cost pressure is forcing us to streamline our structures – without sacrificing our local strength."

Changes and costs pose challenges

The market continues to undergo structural change, which is giving rise to problems for companies. Although the total weekly circulation of free weekly newspapers dipped only slightly from 45 to 42 million copies, circulation was still over 83 million in 2019.

The association says that the main driver behind the slide is the discontinuation of titles, especially midweek issues. At the same time, many publishers are adjusting their delivery areas in order to maintain economically viable structures in the face of mounting cost pressure. As a result, the number of titles has virtually halved since 2019.

Titles and publication days in flux

In 2026, Germany is home to 654 free weekly newspaper titles published by 266 companies. At their peak, more than 1,300 titles belonged to this segment, with the high point reached in 2010 at 1,384 editions. By 2021, the number had already fallen below the 1,000 mark.

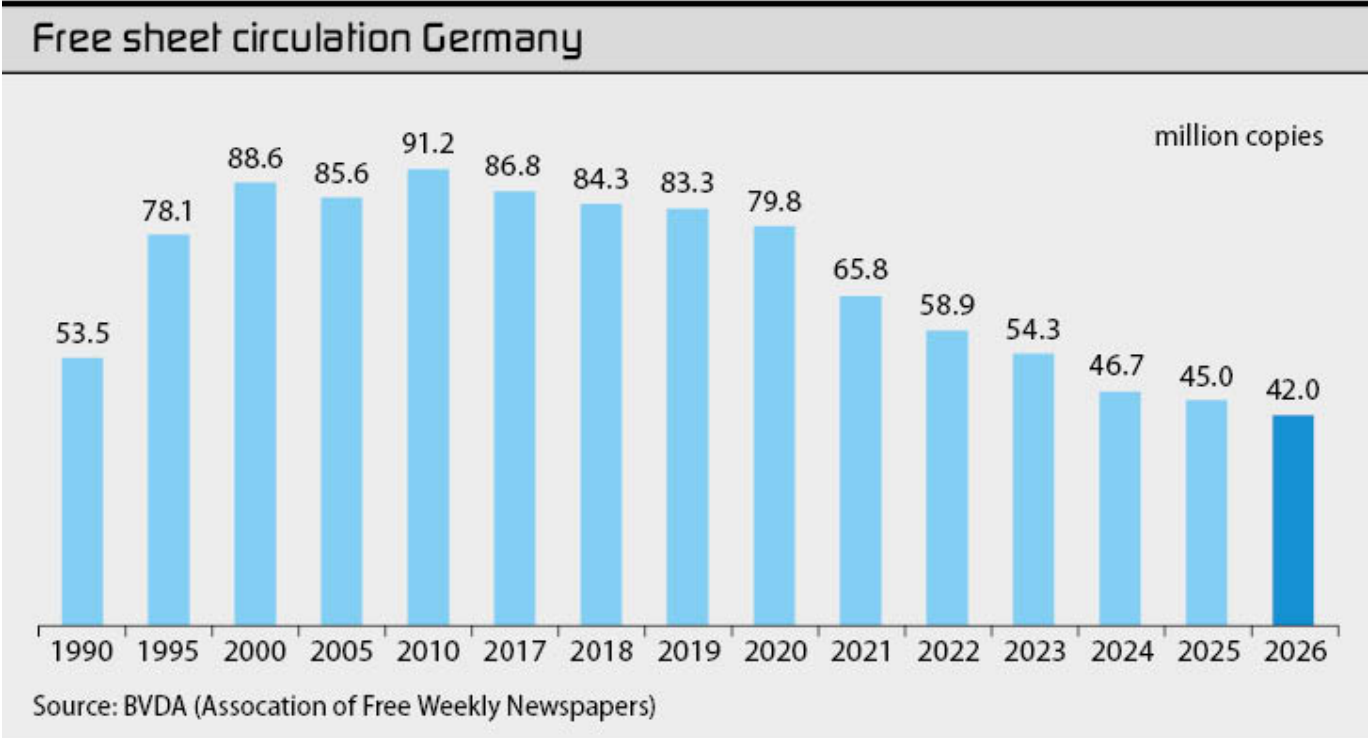
Free weekly newspapers are generally published once a week, with a clear focus on the weekend. As the association notes, this reflects reader behaviour: people have more time to read and plan their shopping at the weekend. A defining feature of the market is therefore the strong concentration on Saturday and Sunday: around 75 per cent of all titles now appear at the weekend, including 432 on Saturday – more than 30 titles up on the previous year – and 52 on Sunday (2025: 57). In addition, weekly papers are also published from Wednesday to Friday. A total of 98 titles now appear on Wednesdays and Thursdays, down from more than 150 a year earlier. Friday remains comparatively stable with just over 70 titles.

Downturn in sales revenue stabilises

Industry sales revenues have recently held steady. Total net revenues from advertising declined by roughly one per cent from €1.17bn in 2024 to €1.16bn in 2025. The biggest change took place from 2019 to 2020.

Despite this stable trend in revenues, publishers remain under considerable economic pressure. Sebastian Schaeffer stressed that the industry is in the midst of a structural adjustment process, with rising logistics and delivery costs in particular weighing heavily on publishers' results.

