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OCTOBER 2025

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Paweł Wiśniewski
Editor-in-Chief

Some might call trade fairs "anachronisms of the analogue era". Why gather tens of thousands of professionals in one place when technologies allow us to connect daily through video calls, webinars and online marketplaces? The answer is simple: fairs remain the condensed heartbeat of an industry. They compress time and space, bringing together people, machines and ideas in a way no digital platform can match. The K show in Düsseldorf is more than a meeting point. It is a stage on which the plastics sector presents not only its products, but also its ambitions, dilemmas, and visions of the future.

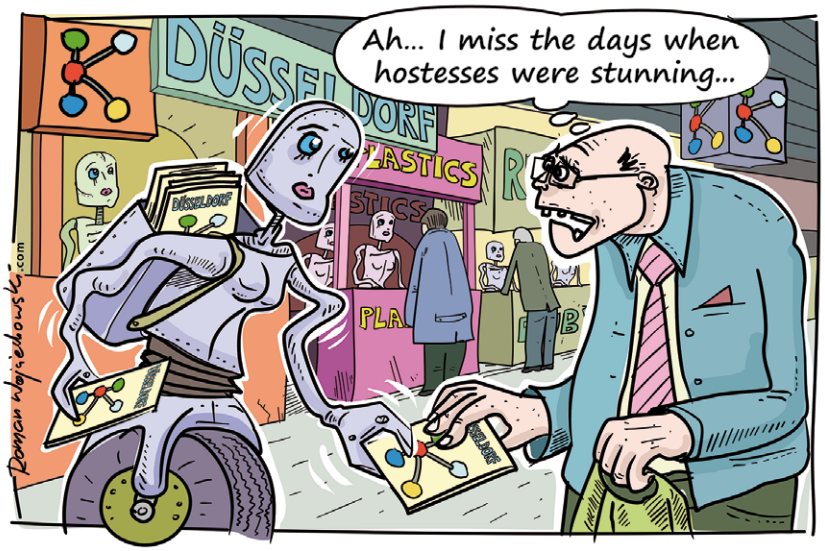
This year, perhaps more than ever, the fair takes place at a time of uncertainty. The war in Ukraine and growing tensions on the EU's eastern flank have created a lasting sense of political fragility, something we in Poland understand all too well given our location and history. At the same time, European production volumes have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. High energy costs, low-cost competition from Asia, and the US tariff disputes weigh heavily on confidence. On top of this comes the constant flow of new EU regulations. Investment decisions are being postponed or cancelled, as companies hesitate to invest in such an uncertain environment.

Nowhere are today's challenges more evident than in the chemical industry. Europe, once a global leader in plastics, has lost ground to mega-complexes in Asia and the Middle East, while sanctions on Russia cut off access to cheap oil and gas, driving up costs and making ageing steam crackers uneconomical to modernise. Shutdowns are multiplying, global giants are selling off assets and the continent's industrial base is shrinking. Even mechanical recycling, once the flagship of the European Green Deal, is faltering under cheap imports, bureaucracy and the widening gap between ambitious targets and economic reality. In 2025 alone several major plants shut down and the dream of a circular economy looks far more fragile than policymakers expected. Among processors the machinery sector, traditionally a barometer of industry sentiment, is now seeing falling orders, a clear sign of hesitation across the value chain. For many companies these mounting pressures mean a shift from growth to survival.

Yet an industry caught in stagnation cannot stay still: the *status quo* is unsustainable, and continuing along the same path will only deepen Europe's loss of competitiveness. Signs of renewal are beginning to appear: the digitalisation of production, the rise of circular business models, advances in chemical recycling, collaborations across the value chain, and a new wave of engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs working to transform plastics. Chemical recycling in particular stands out, attracting unprecedented investment through projects that aim to turn hard-to-recycle waste into near-virgin feedstock. If the technology proves scalable and environmentally sound, it could become the missing link that allows Europe to align circularity with industrial competitiveness.

This edition of *Plast Echo International* aims to capture both sides of the present moment: the harsh reality of stagnation and the fragile but powerful signals of change. We cover the companies that continue to invest despite uncertainty, the technologies that could redefine recycling, and the debates that will decide whether Europe leads or falls behind in the global plastics economy.

The road ahead is far from easy. But history shows that times of crisis often serve as catalysts for renewal. The pressures now weighing on the plastics industry may provide exactly the conditions needed to crystallise new solutions. At K 2025, among the machines and the buzz of countless meetings, the outlines of recovery may already be visible. The real test will be whether visitors are ready not only to observe but also to buy.



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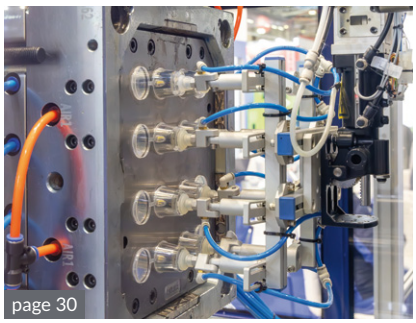
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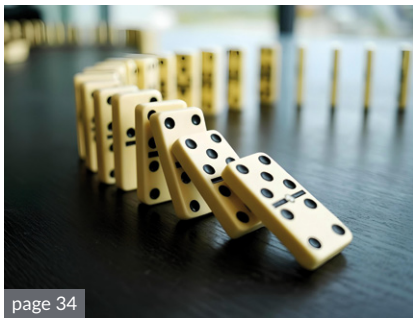
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K 2025 highlights young talent with tours and forums

K 2025 will place a strong focus on the next generation of professionals through its “Young Talents” initiative. The program is designed for school pupils, students and young professionals who are considering training or academic studies in plastics and rubber technology. Across multiple formats, visitors will receive practical guidance on education pathways, insights into the industry’s diverse roles and exposure to topics that are shaping plastics, including the circular economy, climate protection, and high-tech applications in medicine and mobility. From 8 to 15 October 2025 in Düsseldorf, the fair will provide central points of contact for information on training courses, study opportunities and career prospects, complemented by a new pre-show podcast and a structured tour on K Sunday that connects participants with companies and institutions active in workforce development.

Young Talents initiative and podcast

Ahead of the fair, the podcast “A look behind the scenes, young talents in the plastics industry” offers first-hand perspectives from four trainees and students, Jacob, Jacqueline, Johanna and Mathias. They discuss their day-to-day work, experiences, challenges and opportunities, illustrating the breadth of roles and the future orientation of the sector. The same four young professionals will guide the Young Talents Tour at the trade fair.

Young Talents Tour

The Young Talents Tour will take place on Sunday, 12 October. The program includes stops at the GKV’s Young Talents Lounge and at the exhibition stands of training companies: Arburg, Erema, Covestro and Simona. Participation is free of charge and no advance registration is required. Tours will be conducted in German and will start at the GKV, Hall 8a / Stand F11-01.

Young Talents Lounge

The Gesamtverband Kunststoffverarbeitende Industrie (GKV) will serve as the responsible sponsor of the official special format “Young Talents Lounge” at K 2025, underscoring training, study and career prospects in plastics processing. The lounge will present interactive experiences, including an obstacle course, VR applications and a mini injection moulding machine. The association will also showcase innovative courses of study and initiatives to promote young talents. A special highlight will be the gathering of the winners of the Günter Schwank Prize within the “Club of the Best”. The award honors the best graduates in plastics technology each year.

VDMA pavilion and “Young Talents Time”

Mechanical engineering will provide its own platform for young talent in the VDMA pavilion, which is part of the “The Power of Plastics!” Forum. Trainees, students and young professionals will host the daily “Young Talents Time” from 9 to 14 October at 11:00 a.m., where ideas for the future of the plastics industry will be discussed. In addition, VDMA will highlight initiatives to promote young women in mechanical engineering, including EnSHEneer.

Career Sunday with Plastics Europe Germany

K Sunday will focus on recruitment and careers at Plastics Europe Germany. In the official special show “Plastics Shape the Future”, the association will present a program that addresses training, recruiting and career development. The agenda includes a panel on recruiting skilled workers, expert talks on topics such as “Recruiting by Gaming” and “Recruiting by Diversity”, a recruiting stand-up and interactive formats such as “HR Bullshit Bingo”. A Science & Poetry Slam will round off the program.

School pupils, trainees and students will receive free admission on K Sunday, 12 October. Proof of eligibility in the form of a pupil or student ID card is required according to the information on tickets for K 2025. The fair will be open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. from Wednesday, 8 October to Wednesday, 15 October 2025. Further information is available at www.k-online.com.

Plastic is Fantastic Association to debut at K 2025

The Plastic is Fantastic Association, initiated by the Alpla Group, will make its public debut at K 2025 in Düsseldorf. Presented as a global movement focused on how plastic is perceived, the association aims to provide science-based, objective information and to act as a network for stakeholders across the plastics value chain. Its stated approach prioritises factual communication over opinion, with an emphasis on addressing practical questions about materials, applications and end-of-life solutions.

According to the organisers, the initiative will address topics such as next-generation materials, waste management and sustainability, while seeking to counter common clichés and myths about plastics. The association positions plastic not as the root of environmental challenges but as part of potential solutions, depending on responsible design, use and recovery systems. The slogan announced for the campaign is “Powerful material. Powerful voice”.

From 8 to 15 October, the group will present itself at K 2025, booth N05 at the North entrance, inviting visitors to learn more, ask questions and engage with the program. The association describes itself as an open, hands-on community format.

K 2025 will also serve as the launch platform for a global communications campaign. The association states that the campaign will emphasise benefits associated with plastics in modern applications, including safety, low weight, hygiene and recyclability. It also asserts that plastic can often be the most sustainable option when assessed across the product life cycle.

The stated objective is to bring existing scientific knowledge about plastics to broader public awareness and encourage informed discussion.

“Fair Match”: a smart matchmaking tool for exhibitors and visitors

With “Fair Match”, K 2025, from 8 to 15 October 2025 in Düsseldorf, is offering an innovative digital service that connects exhibitors and visitors in a new, smart way. The aim of the tool is to enable business contacts to be made in an even more targeted and efficient manner – before, during and after the trade fair.

Fair Match is designed for both exhibitors and visitors. After registering and redeeming their exhibitor badge code, exhibitors can activate their participation with just a few clicks. Companies that are already registered can simply activate the service in their personal profile. Visitors register free of charge or log in with their email address to access all functions directly. Personalised contact suggestions are at the heart of Fair Match. Based on the interests of the trade visitors stored in their profiles and the product categories of the exhibitors, an intelligent algorithm suggests suitable business partners.

This enables companies to find potential customers in a targeted manner and visitors to quickly discover relevant exhibitors. The integrated chat function allows direct communication and easy appointment scheduling – without time-consuming coordination or lengthy email correspondence. Interesting contacts can also be saved as favourites for quick access at any time.

Another advantage is that Fair Match does not end with the last day of the trade fair. The service remains available throughout the year, enabling valuable contacts to be maintained beyond the trade fair and new business opportunities to be developed. This extends the trade fair experience and maximises the benefits for all involved. Visitors benefit in particular from the ease of use: they complete their profile with a few details about their interests and business objectives and immediately receive suitable recommendations.

All communication and appointment coordination take place conveniently in the K app, which is available free of charge in the App Store and on Google Play. With Fair Match, Messe Düsseldorf provides an efficient tool for successful networking: personal, efficient and available at all times – whether on site at the exhibition centre or on the move.

K Assistant now makes trade fair preparation even more convenient and efficient

K in Düsseldorf now offers the AI-supported chatbot “K Assistant”: a virtual companion that provides exhibitors and visitors with targeted information around the clock – individually, multilingually and intelligently.

K Assistant is available to assist anyone interested at www.k-online.com. Whether you need initial information on hall plans, exhibitor offers, the supporting programme or services, the chatbot ensures you are perfectly prepared for an optimal trade fair experience.

“With K Assistant, we are offering an innovative service that enables visitors and exhibitors to plan their trade fair visit even more efficiently”, explains Thomas Franken, Director K at Messe Düsseldorf. “Digital tools such as the chatbot are an important step towards offering our customers modern and user-friendly support”.

More than just a chat – what the K Assistant can do:

- Available 24/7: The AI chatbot is available to users at any time of the day or night, ensuring maximum planning freedom.
- Intelligent answers instead of mere search results: The K Assistant thinks for itself – it analyses questions in context and provides structured, precise information instead of long lists of hits.
- Language diversity for global target groups: Visitors and exhibitors from all over the world benefit from the multilingualism of the system, which communicates in numerous national languages.

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KraussMaffei advances continuous PU chemical recycling

To address the tightening outlook for thermal treatment of plastics, KraussMaffei, together with BASF, Rampf and Remondis, is industrialising a continuous chemical recycling route for polyurethane insulation foams from end-of-life refrigerators. The approach, based on depolymerisation via a modified glycolysis run in a co-rotating twin-screw extruder, is designed to handle heavily contaminated PUR regrind, including residues of other plastics and metals at levels up to 30%.

In the purity glycoLine PU process, regrind from Remondis' refrigerator recycling operations is metered with depolymerisation agents and additives into a ZE BluePower extruder, where polymer chains are broken down within minutes to form an intermediate. Foreign substances are then removed directly in-line through filtration adapted by KraussMaffei to meet polyol market requirements.

The resulting recycled polyols can be used at BASF as components in rigid foam systems with recycled content. The partners indicate that the process is already economically attractive.

At K 2025, KraussMaffei plans to demonstrate live processing of the PU system with recyclate content into foamed beverage insulators, and will also introduce a RimStar metering machine prepared for digitalisation and future autonomous operation.

Circular Valley Convention comes back in March 2026

The Circular Valley Convention will return on 11 and 12 March 2026, bringing decision-makers and circular economy practitioners back to Düsseldorf and the Areal Böhler.

Following its debut in March 2025, which gathered more than 100 exhibitors and 200 speakers, the 2026 edition again combines a specialist conference, a practice-oriented expo and targeted networking. Four global companies, BASF, Bayer, Evonik and Henkel, are confirmed as co-hosts. Together with additional partners, they underline a cross-industry and cross-sector approach to circularity and signal support for solution-driven collaboration across value chains.

The program highlights circular value creation throughout the product life cycle, from design and material selection to digital applications and recycling technologies. Registration for exhibitors and partners is open to companies, start-ups, research institutions and NGOs that aim to present solutions in the expo area or on the conference stage.

As co-hosts and early movers in the circular economy, BASF, Bayer, Evonik and Henkel will contribute through exhibition stands, best practice examples in the expo area and expert content with high-profile speakers on the conference stages.

"The circular economy is the key to a sustainable future, and at Bayer we are actively committed to developing innovative solutions that both conserve resources and minimise our environmental footprint. The Circular Valley Convention 2026 offers a valuable opportunity to come together with other thought leaders to explore new approaches and actively drive the transformation towards a circular economy. Only through collaboration and the exchange of best practices can we master the challenges of the future", said Dr. Holger Weintritt, Head of Pharmaceuticals Product Supply, Bayer AG.

"The Circular Valley Convention is a unique platform to connect ideas, talent, and industries, dimensions of strategic relevance for Henkel. By connecting science, industry, and partners across the value chain, we can accelerate scalable solutions that drive the circular economy, sustainable growth and lasting impact", added Frank Meyer, CSVP R&D & Sustainability Henkel Consumer Brands.

The convention's format combines a high-calibre conference with practical demonstrations and networking to facilitate dialogue and cooperation. The agenda focuses on actionable approaches to circular value creation, cross-industry collaboration and innovation across the entire life cycle. Topics explicitly include design for circularity, material use strategies, digital applications that enable transparency and efficiency, as well as recycling technologies that close loops. This mix is intended to promote exchange between business, science, politics and civil society, with the goal of translating concepts into scalable solutions.

KHS analyses **bottle and machine parameters** using simulation

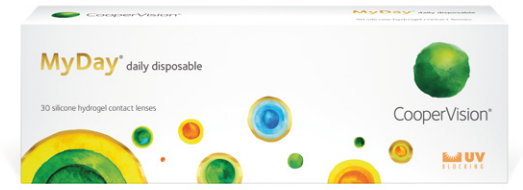
High-capacity beverage filling can lead to liquid sloshing when rotation speed and changes in direction act on the contents of the bottle, especially at the handover from the filler to the transfer star and on to the capper. Even when this amounts to only a few drops per container, the cumulative loss becomes significant at throughputs of up to 90,000 fills per hour. Beyond efficiency, hygiene is affected as sugary beverages can soil necks and closures, in some cases promoting mould formation, while machine components become contaminated. This increases cleaning requirements and shortens available production time. To counter these issues, KHS bases machine design decisions on extensive calculations that predict and mitigate sloshing behaviour under realistic operating conditions.

