



## Press Release

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Brussels, 26 March 2020

# Collection and recycling of used paper more important than ever in times of health crisis

The Covid-19 sanitary crisis is unprecedented. The industry associations supporting the European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC) are saddened to see that so many people have lost their lives due to the pandemic. The lockdown measures taken to slow down contamination are deeply impacting our lives as well as business operations.

The paper value chain committed to keep its operations to deliver all essential paper products, such as hygiene products, packaging for food or pharmaceuticals while taking all necessary measures to protect workers, suppliers and customers.

The EPRC asks all authorities to enable crucial industries such as paper to continue production and to facilitate transport and cross border shipments for the supply of these goods. *"In these critical times, it is more than ever important to keep the supply for our industry running, in order to secure packaging for essential products"* said Angelika Christ, chairwoman of the EPRC.

The new circular economy action plan recently published by the European Commission recognizes separate collection as a prerequisite for the circular economy. With a recycling rate of 71,9% and even 84,6% in packaging, the paper and board value chain depends on paper for recycling.

**Separate collection of paper for recycling from households and supermarkets, but also its sorting and transport to paper mills are an essential part of this supply chain.**

Recently, individual cities in some Member States have announced they might have to reduce separate collections or close sorting centers due to the current crisis.

People's health must be the first priority along with supplying our society with essential goods for everyday life.

Cepi, the Confederation of European Paper Industries is hosting the EPRC secretariat.

For further information please contact Ulrich Leberle at [u.leberle@cepi.org](mailto:u.leberle@cepi.org) or +32 479 905 921.

### Note to editor:

*The European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC) was set up as an industry self-initiative in November 2000 to monitor progress towards meeting the paper recycling targets set out in the 2000 European Declaration on Paper Recycling. Since then the commitments in the Declaration are renewed every five years. In 2017 the EPRC committed itself to meeting and maintaining both a voluntary recycling rate target of 74% in the EU27 plus Switzerland and Norway by 2020 as well as qualitative targets in areas such as waste prevention, ecodesign and research and development. In*

*2017, Members of the ERPC are ACE, CEPI, CITPA, EMFA, ETS, FEPE, INGEDE and INTERGRAF. Supporters are Afera, EuPIA, FINAT, FEICA and RadTECH Europe. DG Environment and DG Grow of the European Commission are permanent observers to the EPRC.*