At the same time, the share of third-party inserts continues to rise and reached a new high of 55 per cent of total revenues in 2025, up from around 53 per cent in 2024 and a steady 47 per cent between 2021 and 2023. This underscores the strong importance of printed leaflet advertising for retailers, the association noted. In 2025, inserts accounted for 55 per cent of total net revenues generated by free weekly newspapers, once again up on the previous year.





Commission reaffirms EUDR implementation with deadlines unchanged, clarifies packaging rules

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The EU Commission published a simplification review report of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) on 4 May. The report describes the simplification measures that have been implemented since the entry into force of the EUDR in June 2023, but also introduces a series of additional measures.



The central message of the package is clear: the EUDR will remain in force and the Commission does not intend to reopen the regulation.

The deadlines also remain unchanged. This brings implementation closer for the companies concerned. From 30 December 2026, the regulation will apply to large and medium-sized companies as well as to micro and small enterprises already covered by the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR). For other small market participants, the relevant date is 30 June 2027.

The package now presented includes, in addition to the report to Parliament and Council, updated guidelines and FAQs, as well as a draft delegated act on product scope. According to the Commission's assessment, all measures are intended to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the rule and provide additional clarity to economic operators. What is more, compliance costs for companies are expected to be reduced by around 75 per cent compared to the original design of the regulation.

The draft delegated act proposes targeted adjustments to the EUDR product scope. It includes additional downstream products such as soluble coffee and certain palm oil derivatives, while excluding specific product groups such as leather products, samples and retreaded tyres.

The treatment of packaging materials is not fundamentally changed but clarified through guidance and FAQs. The Commission specifies that paper and cardboard packaging will continue to fall within the scope of the EUDR if they are placed on the market or exported as standalone products. This applies, for example, to cartons boxes, cases, bags and other packaging solutions made of paper, board and cardboard (HS code 4819), provided they are sold as goods.

By contrast, if packaging is used exclusively to protect, carry, or transport another product, it is not considered a relevant product within the meaning of the regulation.

In addition, the Commission further clarifies obligations along the supply chain, particularly for downstream operators. Supporting tools such as databases on legislation in producer countries and certification systems are intended to facilitate implementation. The draft is open for public feedback until 1 June 2026.

UPM confirms Q1 results in line with the previous year

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UPM describes its results for the first quarter of 2026 as solid, with the company achieving comparable Ebitda of €395m (Q1 2025: €421m), an operating profit of €255m (€198m) and a net profit of €200m (€143m) against a slight decline in sales.

Unfavourable exchange rate movements and lower prices in some business areas reduced sales, particularly in Fibres, Communication Papers, Specialty Materials and Adhesive Materials, whilst revenue in Energy Plywood and Other Operations (including biofuels and biochemicals) increased. The negative impact of falling sales prices was offset by lower variable and fixed costs.

UPM reports that UPM Fibres improved its underlying performance compared with the previous quarter at both platforms, and the average price of pulp for UPM rose slightly. Compared with the same quarter last year, however, pulp prices were lower and there were negative exchange rate effects, which could only be partially offset by lower variable costs. Revenue and profits declined.

The earnings trend was similar at UPM Communication Papers, where lower fibre costs could not offset the fall in sales prices. These were around 4 per cent lower for newsprint in Europe than in the same quarter of the previous year, whilst the price level for fine papers was approximately 6 per cent lower.

UPM describes the market environment for adhesive materials as solid in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, whilst the market was weaker in North America. The business unit increased its sales volume and reported lower costs, though this was offset by falling prices.

Specialty Materials also faced lower sales prices, which could not be fully offset by cost reductions. The market for labels, release liners and packaging papers picked up in Europe, partly due to stockpiling in the final month of the quarter.

UPM Energy saw an increase in Ebitda and operating profit, driven by a 30 per cent rise in energy prices during the cold winter months. The business unit Other Operations, which includes biofuels and biochemicals, managed to reduce its losses thanks to lower raw material costs and higher selling prices. UPM reports that prices rose significantly, particularly in March, due to developments in conventional diesel. The company emphasises that the disruptions in the fossil fuel markets underscore the importance of renewable alternatives.

In a preview of the full first half of 2026, UPM expects comparable Ebit in the range of €325m to €525m (€413m in the first half of 2025 and €508m in the second half of 2025). The company expects significant uncertainties in the areas of geopolitics and trade to

remain.

UPM confirmed the previously announced timetable for the planned joint venture with Sappi for the two companies' graphic papers businesses, which envisages the signing of a definitive agreement in the first half of 2026 and, subject to the necessary approvals, the entry into force of the joint venture and the immediate commencement of business operations before the end of this year.

