



# The Recyclers Bulletin

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## Circular Economy Bulletin

March 2026

***Dearest gentle readers,***

*If one thought March might pass quietly, one would be most mistaken.*

*We unveiled our Annual Report for 2025—laying bare a year of progress, persistence, and no small amount of advocacy. Not ones to linger in reflection for too long, we also presented our DOs and DON'Ts for the forthcoming Circular Economy Act—a discreet yet pointed guide for those shaping Europe's next chapter.*

*And for those with a keen eye for opportunity, a new role has quietly entered the scene: a communications internship, awaiting its most promising candidate.*

*As the Easter break approaches, one might be tempted to rest entirely... but we would suggest a more strategic indulgence: securing your place at our upcoming e-waste event and the European Recycling Conference.*

*After all, the most well-prepared guests are always those who register on time.*

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# Securing Europe's clean transition through e-waste circularity

27 May

Residence Palace, Brussels

Get your tickets

**EARLY BIRD TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE** ♻️ At a decisive moment for Europe's circular economy, Recycling Europe is bringing the e-waste stakeholders back together in Brussels. Join a full house of speakers from the European Commission, insights from the European Parliament, and leading recyclers and manufacturers -all around the same table- to discuss what's next for WEEE, critical raw materials, and the Circular Economy Act.

### Discover the agenda

**27 May 2026 | 13:30-18:00 | Residence Palace, Brussels**

Get your ticket now



## Metals

The European Commission is organising the 2026 Clean Steel Roundtable on 29 April to discuss how EU research funding can support the steel sector's ambition to cut emissions by 55% by 2030 while remaining competitive. The discussion will focus on the role of the Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS) in driving breakthrough technologies, the conditions needed to advance decarbonisation in a complex geopolitical and economic context, and the key innovations that should shape the future research agenda. Register [here](#) by 28 April to join the discussion.



## Critical Raw Materials

Recycling Europe has reacted to proposed amendments to the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), warning that they could weaken Europe's circular economy. In our reaction, we **stress** that strengthening circularity and recovering CRMs from end-of-life products is essential, and that recycled content targets should focus on post-consumer materials. Counting pre-consumer waste toward these targets, especially for rare earth magnets, would reduce incentives to recover materials from end-of-life products, undermining recycling capacity and Europe's material autonomy.

### Read our reaction

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## E-waste

Recycling Europe participated in a Joint Research Center (JRC) workshop held in the context of the upcoming WEEE Directive revision, which was divided into two sessions focusing on harmonised requirements and standards for WEEE treatment, and on material recovery and preparation for re-use across different WEEE categories. The discussions aimed to support the development of more consistent treatment practices and to improve the recovery of valuable materials. Following this, Recycling Europe has circulated the relevant background documents and a JRC survey to its members, inviting them to review the materials, provide comments on the JRC's assessment, and submit data and input on topics such as the recovery of rare earth elements, silicon from PV panels, and other critical raw materials. Members are encouraged to provide detailed, data-driven feedback by 10 April to support a consolidated response ahead of the JRC's 20 April deadline.

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## Net-Zero

On 4 March, the European Commission published the **Industrial Accelerator Act (IAA)**, aiming to create lead markets for low-carbon products and strengthen Europe's industrial competitiveness. While the ambition is welcome, Recycling Europe **considers** that the proposal falls short by overlooking one of Europe's most effective tools for industrial decarbonisation: the recycling industry. Despite already delivering significant CO<sub>2</sub> savings and reducing reliance on third-country raw materials, recycling is not recognised as a

strategic sector and does not benefit from fast-track permitting—putting at risk the EU's broader objective of reaching 24% circular material use by 2030.

### Read our reaction

**EU ETS:** According to Contexte, the European Parliament's ENVI Committee is calling on the European Commission to address transparency gaps in how member states use revenues from the EU Emissions Trading System. In a letter, Chair Pierfrancesco Maran pointed to inconsistencies and insufficient data on how the €193 billion collected between 2013 and 2025 has been spent, urging clearer reporting rules and stronger enforcement, including potential infringement procedures. MEPs are also requesting a detailed, year-by-year assessment of national spending ahead of the upcoming ETS revision expected by July.



