

## Example – recycled writing paper

### ***Generic product activity or name***

Recycled writing paper.

### ***Synonyms***

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### ***Context and background***

There is a specific consumer demand for recycled writing paper that may even lead to prices for recycled writing paper to be higher than writing paper from virgin wood pulp. (Williams 2005). At a global level the overall paper consumption is growing although there are signs of a potential emerging decline in paper use in the OECD countries, which is probably due to an increase in use of electronic media (Hetemäki et al. 2014).

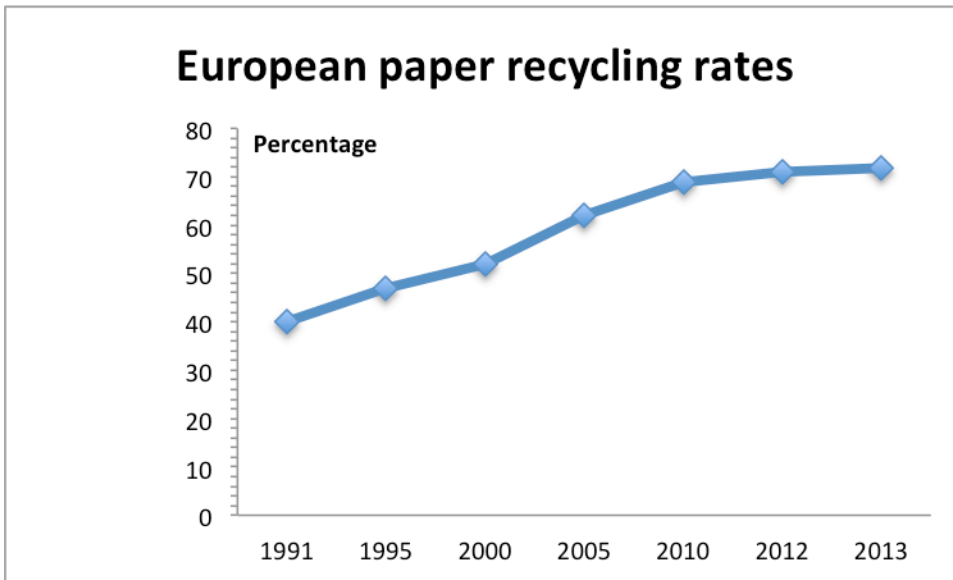
### ***Presentation of example***

Paper can be recycled a number of times by breaking down the old paper, called “scrap paper” to pulp. To the recycled fraction is added a fraction of paper pulp from wood pulp (virgin paper pulp), since the recycled fibers will inevitable be shorter due to the (mechanical or chemical) breakage of bonds formed in making of the original papers (Wikipedia 2015).

As environmental concerns increase worldwide there has been an increased focus on recycling paper from NGO’s and governments alike (see e.g. WWF Global 2015). Postconsumer paper recycling has increased in Europe for the last 15 years, and is now at a rate of around 70 % (European Paper Recovery Council 2015).

Pulp and paper as a whole are considered to be standardized and at a mature stage of the product life cycle, which means that price differentials between suppliers are small and the real “negotiating” power lies with the customers (Hetemäki et al. 2014). Even though recovery schemes, such as the European, have resulted in a higher level of recycling, there is a finite amount of paper waste available.

If there is an additional (marginal) demand for recycled writing paper the additional amount of recycled pulp therefore comes from a reduction in supply to the other customers in the market for scrap paper/recycled pulp, which therefore must compensate by an increased supply of virgin pulp, in order to maintain the market output constant.



**Figure:** European recycling of paper. Source: European Paper Recovery Council.

<http://www.paperrecovery.org/fact-figures/facts>.

### ***Information sources used***

The European Paper Recovery Council gives a good overview of the current paper collecting policies.

### ***References***

European Paper Recovery Council (2014). Recycling is at 71.7%.

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***How to reference this***

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