

EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bag products

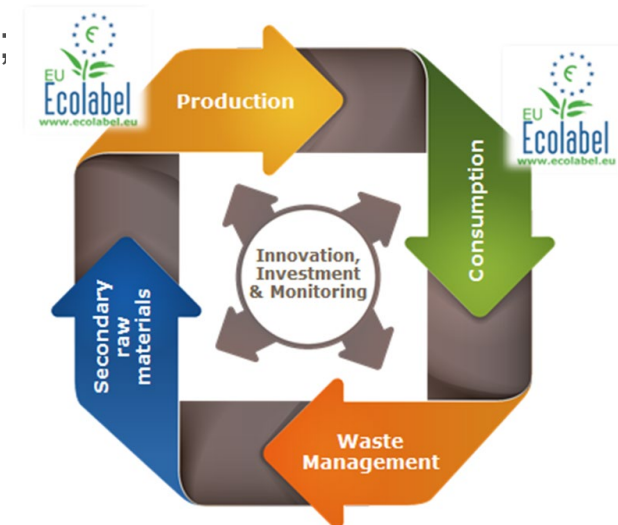
INGEDE Symposium, 2 March 2021

Malgorzata Kowalska (EC, DG JRC)

What is the EU Ecolabel?



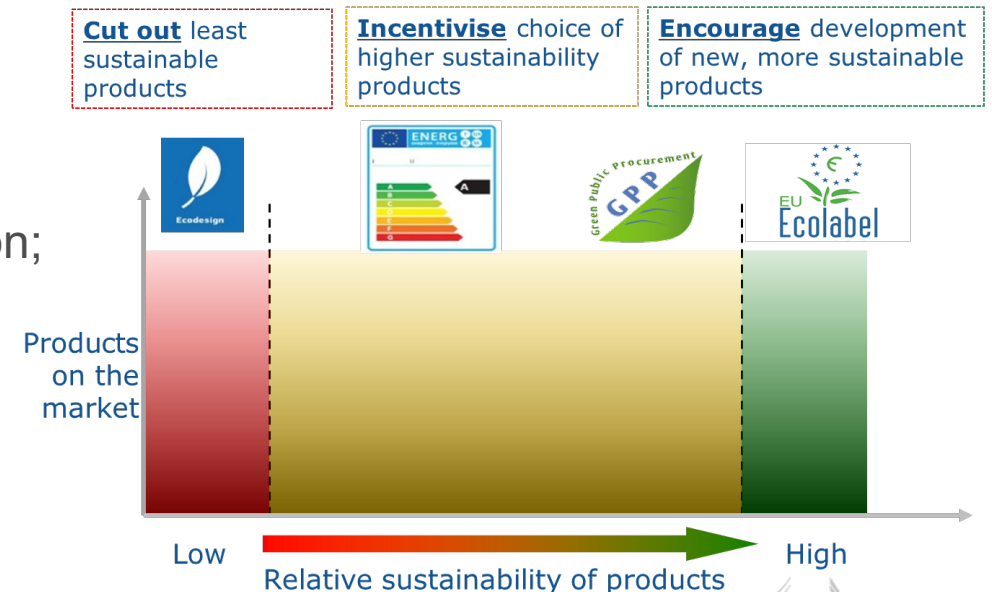
- The **official European Union label for environmental excellence** established in **1992** (EU Ecolabel Regulation n. 66/2010).
- A **third-party certified voluntary** scheme (**ISO 14024-type I-ecolabel**) for companies aiming to promote products and services with a **lower environmental impact**; Criteria are based on the **Life cycle approach**;
- Managed by the **European Commission** and Member States **Competent Bodies**;
- An effective tool to **empower consumers' and procurers'** sustainable choices;
- Supports the implementation of:
 - the **EU Green Deal**
 - the **new Circular Economy Action Plan**
 - the **new Consumer Agenda**
- Represents the **opportunity** in the circular economy context.



