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Summary of the study on Non-collectable and non-recyclable paper products

The aim of the study

Within the auspices of the European Declaration on Paper Recovery, a plan to increase knowledge on recovered paper flows has been developed. The amount of paper & board products that for technical reasons are not collectable and/or not recyclable has been identified as one of the most important knowledge gaps. This would directly influence the potential recovery and recycling of paper.

The aim of the study, carried out by EU Consulting, was to build up a methodology to calculate the share of non-collectable and non-recyclable paper products and come up with a figure for Europe (CEPI countries).

The methodology used

All possible reasons why a paper or board grade should not be included in the recycling loop were covered: it may be a collection problem (non-collectable because of destruction, permanent conservation etc.), technical unsuitability for recycling (non-recyclable because of physical alteration, heavy contamination etc.), or physical unavailability because of the nature (duration) of the application use (long-lasting papers).

Starting from paper and board consumption figures recorded by CEPI, and using data from available studies and earlier experiences, assumptions were made by paper grade group for end-use distribution, converting losses and lifetime for long-lasting papers. Thereafter, the assumptions were tested and verified with the national data.

The outcome of the study

On average, 19% of total paper and board consumption is considered to be non-collectable and non-recyclable in Europe for technical reasons.

It is to be emphasised that this figure refers to technical collectability and recyclability: it doesn't take into account that all paper may not be available for collection/recycling because of alternative uses (households burning paper for example), or the fact that



collection/recycling of all that would be technically available may not be justified environmentally or economically.

Detailed estimates on the share of non-collectables / non-recyclables by main paper & board grade is given below (for detailed description of different paper and board grades, please see the CEPI Annual Statistics):

- Newsprint:	0 %	technically 100% collectable and recyclable
- Uncoated mechanicals:	2 %	(part of books)
- Coated mechanicals:	11 %	(part of books and magazines)
- Uncoated woodfrees:	20 %	(part of books, archiving materials, specialities)
- Coated woodfrees:	15 %	(part of books, magazines and other printed matter)
- Tissue:	100 %	(Italy 98%, UK 95%, converting losses)
- Case making materials:	5 %	(contaminated materials)
- Cartonboards:	6 %	(contaminated materials)
- Sack & wrapping papers:	51 %	(contaminated materials, specialities)
- Other packaging paper & board:	8 %	(part of solid boards, specialities)
- Other paper and board:	96 %	(specialities, only converting losses is collectable)

Total paper and board 19% (based on average CEPI consumption structure)

Long-lasting papers represent 2-3% to the 19%. Even though they come back to the flow later on, it is necessary to take them into account, as they cannot be collected / recycled in the year they have been put on the market. And when collection and recycling rates are calculated, collection and recycling is compared to the paper put on the market during a particular year.

By paper grade group, tissue accounts for the highest quantity (36% of non-recyclable consumption), followed by printing and writing papers (25%), packaging grades (21-22%) and other paper and board (17-18%).

Some differences emerge between countries because of the paper consumption structure.

This study will be updated every 4-5 years using the same methodology in order to monitor the evolution in Europe.