Since 2013, KHS development engineer Dominik Weirich has been preparing calculations to incorporate liquid dynamics into the engineering workflow. “Ever higher filling outputs mean that the technology’s reaching its physical limits, so that we also have to take liquid sloshing into account when designing the machine”, says the KHS development engineer at the factory in Bad Kreuznach, Germany. Data from these simulations feed directly into machine design and into commercial offers for new lines.

The calculations address two parameter groups that govern sloshing risk and can be adjusted to varying degrees during a project.

- Geometric parameters of the containers: the influence of bottle shape, fill height and neck diameter is evaluated. This work is done in close consultation with Bottles & Shapes experts, particularly in new line projects that modify geometry or reduce bottle weight.
- Physical parameters of the machines: capacity, machine pitch and the diameter of the stars are considered. These settings can usually be adapted relatively easily compared to container changes, which tend to be iterative and more extensive.

TotalEnergies and CooperVision use ISCC Plus PP in lens packs



TotalEnergies and CooperVision have taken their more than 20-year collaboration a step further by introducing ISCC Plus-certified polypropylene into blister packs for certain CooperVision contact lenses. Under CooperVision's "Plastic Made Better" program, TotalEnergies supplies certified renewable polypropylene implemented via a mass balance approach. The bio-certified polymer is derived from the processing of renewable feedstocks, primarily sunflower and rapeseed oils, at TotalEnergies' bio-refinery in La Mède, France. By using mass balance, the environmental benefits of the renewable inputs can be allocated across the value chain, which enables CooperVision to improve the environmental footprint of its packaging without altering the original materials or compromising performance.

The ISCC Plus-certified polypropylene is part of TotalEnergies' RE:newable range. According to a cradle-to-gate life cycle analysis conducted by TotalEnergies, RE:newable polypropylene grades can allow a reduction of 2.3 kg CO2eq per kilogram of polypropylene when replacing its fossil-based equivalent from TotalEnergies. The company positions this collaboration as supportive of its ambition to produce 1 million tons of circular polymers in 2030.

ISCC Plus certification and the mass balance methodology are central to the approach. Mass balance allows TotalEnergies to allocate the environmental benefits of renewable feedstocks across the value chain. This enables the use of certified renewable polypropylene in existing blister pack formats, without altering materials or performance, for selected CooperVision lenses.

"This collaboration to Coopervision's 'Plastic Made Better' effort demonstrates how TotalEnergies supports the sustainability ambitions of a long-standing partner. Enabling the valorisation of bio-certified polymers in high-value applications, such as in the medical device sector, also showcases our commitment as a company to promote the circular economy and fully supports our ambition to produce 1 million tons of circular polymers in 2030," said Olivier Greiner, Vice President Polymers Europe & Orient at TotalEnergies.

"At CooperVision, we are taking steps to minimise our environmental impact and operate more sustainably," said Aldo Zucaro, Senior Director of Corporate Responsibility at CooperCompanies. "Working with TotalEnergies to support our 'Plastic Made Better' effort means our customers and patients can participate in our sustainability journey by just choosing participating CooperVision contact lenses".

Hasco plug insert enables 12-zone control in compact housings

Limited installation space is a recurring constraint in mould-making, where every millimetre affects assembly and operation. Hasco has released the plug insert H12294 for 12 control zones, designed to utilise available space without compromising electrical performance.

Despite the increased connection density, the insert retains a maximum load capacity of 16 A. It is intended to replace large, complex connection boxes with a compact interface, while keeping the mounted housing identical to earlier 6-zone variants. A key benefit of the design is that only half of a bulkhead mounted housing is required. This can be advantageous in small, compact moulds and also in large multi-cavity injection moulding tools, in which connection boxes often protrude from the mould and complicate assembly. By shrinking the footprint of the connection hardware yet maintaining current-carrying capability, the insert addresses typical integration challenges in hot runner-equipped tools.

The plug insert uses crimp technology to secure cables. The wires are permanently compressed in the pins, providing a reliable connection, yet can be removed from the plug with the appropriate tool for rewiring when required. This approach enables fast changes to wiring layouts and is intended to support safety, reliability and long service life.

To complement the insert, Hasco Hot Runner supplies coordinated cables. On request, these can be provided as a connecting cable with compact pin assignment on one side and the usual wiring on the other, allowing existing control technology to continue in use without modification.

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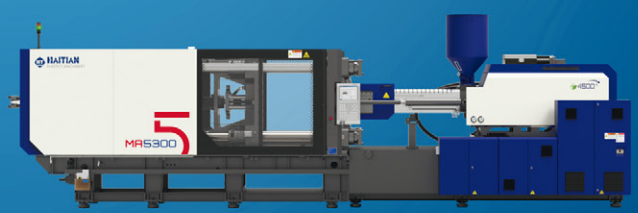

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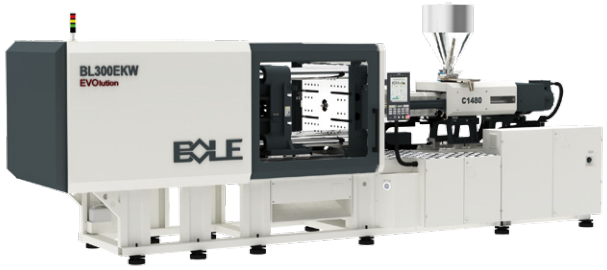
DÜSSELDORF

Bole at K 2025: driving innovation in plastics processing



At K 2025 in Düsseldorf, Bole will showcase groundbreaking injection moulding technologies under the theme "Innovations Driving Tomorrow's Industry". Visitors will experience live demonstrations of solutions designed to boost efficiency, precision, and material savings.

Highlights include the 250EKW-E EVOlution, a servo-hydraulic multi-component injection moulding machine that enables faster, more economical production by combining multiple materials in one mould. With the CIML 200, Bole will demonstrate long-fiber injection technology for producing high-strength, lightweight parts, such as drone fan blades from PA + CF with fibers up to 15 mm.

Another focus will be MTX Thixomolding, dedicated to magnesium alloys. As demand for lightweight yet durable components grows across automotive, electronics, defense, and consumer goods, magnesium thixomolding is rapidly becoming a preferred solution worldwide.

In cooperation with a partner, Bole will also present the DK 200 with Water Injection Technology, a modern alternative to gas injection moulding. This method allows the production of thick-walled parts while saving raw material and costs.

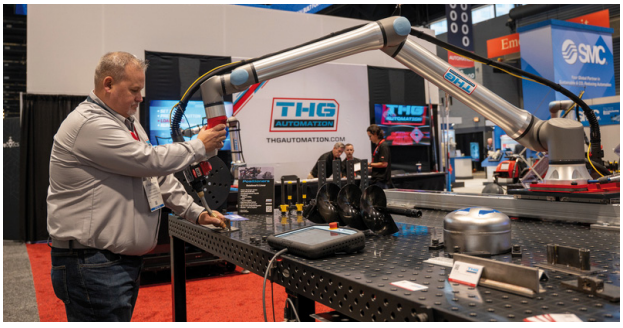
Bole invites all visitors to K 2025 to discover how its technologies are shaping the future of plastics processing.

Universal Robots introduces UR8 Long cobot with 1750 mm reach

Universal Robots unveiled the UR8 Long, a long-reach collaborative industrial robot designed for the most demanding automation tasks in confined spaces. The new model, first shown at the Fabtech trade show in Chicago, combines a 1750 mm reach, identical to the UR20, with a lightweight design and an 8 kg payload. The extended reach, together with coordinated multi-axis motion, enables complex welds with consistent quality. Optimised motion profiles deliver smoother movements at maximum speeds, improving bin-picking throughput. The manufacturer reports that the UR8 Long is already available for purchase, with shipments starting in October. Thanks to its compact build and 30% lower mass than the UR20, the model is intended for tight workcells and for mounting on gantries, rails, and overhead systems, where external axes can operate more efficiently. Applications include, among others, welding, case packing, and multipoint quality inspections.

The UR8 Long works with both PolyScope 5 and PolyScope X, Universal Robots' software platforms. It can be extended with MotionPlus, a motion-control technology that enables integration with external linear axes and rotary positioners. This solution provides precise guidance, smoother trajectories, and consistent accuracy.

Using enhanced Freedrive functions, users can manually guide the arm with high precision. This facilitates lead-to-teach programming and shortens setup, including for complex parts, without multi-layer interfaces or external tools. The lower mass and compact joints favor mounting on gantries, rails, and overhead systems, as well as inverted mounting, broadening the range of applications.



"The UR8 Long is an intelligent robot arm that can reach farther and perform more tasks than ever before. It was designed to help people and companies work faster, more safely, and with less physical strain", said Jean Pierre Hathout, President of Universal Robots. "Whether it's lifting, moving, or performing repetitive or physically demanding tasks, this robot makes the job easier. Its longer reach means it can cover a larger workspace, and its advanced features open new opportunities to automate work that was previously done manually".

With its long reach, advanced motion control, high precision and repeatability, the UR8 Long is aimed at welding processes. According to the manufacturer, the robot offers simpler programming than traditional welding robots, and weld quality is said to surpass manual welding.

Continental first to use Lanxess' sustainable rubber additive

Continental has become the first tire manufacturer to use Vulkanox HS Scopeblue from Lanxess in the production of its tires. The ISCC Plus-certified additive is a more sustainable version of the established Vulkanox HS (TMQ) antioxidant and is designed to protect rubber compounds during vulcanisation from oxygen and heat.

According to the companies, the overall chemical structure of the Scopeblue grade is unchanged compared to the conventional product, so tire makers do not need to adapt their production processes.

Lanxess reports a cradle-to-gate carbon footprint that is more than 30% lower, achieved by using bio-circular acetone as feedstock and renewable energy in manufacturing. The collaboration supports Continental's materials strategy and aligns with its target of using over 40% renewable and recycled materials in its tires by 2030.

"At Continental Tires, we are continuously working to improve the environmental performance of our products. Collaborations like the one with Lanxess and the use of innovative rubber additives such as Vulkanox HS Scopeblue, help us move closer to our goal of using over 40% renewable

and recycled materials in our tires by 2030," said Steffen Ryssel, Head of Purchasing at Continental Tires.

"We are delighted that Continental, a premium manufacturer, has chosen our Vulkanox HS Scopeblue for its products. This shows that our innovative additives are recognised and valued in the industry. With solutions like these, we support our customers in developing the best possible products while achieving their climate goals", added Dr. Jens-Hendrik Fischer, Head of Lanxess's Rhein Chemie business unit.

ENGEL presents fully automated production solution for the diagnostics market

At K 2025, ENGEL is presenting an integrated, fully automated production solution for the diagnostics market. The system achieves an increase in overall efficiency of approximately 25% compared to conventional production methods. In a single cell, well plates and lids are produced and packaged in a validated manner. At the heart of the solution is an all-electric ENGEL e-motion 280 WP combi MW injection moulding machine with 2800 kN clamping force.

ENGEL's compact system concept combines with the innovative high-performance Variotwinstack mould technology from HACK Formenbau GmbH to implement the principle of two machines in one. The mould is designed for the simultaneous production of up to four polystyrene well plates with 24 wells and their matching lids. For optimal media connection, the e-motion features a movable centre platen. The two injection units operate in parallel – not sequentially – reducing the cycle time to just 11 seconds. The shot weight for the well plates is 42.6 grams, and 13.2 grams for the lids.

The angled arrangement of the moving injection unit brings the nozzle closer to the hot runner, reducing its volume and thus increasing process reliability. Valve gate hot runner injection without a sprue optimises material usage while completely eliminating weld lines and flow marks. A multi-stage demoulding process with intelligent cooling and optimal part orientation further provides a particularly wide process window. In addition, integrated HACK moldlife sense sensor technology continuously monitors the mould mechanics, increases system availability and detects faults at an early stage. This system also supplies data to support digitally assisted process validation.

One of the key advantages of this production solution lies in its reduced system height, made possible by the newly designed layout. The overall footprint of the production cell is reduced by 40% – a significant cost-saving factor in cleanroom environments, where floor space comes at a premium.

ENGEL's e-motion series has been specifically developed to meet the most demanding requirements in injection moulding for medical technology and sets new standards in precision, efficiency and long-term cleanroom performance.

Wittmann Battenfeld presents smart injection moulding solutions at K 2025

Wittmann Battenfeld is set to present a comprehensive portfolio of injection moulding solutions at K 2025 in Düsseldorf, under the theme "Smart Choices – Smart Savings." Visitors to booth B22 in hall 15 will encounter a range of innovations designed to optimise resource use, enhance process efficiency, and address current sustainability demands in plastics processing. For the first time, the entire Wittmann Group will present its offerings together on a common booth, reflecting the company's integrated approach to machinery, automation, and digitalisation.

The highlight of Wittmann Battenfeld's exhibition will be the new MacroPower 500/3400, distinguished by its compact, one-piece machine body. This design innovation reduces installation time and space requirements, while the pivotable injection unit simplifies screw changes and maintenance. The MacroPower is equipped with the Unilog B8X control system, featuring in-house developed components that enable faster response times and improved part reproducibility.

The new MacroPower series, available in clamping forces from 400 to 600 t, will be demonstrated by producing a "HAIBOX" from polypropylene (PP) supplied by Borealis, using a single-cavity mould from Haidlmair. The process integrates in-mould labelling (IML) with labels from Viapiani and employs thermal imaging for quality control, with SKZ's TD14.0 software ensuring only parts within temperature tolerances proceed to packaging.

The company will also display a MacroPower 650/2250H/1330H Combimould with a 1500 mm rotary table, demonstrating multi-component moulding with two horizontal injection units. This setup produces a foldable laundry basket from PP and TPE using a 1+1-cavity mould from ATA Kalip ve Plastik, with a Primus 148T robot handling part removal and placement.

Today. Tomorrow. Electric. Sumitomo (SHI) Demag at K 2025

At K 2025, Sumitomo (SHI) Demag will showcase its most innovative and customer-oriented developments to-date, highlighting how the unique collaboration between industrial experts in Germany and Japan is advancing process efficiencies. Customers who choose Sumitomo (SHI) Demag technologies become more agile – today, tomorrow, and beyond. Reinforcing the company's commitment to a future supported by cutting-edge all-electric injection moulding machines.

Aligned with the company's new theme "Today. Tomorrow. Electric.", Sumitomo (SHI) Demag will showcase 8 all-electric machines at K 2025, featuring options from the IntElect platform for manufacturers across all market segments. The company will also unveil two brand new PAC-E machines, designed as the ultimate all-electric fast-runners. Developed on a global platform, these machines were created through close collaboration with electric drive specialists in Japan. Robotics will be another key focus across the main Sumitomo (SHI) Demag stand, alongside several process improvement solutions developed by sister company Leifeld, also part of the Sumitomo Heavy Industries Group.

The highlight at the Sumitomo (SHI) Demag booth is the debut of an all-electric 2K multi-component IntElect 350t machine combined with a SAM-C20 robot. The R-position offers a standard option for 220–500 t IntElect machines, with an adjustable nozzle distance providing added flexibility. In response to processor demand for a top-entry robot offering greater stability and precision within a smaller footprint, Sumitomo (SHI) Demag will showcase the benefits of

partnering with a single supplier capable of managing the entire customisation, technology integration, and cell validation process. This includes the installation of all safety-relevant components, machines, robotics, peripherals, and conveyor technology.

Leading the shift towards all-electric in the fast cycle packaging market, the first 420-ton PAC-E machine will feature a packaging caps and closures demonstration with clean, digital inline cap printing. Developed by Swiss supplier CAPrint, this fast changeover personalisation proves that processors moulding 72 caps every 2 seconds can seamlessly print and quality check customised designs for branding differentiation and match the closure moulding speed. The production cell also comprises a 72-cavity tool from Z-Moulds, a mould area dehumidification system from Eisbär and a state-of-the-art inspection camera and box packing system from IMDVista.

K 2025: Zhafir debuts Zeres medical with COC syringe demo

At K 2025, Zhafir will present the Zeres medical, an all-electric injection moulding solution derived from the Zhafir Zeres series and equipped for regulated healthcare production. The GMP-compliant configuration includes GoFactory as standard. Its integrated interface enables process monitoring and traceability at no additional cost, supporting validation and documentation.

