

Press Release

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European plastics industry and MEP Sajjad Karim calls on regulators to support plastics recycling market as crisis bites

The plastics industry and MEP Sajjad Karim have asked European decision-makers to support the plastics recycling markets following the negative impact of the financial crisis. A report launched today shows that plastic recycling is under threat as plastics demand decreases and prices of virgin material keep dropping.

As a direct consequence, 12.2 million tonnes of plastics waste in Europe still ends up in landfill. The industry warns that the situation could get worse as it continues to struggle with the impact of the economic downturn.

Among the concrete requests which the industry is making to legislators are:

- Recasting public procurement and green public procurement legislation and guidelines
- Providing incentives for energy efficiency-related measures
- Boosting innovation by providing a more favourable environment

This was further supported by MEP Sajjad Karim who said: *“I want to send a clear message to European DecisionMakers: the plastics industry needs your support in these times of crisis – not only for the benefit of its 1.6 million employees, but also for the environment.”* He continued by stating that *“We could create storage for the waste....or we could create more landfill space. But we’re already plagued by an excess of landfill sites across EU Member States; this is surely not the way forward.”*

The annual report “The Compelling Facts about Plastics” shows that recycling across Europe still increased (from 20.4% in 2007 to 21.3% in 2008, and energy recovery increased from 29.2% in 2007 to 30% in 2008) – but both figures represent a slowdown compared to the considerable increases recorded in recent years.

Moreover, there has been a major collective effort by the plastics industry to increase plastics recovery figures over the years. The industry, local, national and European governments, NGOs, retailers and consumers alike have been major players, since everyone’s contribution is needed to get over this negative phase caused by the crisis. The industry continues to strongly

believe in plastics recycling and its contribution to society, and is counting on European decision-makers to demonstrate the same commitment.

A full version of the “The Compelling Facts about Plastics 2008” is available at:
www.plasticseurope.org, www.plasticsconverters.eu, and www.plasticsrecyclers.eu

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Note to editors:

This report has been produced in partnership between PlasticsEurope, EuPC, EuPR and EPRO.

The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.6 million people are working in about 50,000 companies (mainly small and medium-sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover in excess of €300 billion per year.

PlasticsEurope is one of the leading European trade associations with centres in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Madrid, Milan and Paris. We are networking with European and national plastics associations and have more than 100 member companies, producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU27 member states plus Norway, Switzerland, Croatia and Turkey.

EuPC – European Plastics Converters – is the professional representative body of plastics converters within Europe whose activity embraces all sectors of the plastics converting industry including recycling. The overall objective is to defend and promote the interests of the European plastics converting industry:



- Voicing the industry's opinion towards European and international institutions and non-governmental organisations;
- Maintaining relationships with corresponding organisations in Europe and worldwide;
- Carrying out business surveys, studies and research projects in all aspects of the plastics processing industry.

EuPR – European Plastics Recyclers – is the professional representative body of plastics recyclers in Europe. EuPR promotes plastics mechanical recycling and conditions that enable profitable and sustainable business, while offering a service platform to its members. EuPR members bring together 85% of the European recycling capacity, processing more than 2.5 million tonnes of collected plastics per year.

EPRO is the association of the national organisations charged with organising and promoting recycling and recovery of plastics throughout Europe. EPRO provides a unique forum for the leading specialists in plastics waste management from across Europe to exchange learning, develop integrated plastics packaging waste strategies and support technological development.