The EU Ecolabel criteria



- Address **10–20 %** env. best performing products on the market;
- Criteria are determined on **scientific basis** and are based on LCA analysis (**hotspots** identification);
- Include **health, safety, social and ethical aspects**, where appropriate;
- Favor substitution of **hazardous substances** with safer alternatives;
- Address **fitness for use** requirements, and support **durability, reusability, recyclability, and recycled content** of products;
- Guarantee compliance with **existing EU legislation**;
- Are **regularly revised** to follow technological evolution;
- Adopted as **Commission Decisions**;





EU Ecolabel key figures

as per September 2020

75 796 products (goods and services) 1 757 licenses awarded
with the EU Ecolabel in 24 different product categories

Fastest growing product categories over the past 6 months

Hand dishwashing
detergents
+23%

Furniture
+56%

Industrial
Laundry
Detergents
+91%

Indoor Cleaning
Services
+116%

Number of products

Number of products awarded per country



Spain 15 768	United Kingdom 2 151	Cyprus 84
Italy 9 703	Denmark 2 128	Hungary 64
France 7 950	Netherlands 1 605	Romania 31
Germany 6 714	Estonia 863	Latvia 26
Czech Republic 5 352	Austria 688	Croatia 21
Belgium 5 202	Finland 647	Bulgaria 9
Sweden 4 811	Lithuania 458	Malta 6
Portugal 4 631	Norway 150	Slovak Republic 5
Greece 3 523	Ireland 112	Luxembourg 1
Poland 2 909	Slovenia 96	Iceland 0

TOTAL 75 796

www.ecolabel.eu

September 2020 EU Ecolabel figures

- 24 Eligible Product Groups;
- The number of EU Ecolabel goods and services kept growing despite the COVID-19 crisis (+21 % licences and +7 % products in respect to March 2020);
- 1 757 licenses are awarded for 75 796 products;
- Highest n. products for: indoor **paints** and varnishes, tissue **paper** and tissue products, hard **coverings**, **textiles**, hard surface **cleaning products** and **tourist accomodations**;
- Leading countries: **Spain, Italy, France**;
- More info available at:
<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/facts-and-figures.html>

Commission Decision (EU) 2020/1803 of 27/11/2020 establishing EU ECOLABEL for PRINTED PAPER, STATIONERY PAPER AND PAPER CARRIER BAG PRODUCTS

Merging of two product groups:

- EU Ecolabel criteria for Converted paper products (2014/256/EU)
- EU Ecolabel criteria for printed paper products (2012/481/EU)
- Criteria revision process 2018–2020

✓ Validity until 31 December 2028

✓ Transition period for the current licenses 18 months: 26/05/2022
(old criteria applicable until 26/01/2021)

USER MANUAL – applicants guidance

TECHNICAL REPORT – rationales behind the criteria

(available on www.ecolabel.eu)

COMMISSION DECISION (EU) 2020/1803

of 27 November 2020

establishing the EU Ecolabel criteria for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products

(notified under document C(2020) 8155)

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 8(2) thereof,

After consulting the European Union Ecolabelling Board,

Whereas:

(1) Under Regulation (EC) No 66/2010, the EU Ecolabel may be awarded to those products with a reduced environmental impact during their entire life cycle.

(2) Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 provides that the criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel are to be established according to product groups.

(3) Commission Decision 2012/481/EU⁽²⁾ for the product group 'printed paper' has been extended to 31 December 2020 by Commission Decision 2019/1791/EU⁽³⁾.

(4) Commission Decision 2014/256/EU⁽⁴⁾ for the product group 'converted paper' has been extended to 31 December 2020 by Commission Decision 2019/1791/EU⁽³⁾.

(5) In order to better reflect the environmental requirements for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products, it is appropriate to revise the criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for these product groups.

(6) The EU Ecolabel criteria for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products should be established according to product groups.

(7) In line with the objective of the EU Ecolabel, it is appropriate to revise the criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products.

(8) The criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products should be established according to product groups.

(9) The criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products should be established according to product groups.

(10) The criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products should be established according to product groups.