A live application on a ZE1500V-300h medical with a 32 mm screw will demonstrate production of a syringe barrel in cyclic olefin copolymer using an eight-cavity mould. With a 24 gram shot weight, the glass-like COC demands precise temperature control and stable injection to achieve high dimensional accuracy. The Zeres medical addresses these requirements with an injection pressure capability up to 2,530 bar and a maximum injection speed of 300 mm/s to maintain consistent process conditions and repeatable quality. The cell is equipped with peripherals from Haitian Smart Solutions, including a dryer, a material handling system and a temperature control unit operating at a 110°C setpoint, and with cleanroom elements from partner Petek such as a fan filter unit, a laminar flow box and a fully enclosed conveyor for controlled part handling.

Zhafir Plastics Machinery, founded in 2005, is a brand of Haitian International and focuses on electrical precision solutions in injection moulding. More than 33,000 machines have been installed worldwide to date, almost 30,000 of them in the last 10 years.

MOL Group turns plastic waste into high value products

MOL Group has achieved a significant milestone in its Shape Tomorrow strategy by successfully completing its first ISCC Plus-certified production run using circular feedstock at its MOL Petrochemicals site in Tiszaújváros, Hungary.

The pilot test demonstrates MOL's ability to convert circular feedstock, namely post-consumer plastic waste-based feedstock into high-quality polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP). This marks a major step in MOL Group's Shape Tomorrow strategy to integrate circular economy into production and establish itself as a leader in sustainable petrochemicals in Central and Eastern Europe.

"This successful test shows that MOL Group can now process circular feedstocks according to ISCC Plus certified process, turning plastic waste into new, high-value products", said Péter Császár, Senior Vice President, MOL Group Chemicals. "It is a significant step towards sustainable petrochemicals and strengthens our position as a leading circular economy player in Central and Eastern Europe".

During the pilot, circular feedstock based on post-consumer waste was introduced to MOL's steam cracker. This process allows the production of circular-based monomers and then converts them into polymers. During the process, the mass balance approach was applied, a methodology that tracks and accounts for circular material when processed together with traditional inputs, ensuring the balance of the total process flows.

This achievement follows the ISCC Plus certification, which was achieved by MOL Petrochemicals in Tiszaújváros and Slovnaft in Bratislava in 2024 for steam cracker and polymerisation units. Maximising synergies with waste management is central to MOL Group's Shape Tomorrow strategy. The company aims to continue the transformation towards circular chemicals and to utilise up to 1.5 million tonnes of feedstock for the energy industry by 2030. This is supported by a growing portfolio that includes a concession to manage municipal waste in Hungary, past acquisitions in plastics recycling in Hungary and partnerships to advance chemical recycling technologies.

MOL Group will continue testing additional circular feedstocks and developing new processes to expand the role of waste as a raw material for plastics production.

RecyClass certifies over half of Europe's plastic recycling capacity

Covering 60% of Europe's installed plastics recycling capacity, the RecyClass Recycling Process Certification has become the leading certification scheme for plastics traceability across the region in only 3 years since its launch.

"The continued growth of this certification scheme is a clear indicator that RecyClass' efforts to drive plastics circularity are delivering real impact. RecyClass Recycling Process Certification has become the benchmark for companies seeking to certify their recycling processes and comply with the EN 15343:2007 standard", affirmed Paolo Glerean, Chairman of RecyClass.

In 2024, the share of European installed recycling capacity certified by RecyClass at the stream level grew exponentially, reaching 58% for HDPE/PP, 62% for ELV-WEEE, 70% for LDPE, and 75% for PET. These figures underscore the plastic recycling industry's commitment to operating under verified and reliable recycling standards, thereby providing the value chain with high-quality recycled materials.

Today, RecyClass collaborates with 11 accredited and 7 recognised third-party Certification Bodies, amounting to more than 120 auditors available to issue Recycling Process Certificates. In view of the legislative targets for recycled plastics outlined in the Single-Use Plastic Directive (SUPD) and Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), recyclers seeking to demonstrate the traceability of their operations and ensure transparent communication of the origin of plastic waste are encouraged to apply for certification.

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K 2025: world premiere of the Allrounder 475 V

The Allrounder 475 V will have its world premiere at the K 2025 trade fair. It boasts high energy efficiency, a small installation area and an attractive price/performance ratio. Sales will commence worldwide in January 2026. The new vertical machine from Arburg can be used flexibly and is ideal for both manual and automated overmoulding of inserts.

The installation area is especially small: despite its small footprint, the new vertical machine offers extra space even for larger moulds. The standard installation height is 250 millimetres and can be extended by 100 or 200 millimetres as an option. Side doors and the closing cylinder, which is positioned higher up, ensure easy access to the mould and the ejector. An off-centre ejector is available as an option. The table height is 900 millimetres for improved ergonomic working.

The Allrounder 475 V has a clamping force of 1,000 kN and can be equipped with hydraulic injection units ranging in size from 100 to 400. For energy-efficient operation, the machine is equipped as standard with Arburg servo-hydraulics (ASH), which continuously adjusts the water-cooled, speed-regulated servo motors to the actual power requirement. This minimises no-load losses and reduces specific energy requirement by up to 60% compared to conventional hydraulic machines.

If required, the vertical machine can be flexibly automated, e.g. with a six-axis or linear Multilift robotic system. Whether simple sprue removal, difficult component handling or a tailored automation system for complex project systems including upstream or downstream process steps – Arburg can fulfil almost any customer specifications. The turnkey experts supply machines, including automation and peripherals, in compliance with CE standards, all from a single source.

At booth 13A13, the Allrounder 475 V can be seen as part of a turnkey system that produces, labels, and finishes high-quality covers for car remote keys from PC/ABS recycled material in combination with in-mould decoration (IMD).

Coveris launches monomaterial resealable tray for chilled foods

Coveris has expanded its portfolio under its No Waste mission with the introduction of MonoFlexBP, a resealable monomaterial tray developed for refrigerated foods. The solution is positioned as an alternative to non-recyclable, mixed-material packs and is designed to combine recyclability with everyday handling.

The tray incorporates a reclosure system that allows multiple openings and closures to support portion-by-portion use and help reduce food waste. To complement the tray format, Coveris also supplies thermoformable bottom films that provide product protection and help secure optimal shelf life across a range of chilled contents. For applications that require elevated oxygen barriers, the company offers a PET- and PA-free lidding film that seals, peels and reseals on PP trays while delivering a high gas barrier, a parameter that is essential for preserving the freshness of perishable goods. According to the company, the combination of recyclable MonoFlexBP trays and reclosable lidding films is intended to balance sustainability requirements with functional performance and consumer convenience. The trays are described as fully recyclable monomaterial packs and are compatible with existing packaging machinery, enabling implementation without line changes.

“We are extremely pleased to launch MonoFlexBP tray for refrigerated goods. With this sustainable alternative to non-recyclable materials, Coveris continues to lead the way in circular packaging innovation, offering high-performance solutions that address both environmental impact and consumer demand”, said Katja Killian, BU Flexibles Business Development Director at Coveris.

The solution is suited for processed meats, sausages, dairy products, cheese and other chilled or refrigerated items. To meet branding and shelf differentiation needs, trays can be printed using gravure or flexographic methods and offered with matt or paper-effect lacquer finishes.

Plastics Recycling Awards Europe 2026 open for entries

Entries are now open for the Plastics Recycling Awards Europe 2026, inviting organisations across the European plastics recycling value chain to present solutions that advance circular use of plastics. The programme covers 7 categories spanning product applications and technology, and is open to brand owners, retailers, product designers, manufacturers, packaging and recycling machinery producers, raw material suppliers and suppliers of recycled plastic products.

The deadline for entries is Friday, 5 December 2025. Winners will be announced on the second day of the Plastics Recycling Show Europe 2026 at the RAI in Amsterdam, on 5 and 6 May 2026, marking the 10th edition of PRS Europe. The awards are jointly organised by Plastics Recyclers Europe and Crain Communications. Eligible entries must be designed, developed or manufactured in Europe. Products must contain at least 50% recycled content and all submissions must contribute to sustainability and the circular economy.

“These awards provide a platform to celebrate the ingenuity of companies and individuals who are pushing boundaries and creating real impact. Each entry is a sign of progress, showing how innovation and collaboration are helping Europe to move closer to a truly circular plastics economy”, said Ton Emans, President of Plastics Recyclers Europe.

“The Plastics Recycling Awards are not only a celebration of success but also a catalyst for change. Reaching the 10th edition of PRS Europe underlines the growth and influence of this community. We invite organisations across the value chain to participate, demonstrate their leadership, and showcase solutions that will define the next decade of sustainable plastics use”, added Matt Barber, Global Events Director at Crain Communications.

K trade fair sets the direction for the plastics industry

Interview with Thomas Franken, Director of K Show

K 2025 is not just a trade fair – it's a benchmark event for the entire plastics industry. Thomas Franken, Director of the event, discusses the key innovations, priorities, and significance of this year's edition, scheduled to take place from 8 to 15 October in Düsseldorf

What scale will this year's K trade fair reach – both in terms of exhibitor numbers and international reach? Which regions of the world will be particularly visible in the halls of Messe Düsseldorf?

By the end of the official registration period in May 2024, it was already clear that all leading companies from the global plastics and rubber sector would be taking part in this premier industry event. Once again, all 18 halls of the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre, along with the outdoor areas – equivalent to the size of 25 football fields – will be fully occupied. More than 3,100 exhibitors from 63 countries are expected.

Europe will be especially well represented at this year's K, with strong participation from Germany, Italy, Turkey, Austria, as well as the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Spain. At the same time, K clearly reflects the ongoing shifts in the global market: the number of companies from Asia and the exhibition space they occupy has remained at a consistently high level for years. Particularly impressive participation is expected from China, India, and Taiwan.

What innovations will debut at K 2025, and how will they address the key challenges currently facing the plastics industry?

In these challenging times, K in Düsseldorf once again confirms its status as the world's leading trade fair for the plastics and rubber industry. It is here that the entire sector comes together to showcase the highest levels of innovation and expertise. Nowhere else will you find as many world premieres as at K – which is why many exhibitors keep their new technologies and breakthrough solutions under wraps until the show begins. I am confident that the upcoming edition will deliver significant progress in the key areas driving the industry forward.

The official motto of K 2025 – "The Power of Plastics! Green – Smart – Responsible" – reflects the 3 core themes shaping the industry today.

Sustainability will be the top priority at nearly every exhibitor's stand. Plastics are indispensable across numerous sectors of the economy, driving innovation and progress, and their role in building a sustainable future cannot be overstated. One of the central themes of K 2025 is "creating a circular economy" – a concept that is increasingly defining the industry's development. Recycling, reuse, and plastic waste reduction are the cornerstones of this transformation. Circularity will also take center stage at the VDMA Forum, located outdoors between Halls 10 and 16. There, VDMA and its member companies will demonstrate how technology can actively support the implementation of circular systems and will create a space for discussion inside the specially designed VDMA Dome.

It is also worth highlighting the other 2 guiding themes of K 2025, both closely tied to sustainability. The first is digitalisation – as it enables increased efficiency of machines and products and supports sustainable practices such as material tracking and sorting for re-entry into the value chain. The second is social responsibility – emphasising responsible resource management and environmental care. This includes supporting young talent and creating long-term career perspectives for future generations in the plastics and rubber sector.

All three of these themes will be reflected in the official special show "Plastics shape the future," organised by Plastics Europe Deutschland in Hall 6. The program will include theme days, expert panels, a Career Day, and a start-up competition – all showcasing visions and tangible technological solutions for the future.

What specific changes can we expect at K 2025 compared to the 2022 edition – both for exhibitors and visitors? What kind of new features will we see in the event program and layout?

Naturally, we are building on the proven and successful concept of K 2022, while at the same time enhancing and refining it to meet the current needs of the industry. One

example is the new approach to the Science Campus, which will make it easier for institutes from around the world to participate. Universities, research institutions, and higher education facilities will present their latest findings on plastics science and technology. Following its successful debut in 2022, the Start-up Zone will also be expanded – offering a space where young, innovative companies can showcase their ideas. Notably, for the first time, the Science Campus will be located directly next to the Start-up Zone in Hall 7, creating new synergies between science and business.

Rubber Street, the dedicated area for rubber and elastomers, will return as well – but with a completely redesigned layout in 2025. This transformation is being carried out in collaboration with the German Rubber Manufacturers Association (wdk) and aims to highlight the innovation potential of the rubber sector.

A brand-new feature at K 2025 will be the Young Talents Lounge – a dedicated space for young professionals offering interactive presentations of educational programs and career development opportunities. This area is being organised by the German Association for Plastics Processors (GKV). Another first will be a networking event titled "Women in Plastics", designed specifically for women working in the plastics industry.

Does size matter? What makes K – and not the larger Chinaplas – the event that sets the direction for the plastics industry today?

It's quality that counts, not just quantity. In Düsseldorf, we offer the global plastics and rubber industry the leading trade fair worldwide – the most important platform for information, communication, and business. Exhibitors and visitors from all continents come together here to showcase industry capabilities, discuss current trends, and shape the future.

Nowhere else will you see as many machines running live at the same time. Only in Düsseldorf you can experience and compare such a diverse and international range of innovations, solutions, and product premieres. K underlines its unique status not just through the immense interest it attracts from the global industry, but also through its willingness to tackle the most pressing contemporary challenges – especially those facing the plastics sector. It is a benchmark for the entire industry and a global platform for innovation.

What has been the most striking transformation or moment that has stayed with you over the years at K? Can you share an example that truly surprised you?

One of the most striking transformations I've witnessed at K has been its increasing globalisation – a reflection of the dynamic changes within the plastics and rubber industry itself. What started as a primarily European-focused event has evolved into a truly global forum, with a steadily growing presence from Asia, where new market leaders are emerging. This shift has not only increased the diversity of exhibitors but also raised the level of innovation and competition across the fair.

> *K underlines its unique status not just through the immense interest it attracts from the global industry, but also through its willingness to tackle the most pressing contemporary challenges – especially those facing the plastics sector*

Another transformation that made a deep impression on me is the industry's growing willingness to confront global challenges. K has always mirrored the heartbeat of the sector, but I was genuinely surprised by how many companies have begun to adopt a proactive approach – taking responsibility and offering concrete solutions across the entire value chain.

This is particularly evident in the topics addressed by our special shows: until 2013, they focused mainly on technological and economic trends. Since then, they have increasingly tackled social and environmental issues. We introduced themes such as marine litter, and more recently, the concept of a circular economy. It's a clear signal that the industry is taking sustainability seriously and recognises its role in building a better future.

Witnessing these changes – both geographical and mental – has been incredibly moving. It shows that K is not just a trade fair, but also a platform for transformation and a reflection of the industry's growing maturity.

What should first-time visitors to K keep in mind? How can they best plan their visit to make the most of this event?

First and foremost, it's important to arrange your ticket and accommodation well in advance. Online ticket sales are already available at www.k-online.de. K is a massive event with an extremely broad thematic scope, so careful planning is essential. The best way to prepare is by visiting www.k-online.com, where you'll find a full exhibitor database, hall plans, a hotel booking tool, and many other useful resources.

It's also highly recommended to download the K mobile app, available since May. It's the perfect companion for

fot.: Messe Düsseldorf / tillmann

your visit – with interactive maps and hall layouts to help you navigate the fairgrounds. With a single tap, you can enter a specific hall, zoom in on individual booths, and view detailed exhibitor profiles and product offerings. The full database is fully searchable using a keyword function.

We've also enhanced our matchmaking tool, FairMatch, which helps both visitors and exhibitors make their participation at K 2025 even more productive. From August 2025, you'll be able to use this tool on the K website and in the app to identify relevant business partners and products. The system will suggest the best matches and allow you to schedule meetings in advance.

In times of economic uncertainty – with rising costs, regulatory changes, and global tensions – companies are making investment decisions with great caution. What makes participation in K especially valuable right now?

That's a very accurate observation. Indeed, in the face of economic slowdown, trade tensions, and increasingly complex regulations, many companies are approaching investment decisions with heightened caution. It is precisely in this kind of environment that K takes on even greater importance.

First, K remains the place where the entire sector comes together to gain a concentrated overview of where the industry is heading – both technologically and in terms of market dynamics. This gives businesses not only orientation, but also greater confidence that their investment decisions align with current trends and market needs.

Second, attending the fair is a unique opportunity for direct engagement – with business partners, suppliers, experts, and even competitors. In uncertain times, building relationships and trust becomes more essential than ever.

And finally, K is not just an exhibition – it is also a platform for dialogue: a space for sharing knowledge, experience, and inspiration, where the future of the entire industry is actively shaped, especially in the context of digitalisation, sustainability, and global economic challenges.