### ELVs

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) has launched a consultation survey as part of its feasibility study under the End-of-Life Vehicles Regulation (ELVR), focusing on recycled content targets for steel and aluminium in new vehicles. Stakeholders are invited to provide input by 17 April 2026 via the survey [here](#).



### Packaging

The European Commission has **published** new guidance on the implementation of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) to ensure consistent application of the rules across the EU ahead of its entry into force in 2026. Developed in response to extensive stakeholder feedback, the guidance clarifies important aspects of the regulation, including definitions of packaging and economic operators, as well as requirements on single-use packaging, PFAS in food contact materials, re-use targets, and extended producer responsibility schemes. It is complemented by a dynamic FAQ document and aims to provide greater legal certainty while supporting both businesses and Member States in implementation. Importantly, the guidance does not modify the legal obligations of the PPWR but should be read alongside the regulation.



## Waste Shipments

On 27 March, Recycling Europe met with the European Commission and Member States at the Expert Group on waste shipments to discuss the implementation of the revised Waste Shipment Regulation. The Commission confirmed limited flexibility for Annex VII submissions under DIWASS until the end of 2026 (mainly paper-based), but no flexibility for notified waste, for which DIWASS will be mandatory from May 2026, and no changes to the two-day advance submission requirement. Discussions also covered ongoing work on exports to OECD and non-OECD countries, with key decisions expected in 2026, as well as the upcoming Delegated Act on green-listed waste. On audit obligations, the Commission will establish an ad hoc working group, although Member State engagement remains limited. Transitional rules were clarified, with only notifications submitted and acknowledged before 21 May 2026 remaining under the current regime. Overall, while some flexibility was introduced, several industry concerns remain outstanding.

Earlier in the month, Recycling Europe alongside several industrial lobbies, including and associations from the paper, plastics, metals, glass and waste management sectors, had urged the European Commission to introduce a one-year adaptation phase for the implementation of the Waste Shipment Regulation, ahead of its entry into force. We called for flexibility in deploying the DIWASS digital system, including a transitional period without sanctions, the temporary use of paper or alternative communication methods, and greater harmonisation across Member States, notably maintaining the current Annex VII procedures.

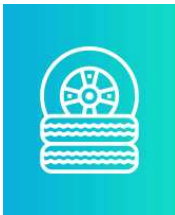


## Textiles

Recycling Europe is actively contributing to the development of future ecodesign requirements for textiles under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR). We have recently submitted feedback to **JRC's 3rd milestone** of the Preparatory Study on Textiles, setting the foundation for upcoming ecodesign requirements for apparel (ESPR apparel DA). Study completion foreseen in mid-2026. Foreseen adoption of the ESPR DA by end of 2027.

Our priorities focus on introducing ambitious and mandatory recycled content targets that prioritise EU post-consumer textile waste, alongside strong recyclability requirements built on a technology-neutral framework that supports innovation and improves collection and sorting systems. We also call for a comprehensive approach to durability, ensuring products are designed to last and support reuse, as well as a full life-cycle approach to environmental footprint backed by performance measures. Finally, greater transparency on substances of concern across the value chain remains essential.

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## Tyres

Recycling Europe joined the AZuR Network **Partner Meeting** in Austria, hosted by KIAS Recycling, bringing together key players from the tyre recycling sector. The meeting highlighted the industry's innovation and growing momentum, while discussions focused on market challenges, regulatory developments, and future opportunities. Recycling Europe also contributed to the exchange by facilitating a workshop on the Digital Product Passport, gathering insights from across the tyre value chain.

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## Ecodesign

In mid-March, Recycling Europe **joined** the Ecodesign Forum Expert Group to help shape the Digital Product Passport (DPP) for textiles, iron & steel, and construction. We emphasised that the DPP must reflect recycling realities and product-specific needs to effectively boost circularity. Recycling Europe will continue engaging across sectors to ensure ecodesign requirements and the DPP support real recyclability and a stronger circular economy.