UPM results		
million €	January - March	
	2026	2025
Key figures		
Sales	2,505	2,646
Comparable EBITDA	395	421
Operating result	255	198
Net result	200	143
Business area review		
UPM Fibres		
Sales	876	1039
Comparable EBITDA	178	227
Pulp deliveries, 1,000 t	1,413	1,433
UPM Communication Papers		
Sales	613	664
Comparable EBITDA	27	65
Paper deliveries, 1,000 t	726	731
UPM Adhesive Materials		
Sales	414	424
Comparable EBITDA	45	49
UPM Specialty Materials		
Sales	332	374
Comparable EBITDA	52	59
Paper deliveries, 1,000 t	367	368
UPM Plywood		
Sales	119	103
Comparable EBITDA	17	12
Other Operations		
Sales	185	166
Comparable EBITDA	-15	-37
UPM Energy		
Sales	252	173
Comparable EBITDA	102	51
Source: UPM		

Rising costs put pressure on Mayr-Melnhof's Q1 results

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Significantly higher energy, transport and chemical costs weighed on Mayr-Melnhof's earnings in the first quarter of 2026. The trigger is the recent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, the effects of which have been noticeable since March, the company said. Against this backdrop, the group refers in its current trading statement to increased earnings risks for the rest of the year.

The market environment in the reporting period remained characterised by subdued demand, intense competition and structural overcapacities. Sales declined to €928m in the first quarter, compared with €1.04bn a year earlier. Adjusted Ebitda stood at €104m, 3 per cent down year-on-year, while adjusted operating profit fell 20 per cent to €49m. According to the company, the decline in sales revenues is mainly due to the divestment of the Tann group and lower sales from its Food & Premium Packaging and Board & Paper divisions.

For the full year, Mayr-Melnhof expects the challenging market environment to continue. In addition to weak demand and overcapacity, the group cites the ongoing cost pressure from energy, transport and chemicals in particular as the major uncertainty factor. At the same time, the company refers to ongoing efficiency measures as part of its Fit-For-Future program.

Board and paper business stable, packaging under pressure

First quarter sales in the MM Board & Paper division fell 8 per cent below the comparable figure for the previous year. The division's adjusted Ebitda and operating profit were virtually unchanged, according to MM's report. At around 812,000 t, output also stood at the previous year's level, and capacity utilisation remained correspondingly high.

The average order backlog was higher than in the previous year. However, the market environment continued to be characterised by price and cost pressure, the report says. In addition, business was burdened by the increase in energy prices since March as well as uncertainties involving cost developments and raw material availability.

For MM's Food & Premium Packaging business unit, first quarter sales and volumes declined by 18 and 34 per cent, respectively. According to the company, the decline was due to persistent weak demand. Earnings also declined, with the downturn cushioned by cost reductions and efficiency measures.

The MM Pharma & Healthcare Packaging division recorded improved earnings. Sales were slightly lower year-on-year. Earnings were driven by efficiency improvements and contributions from the Fit-For-Future programme.

Mayr-Melnhof results		
million €	January - March	
	2026	2025
Key figures		
Sales	928	1,043
Adjusted EBITDA	104	119
Adjusted operating result	49	61
Business area review		
MM Board & Paper		
Sales*	471	510
Adjusted EBITDA	34	34
Adjusted operating result	6	6
Production, 1,000 t	812	813
MM Food & Premium Packaging		
Sales*	344	422
Adjusted EBITDA	48	66
Adjusted operating result	32	46
Production, in million m ²	512	775
MM Pharma & Healthcare Packaging		
Sales*	161	163
Adjusted EBITDA	22	20
Adjusted operating result	12	9
Production, in million m ²	236	234
* including internal sales		
Source: Mayr-Melnhof		

Norske Skog reports improved results compared with Q4 2025

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In the first quarter of 2026, Norske Skog achieved an operating profit of NOK407m and an Ebitda of NOK451m, representing a significant improvement on the fourth quarter of 2025, when the company recorded an operating loss of NOK194m and an Ebitda of NOK13m. Profits and sales revenues remain below the figures for the first quarter of 2025.

The company explains that operational performance has improved in the packaging paper business, whilst profitability in the newsprint segment has benefited from lower raw material costs and the realised gain associated with the Saugbrugs transaction. Norske Skog also sees positive effects from its cost and working capital optimisation initiatives. Following the end of the quarter, Norske Skog also received energy refunds of around NOK370m in April and expects further refunds of around €10m in the second quarter of 2026. The company anticipates net proceeds of NOK770m in the second quarter of 2026 from the sale of land to NND (Norwegian Nuclear Decommissioning) at the Saugbrugs site, of which around NOK50m will be used for dismantling costs.

Norske Skog's publication paper division recorded lower sales volumes due to seasonal factors, which, combined with fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Norwegian krone, led to a decline in sales revenues. Profitability improved compared with the final quarter of 2025 thanks to lower pulpwood prices, staff reductions, higher market shares across all newsprint segments and the recognition of a profit of NOK320m from the transaction with NND in Saugbrugs. In 2026, Norske Skog expects a further decline in raw material prices. The company notes that further capacity closures across all publication paper grades are necessary to maintain a balance between supply and demand.

The packaging paper segment has made operational progress with record deliveries of 106,000 t of recycled corrugated case material in the quarter, reports Norske Skog. Improved operational efficiency, stable prices and a higher proportion of deliveries to Europe have supported profitability. The PM 3 at the Bruck mill achieved a positive Ebitda of NOK15m, whilst losses at the Golbey mill's PM 1 were significantly reduced to an Ebitda of NOK-43m, compared with NOK-124m in the previous quarter. Full capacity utilisation at Golbey PM 1 is still targeted for the first half of 2027.