We are cautiously optimistic about the signs of recovery that began to appear in the European economy in the first half of the year – whether in industrial production figures or in the growing interest in innovative solutions. Although uncertainty still shapes the business landscape, more and more companies are once again looking to the future with openness and readiness to act. We hope that by October this positive momentum will have strengthened even further – and that it will be reflected at K 2025: in the number of conversations held, the quality of relationships formed, and the scale of decisions made.

We firmly believe that here in Düsseldorf, many companies will find the spark for their next step forward – be it new investments, technological implementations, or strategic partnerships that will shape the future of plastics processing in the years to come.

K has always been the place where innovation meets real business – and we are convinced that this will be more evident than ever this year. •

The innovative DNA of plastics industry

Plastics Europe's main ambition is to build a fully sustainable plastics system in Europe which continues to meet consumer and societal needs, support the transformation of other sectors and remain a strategic resource for the European economy. This path is far from simple, yet our industry has creativity and innovation deeply embedded in its DNA. For decades these qualities have enabled breakthrough discoveries and pioneering solutions. K, the largest plastics trade fair in Europe, offers an excellent opportunity to recall this progressive spirit and to appreciate once again the transformative nature of the industry and the material itself

Anna Kozera-Szałkowska
Managing Director,
Plastics Europe Polska

Innovation has been part of the history of plastics from the very beginning. In the relatively short time since plastics came into widespread use, they have revolutionised nearly every area of our lives. Drivers now use safer, lighter cars that consume less fuel. Farmers have increased yields while using less water and fewer pesticides. Secure packaging has improved food safety and extended shelf life. Patients have benefited from medical breakthroughs once unimaginable, like a man blind for more than ten years who regained his sight thanks to the world's first synthetic cornea implant. These are just a few of a long list of examples of how the hard work of scientists, chemists, engineers, technologists, designers and other experts specialising in narrow fields using plastics has allowed to create innovative inventions without which it is hard for us to imagine everyday life today.

In the 21st century, policymakers, business and society have become fully aware of the global scale of the challenges connected with economic growth. Climate change and plastic waste have become pressing issues that demand urgent solutions. The European plastics industry is already providing such solutions and is determined to do more. Plastics Europe and its member companies share public concerns about the impact of plastics on climate change and environment pollution, and we recognise the need to support the sustainable use of plastics. We believe that developing a circular economy for plastics, which preserves natural resources, reduces waste, keeps valuable materials in circulation through better production, design, reuse and recycling, and lowers greenhouse gas emissions, is the most effective way to address these challenges.

This is why the circular and net-zero transition of the plastics industry has become the main focus of our sector's creativity and innovation. The vision is set out in our 2023 roadmap, *The Plastics Transition*. It shows that with the right measures, greenhouse gas emissions from the plastics value chain could be reduced by 28% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. It also foresees the gradual replacement of fossil-based plastics, estimating that circular plastics from mechanical and chemical recycling, biobased feedstocks and carbon capture and utilisation technologies could meet 25% of European demand by 2030 and 65% by 2050. Making this scenario happen will not be possible without fresh ideas, bold thinking and pioneering technologies, which form the foundation of this transition.

Yet circular innovations face major obstacles, with decline of European economy competitiveness on the top. Europe's share of the global market has been shrinking steadily, and the situation is becoming increasingly difficult. The plastics value chain supports around 1.5 million jobs across more than 50,000 companies in the EU. Plastics, used across almost every sector of industry, are essential to the European economy. When we say that Europe needs a strong and competitive plastics industry, we are at the same time speaking about all the strategic sectors that cannot function without plastics. And without competitiveness innovation becomes difficult. Budgets for research, development and technological modernisation are shrinking. When the priority is survival, extra spending is suspended. The weakening competitiveness of Europe's plastics industry therefore poses a serious threat to the development of circular innovations and to the goals of sustainable transition.

For this reason, although Plastics Europe and its members are strongly committed to the vision of the roadmap, the success of our efforts depends on cooperation across the entire value chain and, above all, on clear political support from the EU and its Member States. Europe needs policy frameworks that truly enable competitiveness. These should include reducing regulatory burdens by simplifying procedures and cutting bureaucracy, especially for permitting low-emission and circular industrial installations. Material neutrality and legal clarity for innovative recycling technologies need to be ensured, as well as level playing field, for example through separate customs codes for imported plastics and increased monitoring and controls at EU borders. Europe must also support investments in circular plastics with economic and financial tools such as tax incentives, and adopt ambitious and binding recycled content targets for plastic packaging before 2030. Finally, we need to modernise and connect the EU's energy grids and secure access to affordable raw materials to renew and expand Europe's industrial base. Taking these steps without delay is essential to maintain competitiveness, safeguard strategic autonomy, unlock innovative potential and accelerate the circular transition of the plastics industry.

Every three years in Düsseldorf, K Fairs offer the chance to witness the results of our industry's creativity and to rediscover its innovative spirit. In addition to practical innovations, visitors will hopefully experience something more – the energy, motivation and ambition of our industry to adapt, respond to global needs and continuously improve. •

Plastics Europe Polska represents plastics producers in Poland. It is the local branch of Plastics Europe: the pan-European association of plastics manufacturers with offices across Europe.

For over 100 years, science and innovation have been the DNA that cuts across our industry. With members producing over 90% of all polymers across EU27+3 (Norway, Switzerland, UK) we are the catalyst for the industry with a responsibility to openly engage with stakeholders and deliver solutions which are safe, circular and sustainable. We are committed to implementing long-lasting positive change.

The iceberg effect: what lies beneath the crisis in Europe's plastics recycling sector?

The European plastics recycling sector is sliding into one of its deepest crises to date. By the end of 2025, Europe will have lost nearly one million tonnes of recycling capacity since 2023. Alarming figures show that in the first 7 months of 2025 alone, almost as much capacity disappeared as during the whole of 2024 – and by year's end, closures will have tripled compared to 2023

Ton Emans
President of Plastics Recyclers Europe

With forecasts pointing to zero net growth in 2025, Europe's recycling capacity is at a standstill after years of steady expansion. At current pace, Europe risks falling irreversibly behind on its environmental ambitions, as the plastic recycling capacity would need to double by 2030 if the recycled content targets are to be achieved.

The decrease in Europe's industrial facilities translates into reduced strategic and resources independence, as well as accumulating difficulty in competing at the global level. Yet the current crisis, alarming as it already is, is the exposed face of a much larger iceberg.

Beneath the surface lie far-reaching issues that have been eroding the industry for the last years – an increase in unverified and low-priced imports of recycled plastics, a decrease in the demand for European recyclates, mounting economic pressures, lack of enforcement of existing regulation and excessive red tape.

The plastics recycling sector has sounded the alarm time and again, but action has fallen short. Although important pieces of legislation aim at advancing plastics circularity – such as the PPWR, the SUP Directive or the ongoing revision of the ELV Directive – they have failed to address the competitiveness crisis hitting the plastics recycling industry. Even legislation designed to safeguard citizens, such as food contact applications of recycled plastics, is left unenforced.

Uncovering the iceberg: the issues fueling Europe's competitiveness & plastic recycling crisis

One of the most pressing challenges currently facing the European plastics recycling value chain is the increase in unverified imports of plastics. Paired with the lack of enforcement mechanisms, these imports do not undergo verification to determine whether the material is recycled, and if it is, whether it meets the same regulatory requirements as materials produced in Europe. The additional advantage of cheaper production costs in these countries makes it virtually impossible to remain competitive for European plastics recyclers, while the non-compliant imported plastics gain a free pass into the Single Market, posing a risk to the environment and consumers.

The recent announcement of US tariffs to be imposed on PET imports could lead to an added influx of materials to European markets, coming from South and South-East Asian countries – further exacerbating existing market distortions.

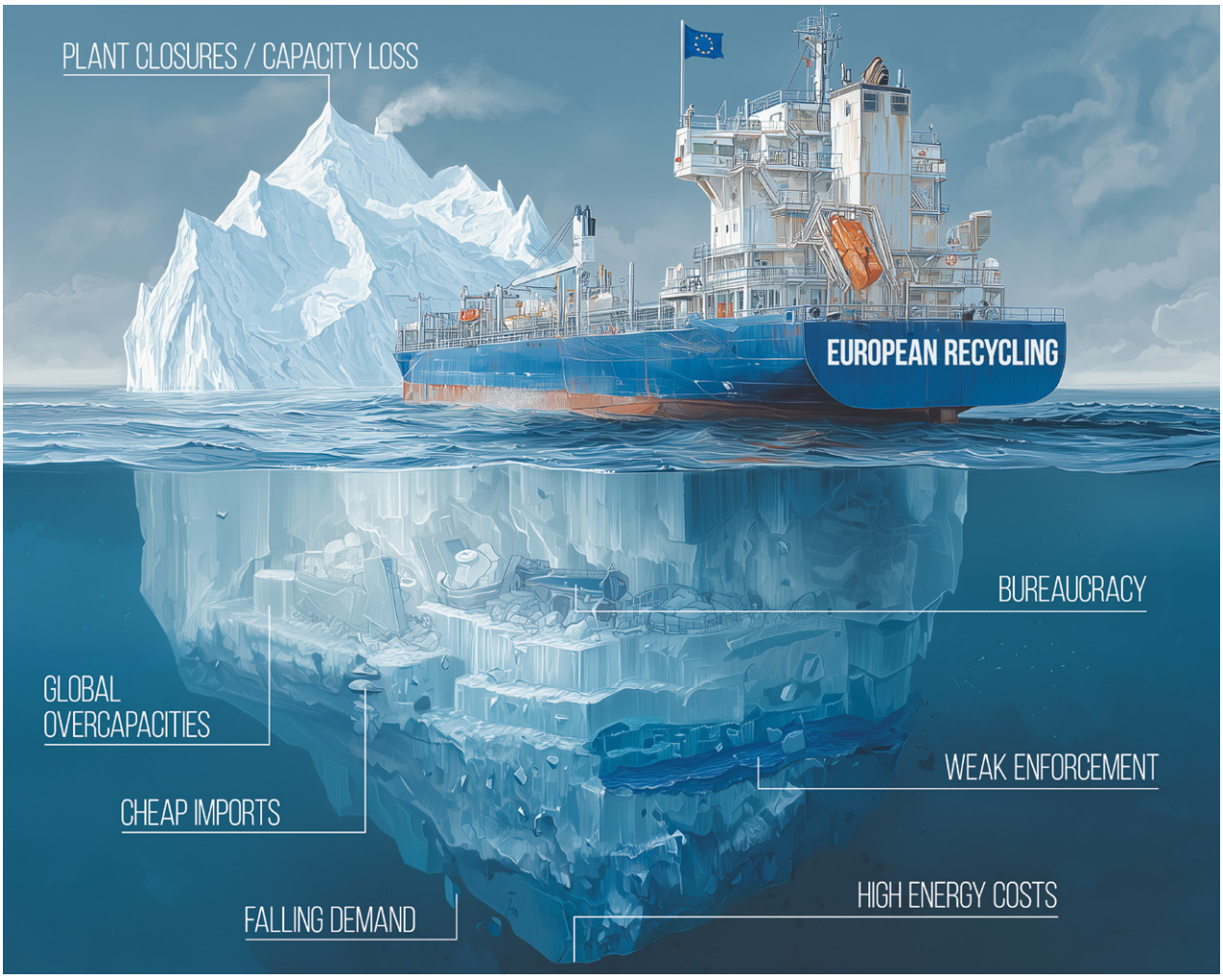
Mounting economic pressures – including some of the highest energy prices worldwide – accrue to the burden for European recyclers. This consequently leaves them at great disadvantage in a global market which is increasingly competitive and fierce. These factors are resulting in market distortions, which are driving down demand for plastic recyclates produced in Europe. The global overcapacity for polymer production will further aggravate the situation, driving production away from Europe.

With oil prices softening, virgin plastics have become cheaper, luring converters away from recyclates. Buyers are once again turning to fossil-based feedstock, leaving recyclers with unsold volumes.

Besides the external factors, European plastics recyclers face mountains of paperwork and lengthy waits to obtain and renew recycling permits. Together with regulatory inconsistencies and lack of proper enforcement of existing legislation, these have created a hostile environment for investments. This not only puts at serious risk the millions of euros that have been dedicated to advancing circularity and improving recycling practices in the last decades but also obstructs future developments and innovations in the sector, undermining progress towards a circular economy in Europe.

Immediate action needed to reach safe waters

Europe's recyclers are not failing from lack of ambition or technology. They are being outcompeted, undercut, and

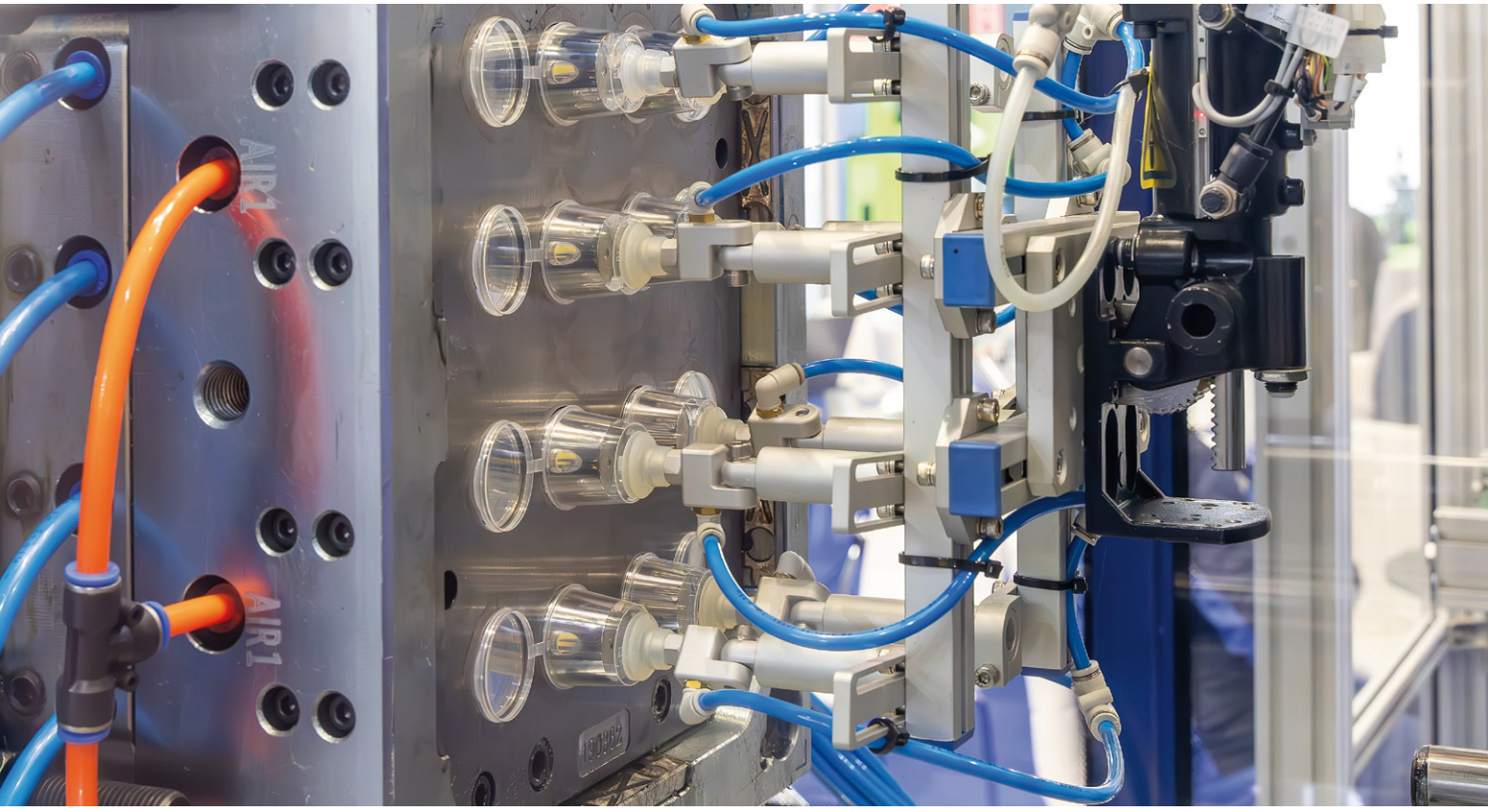


overregulated in their home market. To steer clear of the collapse of the European plastics recycling sector, action must be swift and coordinated. Reviving demand for recyclates produced in Europe, preventing further closures, and ensuring continued innovation require a comprehensive response. Trade defence tools are essential to shield the sector from non-compliant imports that do not meet the EU's standards. These must include robust mirror clauses, stronger third-party verification, tariff adjustment mechanisms for recycled plastics and products with recycled content, and reinforced customs controls backed by harmonised penalties and certification rules.