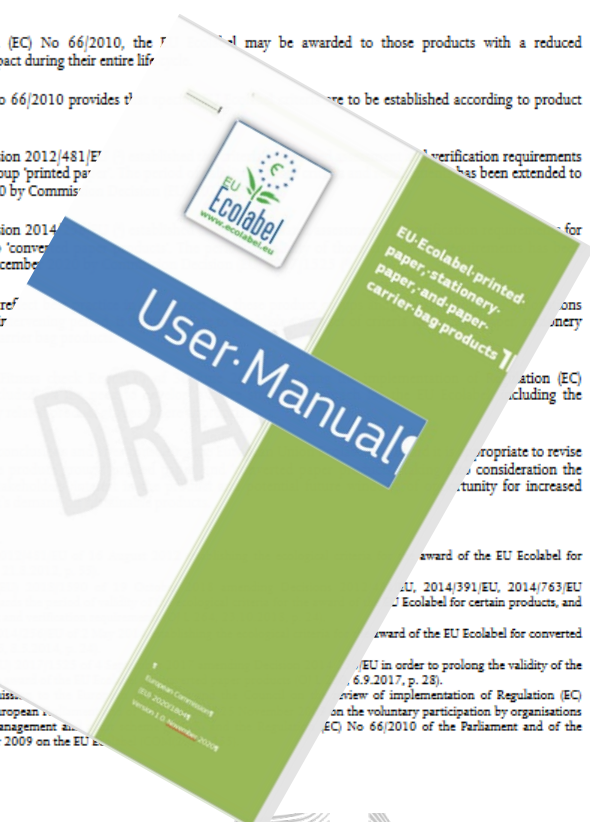
(11) The criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper, and paper carrier bag products should be established according to product groups.

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Commission Decision (EU) 2020/1803

1. Substrate;

2. Restricted substances:

- 2.1. Restrictions on Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs);
- 2.2. Restrictions on substances classified under Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- 2.3. Biocidal products and biocidal active substances;
- 2.4. Cleaning agents;
- 2.5. Alkyl phenol ethoxylates, halogenated solvents and phthalates;
- 2.6. Further restrictions applying to printing inks, toners and varnishes;
- 2.7. Toluene recovery from rotogravure printing;

3. Recyclability:

- 3.1. Removability of non-paper parts;
- 3.2. Repulpability;
- 3.3. Adhesives removability;
- 3.4. Deinkability;

4. Emissions:

- 4.1. Emissions to water from rotogravure printing;
- 4.2. VOCs emission from installations covered by Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council or equivalent installations;
- 4.3. VOCs emissions from printing processes not covered by Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council;

5. Waste:

- 5.1. Waste management system;
- 5.2. Paper for recycling from printing facilities;
- 5.3. Paper for recycling from stationery paper product and carrier bags production sites;

6. Energy use;

7. Training;

8. Fitness for use;

9. Information on the product;

10. Information appearing on the EU Ecolabel.

Scope

1. Printed paper products

- >90 % w/w of paper substrate
- For books, catalogues, ... >80 % w/w paper substrate

2. Envelopes – >90 % w/w paper substrate

3. Paper carrier bags – 100 % w/w paper substrate

4. Stationery paper products

- >70 % w/w of paper substrate except for some storage product

Product	Paper substrate content	Metal threshold	Plastic threshold
Printed paper			
Printed paper	90 %	x	x
For books, catalogues, booklets, forms, (...)	80 %	x	10 %
Stationery paper product			
Envelopes	90 %	x	x
Sorters and part files	70 %	<30 g	<10 %
Tree flap folders			
Filing boxes			
Dividers			
Paper folders, (...)			
Exercise books, Diaries	70 %	<30 g	<13 %
Notebooks, (...)			
Lever arch Files	70 %	75 g up to 225 sheets	<13 %
Ring Binders		170 g for more than 225 sheets	
Folders with metal fasteners	x	75 g up to 225 sheets	<10 %
Suspension files	x	170 g for more than 225 sheets	
Gift wrapping, paper bags	100 %	x	x

Maximum allowed content of plastic and metal adapted to a product type

PREAMBLE: A&V – key aspects

- The ecological criteria cover the manufacturing of products, including constituent sub-processes (i.e. paper production, printing, lamination, etc.). Transport and packaging are not covered.
- Each criterion needs to be met → the specific assessment and verification requirements are indicated within each criterion
- Parts of the final product that are printed or converted by a sub-contractor shall also fulfil the related requirements (unless separately specified e.g. non-fixed inserts).
- An application can be submitted for a product line (the product group of certain type):
 - a theoretical product described based on the format, materials, inks, and bindings used. For this product the license would be given to that fulfils the general description.
- Prerequisite: a product shall meet all applicable legal requirements of the country or countries in which the product is placed on the market.