Norske Skog says it continues to evaluate strategic options for the Saugbrugs plant following the property transaction with NND. Studies related to alternative industrial activities, including a potential data centre collaboration and a possible rebuild of PM 6 for a switch between SC magazine paper and TMP-based kraftliner, a packaging paper product, are expected to conclude during the second quarter of 2026.

Despite an uncertain business environment and difficult market conditions, Norske Skog aims to further increase its market share. The company anticipates continued volatility in raw material prices, overcapacity and frequently changing operating conditions. Price increases for newsprint should support profitability, according to Norske Skog. Due to its high proportion of energy from biomass, the company considers itself less exposed to the crisis-related pressures of the energy market.

Norske Skog results		
million NOK	January - March	
	2026	2025
Key figures		
Sales	2,877	3,101
EBITDA	451	612
Operating profit	407	489
Net result	335	401
Business area review		
Publication Paper		
Sales	2,291	2,778
EBITDA	477	649
Production 1,000 t	277	274
Deliveries 1,000 t	274	273
Packaging paper		
Sales	508	255
EBITDA	-28	-35
Production 1,000 t	106	47
Deliveries 1,000 t	106	48
Source: Norske Skog		

Smurfit Westrock sees market recovery after “challenging first quarter”

 **EUWID** + 06 May 2026 | ⌚ ~ 3 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Irish paper and packaging group Smurfit Westrock reported a slight increase in sales but a sharp decline in net income for the first quarter of 2026. According to the company, however, dynamics in the global paper and packaging markets improved noticeably during the course of the quarter, leaving Smurfit Westrock cautiously optimistic for the remainder of the year.

Group sales rose slightly to around \$7.7bn, while net income fell from \$384m in the prior-year quarter to \$65m in the reporting period. The company cited higher production costs as the main reason for the earnings decline, including accelerated depreciation linked to machine closures. Lower sales volumes, economically driven machine downtime, adverse weather conditions and higher freight costs also weighed on the result.

CEO Tony Smurfit said during the results press conference that the recently higher energy costs had not yet had a significant impact because energy requirements had previously been hedged. The company nevertheless expects corresponding cost pressure from the second quarter onwards.

Smurfit Westrock reviews site closures despite improving market conditions

The EMEA, MEA and APAC business division increased both sales and earnings in the first quarter compared with the prior-year period. Sales rose to \$2.8bn, while adjusted Ebitda increased to \$431m. Smurfit Westrock attributed this primarily to lower costs, including a \$28m reduction in energy costs. Volumes remained largely stable year-on-year, rising by 0.3 per cent.

The company reported Europe-wide price increases for containerboard as well as significantly improved paper machine utilisation rates. This was also reflected in export business: whereas large volumes of sometimes very low-priced European containerboard had previously been sold into Latin America at short notice, delivery lead times have now lengthened considerably.

According to CEO Tony Smurfit, the containerboard machine closures implemented so far had hardly been noticeable due to previously weak demand. However, this situation has now changed amid a recovery in global demand.

The improved demand environment provided the basis for containerboard price increases in Europe, implemented in March and April. These are also expected to support corrugated box prices after the usual time lag.

At the same time, Smurfit Westrock is currently reviewing the closure of its containerboard mill in Birmingham, UK. According to

the company, the site is among the group's least cost-efficient paper mills. In addition, three converting plants in the UK and one site in the Netherlands are set to close.

Smurfit Westrock is also reviewing whether to maintain its listing on the London Stock Exchange. The company expects to take a decision during May.

North American business affected by lower volumes and higher costs

Sales in the North American business division declined to around \$4.5bn. The main reason was a 7.4 per cent drop in volumes, which could not be fully offset by higher selling prices. Smurfit Westrock continues to pursue a strategy in the region of phasing out low-margin contracts and replacing them with higher-value business. The company said that this strategy is progressing successfully, although the positive effects are expected to become more visible mainly from the second half of the year onwards.

Adjusted Ebitda in the division fell to just under \$600m. The result was particularly affected by economically driven machine downtime, which had a negative impact of \$74m, and adverse weather events with an impact of \$55m. Higher freight costs also weighed on earnings, amounting to \$32m.

The LATAM division increased sales to \$540m, while adjusted Ebitda declined slightly to \$109m due to higher costs. Deliveries rose by 2.3 per cent. Through the acquisition of a corrugated packaging producer in Ecuador, Smurfit Westrock also expanded its position in Latin America.

For the remainder of the year, Smurfit Westrock remains cautiously optimistic and confirmed its previously issued guidance for adjusted Ebitda of between \$5.0bn and \$5.3bn for full-year 2026. For the second quarter, the company expects adjusted Ebitda of between \$1.1bn and \$1.2bn.

