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Corrugated packaging advancing circularity and competitiveness at FEFCO Summit 2026

Brussels, Monday, 01 June 2026

The FEFCO Summit 2026, held from 27-29 May in Madrid, gathered 225 participants from across the European corrugated packaging industry, including business leaders and industry suppliers to discuss the sector's role in a rapidly evolving regulatory and economic environment.

The event officially launched by FEFCO President Nina Iversen (Glomma Papp) is built around the theme "Circularity in Action." The opening session, "*Setting the Scene: 2026 and Beyond*", provided insight into market dynamics and global economic trends, highlighting the need for companies to adapt to an increasingly complex and volatile environment.

The Summit addressed key developments shaping the industry, with particular emphasis on the implementation of the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and its practical implications for the value chain and the associated challenges and opportunities. Speakers underlined the importance of clear, harmonised and workable rules, supported by collaboration across stakeholders.

In the session "*Corrugated Cardboard Packaging – Circularity Champion*," the sector's strong circular performance and contribution to resource efficiency were highlighted, alongside ongoing efforts to optimise design and recycling systems.

Looking ahead, the session "*Corrugated Packaging: Sustainable, Adaptable, Smart and Secure*" explored how the industry can capitalise on the potential of Artificial Intelligence, while addressing emerging risks and operational priorities.

Cybersecurity was identified as a critical matter for industrial resilience, the panel examined its impact on operations, supply chains and business continuity and agreed that "When production stops, cyber becomes a business issue, not an IT issue."

The programme also highlighted new opportunities for corrugated cardboard driven by the ongoing paperisation trend which will require continued innovation to successfully address evolving customer needs and regulatory expectations.

The Summit also provided an opportunity to present the work of the FEFCO Communication Committee, including the progress of the "Recycled for Real" campaign, its further development and next steps.

In the session "*A Vision for the Future of Corrugated*" panellists shared their perspectives on the sector's long-term outlook. A clear consensus emerged "The future of corrugated packaging will depend on our ability to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, combining circularity, decarbonisation and industrial resilience, while clearly demonstrating the value of sustainable packaging."

At its closing speech, Saverio Mayer (FEFCO Vice-President, Smurfit Westrock) summarised the key takeaway: “This Summit confirmed one clear message: the corrugated industry is resilient, circular by design, and increasingly recognised as part of the solution; helping customers, communities, and policymakers build a more sustainable future for packaging.”

Eleni Despotou, FEFCO Director General, emphasised that the Summit reinforced the sector's commitment to supporting EU sustainability objectives, while ensuring that packaging solutions remain effective, efficient and fit for purpose.

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Note to the editors

FEFCO (European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers) represents the interests of the corrugated packaging industry in Europe. Headquartered in Brussels, FEFCO brings together European 16 national corrugated packaging organisations. The role of the Federation is to investigate economic, financial, technical and policy issues of interest to the corrugated packaging industry, to analyse all factors which may influence the industry, and to promote and develop its reputation.

Europe's corrugated industry produces around 46–50 billion square metres of board each year and comprises around 400 companies operating more than 600 plants, employing approximately 100,000 people. Corrugated cardboard packaging is inherently circular: it is based on renewable raw materials and is widely recycled in practice. The average box weight has decreased by 9% between 1996 and 2022 and contains on average 88% recycled content.