CRITERION 1: Substrate

CRITERION 1: Substrate

The paper substrate, including paperboard used in a final product shall bear the EU Ecolabel for “Graphic paper” in accordance with Annex I to Commission Decision (EU) 2019/70

EU Ecolabel criteria for graphic paper and board

Fibres sourcing – virgin or recycled fibre
min 70 % SFM fibre and/or recycled material

Emissions– COD, P, NO_x, SO₂, CO₂, AOX
Energy use – fuel and electricity consumption
Hazardous chemicals – CLP and SVHCs restrictions, chlorine, APEOs, Surfactants in deinking, biocides, Azo dyes, metal-based pigments and dyes, ionic impurities in dye-stuffs,
Waste management
Fitness for use

EU Ecolabel criteria for printed paper stationery paper and paper carrier bag products

Life cycle stage

Raw material sourcing

Pulp and Paper Production

Conversion

Criterion 2. Restricted substances

2.1. SVHC restrictions (final product level)

2.2. CLP restrictions (final product level)

2.3. Biocidal products and active substances (chemical level)

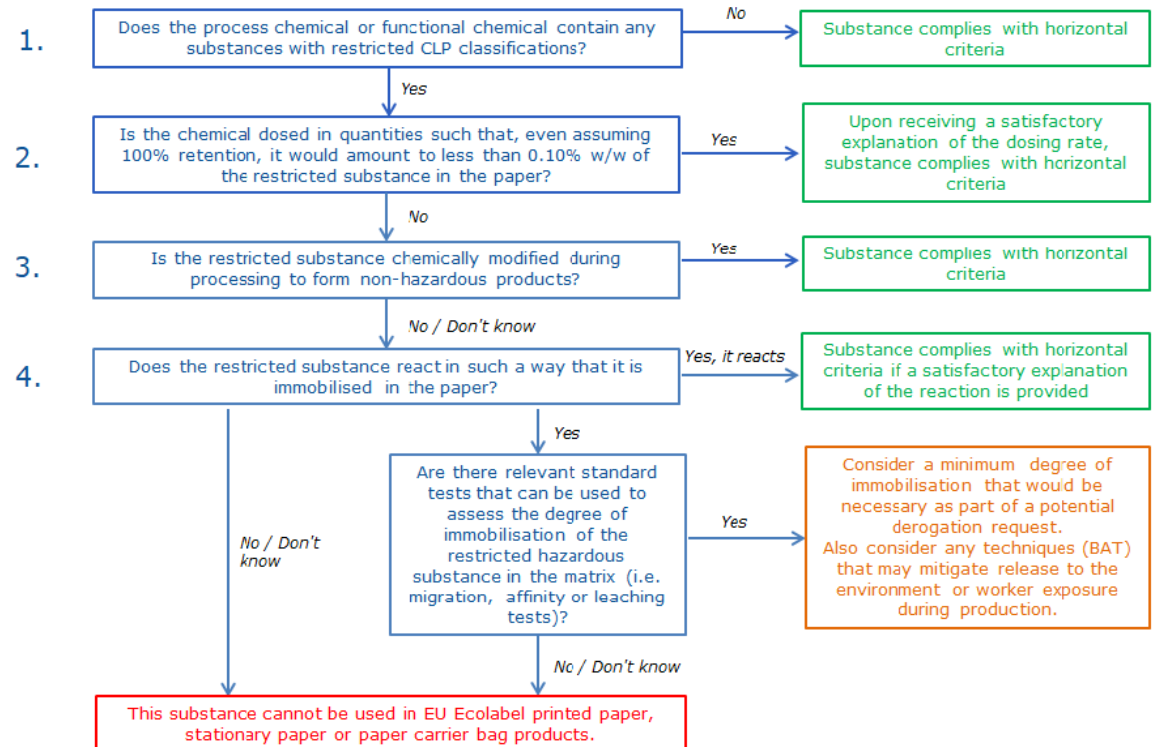
2.4. Cleaning agents (chemical level)

2.5. APEOs, halogenated solvents and phthalates (chemical level)

2.6. Printing inks, toners and varnishes (chemical level)

2.7. Toluene recovery from rotogravure printing (production line level)

Supply chain control based on SDS



Criterion 3. Recyclability

Criterion 3.1. Removability of non-paper parts

Easy separation of non-paper components from paper components

Criterion 3.2. Repulpability;

- Wet strength agents shall not be used (except for wrapping paper and carrier bags)
- Double lamination should not be used
- Lamination permitted only for durable products,

Criterion 3.3. Adhesives removability

Unless otherwise specified, adhesives may be used only if their removability can be proven with **a score of at least 71 on the EPRC Adhesive Removal Scorecard.**

Pressure sensitive adhesive coatings shall be used only if their removability can be proven with at least a positive removability score according to the EPRC Adhesive Removal Scorecard.