Smurfit Westrock results		
million \$	January-March	
	2026	2025
Key figures		
Sales	7,712	7,656
Paper	1,512	1,582
Packaging	6,200	6,074
Adjusted EBITDA	1,127	1,289
Operating result	253	553
Net result	65	384
Business area review		
North America		
Sales	4,502	4,669
Paper	1,079	1,126
Packaging	3,328	3,452
Adjusted EBITDA	597	785
Europe, MEA and APAC		
Sales	2,771	2,582
Paper	390	410
Packaging	2,375	2,166
Adjusted EBITDA	421	389
LATAM		
Sales	540	513
Paper	43	46
Packaging	497	456
Adjusted EBITDA	109	115
Source: Smurfit Westrock		

Mondi expects further recycled containerboard capacity closures

Ebitda almost stable in Q1 despite higher cost impact

 **EUWID** + 06 May 2026 | ⌚ ~ 3 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Mondi's CEO Andrew King believes that further capacity closures are necessary in the recycled corrugated case material market. In an analyst interview after publication of the company's latest financial report, Mr King expressed surprise that more machines have not been taken offline so far. Many mills were running at reduced capacity, although this involved high overheads, he remarked. These temporary stops and production curtailments are reflected in the European inventory statistics in the first quarter, which Mondi said were well below the seasonal average.

Mr King pointed out that since the beginning of the Iran war, recycled containerboard producers without in-house power generation facilities in particular have been in a difficult situation, given that the industry had already been under pressure at the beginning of the year. Mondi sees itself as less affected compared to other companies. The group says it meets large parts of its energy needs with biomass and therefore has comparatively lower reliance on natural gas. Mondi's management estimates that its gas expenditure in Europe currently amounts to approximately €100m.

According to Mondi's management, even the latest price increases for recycled corrugated case material are not enough to significantly improve the margin situation of many producers. "Players who were underwater at the beginning of the year are under even more pressure today," Mr King said, adding that the implemented price hikes would not bring them back into the profit zone.

Commenting on the last price round, the Mondi CEO also observed that besides cost inflation, the hike was owed to better market conditions, especially due to lower inventories in Europe. Mondi's order books are said to be currently well filled after a weak start to the year in January and February.

Mondi is also pushing ahead with price hikes in all other major paper segments. Due to the usual time lag to implement the hikes along the value chain, their full effect is expected in the further course of the year. At the same time, Mondi's management pointed out that the lag is likely to be compressed in view of the significant cost increases. The magnitude of cost inflation required faster pass-through, which was increasingly accepted by customers, Mr King said.

First quarter Ebitda slightly below previous year figure

In the first quarter of 2026, Mondi generated adjusted Ebitda of €212m, including a fair value gain of €8m in the forestry business. In last year's corresponding quarter, Ebitda had touched €214m. These are the only figures that Mondi publishes in its trading update.

Deliveries increased quarter-on-quarter in the containerboard and flexible packaging segments, supported by capacity expansion, amongst others, Mondi said. At the same time, lower selling prices and rising input costs weighed on earnings.

In the converting businesses, Mondi's margins were under pressure, especially in the corrugated packaging and paper sack segments. Business with flexible consumer packaging reportedly developed steadily.

Geopolitical tensions in the Middle East led to additional volatility and rising costs for energy, raw materials and logistics. Mondi is responding to the spike with price increases, the full effect of which is expected in the third quarter.

In order to further optimise its cost structure, the company announced the closure of three converting plants in Germany, Hungary and Poland in April. In February, it had announced plans to close three converting plants, including two sites for paper sacks in Hammelburg, Germany, and Nyíregyháza, Hungary. Turkish corrugated board plant in Gebze was also said to be part of the plans.

Koehler Paper announces major investment to expand capacity for premium playing card board

 **EUWID +** 06 May 2026 | ⌚ ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

German paper producer Koehler Paper says it will carry out a major investment to expand its production capacity for specialty board used to make playing cards. Parent company Kohler Group will provide a triple-digit million euro sum for investments at the Oberkirch and Kehl production sites in southwestern Germany. The company says this investment lays the foundation for its next stage of development and sends a clear signal for long-term growth, innovative strength and global competitiveness.

The investment package includes machinery expansion, additional production machines as well as infrastructure building measures, the company told EUWID. Detailed planning for the individual measures is currently underway. Koehler, which describes itself as the world's leading producer of playing card board, intends to carry out the rebuild work during ongoing operations and take advantage of already scheduled technical downtime.

Koehler's specialty paper is used for casino playing cards as well as collectors' cards. The company describes it as a high-quality coated board with a black interior layer for maximum opacity.

At the Oberkirch plant, Koehler operates three paper machines. PM 3 primarily produces edging base paper. On PM 5, the company predominantly makes carbonless copy paper and fine paper, while PM 4 specialises in the production of fine paper. Koehler recently announced it wanted to relocate production of index and office board from the Oberkirch site to its facility in Greiz in eastern Germany.

At its mill in Kehl, Koehler produces thermal paper and decor paper on three machines: PM 1 and PM 2 manufacture thermal paper, while PM 6 has exclusively produced decor paper since September 2000. The paper and coating machine PM 8, which was commissioned in 2019, makes flexible packaging paper and innovative barrier paper, according to the company.

Koehler did not elaborate on its current annual production output of playing card board. In 2024, the company produced around 82,000 t of fine paper, with the trend pointing upward.