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## Plastics

**Circular Plastics Alliance (CPA):** The **Circular Plastics Alliance (CPA)** set out its relaunch roadmap at a 13 March relaunch meeting, confirming a high-level dialogue on 8

April to align commitments under its 2026 work programme, with first reports expected in May. The alliance will introduce quarterly monitoring of the European plastics market, including global trade analysis, and plans by June to identify sector vulnerabilities—particularly from subsidised imports—and propose measures to boost demand. The initiative is led by a steering committee of 14 member states and key industry players

**Made in Europe recycled plastics:** Recycling Europe has joined forces with FEAD, Der Grüne Punkt, Plastics Recyclers Europe, and Reloop to advocate for “Made in Europe” recycled plastics. In a letter to the European Commission and EU Presidencies, they call for regulatory targets that boost the uptake, value, and market demand of European recycled plastics, strengthen the EU circular economy, and support sector resilience and competitiveness. This initiative aims to build a truly circular, competitive, and sustainable plastics economy in Europe.

**SUPD revision:** Recycling Europe has submitted its recommendations on the revision of the Single-Use Plastics Directive (SUPD), calling for stronger measures to boost circularity and support the EU plastics recycling industry. The paper highlights the need for more ambitious recycled content targets—raising PET bottle requirements to 50% by 2030—alongside short-term demand incentives, robust enforcement and penalties, and safeguards against unfair competition from imports. It also stresses the importance of prioritising EU-origin recycled materials and ensuring strict compliance of imported plastics with EU standards through effective “mirror clauses” and enforcement.



A recent parliamentary question warning about Europe’s alleged dependence on third countries for paper recycling overlooks a simple reality: Europe produces more recovered paper than it can use domestically. Exports are therefore not a weakness, but a necessary part of a well-functioning market. Restricting them would distort prices and undermine recycling. Recycling Europe has published a position paper setting the record straight, calling instead for stronger internal markets—through harmonised rules and EU-wide end-of-waste criteria—to support Europe’s circular economy.

[Read our reaction](#)

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## Ship recycling

The European Commission has **updated** the European List of Ship Recycling Facilities, adding the first approved German shipyard in Emden and renewing the inclusion of four EU yards in Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania and Spain, as well as one facility in Türkiye. The move aims to ensure that large EU-flagged vessels are dismantled under strict environmental, safety and labour standards, addressing the risks posed by unsafe ship recycling practices. Under the EU Ship Recycling Regulation, in force since 31 December 2018, all large seagoing EU-flagged ships must use facilities from the European List, a measure that is particularly relevant given that European ship owners control around 30% of the global fleet while many vessels are still dismantled outside the EU, often under harmful conditions.

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## Sustainable Finance

**Revision of EU Taxonomy criteria:** The European Commission is seeking **feedback** on proposed revisions to the EU Taxonomy criteria for sustainable economic activities, aiming to simplify the framework and make it easier to use. The changes include streamlined technical criteria, clearer compliance guidance, and alignment with updated legislation and technological developments, with the goal of boosting adoption, improving access to green finance, and enhancing transparency. The consultation is open until 14 April, with adoption of the revised criteria expected by summer.

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## Competitiveness

Nicosia's latest draft proposals on the EU Competitiveness Fund, discussed by national experts on 25 March, avoided addressing disagreements over how funding should be allocated in the 2028–2034 EU budget, instead emphasising added value, innovation, productivity gains, and improved access for SMEs through tailored tenders and adjusted eligibility criteria.



## Other EU files

**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** Recycling Europe has called on the European Commission and co-legislators to keep the appointment of an authorised representative mandatory in EPR schemes. While supporting efforts to simplify regulations, we emphasized that authorised representatives are crucial for ensuring legal accountability of foreign producers, preventing circumvention, free-riding, and loss of traceability. We also highlighted that maintaining this requirement is key to effective EPR enforcement, supporting strategic autonomy, and maximising the circularity potential of EU waste management systems.

[Read our position paper](#)

**Food contact materials (FCM) regulation:** The European Commission has **published** the first list of novel technologies notified under Regulation (EU) 2022/1616, assigning “novel technology numbers” (NTNs) to 24 recycling technologies currently under development in the EU and beyond. The document also includes links to further information on each technology, and recyclers are now expected to begin using these NTNs in their documentation. The Commission has indicated that additional technologies will be added in the coming weeks as validation work continues.

**Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) criteria:** The European Commission has launched a **call for evidence** to develop simplified guidance on applying the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principle across EU funding programmes. The aim is to ensure that EU investments support climate and environmental objectives while reducing administrative burdens, improving policy coherence, and replacing fragmented, fund-specific requirements with a consistent approach. Feedback is open until April 1.

**Circular Economy Act:** The European Commission is **inviting** young people to share their views on the upcoming Circular Economy Act (CEA), aiming to accelerate the shift to a more circular economy. The initiative seeks input on how to boost recycling, reduce dependence on raw materials, and create jobs, giving youth a chance to help shape future EU policy.

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## HIGHLIGHTS



Highlight from **Recycling Europe's General Assembly** on 17 March, which brought together all members and partners, showcasing expertise, commitment, and momentum while turning conversations into action and policy impact. View and download the meeting's photos [here](#).



At **IARC 2026** in Hamburg, Recycling Europe's Policy Director **Maria Vera Duran** highlighted the growing focus on automotive circularity, particularly green metals and recycled steel. Recycled content targets are gaining traction, but achieving them requires strong demand from manufacturers. Recyclers face stricter quality standards and

significant investment needs, making industry commitment essential. Without sufficient uptake, circularity goals cannot be realised.



Recycling Europe participated in Hannover at the **Tire Technology Expo**, where our Technical Advisor Gabriel Gomez **opened the session** “Building a Sustainable Tire Industry.” The session gathered industry experts to discuss accelerating circularity in the tyre sector. Gabriel highlighted how EU frameworks, including the Circular Economy Act (CEA) and the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), can create new opportunities to strengthen tyre recycling.

## EVENTS



### IFAT 2026 | Fast fashion, slow progress? Scaling EU circularity in textiles

Recycling Europe, together with bvse, is co-organising a dedicated IFAT session on Wednesday, 6 May 2026 (16:30–17:20, Orange Stage). The panel will bring together key voices from industry, policy and civil society to explore how Europe can reconcile fast fashion’s volume and price pressures with its circularity ambitions.

Recycling Europe members, partners and sponsors benefit from a free IFAT ticket using the code: **ReEu\_IFAT2026**

Discover IFAT [here](#).

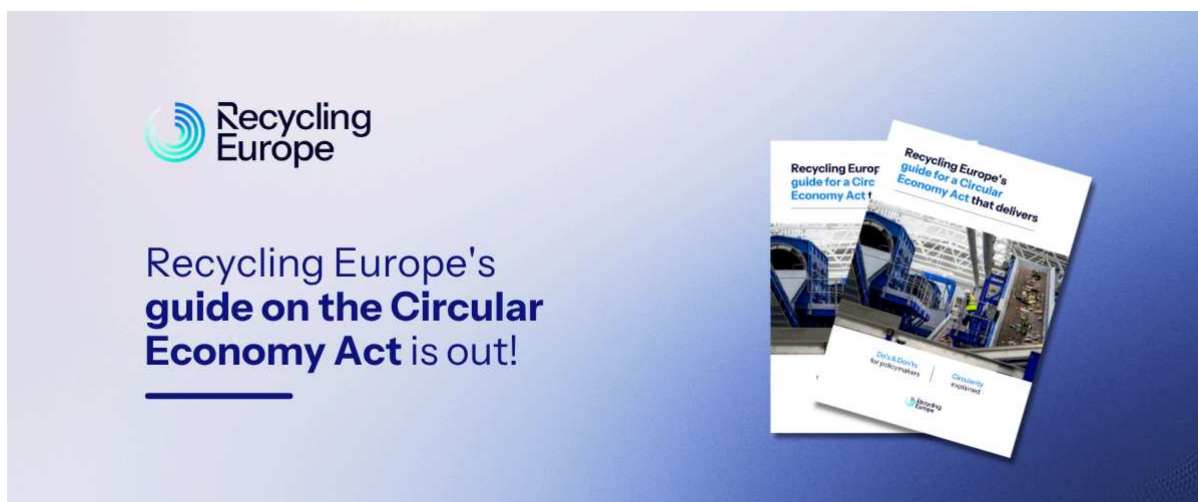


### European Recycling Conference 2026

The European Recycling Conference (ERC) is coming to Madrid, Spain, on 10 June 2026 at IFEMA. This year's edition, co-organised with Recycling Europe's Spanish member FER, will bring together hundreds of recycling professionals, policymakers, traders, and market experts from across Europe and beyond to strengthen dialogue, build partnerships, and advance circularity.