At the same time, European plastics recyclers need urgent access to affordable, clean energy and targeted fiscal relief through subsidies and incentives. Harmonised Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes across Member States would contribute to strengthening local sourcing of recyclates and providing stability to the plastics recycling value chain. Tackling raw material price volatility, accelerating and simplifying permitting processes, and streamlining reporting obligations would encourage the much-needed investments in the sector.

Enhanced consistency in the implementation and enforcement of existing EU legislation is also vital. Recycled content targets contained in key pieces of legislation – such as the PPWR or the SUPD – must be upheld through third-party certification, legal clarity, and uniform implementation. Only a transparent, predictable, and fair regulatory environment can de-risk investments, restore competitiveness, and allow the European plastics recycling value chain to continue innovating.

Plastics recycling is not a niche industry. It is a strategic sector for Europe's autonomy, and a prerequisite for reaching climate and circular economy goals. Europe's capacity to respond to the current crisis will determine its ability to remain at the forefront of the global transition to a sustainable future, to regain competitiveness in an increasingly challenging market, and to uphold the values on which its policies are built. With immediate, coordinated, and forward-looking action, Europe can successfully navigate this iceberg and enable its plastics recycling sector to emerge from the crisis stronger and more resilient. •



The state of the plastics processing industry: challenges and risks to competitiveness

The European plastics industry faces challenges from strict regulations, rising recycling demands, and record-high energy costs. Production is shifting outside the EU, risking dependence on imports and weakened competitiveness. While recycling is vital, cheaper, lower-quality imports threaten local processors. To safeguard jobs and competitiveness, the sector needs stable regulations, fair recycling policies, and lower energy costs

Robert Szyman
Managing Director of the Polish Union of Plastics Converters (PZPTS)

The plastics processing industry in Poland and across the European Union is currently facing serious challenges which directly affect its competitiveness, stability and future growth prospects. Companies in the sector are increasingly impacted by both regulatory and economic factors.

On the one hand, firms must contend with increasingly restrictive EU regulations, which impose additional administrative and technological requirements; on the other, growing pressure to raise recycling rates is forcing costly investment in new solutions and processes. Added to this are record-high energy prices, which significantly increase production costs and reduce profitability. As a result, European firms are at risk of losing their competitive edge to manufacturers outside the EU, where regulations are less stringent and production costs considerably lower.

Over-regulation and the risk of losing production from Europe

In recent years, the EU plastics sector has been burdened with another wave of environmental, production and trade

Plastics production (including countries outside the EU27)			
Export		Import	
Great Britain	14,9%	USA	22,2%
Turkey	11,8%	South Korea	12,7%
China	11,7%	China	11,5%
USA	11,7%	Switzerland	9,3%
Switzerland	5,9%	Saudi Arabia	6,4%

Plastics processing (including countries outside the EU27)			
Export		Import	
Great Britain	17,1%	China	32,6%
USA	13,3%	USA	12,2%
Switzerland	10,0%	Great Britain	12,2%
China	6,7%	Turkey	8,7%
Turkey	5,2%	Switzerland	8,0%

Non-EU trading partners (in terms of sales value) in 2023
Source: "Plastics in the circular economy. Analysis of the situation in Europe", Plastics Europe 2024

regulations. While many of these are justified on environmental grounds, their excessive pace of introduction combined with other adverse factors means that the production of virgin plastics is gradually shifting outside Europe.

According to analyses by Plastics Europe, although the global situation has improved, the data for Europe are far less encouraging. Reports indicate that in the first quarter of this year, average industrial production across Europe fell by 1.7% year on year. Industrial output increased in two of the five largest EU economies (Germany and Spain), while in the other three (France, Italy and Poland) declines were recorded.

It is not only energy-intensive sectors but also many other industries that are struggling with falling orders. EU production of plastics in primary forms in the first quarter of 2024 rose by 2.7% compared to the previous quarter. It was also higher than a year earlier, but demand was driven mainly by orders from outside Europe. Current production levels remain around 20% lower than before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine.

If this trend continues, Europe will be forced to import raw materials and products from third countries – a move which carries not only price risks but also political risks. The earlier dependence on Russian raw materials, or today's reliance on imports from the United States, demonstrates how dangerous it can be to rely on sources over which Europe has little real influence. With regard to trade in plastic products, the risk of political relations with the US having a major impact appears smaller, owing to the relatively modest export surplus over imports.

Not only producers but also plastics processors in the EU are failing to see growth. Since 2023, there has been a decline in the value of goods sold by EU companies on the internal market. At the same time, since 2022, production of plastic products has also fallen. Nevertheless, the EU has maintained a relatively stable positive trade balance with non-EU countries. Declining demand within the EU market is being partly offset by exports.

Pressure to recycle – sound assumptions, difficult practice

EU policy assumes the intensive development of recycling as one of the pillars of the circular economy. This direction is undoubtedly correct – increasing recovery and reuse of plastics can, in the long term, deliver tangible environmental and economic benefits. The problem arises, however, when significant volumes of recyclate from outside the EU begin to enter the market. Imported material is often more competitive on price, but its quality does not always meet the EU's strict standards. The absence of effective mechanisms for verifying and controlling the technical parameters of recyclate from third countries risks undermining confidence in the entire secondary raw materials segment. At the same time, imports of cheaper recyclate weaken the competitiveness of local plants, which continue to struggle with surpluses of their own waste and limited options for managing it.

The consequences of this situation may include both job losses in European processing and a further widening of the trade deficit in plastics. In addition, lower prices for virgin raw materials continue to discourage the use of recyclate, with a negative effect on demand for recycled material.

Data show that European polymer exports fell by 25.4% between 2020 and 2023, clearly indicating the region's weakening position in global markets. The structure of trade also confirms the challenges facing the industry.

For Poland, Germany remains the principal intra-EU partner, while outside the EU the most important partners include Ukraine (exports of plastics in primary forms) and South Korea (imports), as well as the United Kingdom (exports of plastic products) and China (imports). Notably, China is now Europe's main partner in imports of plastic products, accounting for 32.6% of the total volume in 2023.

Meanwhile, there is no shortage of raw materials for plastics production – whether derived from petroleum or from alternative sources, including innovative technologies based on CO_2 utilisation. Contrary to earlier forecasts warning of rapid depletion, the availability of base raw materials is not currently the main constraint on industry development. Increasingly decisive are legal regulations, price competition and the capacity to implement modern recycling technologies.

Energy costs and the risk of losing competitiveness

The plastics industry is relatively energy-intensive – particularly in the production of raw materials and in recycling, while in processing energy also represents a significant cost factor. High and volatile energy prices in EU countries substantially increase operating costs. Coupled with the potential introduction of protective tariffs on finished goods from Asia or other external markets, this creates the risk of trade wars and retaliatory measures, which could further reduce the profitability of European exports.

The example of US–EU trade relations, where tariff increases were met with immediate retaliation, demonstrates that protectionism does not always bring the desired results.

"These tariffs could trigger a chain reaction, leading to higher raw material prices, reduced competitiveness and job losses across the European Union. Such measures run counter to Europe's industrial and environmental objectives," stresses Paolo Bochicchio, Managing Director of EuPC.

According to the European Commission, the tariff rates are as follows:

- Imports from Egypt: 74.2% to 100.1%
- Imports from the US: 58% to 77%

The measures are intended to protect the EU PVC industry, which provides employment for around 4,000 people in seven Member States. Without intervention, the market could suffer further collapse and the closure of production plants within the EU.

In protecting the market, however, it is important to safeguard export opportunities, without which many companies in the processing sector will not be able to survive. To remain competitive, the European – and therefore also the Polish – plastics industry needs a coherent and predictable regulatory framework, a rational approach to recycling, and tangible measures to reduce energy costs.

Without these, Europe risks not only losing production to non-EU markets but also deepening its dependence on imports of raw materials and products – a development which, in the longer term, could weaken the economic security of the entire Union. •

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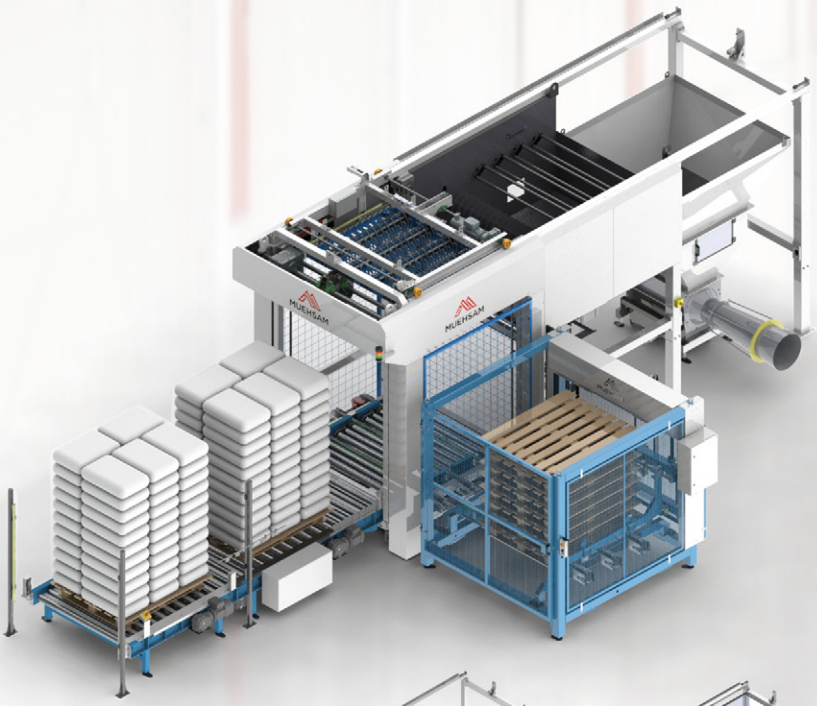

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How did a milking cow become a dead dog?

Europe's polymer and plastics markets are in crisis: demand is weak, virgin polymer production is shrinking, and ambitious recycling targets clash with technological limits, pushing many companies into bankruptcy. Can the industry still escape this strategic trap?

László Bűdy
CEO, myCeppi

After a summer of bad moods, the autumn of bad moods has come to the polymer markets and I dare not even think about the winter, the last quarter. The illusions of a seasonal strengthening in the fall seem to be disintegrating everywhere. So far, September has not brought a spectacular but noticeable increase in demand and October is not expected to do so either. What happened to the European polymers and plastics market? The problem is big and this is also felt by European interest groups, who have addressed European decision-makers, parliament and national governments in a joint declaration entitled "Plastics Value Chain Demands Immediate Action to Save EU Industry".

The main demands are as follows:

- Restore Fair Competition – Promote EU-Made Circular Plastics Now
- Cut Energy Costs – Empower and Support Circular Plastics to Compete Globally
- End Loopholes in Verification and Enforcement
- Tackle Fragmentation – Implement and Enforce EU Law
- Break the Deadlock – Catalyse Innovation and Private Investment
- Enhance EPR for a Fair Circular Market.

It is in all our interests to support these demands, but are we really solving the problems? In my opinion, the root of the problems is deeper and, given the long-term trends, it is unlikely that we can change the situation. At least in the short term and certainly not by administrative means.

To understand the problem, it is necessary to distinguish between virgin and recycled plastics. Although we seem to be talking about one product range, we are not.

With one or two exceptions, recycled plastics are only partially and limitedly suitable as a substitute for virgin polymers, both in terms of quantity and quality. Virgin polymers are produced on an industrial scale, while recycled plastics are partly manufactured on a handmade basis, and the difference in production figures shows that the difference is of a large magnitude, and has been increasing for years.

The problem is strategic, so a strategic analysis should be carried out. The BCG matrix is well known to everyone, with two dimensions: market growth rate and relative market share. In these dimensions, I examine virgin polymers and recycled plastics separately.

Europe's share of world virgin polymer production decreased from 27.5% to around 10.4% from 2002 to 2023. This decline would likely continue in 2024 and 2025. In just a few weeks, we will see the 2024 figures clearly on the K trade fair.

The main source of the share decline was primarily the doubling of world polymer production in 21 years. Investment outside Europe has been driven by two main drivers: on the one hand, rising consumption, mainly in Asia and China, driven by rising living standards. On the other hand, exports based on cheap feedstock can create products and production in the Middle East, Central Asia, Siberia and North America. The latter largely considers Europe as their target market. But Africa and Turkey are also important target markets for polymer producers in the Middle East and North America, where they have to compete with European producers. In a growing market, losing market share was not surprising.

However, it is worrying that European virgin polymer production volumes have fallen by 19.7% compared to 2018, and for the first time this millennium, fell deep below 50 million tons to 42.9 million tons in 2023. Total European virgin polymer production is likely to be below 40 million tons by the end of 2025, with some estimates suggesting that announced European plant closures could see production below 30 million tons in 2026.

This means that we have gone back 30 years in terms of production volume, to the 90s of the last century.

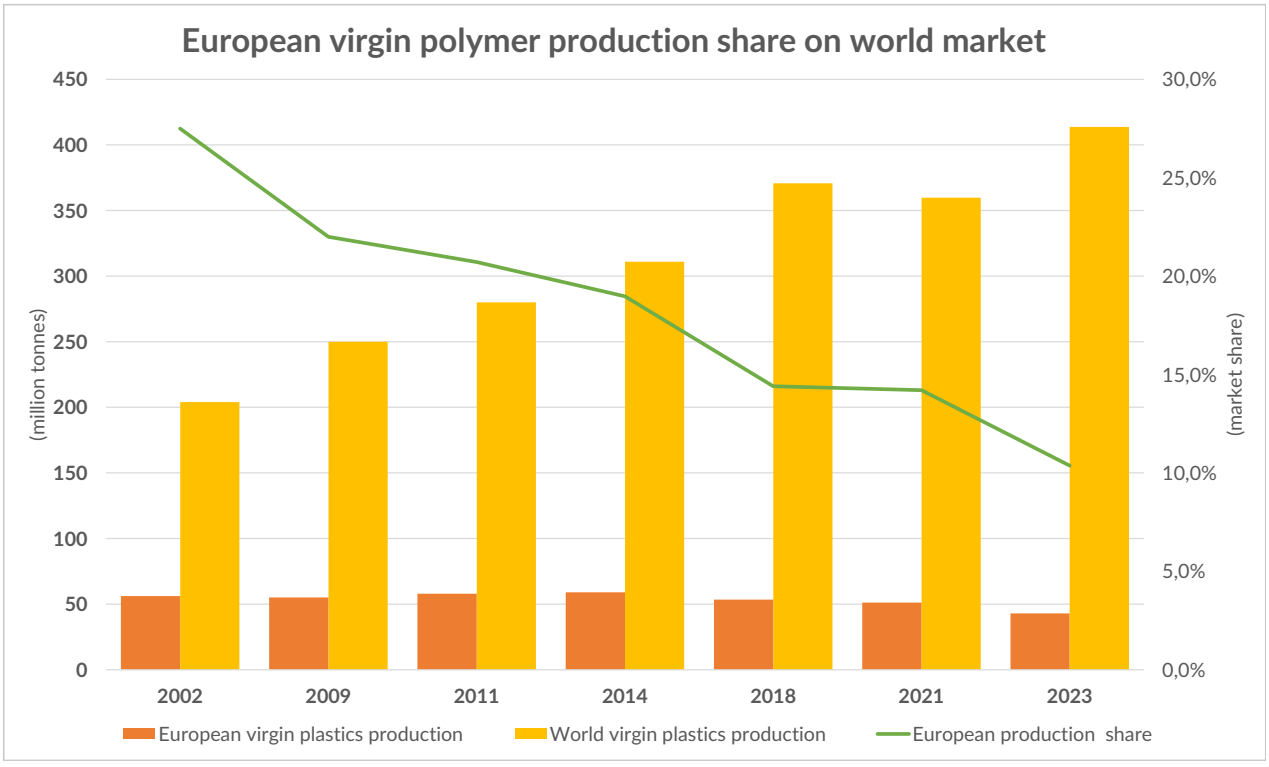
If we consider the entire European virgin polymer production as a whole, we see the following strategic shifts in position.

Between 2002 and 2011, the global polymer market grew rapidly, with Europe's market share being high, above 20%. It was a "Star" in terms of its strategic position.