Elopak appoints Bent K. Axelsen as interim CEO

 **EUWID** + 06 May 2026 | ⌚ ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Following the announcement of **Thomas Körmendi**'s resignation, **Elopak**'s Board of Directors has appointed Chief Financial Officer **Bent K. Axelsen** as interim CEO, effective 8 May 2026. Director Finance & Tax **Ola Buarøy** has been named interim CFO, the company said, adding that its strategic direction and priorities remain unchanged. Elopak's Board thanks Thomas Körmendi for his leadership and contributions over recent years. The recruitment process for a permanent CEO is progressing well and is expected to be completed by the second quarter of 2026.

Arpulp eyes softwood pulp mill project in Argentina

 **EUWID** + 05 May 2026 | [Karolina Utracki](#) |  ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

A new softwood pulp mill project in Argentina was announced in April. Notably, this stands in contrast to other major projects in recent years and those currently in planning stages, which are all focused on hardwood pulp.



Image generated by ChatGpt | EUWID

symbolic image; pulp mill with port access

In Ituzaingó, in the northeastern province of Corrientes, project firm Arpulp intends to build a pulp mill with a swing fibre line that can produce fluff pulp and bleached softwood pulp for paper and packaging applications, as well as unbleached pulp for high-strength industrial applications. The project was officially presented to the public in mid-April at an event attended by Gustavo Valdés, governor of the province of Corrientes, as well as representatives of Arpulp.

According to the company website, the investment volume could amount to around \$2bn. Initially, the facility will have a production capacity of 800,000 tpy, with potential to expand it to up to 1 million tpy. The mill will reportedly focus on softwood pulp for the global market, in particular for applications in the sanitary paper segment.

Arpulp is acting as the project company for the undertaking. Argentinian investment group Grupo Pegasus is involved in the coordination and development, while Afry will be in charge of conceptual planning. The development phase is scheduled for 2025-2030.

The project firm puts the mills' fibre demand at around 5 million m³ of pine wood per year. More than 200 sawmills are active in the Corrientes region, but these only process around 40 per cent of the available wood, Arpulp says. A key advantage of this site is the availability of certified pine plantations in the region, it added.

The envisaged pulp mill project is to be located in an industrial park, which would have its own port on the Paraná river. In terms of logistics, the site was well-positioned with access to the Paraná Waterway, providing a direct route for maritime exports, Arpulp noted. It also mentioned integration into the Brazilian market as well as existing infrastructure with transport, energy and supply networks as further site advantages.

As of the EUWID editorial deadline, the company had not yet responded to a request for further information regarding financing, technical design details and the schedules for individual project phases.

Arctic Paper to hike fine paper prices from 1 June

05 May 2026 | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Arctic Paper has announced a price increase of four to eight per cent for both uncoated and coated fine papers across the European market. The new pricing will apply to all deliveries from 1 June 2026.

The adjustment reflects continued cost pressure across the industry, including increases in raw materials, energy, logistics, and other operational expenses, Arctic Paper says.

The company states that the increase is necessary to maintain stable production and ensure continued supply of high-quality paper products to its customers.

Arctic Paper underlines that it remains committed to supporting its customers with reliable service, consistent product quality and sustainable paper solutions.



Arctic Paper's Swedish mill Grycksbo produces coated woodfree paper.

Smurfit Westrock mulls closing Birmingham paper mill and four converting sites

04 May 2026 | [Frauke Schmidt](#) | 🕒 ~ 1 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Smurfit Westrock has launched a consultation process over the future of its SSK paper mill in Birmingham, UK, and four converting operations in the UK and the Netherlands, which could ultimately result in the sites' closures.



The SSK mill in Birmingham manufactures around 200,000 tpy of fluting and liner for the UK and Irish corrugated packaging market. According to Smurfit Westrock, the review is being driven by “challenging external market factors” as well as the need to optimise the company's manufacturing footprint in the UK and improve long-term competitiveness.

If the closure goes ahead, production volumes currently manufactured at the Birmingham facility would be relocated to other mills in Smurfit Westrock's European system. The company said this would allow it to continue supplying customers while maintaining a sustainable long-term presence in the UK paper market.

Pim Wareman, CEO of Smurfit Westrock Recycled Paper Cluster Europe, described the move as “a difficult but necessary decision” aimed at aligning the business with current market conditions and strengthening its long-term position. He also acknowledged the contribution of the employees at the SSK site.

The consultation process is scheduled to begin on 15 May and will last six weeks. A final decision on the future of the mill will be taken after the consultation has concluded.

In the event of a closure, around 130 employees would be affected. Smurfit Westrock said the impacted workers would be offered support measures, including career assistance and opportunities elsewhere within the group where possible.

EC starts further investigation into planned UPM-Sappi JV

29 April 2026 | [Bernd Hecht](#) | ⌚ ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

The European Commission announced that it had opened an in-depth investigation to assess the proposed creation of a joint venture between UPM-Kymmene Corporation and Sappi Limited.