Registrations open on Monday! Get your ticket [here](#).

## ***MUST-READ***



Recycling Europe has published its **guide for policymakers on the Circular Economy Act (CEA)**, outlining key “DOs and DON'Ts” to support Europe's circularity

**ambitions.**

With circularity becoming central to the EU's industrial strategy and the Clean Industrial Deal aiming to raise the circular material use rate from 11.8% to 24% by 2030, the guide emphasises boosting demand for high-quality recycled materials, expanding recycling capacity, and ensuring free movement of recyclables across the Single Market. It provides recommendations to stimulate circular markets, improve material recovery, enhance e-waste and critical raw materials circularity, and strengthen construction and demolition waste management, while warning against measures that could restrict recycled material markets or create administrative barriers.

[Read our CEA guide here](#)

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**On Global Recycling Day, Recycling Europe published its 2025 Annual Report,** highlighting the vital role of Europe's recycling industry in driving competitiveness, resilience, and reindustrialisation. Our report showcases how recyclers navigate volatile markets and regulatory challenges while reinforcing their position as strategic industrial players, and reflects the collective efforts of members, partners, sponsors, and the Secretariat to embed circularity at the core of Europe's economic and industrial agenda.

[Discover our annual report](#)

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***NEWS & UPDATES***

# We are hiring

## Communications Intern

CIP internship

Send your CV and motivation letter to [info@recyclingeurope.org](mailto:info@recyclingeurope.org) by **15 April EOB**.

Did you hear? Recycling Europe is seeking a **Communications Intern** to join our team in Brussels this May. We are looking for someone who is curious, motivated, and eager to gain hands-on experience in communications, events, and EU projects, while contributing to a dynamic and collaborative work environment. **The application deadline is 15 April.** This is a CIP internship, and eligibility requirements apply. Interested candidates should send their CV and a motivation letter to [info@recyclingeurope.org](mailto:info@recyclingeurope.org) with the subject line: Communications Intern\_Your Name.

[Read the full vacancy here](#)

### NEW SPONSORS



GOLD



SILVER



SILVER

Recycling Europe is excited to welcome three new sponsors! **Galloo** joins as a gold sponsor, while **BST** and **Helco Trade** come on board as silver sponsors. We sincerely thank them for their valuable support of the EU recycling industry.

Interested in supporting Recycling Europe?

## ***EU-FUNDED PROJECTS***

### **SOPHIA Project Update – March 2026**

First Steering Committee Meeting: On 17 March, the SOPHIA consortium held its inaugural Steering Committee meeting, led by project coordinator AIMPLAS. These meetings will serve as a key governance mechanism, ensuring smooth execution of the project's ambitious work programme and enabling timely coordination among partners.

Deliverable D1.2 Submitted: We are pleased to report the submission of Deliverable D1.2: *"Best practices on collection and transport of End-of-Life PV Panels and value chain overview."* This deliverable provides a comprehensive analysis of the current PV end-of-life ecosystem, identifies key barriers to reuse and circularity, and outlines actionable best practices for improving reverse logistics. The findings will inform the development of SOPHIA's technological solutions, including AI-based diagnostics, repair technologies, and digital traceability tools.

### **Discover the SOPHIA Project**

**Other EU-Funded Projects:** Recycling Europe's Horizon Europe proposal CLEANMAT, focused on aluminium recycling, has been successfully selected for funding. The project has a total budget of €7.3 million, with €213,850 allocated to Recycling Europe. Over a 36-month period (start date TBC), Recycling Europe will lead the work package on communication, dissemination, policy, standardisation and stakeholder engagement. Coordinated by Brunel University London, the project brings together 17 partners (including European Aluminium) and aims to significantly reduce hazardous chemicals and waste in the aluminium recycling value chain.

