

PRESS RELEASE

EuRIC tyre recycling event sends strong message to EU policymakers by bringing together the entire value chain

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On 15 April, EuRIC's tyre recycling event "Reinventing the Wheel: Advancing tyre recycling", **brought together all the value chain stakeholders to address tyre circularity challenges** and collaborate on opportunities for increased material recovery in the EU.

Held in Brussels, the event emphasised the significant untapped potential for tyre circularity. Key requirements include improved ecodesign of tyres, mandatory recycled content targets either in new tyres or other applications, and chemical legislation for recycled materials from tyres based on risk assessment rather than the precautionary principle, all fostered by harmonised EU-wide End-of-Waste criteria. Collaboration between industry and policymakers is essential to tackle the economic uncertainties and the ill-suited overregulation that currently undermine the industries' sustainability efforts and the EU's circular economy goals.

Poul Steen Rasmussen, President of EuRIC's Mechanical Tyres Recycling Branch (MTR) said: **"There will be no long-term investment in tyre recycling if there are no stable market applications for the recycled materials afterwards."** He also urged policymakers to prioritise product ecodesign, ensuring both tyre safety and recyclability.

With increasing exports of end-of-life tyre to India, **Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea**, the Commission's Director (DG ENV, Circular Economy), expressed support to the industry's concerns for keeping waste tyres in Europe and preventing their incineration. He also pledged that the Commission would **present solutions to compensate for certain EU restrictions on using recycled tyre rubber** in major end-markets such as infill for artificial sport pitches.

Adam McCarthy, Secretary General of ETRMA, emphasised the intricate nature of tyres and stressed the importance of tyre safety throughout their lifespan. He also highlighted the industry's commitment to sustainability in a broader context. Regarding mandatory recycled content targets for tyres, McCarthy suggested that such measures should be evaluated in light of the market's preparedness.

The first panel discussion on circularity essentials highlighted that **the technology to increase recycled rubber from tyres in many different products, including automotive is available. However, overly complex regulation delays the time it takes for a product to be put into the market.** Additionally, there needs to be a mindset change: recycled materials are not cheap and required both money and time to develop new applications. Without market security, such as recycled content mandates to secure long-term investment returns, progress is impossible.

The second panel highlighted **chemical recycling as a last-resort solution.** It also stressed the importance of developing new markets for mechanically recycled rubber and complementary technologies, such as recovered/recycled carbon black and devulcanised rubber. These are key to increasing tyre circularity and preventing half of the tyres collected in EU from being sent for incineration.

Presentations showcased technological advancements, including the potential introduction of a Digital Product Passport (DPP) for tyres to enhance tyre sorting, as well as the contribution of the BlackCycle project in increasing a circular economy for tyres and improving the sustainability of the tyre industry by producing carbon black from waste tyres and reusing it in new tyres. Discussions also explored the type of regulations the EU should introduce to **maximise the untapped potential of existing products using recycled rubber and to create new ones.** There was also an emphasis on the **need for efficient implementation and a shift in mindsets towards endorsing recycled materials over primary ones.**

We extend our gratitude to all speakers for their valuable input, moderators, and chairs for facilitating the discussions, and participants from all the different sectors, including tyre manufacturers, the chemical industry, recyclers, EPR schemes, NGOs, rubber producers, rubber goods manufacturers, research bodies and technology providers. **Your participation sends a strong message: the industry is ready to advance tyre circularity, but tyres must remain in Europe to be recycled, and EU regulations must support rather than hinder these efforts.**

Note to editor:

For press-related enquiries, please contact Zoi Didili, EuRIC Communication Advisor, by email at zdidili@euric.org or by phone at +32 (0) 489 09 46 02. The [European Recycling Industries' Confederation \(EuRIC\)](https://www.euric.org/) is the umbrella organisation for the recycling industries in Europe. Through its 75 members from 23 European countries, EuRIC represents more than 5,500 large companies and SMEs involved in the recycling and trade of various resource streams. They represent a contribution of 95 billion EUR to the EU economy and 300,000 green and local jobs. By turning waste into resources, recycling reintroduces valuable materials into value chains over and over again. By bridging circularity and climate neutrality, recyclers are pioneers in leading Europe's industrial transition.