In a press release, the Commission said its preliminary investigation indicates that the transaction may reduce competition in the markets for the production and supply of magazine paper, in particular coated mechanical paper, and fine paper, in particular woodfree coated paper, in the European Economic Area (EEA). In addition, the transaction raises preliminary concerns as regards certain specialty paper markets, specifically for the production and supply of one-side coated paper-based face material and pressure-sensitive labels.

In particular, the Commission found that for magazine paper and fine paper UPM and Sappi are major suppliers in the CM and WFC markets and the joint venture would control a significant portion of production capacity in the EEA.

Combined UPM and Sappi graphic paper output capacities		
tonnes/year	UCWF/CWF paper	Publication paper
UPM mills		
Augsburg, Germany		350,000 LWC
Caledonian, UK		235,000 LWC
Jämsäkoski, Finland, PM 6		330,000 SC, newsprint
Rauma, Finland		645,000 LWC
Schongau, Germany		575,000 newsprint, SC
Kymi, Finland	700,000 CWF/UCWF paper	
Nordland, Germany, PM 1+4	770,000 CWF/UCWF paper	
Blandin, Minnesota, USA		225,000 LWC
Sappi mills		
Kirkniemi, Finland		750,000 LWC, 175,000 to be closed
Ehingen, Germany	280,000 CWF, packaging paper	
Gratkorn, Austria	860,000 CWF, 90,000 label paper	
Maastricht, Netherlands	260,000 CWF, cartonboard	
Source: Company figures		

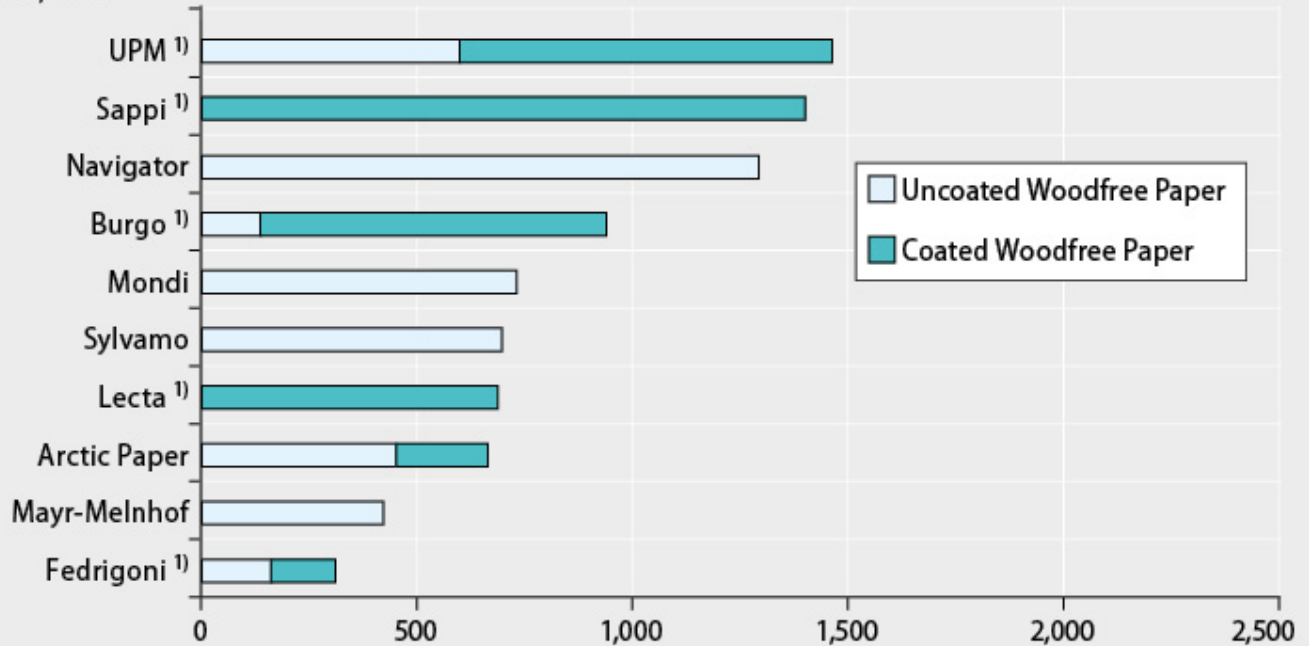
The Commission will now carry out an in-depth investigation into the potential effects of the transaction to determine whether its initial competition concerns are confirmed. During this process, the Commission will continue to assess the transaction benefits claimed by the companies, namely cost efficiencies, environmental benefits, and a more resilient European paper industry, and whether these outweigh any potential harm created by the transaction.

The proposed transaction was notified to the Commission on 19 March 2026. The Commission now has 90 working days, until 26 October 2026, to take a decision.

UPM said the opening of a Phase II investigation is a normal step in the Commission's merger review process in cases where initial concerns have not been fully resolved during Phase I. The company added that it remains convinced of the JV's benefits for customers and the industry, citing improved resilience of European graphic paper supply in declining markets. UPM said it continues to engage constructively with the Commission during this second part of the process to address the concerns raised.