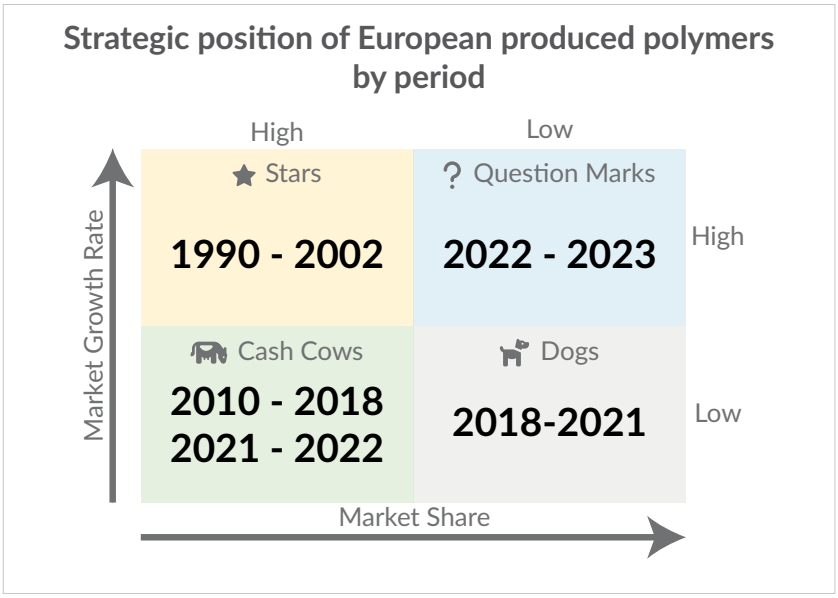
Between 2011 and 2018, the expansion of the global polymer market slowed, but Europe was able to maintain its production volume and the profitability of polymer production. These were the golden years for the European polymer industry, with high world market share, moderate growth and very positive spreads, not only for the polymer industry but also for the plastics industry. In terms of its strategic position, both the polymer and plastics industries were cash cows.

Since 2018, the commodity polymers market has come under pressure due to the entry of new North American, Russian and Far Eastern capacities. The simpler, easily substitutable polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene and PVC grades have faced significant price competition. As it became clear that Europe could not win the competition in the commodity market without cheap feedstock, the strategic position changed to "dog", the dead dog, by 2018.

However, COVID intervened and the general downturn was followed by two prosperous years, not due to improved competitiveness but to a temporary tightening of global supply chains. Once again, the European



Data source: Plastics Europe, *Plastics – the fast Facts 2024*



polymer industry has become a cash cow. Global logistics problems have been partially solved. Meanwhile, the war in Ukraine broke out and Europe began to restructure its energy supply. It has largely moved away from cheap Russian oil and gas and started to build up a new supplier network. We are in the process, the procurement resources are in place, but optimisation will take years. Thus, European industrial electricity prices are two to three times higher than those in China or North America, while natural gas prices are three to four times higher. Europe is now at a disadvantage not only in terms of feedstock but also in energy costs.

The strategic position of European polymer production has become a "Question Mark". The answer has started to come from global polymer producers, with a significant wave of polymer capacity closures, mainly in Western Europe, starting and accelerating. These trends seem irreversible, with Europe losing its role in the global virgin polymer market. But this is not just a market issue, it is also a structural one.

Polymer factory closures will have repercussions, complex, long-established chemical value chains will be shut down, which will also affect many other areas, including the now thriving Consumer Chemicals and Specialties areas. Decisions have been taken or will be taken in the last quarter of 2025. Naphtha processing has already fallen back to the level of the 90s. Fewer and fewer processable molecules will be produced. European production of virgin polymers is expected to decline significantly by the end of 2026, with Europe's share of the world market falling well below 10%.

However, Europe has prepared and responded to the deterioration of its strategic position visible since the mid-2010s: Out with the old, in with the new! Let's have a circular economy! Let's bring recycled plastics and molecules that can be kept in circulation for a long time.

The strategic concept is simple: the global environmental drive will see the market for recycled plastics grow significantly, and Europe, as an early entrant and innovator, can develop and maintain a high market share both in the near and distant future. Thus, initially a "Star" can take up "Cash Cow" positions later on.

The planned high market share was achieved, but the creators of the strategy did not take into account two important factors. One is that "greening" is not a global trend, at most at the level of words. We are alone, the greenest market is Europe, so recyclers from other continents also look to Europe as a target market. The competitive conditions are similar to virgin polymers, cheaper feedstock (waste) and cheaper energy costs. The other thing the strategist did not take into account is that this product is not ready, as most mechanically recycled plastics are still only a limited substitute for virgin polymers.

The biggest problem with mechanical recycling is that only in exceptional cases (PET) can we return to the original product. That is, we can no longer produce the same quality product from the starting plastic product – for example, film waste. The other big problem is that the scale of recycling is much smaller than the scale of plastics production, but if you look at it by application, the difference can be two or three orders of magnitude smaller. And the reason for this is not capacity.

We can boldly state that there is sufficient recycling capacity, but there is not enough high-quality, processable waste, and for the waste and regranulate that there is, there is no market that ensures adequate profitability.

For the time being, recycling of polyethylene and polypropylene, for example, seems to be a failure compared to the plans – the biggest problem is that meanwhile very sympathetic and binding rules are coming into force from 2030, especially for packaging materials, with a mandatory recyclate content of 10–30%. With this legislation in place, hundreds of recycling companies have been set up and recycling machinery manufacturing has boomed.

However, the available technology – mechanical recycling – does not seem to be able to meet the targets set by EU-level legislation. Moreover, the high energy costs and the limited availability of good quality waste make

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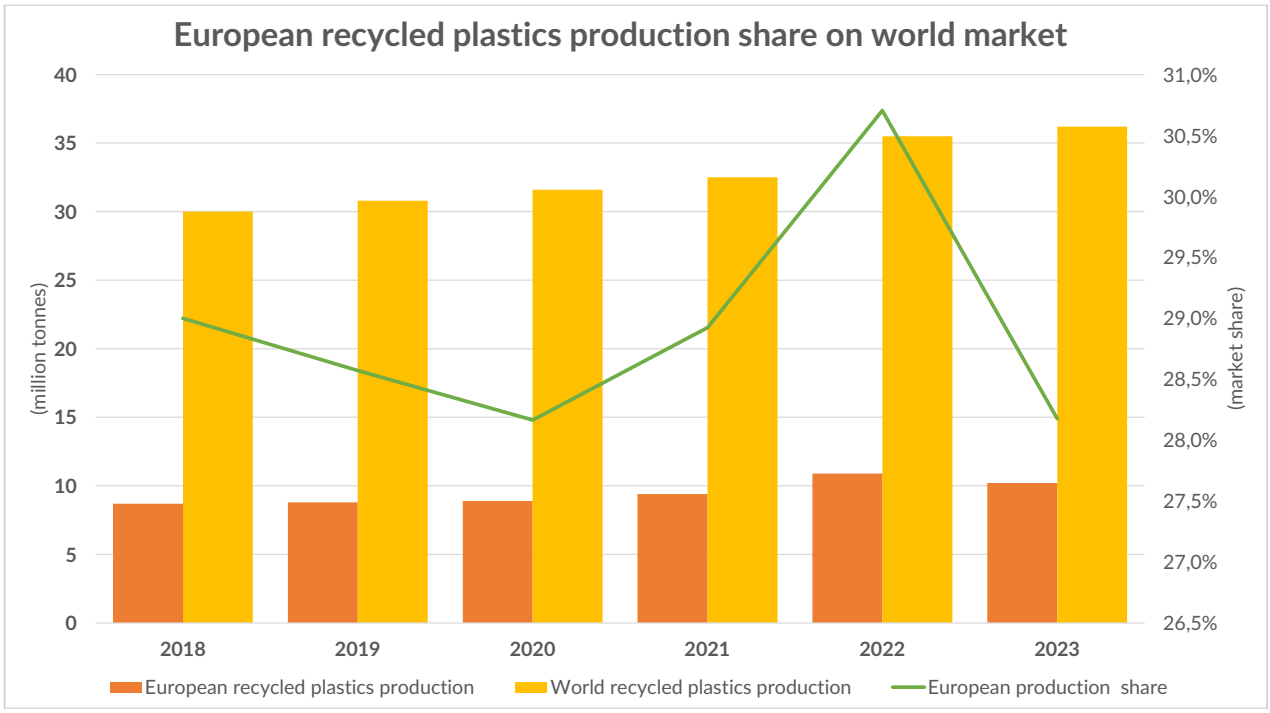


Data source: Plastics Europe, *Plastics – the fast Facts 2024*

the activity unprofitable. This explains the wave of bankruptcies that has decimated recyclers.

So what is the strategic position of European plastic recycling now? It seems that the environment is out of the global focus. The new US administration's priority is to increase industrial production rather than protect the environment. The emerging countries of the Global South are now awash in cheap Russian oil, they want to make money, they want to develop. They would rather sell petrochemical products, polymers, to Europe at cheap prices.

It is no coincidence that no agreement was reached on the Global Plastics Pact. Global recycling growth looks set to slow from 2022 to 2023, with recycling volumes up by just under 2% and global virgin polymer production up by 3.3%. It would be logical to conclude that, although the market is growing slowly, the European recycling industry has a high share of the market, making it a "cash cow" position. However, it is a strange contradiction to call an industry a cash cow when it has serious profitability and cash flow problems. The strategic position of European recycled plastics is outside the BCG matrix. It is no coincidence that many people prefer to close recycling plants.

Can the declaration presented above provide a solution? Not a fundamental solution, as Europe is open to lower cost regranulates, flakes and waste. Imports are needed to meet future high recycled plastic targets. Imported regranulates are more competitive than European ones. The contradiction is clear: ambitious targets are killing the European plastics recycling industry.

So what can we do?

For recycling, the global context must be forgotten! Europe cannot solve the global problems of plastics, especially as its market position and advocacy capacity is steadily weakening. We

need to limit the recycling to geographical limits. From European waste, European re-granulates. Similar to the ban on the export of plastic waste, a ban should also be introduced on imported waste, shredded and recycled materials. Everyone should be responsible for their own rubbish and waste!

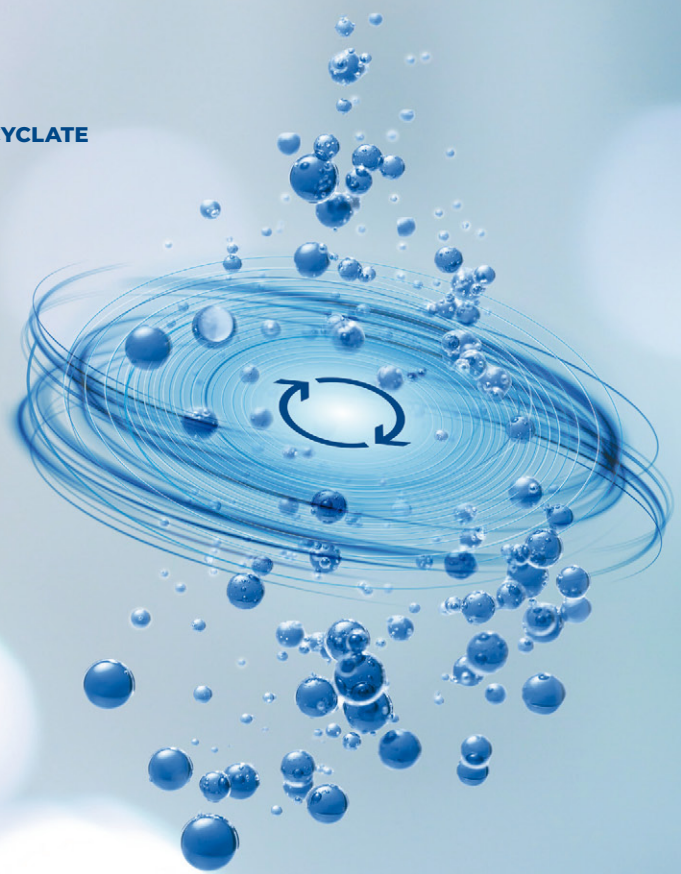
However, the resulting reduction in waste and regranulates will not cover the ambitious mandatory recycled material content requirements already enshrined in law. Legislation on plastic recycling needs to be rethought. It has to be accepted that, contrary to the name "plastics", it is not nearly as flexible as the legislators thought. Molecules cannot be kept in circulation for very long. We need to do away with illusions, and finally make room for physics and chemistry.

Dispelling the illusions about recycling will both disappoint the public and probably harm political interests.

However, it does provide an opportunity for European plastic recycling to survive and become profitable.

But if we stick to dogma, we will also lose the recycled plastic market, and very quickly, before 2030. It could easily happen that European recycling targets will be met with regranulates from the Far East or Africa.

If we can remain flexible and have the courage to rethink, we can protect the European plastics market and create a semi-circular process that is in line with reality. •



Plastpol Expo: Central and Eastern Europe's solid pillar for the plastics industry

The International Fair of Plastics and Rubber Processing is the heart of Europe's key venue for the industry's business meetings. The 30th anniversary event will take place at Targi Kielce from May 19 to 22, 2026, confirming Plastpol's role as a global business and technology platform. In May 2027, the Kielce Exhibition and Congress Centre will witness the completion of its expansion scheme and welcome exhibitors and visitors in its new exhibition hall

"For thirty years, we have consistently enhanced Plastpol's position as a key meeting place for the international plastics processing industry. The participation of companies from around the world has enabled the event to catalyse investments, knowledge exchange, and commercial contracts. This has had a tangible impact on the development of this part of the economy", emphasises Dr. Andrzej Mochoń, President of Targi Kielce.

"The trade fair brings together market leaders, technological innovators and experts from around the world, enabling the exchange of knowledge, experiences and the establishment of strategic partnerships. Due to its international scale and growing importance, Plastpol creates a platform that integrates the entire industry – from raw materials to machines, finished products, and industrial solutions. Plastics are in every area of our lives. The industry aims to reuse them while maintaining the original parameters of the raw material. The recycling offer is playing an increasingly important role at trade fairs; strong emphasis is also placed on the needs related to energy saving and reduction of production costs. This topic will also certainly resonate at the 30th Plastpol, which will take place from May 19 to 22, 2026. Of course, we will also celebrate the anniversary", ensures Kamil

Perz, Plastpol Project Director at Targi Kielce.

From the national exhibition to the international arena

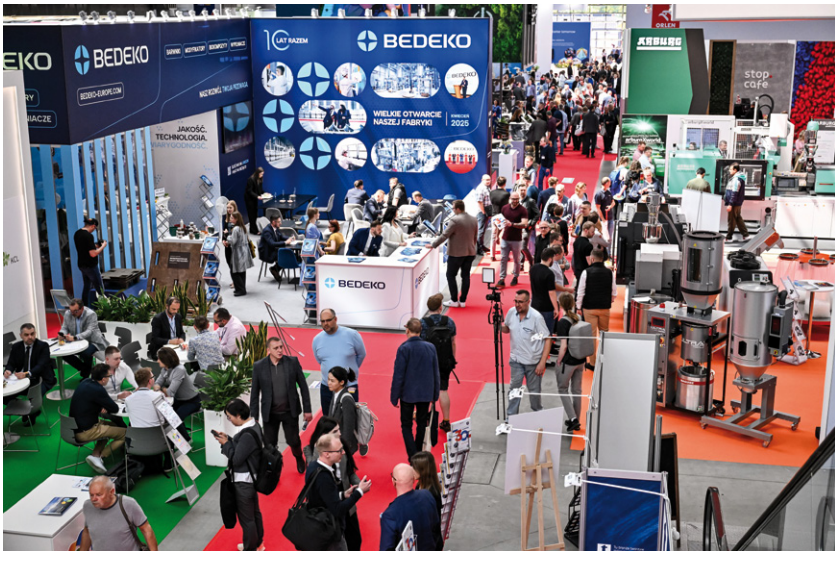
The Plastpol success story means the transformation – from a national event in the 1990s to one of the key industry meetings in Europe. Now, between 600 and 800 exhibitors from around 30 countries participate in the trade fair. The list of countries with regular entrepreneurs representations includes: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Spain, The Netherlands, Japan, Germany, USA, Portugal, Slovakia, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, Hungary, Italy, Great Britain, Latvia, Canada, Hong Kong, Serbia, Ireland and India. The 30th expo features national stands of Switzerland, Czech Republic, Austria and Germany.

The visitors' milieu also has a global dimension – Targi Kielce hosts specialists from Lithuania, Ukraine, Serbia, Estonia, Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, England, Slovakia, China, India, the Middle East and, of course, Poland. This confirms that Plastpol is a genuinely international event.