The criterion does not apply to: (1) to adhesive labels if they constitute less than 0,50 % w/w of the final product (2) non-adhesive labels (3) water based adhesives

Adhesive applications listed in the Annex of the “Assessment of Printed Product Recyclability, Scorecard for the Removability of Adhesive Applications”, are considered compliant with the requirement.

Criterion 3. Recyclability

Criterion 3.4. Deinkability

- **Printed-paper products:** all individual parameters analyzed have a positive score and the final score is at least 51 on the EPRC Deinkability Scorecard, or equivalent.
- **Envelopes:** Deinkability test is not required
 - ✓ internal printing used only for the privacy reasons (paper with a grammage $<135 \text{ g/m}^2$, or opacity level $<98 \%$).
 - ✓ internal printed surface $<80 \%$ of the total interior surface minus the glued area and shall be printed with light colour shades.

Printing technologies and material combinations listed in the Annex of the “Assessment of Printed Product Recyclability, Deinkability Score” shall be considered compliant with the requirements.

Criterion 4. Emissions

➤ Chromium emission to water and air from rotogravure printing, VOCs emission

Criterion 4.2 – Emission from installations covered by Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council or equivalent installations

- Apply to printing processes covered by Annex I and VII to Directive 2010/75/EU or to equivalent printing processes outside the EU that meet specifications of Annex I and VII to Directive 2010/75/EU.
- In general: the criterion addresses installations with an organic solvent consumption capacity of more than 150 kg per hour or more than 200 tonnes per year

Criterion 4.3 – VOCs emission from printing processes not covered by Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council

- Apply to printing processes not covered by Annex I or by Annex VII Part 2 to Directive 2010/75/EU or to equivalent printing processes outside the EU that do not meet specification of Annex I and VII to Directive 2010/75/EU.

**Based on IED approach – VOCs Mass Balance
and/or TVOC measurement
Monitoring based on BAT 10 and 11 (STS BREF)**

User Manual – Mass Balance calculator

Criterion 5 – Waste

- The facility where the product is manufactured shall have a system in place for the handling of waste.
 - ✓ *Possible verification by means of Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) registration and/or certified according to ISO 14001 (if the inclusion of waste management is sufficiently addressed)*
- The amount of waste paper 'X' produced shall not exceed the indicated values.

Printing method	X (%)
Sheet offset	23
Cold-set, newspaper	10
Cold-set, form printing	18
Cold-set rotation (except newspapers)	19
Heat-set rotation	21
Rotogravure printing	15
Flexography printing	17
Digital printing	10
Screen printing	23
Product	
Envelopes	19
Writing stationery products, excluding diaries	15
Diaries and filing stationery products printed on one side	20
Filing stationery products printed on both sides	30
Paper bags and wrapping paper	11

X = annual tonnes of waste paper produced during the printing/manufacturing /annual tonnes of paper purchased for the production

Criterion 6. Energy use

- The site where the EU Ecolabel product is manufactured shall have established an energy management system addressing all energy consuming devices
- The energy management system shall include measures for the improvement of energy efficiency
 - ✓ *Possible verification by means of certification according to ISO 50001, EN 16247; ISO 14001, or registration with EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)*

Criterion 7. Training

All relevant members of staff participating in the day-to-day operation of the production site shall be given the knowledge necessary to ensure that the Ecolabel requirements are fulfilled and continuously improved.

Criterion 8. Fitness for use

- The product shall be suitable for its purpose.
- For those cases when the quality certification is not available, other verification systems should be considered.

Verification forms:

- Letter/document/statements issued by clients for a specific product that assures product quality
- Detailed description of procedure of handling consumer complaints;
- Certification, in accordance with the standard ISO 9001, or equivalent
- Product quality, in accordance with the standard EN ISO/IEC 17050-1,

Criterion 9 and 10. Information on the product and Information appearing on the EU Ecolabel

- The information indicated by Criterion 9 shall appear on the paper bag and printed paper product.
- The applicant shall follow the instructions on how to properly use the EU Ecolabel logo provided in the EU Ecolabel Logo Guidelines:
- If the optional label with text box is used, it shall contain the three statements mentioned in the criteria document. No other statements can be used in the box.