Top 10 fine paper producers in Europe*

in 1,000 t



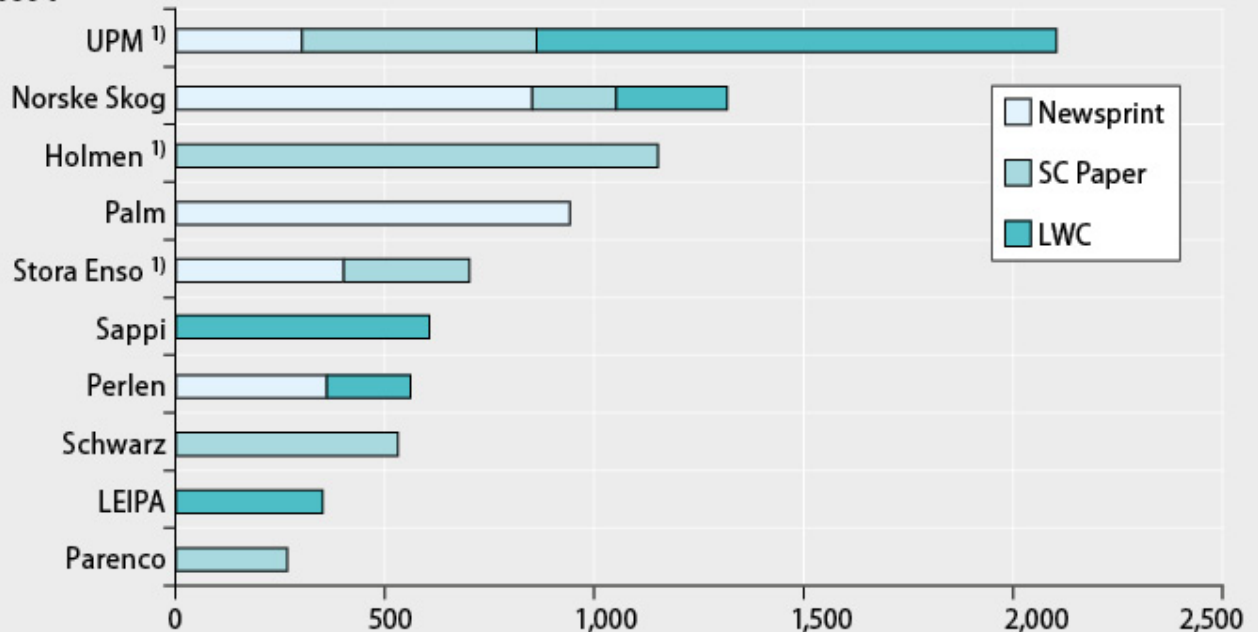
¹⁾ including swing machines

* production sites in Europe excluding Russia

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Top 10 publication paper producers in Europe*

in 1,000 t



¹⁾ including swing capacities

* includes production sites in Europe only

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Papresa files for insolvency, takeover offer on the table

 **EUWID +** 29 April 2026 | [Valeria Buß](#) | ⌚ ~ 2 min | [Published in issue 19/2026](#)

Spanish newsprint and recycled containerboard producer Papresa has filed for insolvency. According to a notice from the Spanish insolvency register, the company, which had been in pre-insolvency proceedings (preconcurso) since October 2025, has entered voluntary insolvency proceedings and moved automatically into liquidation on 21 April.

German investment company Quantum Capital Partners

(QCP), the majority owner of Papresa, was stripped of control of the Spanish paper mill. Insolvency administration was assigned to PKF Attest Concursal.



Spain's last newsprint mill is at risk

A binding offer for the acquisition of a production unit has already been submitted, the notice says. According to local media, this offer stems from Spanish group CL Grupo Industrial. Further binding offers may still be submitted within a 15-day period, according to the notice.

Several Spanish media outlets report that CL Grupo Industrial has offered around €39m for the acquisition of Papresa. According to the reports, the company plans to retain 148 jobs, equivalent to 72 per cent of the site's workforce, and to continue both the production of recycled corrugated case material and newsprint. As reported by the press, the works council considers the offer insufficient and is campaigning for the preservation of all jobs.

QCP had been in talks with Grupo Industrial for several months regarding a possible sale of Papresa to the group. However, the parties failed to reach an agreement. Grupo Industrial had initially submitted an offer to take over packaging paper operations, but was not interested in continuing newsprint production. The future of the newsprint machine remained under discussion in the talks, with QCP stating that Grupo Industrial was still considering acquiring the site's newsprint activities as the machine is one of the last newsprint machines in southern Europe. Local media later reported that Grupo Industrial had withdrawn its offer, after which Papresa filed for insolvency.

Papresa operates one newsprint machine with a capacity of 145,000 tpy. The mill in Erretería also houses another two machines, which have been converted from newsprint to recycled corrugated case material in recent years. QCP put Papresa's total production capacity at 375,000 tpy.

CL Grupo Industrial is a group with 26 subsidiaries and operates in several sectors, including steel, chemicals, energy and packaging. Its packaging division produces recycled corrugated case material and corrugated board through the subsidiaries Ondupack, Matías Gomá Tomás, Murcia Cartón and Papeleras Arlazón, but also plastic packaging. Newsprint or other graphic papers are not currently part of CL Grupo Industrial's portfolio.