"Over the past 30 years, Plastpol has come a long way – today the event has no competition in this part of Europe as it attracts global machine manufacturers, suppliers of raw materials and innovative solutions. The anniversary show offers an opportunity to celebrate three decades of industry involvement", says Kamil Perz, Plastpol Project Director. "Relationships have always been the pillar of the trade fair, as they serve as a springboard to develop this project for 30 years now. This was Henryk Zawistowski's mission – the pioneer and mentor in the plastics industry, a technological authority who was considered the "spiritual guide" of the industry".

He was one of the most outstanding Polish specialists in plastics processing, valued in the European community. He saw Plastpol as a meeting of all industry components, including companies, scientific institutes, industry organisations, and customers from various sectors of the economy. Nearly 50 companies participated in the inaugural trade fair, held from 23 to 25 October 1997.

"The then fellowship included organisations and companies that are actually the founders of the Plastpol Expo: Dopak, Danje-Polymer, Dom Przedstawicielski – today's Engel, Elektromech – today's Muehsam, FCPK Bytów – today's ProPlastica, KGL Corporation, Metalchem from Gliwice – today's ICHEMAD-Profarb, OBRMiCH Metalchem from Toruń, now a member of the Łukasiewicz Research Network, Milar, Polimarky, Wadim-Plast, WEP – today's Telko, as well as the Polish Union of Plastics Converters with the then office director and now a member of the Supervisory Board Wojciech Filek and, of course, the Plastech Plastics Processing Technology Plant with Henryk Zawistowski", notes Kamil Perz. "They trusted us, i.e. the organisers, took the risk of participating in the first expo and have been loyal to us from the beginning of the project, effectively influencing the implementation of the mission", he emphasises.



Creating a supply chain in the heart of Plastpol

Gathering supply chain links in plastics and rubber processing is one of Plastpol's most outstanding values, as producers of raw materials – from granulates, dyes, and additives to regranulates – as well as manufacturers of machines and tools, companies dealing with recycling, automation, and logistics, exhibit here. On the other hand, the expo halls host entrepreneurs from industries that utilise plastics, including packaging, construction, automotive, electronics, medical, and household appliances.

"Plastpol is where the offer meets demand; on the one hand, suppliers of machines and raw materials, and on the other, producers of finished products looking for partners and innovative solutions. This is where new supply chains are created, which then operate on European and global markets, and thus Plastpol actually shapes the global industry's ecosystem", as emphasised by Kamil Perz.

In practice, this means that the talks held during the four-day expo often result in contracts, cooperation, and long-term business relationships. This is where Plastpol's strength lies – in building bridges between different market segments.

The power of relationships at Targi Kielce

Each Plastpol in Kielce means contracts. During the May 2025 event, new customers purchased injection moulding machines, extruders, blow moulding machines, recycling lines, and depalletizers, as well as raw materials such as granulates, dyes, additives, and regranulates. The companies emphasised that it was Kielce where they finalised the negotiations that had lasted for many months. Customers came from Lithuania, Ukraine, Serbia, Estonia, Germany, Ukraine, Italy and The Netherlands.

The expo's competitive advantage lies in the fact that one can learn about the capabilities of technological lines demonstrated in live operation, which facilitates informed investment decisions. Machines demonstrate their abilities in industrial-like conditions.

Plastpol Gold Medals – a symbol of quality and innovation

Innovative technologies and products, according to experts, that are or will be crucial for the industry's development are awarded prestigious Gold Medals. The awarding ceremony is held during the Platinum Plast gala ceremony.

Gold Medals recognise solutions that are of a cutting-edge nature, technologically innovative and respond to key market challenges – such as energy efficiency, process automation and environmental friendliness. These awards carry enormous marketing significance, and for many companies, they are a key element in building prestige on an international scale.

"The Gold Medal Award is a token of recognition for research and development efforts and courage in implementing innovations – many producers who received the award in Kielce are now leaders in their market segments. Plastpol serves as an incubator for new products and trends in the industry", states Dr. Andrzej Mochoń, President of Targi Kielce.

Knowledge and discussion forum

The exhibition of technologies, raw materials and services fosters intensive exchange of knowledge. "The world is changing very rapidly; the plastics industry is under enormous pressure from changing legislation, changing operating philosophy, and changing EU regulations. Plastpol offers the opportunity to discuss these topics and much more", exhibitors and visitors emphasise this advantage. Discussions at expo stands and during specialist conferences, such as the Plastech Info technological seminar co-organised by Targi Kielce in conjunction with Tworzywa.pl.

"The seminar focuses on key topics for the development of the plastics industry and their impact on industry, society and safety", says Kamil Perz, Plastpol Project Director. Paths for the industry's development are also discussed during a press conference organised by the Plastics Europe Polska Foundation. The report and data presented by industry experts are part of the action plans.

Omniplast – an industry knowledge competition for exhibitor representatives – aims to improve competencies and popularise knowledge about plastics and rubber processing. Winners are recognised as highly specialised experts and enjoy prestige in the industry.

30th Plastpol – a celebration of the global industry

"All these components, from international character through innovativeness to knowledge, contribute to Plastpol's strength, which will be particularly visible at the anniversary expo. This will be a celebration of the plastics and rubber industry, showcasing cooperation and development", encourages Kamil Perz, Plastpol Project Director. "The upcoming show enables visitors and exhibitors to see the new exhibition hall of Targi Kielce, which will open in the summer of 2026".

The Targi Kielce new expo hall for Plastpol 2027

The new facility will impress with innovative solutions and open up a range

of opportunities for product presentation. A 15,500-square-meter space on the ground floor of a 15-meter-tall new expo hall will provide designers with ample room to express their imagination. A high-load-bearing floor, wide entrance gates, a limited number of columns, a regular shape to the hall interior, a limited number of roof skylights, and the option of suspension are the foundation for creativity.

"Expo presentations will take various forms, depending on the needs of exhibitors; the heaviest machines will be put on show here. Lighting arrangements in line with the original idea, without intrusive sunlight, will help draw visitors' attention more effectively. Designers, marketing and public relations experts will be able to implement company promotion concepts even more effectively", ensures the President of Targi Kielce.

An additional 3,000 square meters will be available on the mezzanine, featuring conference rooms equipped with the latest solutions for congresses and training sessions. Business talks sometimes require a silent space to hold; this section will be cut out for such talk-shop sessions. The mezzanine will also house a restaurant, which can be divided into 3 parts using a sliding wall system. The solution will enable events from various industries to be organised simultaneously. The investment, valued at approximately PLN 100 million, will significantly expand the expo space at Targi Kielce.

"The new expo hall, combined with the existing space, will create over 50,000 square meters of exhibition space under the roof. This is Europe's top level", adds Andrzej Mochoń, President of Targi Kielce. Plastpol exhibitors will accommodate innovative exhibition concepts in the new expo space of Targi Kielce in May 2027.

Plastpol at the K Expo

Representatives of the Plastpol Expo are present at the K Trade Fair. They look forward to seeing you at the expo stand, located in Hall EN1 / EN1-05B. Trade Project Director Kamil Perz and members of the design team are available every day. They will discuss the 30th Plastpol trade fair and assist you in selecting comfortable exhibition spaces within the Targi Kielce Exhibition and Congress Centre's expo halls.

"We will talk about the possibilities of cooperation for the upcoming and subsequent expo, and the use of the new exhibition hall", says Kamil Perz. •

Plastpol Expo, 19–22 May 2026, Targi Kielce, Poland

Enhancing Packaging Innovation

The Enhancing Packaging Innovation Ecosystems for Interregional Collaboration (EPIC) project aims to strengthen packaging ecosystems in less developed regions. By enabling key stakeholders to identify innovation gaps and challenges, and in turn strengthening the capacity of interregional value chains to drive the transition towards more sustainable packaging

The EPIC project aims to introduce a new, comprehensive approach to addressing current and anticipated challenges in the packaging industry, with a particular focus on the food, health and cosmetic sectors.

The EPIC project strives to foster collaboration between the packaging industry and related sectors by addressing their unique needs, challenges, and regulatory landscapes. By equipping these industries with the tools to define their requirements clearly, EPIC drives innovation and sustainability, ensuring long-term progress.

The consortium brings together key players from every stage of the packaging value chain – including packaging machinery and material providers, manufacturers, and end-user sectors. By leveraging this comprehensive network, EPIC will identify and develop interregional innovation projects that tackle industry challenges and drive value creation across the European packaging sector.

EPIC is dedicated to equipping regional ecosystems with the right skills to drive innovative investment projects. By uniting stakeholders from 4 key sectors – public authorities, academia, civil society, and industry leaders – it fosters collaboration that fuels sustainable growth and technological advancement.

Partnership

The consortium includes 10 partners from 8 European countries representing 9 clusters and 1 research and technology centre, committed to tackling the upcoming fundamental transition towards a more sustainable packaging sector.

Masterclasses

We are delighted to invite you to an exclusive series of EPIC Masterclasses – a dynamic knowledge-sharing initiative designed to accelerate innovation and foster collaboration across Europe's most forward-thinking packaging ecosystems. This series brings together top experts, industry leaders, and innovation drivers to explore the future of sustainable packaging, digital transformation, and cross-regional synergies.

Why attend?

- Discover cutting-edge packaging solutions and trends
- Learn from real-world case studies and industry pioneers
- Connect with like-minded professionals across Europe
- Gain insights into funding, policy frameworks, and collaboration tools

Each Masterclass is carefully curated to offer actionable knowledge, practical tools, and fresh perspectives – whether you're a packaging innovator, sustainability strategist, start-up founder, or policy maker.

Location: Online
Cost: Free of charge, registration required, visit our LinkedIn channel

We look forward to welcoming you to the EPIC community. Let's shape the future of packaging – together. •

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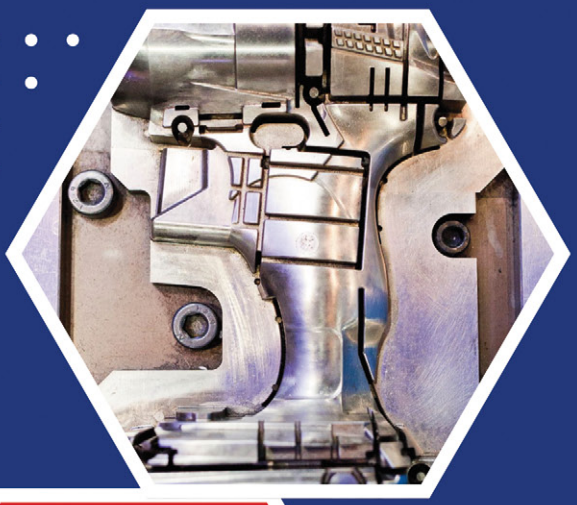

INNO FORM

8th International Cooperative Trade Fair of Tools and Processing Industry

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Bydgoszcz, Poland

The mission of BIC is to create optimal development conditions, stimulate cooperation and integrate processors and toolmakers of the plastics sector in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Region

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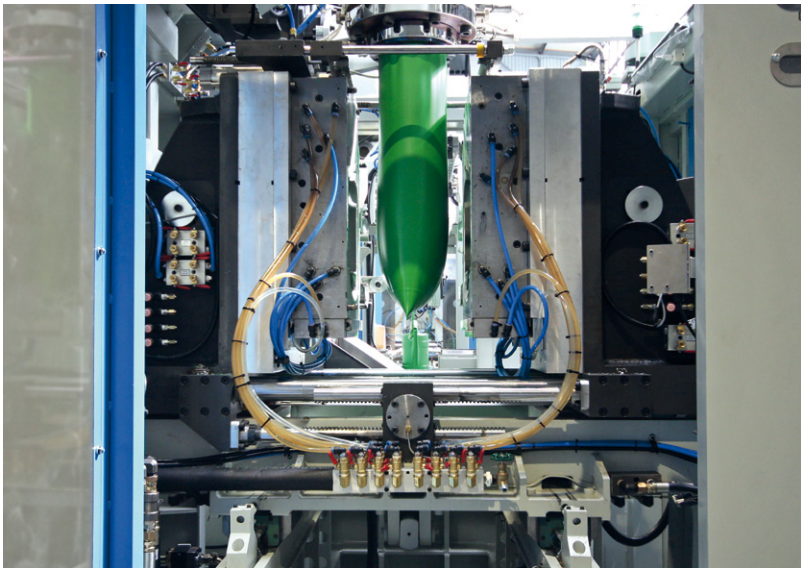
Blow Moulding Factory is Prosperplast's specialised department, which is a response to the market needs in the field of production services in the Blow Moulding technology

We have been processing plastics on injection moulding machines and blow moulding machines for almost 30 years. We have a wide and diverse machine park. We have continuation and accumulation heads. These are machines from the world's leading manufacturers. We are able to produce various types of plastics, but we mainly process HDPE and PP. Our system of feeding and dosing plastics enables very precise dosing of several components at the same time. Dosing devices have a built-in memory that allows you to save recipes and print a report from each cycle of the production order.

Each machine is equipped with a waste grinder, so we can feed the machine the right amount of regrind, which allows the production of repeatable products. We are characterised by continuous development and investments. We can produce medium and large items. Our strength is the production of large-size and complex items in excess of 30 kg in weight and 2 m^3 in volume. Modern solutions, energy efficiency and many years of experience allow us to produce products on competitive terms and in the expected quality. Our experienced engineers solve emerging problems every day and work on the automation of individual processes.

We produce items on moulds provided by customers, which we can modernise and adapt to our machines. In order to comprehensively serve our clients, we have our own tool room with a modern machine park where we build new moulds. We also guarantee a full service of the moulds dedicated to the production.

We have logistic capabilities that allow us to fully meet the needs of our clients. •



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25 years of innovation: Bagsik celebrates a quarter-century of development

Bagsik, a leading manufacturer of machinery and equipment for plastics production and recycling, celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2024. What began in 1999 as a consulting firm has evolved into a globally recognised enterprise, marking a significant milestone in its journey

From consulting to global manufacturing

The company's initial focus on advisory services quickly expanded to include trading in used plastics processing machinery, as response to high market demand. This evolution led to a strategic diversification of products, with Bagsik's core business now centered on manufacturing screen changers, particularly for PVC. Today, the company is a recognised expert in this field, offering solutions that optimise production processes and ensure high-quality final products.

At the forefront of plastics recycling

Plastics recycling is a key element of global environmental protection efforts. This process demands not only proper sorting and material processing but also advanced technologies to achieve high-quality recycled raw materials. Bagsik stands at the forefront of this innovation with its advanced screen changers for plastic filtration.

Bagsik's technology ensures continuous filtration without interrupting the production process, which is a crucial advantage in the recycling industry. Every production pause translates to time and financial losses. Bagsik screen changers guarantee a constant material flow, effectively removing contaminants and minimising raw material waste. Investments in modern technological solutions, such as a design office (Solid Works 3D) and advanced workshop facilities, allow the company to continuously improve its products and adapt them to the growing demands of the market.

Comprehensive solutions and partner trust

Beyond screen changers, Bagsik also offers complete granulation lines and mills. The company is one of Poland's largest suppliers of components and spare parts for the extrusion process, including essential items like filtration screens, extruder spare parts and precision sensors for measuring plastic melt pressure and temperature.

Operating in 18 countries, primarily in Central and Eastern Europe and also beyond, Bagsik has become a trusted partner for many companies, providing not only machinery but also service support, including a 24/7 repair service. This commitment to customer satisfaction and service reliability distinguishes Bagsik from its competitors and builds long-lasting relationships.