The EU Ecolabel-Benefits for applicants



- Contributes to **improve the image of the company**
- Contributes to **resource and monetary savings** (e.g. Managing energy consumption, improving CO₂ footprint, reducing waste production, etc.)
- Contributes to the **growth of the company** and **job creation**
- Certifies that the product/service is **among the most environmentally-friendly in its class**
- Increases the **visibility of the product** on the market (the **EU Ecolabel logo** is recognised throughout Europe by millions of EU consumers)
- Featuring of the products and company on the **EU Ecolabel official catalogue** (<http://ec.europa.eu/ecat/>)
- Benefits from **marketing activities**, also undertaken by the EC and the national Competent Bodies (eg. collaboration with online retailers).
- Easier access to **GPP** (Green Public Procurement).

How to apply for the EU Ecolabel?

- Contact your National Competent Body
- Prepare technical dossier
- Register your product on ECAT
- Submit your application and pay fee
- Assessment of your application
- Award of a license
- Communicate about your products/services!

Important links and contacts:

European Commission EU Ecolabel website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/eu-ecolabel-for-businesses.html>

EC contact Email: EU-Ecolabel@ec.europa.eu



www.ecolabel.eu



The EU Ecolabel is awarded to sustainably designed products, encouraging innovation, and contributing to the EU goal of climate neutrality by **2050** and to the **circular economy**.

Through the EU Ecolabel, industry can offer consumer an **eco-friendly alternative** to conventional paper products, and help them lower their daily environmental impact.

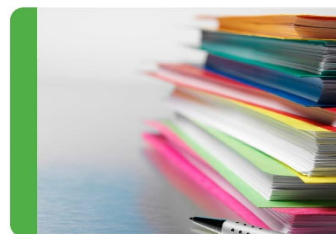
This product group covers:

- any printed paper product consisting of at least **90 %** by weight of paper, paperboard or paper-based substrates (**80%** for books, catalogues, booklets or forms)
- envelopes that consist of at least **90%** by weight of paper, paperboard or paper-based substrates
- paper carrier bags (including wrapping paper) consisting of **100 %** by weight of paper, paperboard or paper-based substrates
- stationery paper products (including filing products) consisting of at least **70 %** by weight of paper, paperboard or paper based substrates (except for suspension files and folders with metal fastener to which the threshold does not apply)



Stringent criteria, focusing on the main environmental impacts throughout the lifecycle of the products, ensure that EU Ecolabel printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bag products are among **the best on the market** in terms of environmental performance. Specifically, EU Ecolabel criteria:

- ensure that the manufacturing of paper-based products is carried out in a more sustainable way and fibres are sourced from sustainably managed forests or recycled materials
- restrict the use of hazardous substances
- increase products circularity by increasing their recyclability
- address emissions generated during the printing process
- reduce the quantity of paper waste generated in a process
- promote energy efficient manufacturing processes



Environment



Hotspots

EU Ecolabel Solution

Please see the full Ecolabel criteria for printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bag products Commission Decision (EU) 2020/1803 of 27 November 2020 : <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2020/1803/oj>

1. Manufacturing

Sustainable raw materials:

- the paper substrate, including paperboard used in a final product bears the EU Ecolabel for "Graphic paper"

2. Manufacturing – hazardous substances

Restricted hazardous substances:

- all process chemicals used by the applicant in relevant printing or converting processes are screened
- all ingoing chemicals used in the production process, and any supplied materials forming part of the final product, do not contain certain hazardous substances
- biocidal products and biocidal active substances, cleaning agents, alkyl phenol ethoxylates –halogenated solvents –phthalates, printing inks, toners and varnishes, toluene recovery from rotogravure printing, have to comply with specific requirements

3. Manufacturing and end-of-life

Product circularity:

- non-paper parts of stationery paper product (e.g. metal bars or plastic covers) are easily removable not to hinder the recycling process
- the product is suitable for repulping
- adhesives may be used only if they are highly removable
- the printed paper product is highly drinkable

4. Manufacturing – emissions into water and air

Reduced emissions into water and air:

- the specific amount of Cr and Cu at the point of discharge from rotogravure printing does not exceed specific limits
- specific requirements on Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) are met

5. Manufacturing – waste generation

Reduced waste generation:

- the facility where the product is manufactured has a system for handling waste in place - which addresses and documents the measures taken to reduce the amount of solid and liquid waste, including waste paper, ink waste, cleaning agent solution and dampening solution waste as defined by local or national regulatory authorities
- the amount of paper for recycling from manufacturing process does not exceed specified thresholds



For more information, visit www.ecolabel.eu

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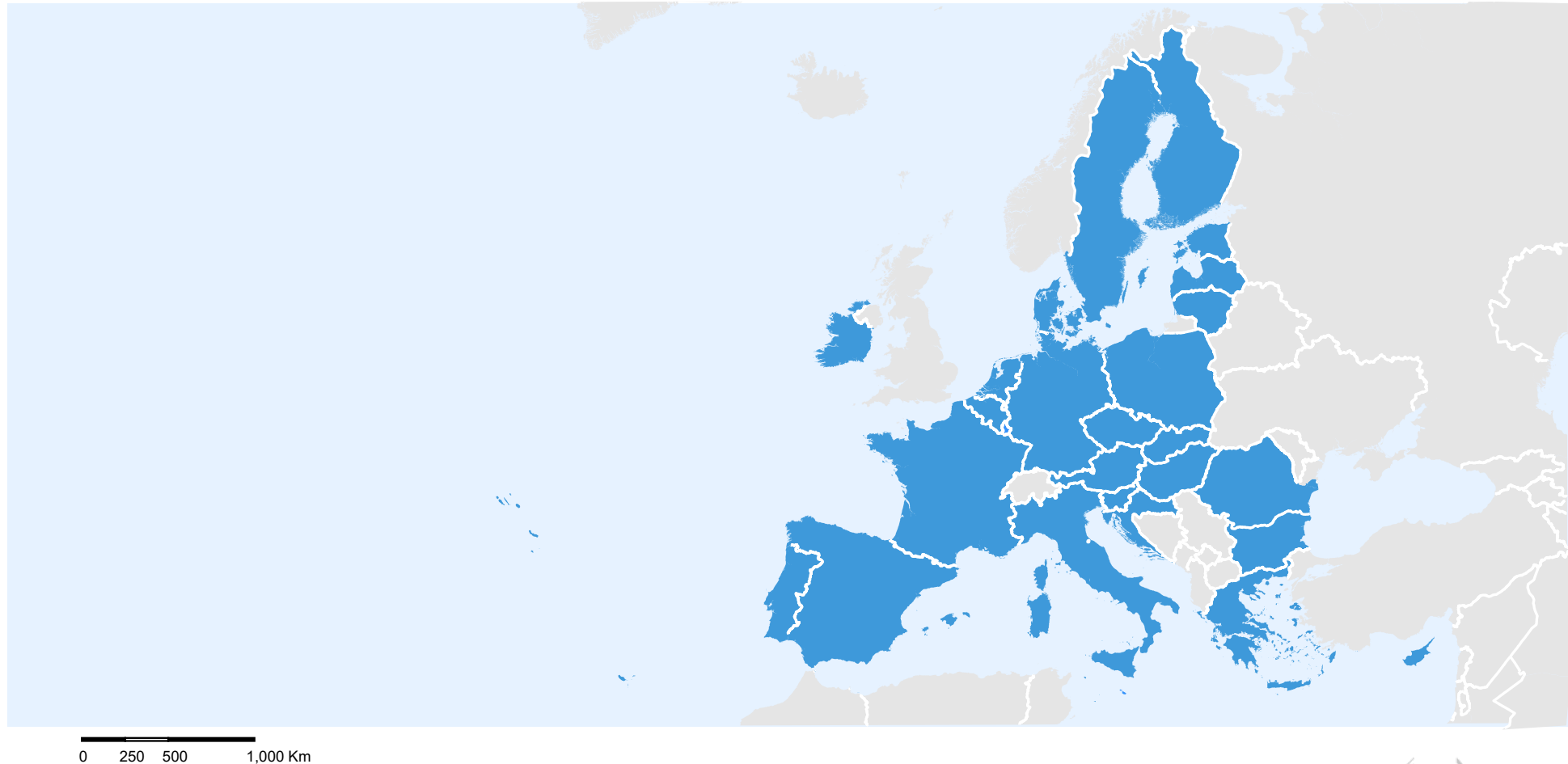


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EU countries



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