## ***SPONSORED EVENTS***

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# 28

INTERNATIONAL

# RECOVERED PAPER CONFERENCE

14 April 2026 Berlin

ESTREL BERLIN

**BVSE - Paper Recycling Division is inviting you to “Altpapiertag”:**

## **28th International Recovered Paper Conference**

**Tuesday, 14th April 2026**

Estrel Hotel, Berlin, Germany

Save the date and join us for the biggest event of the recovered paper industry in Europe! We look forward to inspiring speakers, engaging discussions and exceptional networking opportunities. A finalised agenda and registration details will follow soon **on this page**.

## **ECESP Annual Conference:**



The Annual Conference of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) will take place on 22–23 April in Brussels under the title “A competitive and fair circular Europe: The ambition at the heart of the single market.” This year’s edition will focus on the upcoming Circular Economy Act.

Recycling Europe is as a member of ECESP and part of its Coordination Group. More information **here**.

# STEELORBIS SPRING 2026 CONFERENCE & 94<sup>th</sup> IREPAS MEETING

April 26-28, 2026  
**Amsterdam**  
Hotel Okura Amsterdam



Book your place at the world's number one event for long steel products!

Exclusive 15% discount for Recycling Europe members email us at [events@steelorbis.com](mailto:events@steelorbis.com)!

Discount code  
**REUR94**

## SteelOrbis Conference & IREPAS Meeting:

SteelOrbis is excited to announce that the first gathering of SteelOrbis and IREPAS in 2026 will be held at the Hotel Okura Amsterdam on April 26-28. Recycling Europe is a proud supporter of this flagship industry event!

**Special benefits:** Recycling Europe members, partners and sponsors can benefit from a dedicated discount code for the event! Get your ticket [here](#).



## Navigating change:

Global perspectives on **textile reuse** and **circularity**



**GOTHENBURG**  
Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre  
GOTHIA TOWERS

Tuesday, 2 June 2026  
09.00 – 14.00

## BIR Textiles Division Side Session/BIR World Recycling Convention

The BIR Textiles Division invites you to a special side session held alongside the BIR World Recycling Convention on 2 June 2026 at the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre (Gothia Towers) in Gothenburg, Sweden. The programme will explore global trade dynamics, policy developments, and the practical challenges and opportunities shaping the future of the reuse and recycling sector.

Recycling Europe's Senior Policy Advisor on Textiles, Ekaterina Stoyanova, will join a panel discussion on "Policy in action: aligning frameworks with industry and market needs." Get your ticket [here](#).



24-25 June 2026  
Brussels, Belgium

The leading platform for the  
textiles recycling industry

REGISTER FOR FREE TODAY!

#### **Textiles Recycling Expo 2026:**

The Textiles Recycling Expo will return to Brussels on 24–25 June 2026 for its second edition. The free two-day event will bring together recyclers, manufacturers, and sustainability experts to discuss the latest developments in textile circularity. The programme will feature conference sessions, expert panels, and an expanded exhibition area. Recycling Europe will participate with a dedicated booth and a contribution to a panel discussion. Register [here](#).

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The background of the ICBR 2026 banner is a dark blue image showing several cylindrical battery components in a factory setting, with bright orange and yellow sparks or light trails emanating from them, suggesting a recycling or manufacturing process.

**icbr 2026** | Sep 9 – 11  
Berlin, Germany  
International Congress for **Battery** Recycling

**NETWORK. LEARN. GROW.**

icm.ch

#### **International Congress for Battery Recycling - ICBR 2026**

ICBR 2026 is the international platform for reviewing the challenges faced by the battery recycling industry on a global basis. For 31 consecutive years, ICBR has brought together the international community of experts and decision makers of the entire Battery Recycling value chain, including battery recyclers and manufacturers, collection organizations, OEM's, policymakers, materials and services providers and many more. Register [here](#).

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# AMI COMPOUNDING & RECYCLING EXPO

23-24 September 2026 • Messe Frankfurt

## **AMI Compounding & Recycling Expo**

Registrations are now open for the AMI Compounding & Recycling Expo Europe, taking place on 23–24 September 2026 in Frankfurt. The event will bring together the plastics compounding and recycling value chain, offering insights into the latest market, technology and regulatory developments shaping the industry.

Recycling Europe is proud media partner of this initiative! Register for free [here](#).



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