Reflecting on 25 years of operation shows how Bagsik has transformed from a small enterprise into a dynamic, globally recognised player. The company extends its sincere gratitude to all clients who have placed their trust in Bagsik and remained loyal despite intense market competition. Their support is the driving force for further development and the pursuit of innovative solutions that will shape the future of the plastics industry. •

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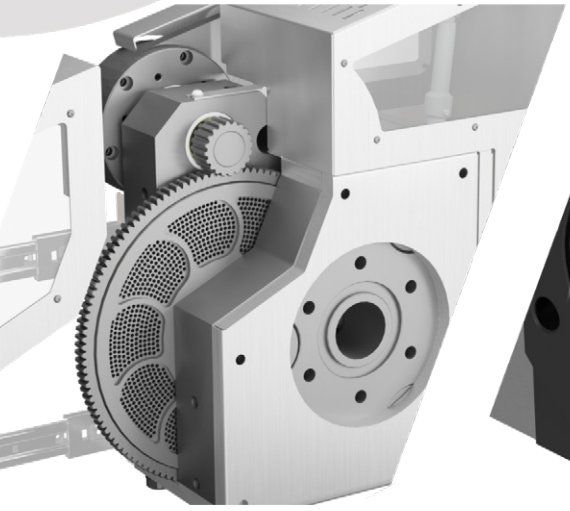

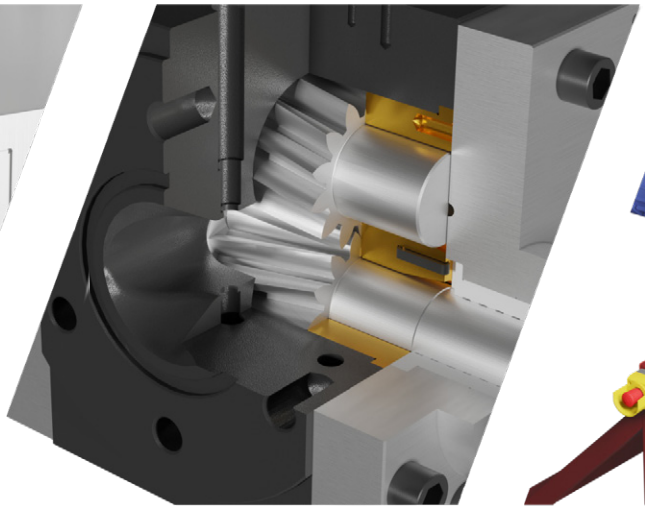

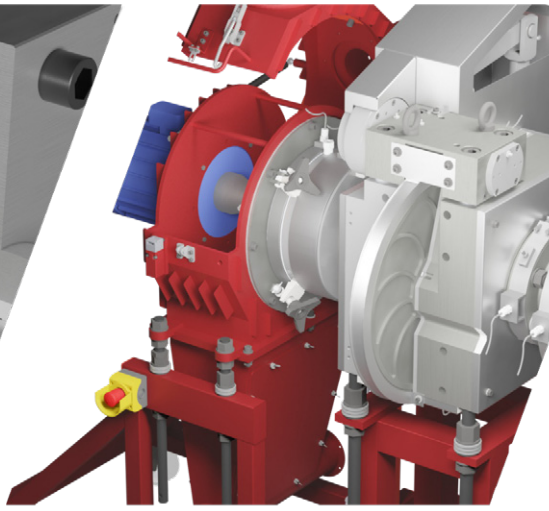

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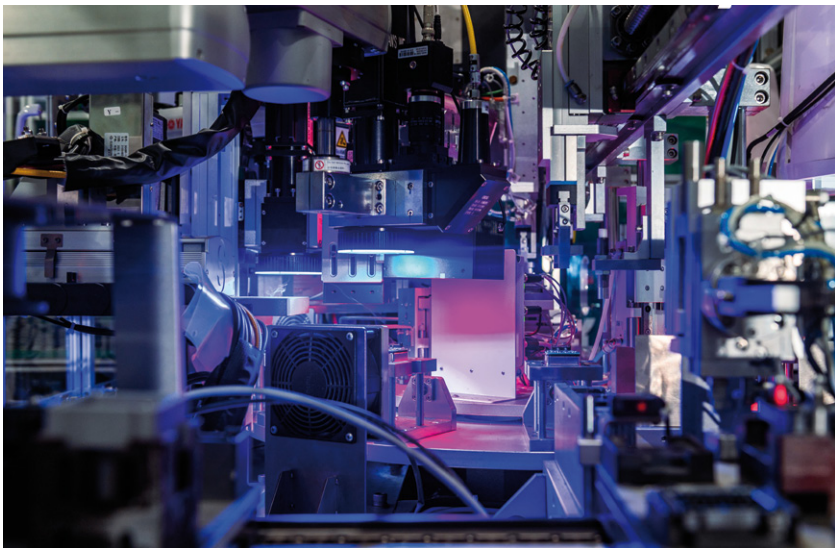
The impact of optical sorting accuracy on polymer regranulate quality

Plastic is everywhere in our daily lives, from bottles to keyboards and eyeglass lenses. Its presence is so common that it's easy to forget how quickly it becomes waste. The problem starts when different types of plastic do not go into the right recycling streams. PET mixes with PE, PP hides among PS, and added chemicals make the process even more complicated



Even a small amount of the wrong polymer in the granules reduces strength, worsens appearance, and complicates further processing. High-quality regranulate ensures stable mechanical properties and aesthetic consistency, but it also enables real replacement of virgin material, reduces oil consumption, and lowers the carbon footprint. The better the regranulate, the fewer compromises manufacturers must make.

Optical sorting: the key to quality regranulate

Every unwanted fragment in a batch lowers the value of the final material. Even a tiny bit of PE in a PET stream changes how it processes and reduces quality. Sorting accuracy is therefore more than a technical parameter. It's an economic and environmental factor that determines the material's worth and its potential for reuse. Optical sorting acts as the "artificial eye" of recycling. NIR cameras detect subtle differences between polymers that are nearly invisible to the human eye. The system checks each piece and uses air jets to move it to the correct channel in milliseconds.

Improving sorting accuracy

Precision in recycling begins where human vision ends. MEYER optical sorters combine physics, AI and a touch of engineering finesse to distinguish one polymer from another almost flawlessly.

MEYER equipment is equipped with Maglev air ejectors, which do not touch the material, yet can move it with almost surgical precision. Thanks to their levitating design, each pulse of air is perfectly aimed and instantaneous. The whole process resembles a carefully choreographed dance: thousands of small pieces separate from the stream at exactly the right moment, landing in the correct channel.

Behind the scenes, Thinker and Master systems work quietly: Thinker collects and analyses data, while Master enables remote operation and sends alerts before minor issues become downtime. This intelligent layer ensures operators do not need to be experts in optics or mechatronics. The machine guides and monitors the process largely autonomously.

It's important to remember that even the most advanced algorithms and ejectors cannot compensate for poorly prepared material. Preceding steps: shredding, washing, and drying, remain critical. A clean, well prepared feed material is the foundation that allows MEYER technology to perform at its best. Together, all stages form an ecosystem with a single goal: producing regranulate so clean it can confidently replace raw material.

Sorting accuracy determines whether regranulate becomes a valuable raw material or a product with limited applications. The future of recycling lies in faster cameras, more advanced algorithms, and mechanisms capable of handling increasingly complex materials. Accurate sorting is the key to responsible plastic use. •

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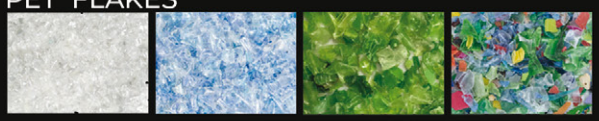
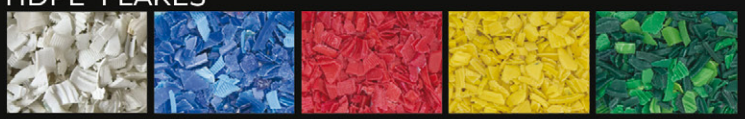


PS / ABS FLAKES

HDPE FLAKES

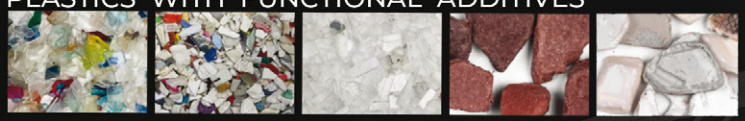


AGING FLAKES

PCR

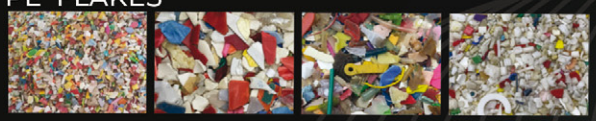
WEEE

PLASTICS WITH FUNCTIONAL ADDITIVES



GRANULES AND PELLETS

PE FLAKES



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MEYER

Sorting creates values

Plasmaq at K 2025 – getting plastics value back on the right track

In October 2025, the capital city of North Rhine-Westphalia will once again host K, the world's largest trade fair for the plastics and rubber industry, held every 3 years. The Portuguese company Plasmaq will take advantage of the hospitable spaces of Messe Düsseldorf to present its range of recycling machines produced in Leiria

The plastics processing industry – more specifically plastic recycling – is the main focus of this family-owned company, which works in close collaboration with its customers. Plasmaq's innovative, easy-to-operate and efficient solutions are recognised worldwide for the satisfaction they deliver to customers.

This year's edition of the K trade fair will undoubtedly, though unfortunately, be unique due to the ongoing military conflicts and the deep crisis affecting the plastics industry, particularly recycling. The autumn event will provide an excellent opportunity for industry leaders to speak out in a factual, decisive and specific way, especially regarding the challenges facing the recycling sector. Naturally, the Portuguese company will not miss the 8-day exhibition, whose motto this year is: "It all starts at K! The power of plastics! Green – Smart – Responsible".

In this spirit, together with more than 3,000 exhibitors, Plasmaq will emphasise 3 key points. First, the urgency of implementing the circular economy as effectively as possible to create new PCR-based materials with virgin-like quality, easy and safe to use for any plastics converter. Second, the promotion of digitalisation as a driver of technological change and strategic adaptation, since integrating information and communication technologies boosts efficiency, flexibility and quality. Third, the company will highlight that human well-being is at the centre of the plastics and rubber industry's efforts – both socially, through the promotion and development of talent, and literally, because there are

areas where plastic is irreplaceable. Plastics improve everyday life and, in many cases, help save health and lives. Basic medical equipment such as syringes, IV catheters, infusion sets and drips are prime examples. These are not only indispensable but, if properly sorted, some components can even be safely recycled. The use of plastic in medicine remains an irrefutable counterargument to manipulative anti-plastic slogans, which have unfairly damaged the material's reputation and contributed to the ongoing crisis.

As a supplier of complete technological concepts for mechanical recycling, Plasmaq implements circular economy principles by reintegrating materials into the production cycle, reducing landfill waste and limiting the need for virgin raw materials. Plasmaq lines are known for their high energy efficiency and technological flexibility, enabling them to adapt to difficult and changing market conditions. In doing so, the Portuguese manufacturer addresses 3 increasingly important needs of companies operating in today's uncertain and volatile global context: the pursuit of energy efficiency to remain competitive, the flexibility to rapidly reconvert production systems, and the automation and simplification of tasks to ensure business continuity.

At this year's edition, Plasmaq will showcase its flagship Plascompact screw press at Hall 9, stand E39. The unique design of these machines ensures that the mechanical properties of the processed material are preserved, resulting in high-quality recycling and maximum process efficiency. The model on display will represent the latest generation of Plascompact, incorporating technological improvements that increase efficiency in stretch film processing. Although it is considered Plasmaq's flagship device, it is only a small part of the company's wide portfolio of recycling equipment, which also covers bale opening, preparation, shredding, washing, drying and storage. •

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The Malplast company was established in 2013. In the early days, it traded raw materials in the plastics industry and beyond. In 2018, we launched our own washing and plastic granulation lines. Since then, we have steadily increased our production, thus acquiring new satisfied customers mainly involved in PP processing.

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Plastics industry media

Where the plastics industry meets Poland

Poland with its central location, strong processing sector and growing recycling investments is one of the most dynamic plastics markets in Europe. Thousands of converters, packaging producers and recyclers operate here, supported by global machinery and material suppliers. For international companies, Poland is a strategic entry point to Central and Eastern Europe

For more than 2 decades, **Plastech.pl** has been among the most influential industry portals in Poland. It attracts tens of thousands of monthly visitors: from decision-makers and plant managers to engineers and purchasing specialists. A unique strength of the portal lies in its dedicated **B2B marketplace**, which alone generates nearly half of all traffic. This section enables suppliers and distributors to present technologies, products, and offers directly to potential clients actively searching for solutions. In other words, Plastech is not just a source of news – it is a platform for business opportunities.

Complementing the online presence is **Plast Echo**, a modern trade magazine published in both print and digital formats. Since its launch in 2020, it has become a trusted source of knowledge and analysis for the Polish plastics sector. Each issue includes expert articles, interviews with industry leaders, and reports from major events. Importantly, once a year an **international English edition** is published and distributed at the most prominent European trade fairs – a copy of which you are now reading.

The synergy of both platforms creates a powerful combination. A campaign on Plastech.pl ensures instant online visibility, measurable in real time, while an advertisement in "Plast Echo" builds long-term brand awareness and prestige. Together, they allow advertisers to cover the entire spectrum of communication – daily online engagement and in-depth editorial presence in print.

Plast Echo – printed magazine

A print run of 2,000 copies is delivered directly to subscribers, with additional copies actively distributed at major industry events.

Plastech.pl – online

Key statistics of portal
17/09/2024 – 16/09/2025

Pageviews:	2,700,904
Unique users:	520,216

The most popular 3 sections (% of all pageviews):

- B2B Offers: 39.6%
- Business Directory: 14.4%
- News: 12.4%

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Publishing Plan 2026

Issue	Distribution	Editorial deadline
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What about Poland?

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ML Polyolefins

The international edition of "Plast Echo" is a great opportunity to bring closer to foreign readers the phenomenon of the Polish economy, which since 1989 has recorded significant GDP growth almost every year. In Europe, it ranks first in terms of cumulative growth, and globally it is among the leaders. This extraordinary rise has transformed Poland – from an economy ruined and exhausted by communist management – into a G20 member by the end of 2025, with a GDP reaching 1 trillion dollars. The President of the United States has acknowledged this success by inviting Poland's new president to the upcoming G20 summit in Miami.

Exhausted by more than 4 decades of Soviet occupation, the government of the People's Republic of Poland was in fact imposed by Moscow, and by 1989 the economy was collapsing. Its picture was tragic: outdated technologies, low labour productivity, market shortages, unpaid foreign debt, and, on top of that, social protests demanding democratic reforms. With the victory of Solidarność began an extremely difficult and socially costly process of transformation, which – through privatisation, strengthening of the national currency, and unleashing Polish entrepreneurship – led to success. However, it came at a high price: countless families thrown to the brink of poverty due to nightmarish unemployment, and later mass emigration of people born in the 1970s and 1980s, who, after Poland's accession to the EU (2004), decided to work abroad.

Today, however, the Polish economy represents a healthy organism whose diversification has allowed it to avoid problems that plagued other countries during recent economic crises. On the one hand, the country attracts foreign investors, for whom a large market (around 40 million population), with educated workers, many returning from EU emigration, and productivity growth outpacing the US and Western Europe, provides an excellent base for further expansion in the prospering region of Central and Eastern Europe. On the other hand, there are Polish enterprises that have been built from scratch over the last 30 years and have already become investors in Western Europe, where they rescue declining companies, inject new energy, and save local jobs.

At the same time, compared with the entire Eastern European region, Poland is the undisputed number one: its GDP is comparable to the combined GDP of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, and Bulgaria,

despite having only half their total population. Poland has also become a key hub for the new technologies sector, particularly after the outbreak of the full-scale war in Ukraine, when IT sectors from Ukraine and Belarus massively relocated to Warsaw and other Polish cities, transferring their business activity here and strengthening the local market. Perhaps the best proof of Poland's contribution to this field is the fact that until recently, 4 Poles belonged to the core group of people with the greatest influence on the development of OpenAI – the hottest tech company in the world. This is just one of many examples of the transformation the Polish economy has undergone since 1989, when access to Western electronic devices was still tightly restricted by the Iron Curtain. Today, Polish scientists help shape the development of the most advanced technologies that are meant to keep the West as the global economic leader.

Poland today is also a place where, in the face of increasingly palpable global tensions and recent supply chain problems, the production of components that supply Western European factories is being relocated. A sensible migration policy has ensured that Poland attracts workers from Eastern Europe, the majority of whom are active and contribute substantially to the labour market. This applies not only to factory and unskilled service workers but also to doctors and nurses, who strengthen the healthcare system. At the same time, rapid infrastructure development – anyone who has recently visited Polish airports or travelled on Polish highways knows what I mean – along with improved security (2024 data shows a decline in crimes such as thefts, rapes, and homicides) has made Poland increasingly attractive to migrants from… Western Europe.

Of course, for many observers of this part of Europe, the biggest question is the future of the region in the context of Russia's aggressive policy. Yet even here, Poland stands out as a leader, having the highest defence spending relative to GDP (4.7%) in NATO. Already now, Poland has the largest armoured forces of the Alliance in Europe, and the implementation of multi-billion-dollar contracts continues, making Poland the first line of defence against Russia's path to Western Europe. The time gained by Russia's engagement in Ukraine allows Poland to rapidly rebuild its military potential, ensuring that the threat from Moscow will be neutralised within a few years.

So, in response to the question in the title – "What about Poland?" – I answer: everything's fine. It's worth coming here to see how hard work translates into real success. •


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