



European  
Commission

## The EU Ecolabel for printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bags

The EU Ecolabel is the official European Union label for environmental excellence



November 2020

#EUGreenDeal; #EUEcolabel

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

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

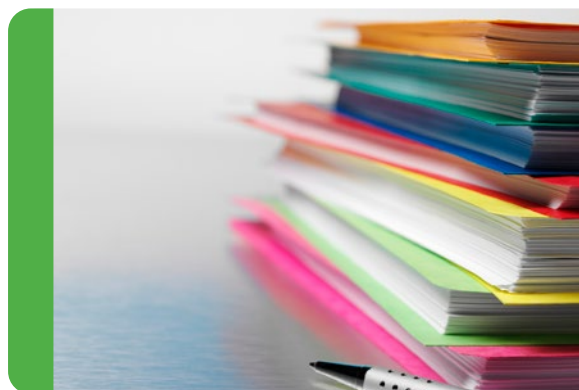
This product group covers:

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



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

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



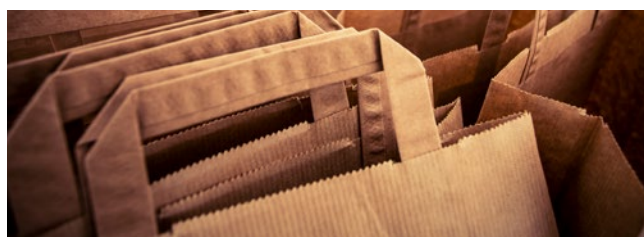
The EU Ecolabel addresses seven key environmental hot issues related to printed paper, stationery paper and paper carrier bags.

## Hot Issues

## EU Ecolabel Solution

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

<b>1. Manufacturing</b>	<b>Sustainable raw materials:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the paper substrate, including paperboard used in a final product, bears the EU Ecolabel for graphic paper</li> </ul>
<b>2. Manufacturing – hazardous substances</b>	<b>Restricted hazardous substances:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ all process chemicals used by the applicant in relevant printing or converting processes are screened</li> <li>✓ all ingoing chemicals used in the production process and any supplied materials forming part of the final product do not contain certain hazardous substances</li> <li>✓ biocidal products and biocidal active substances, cleaning agents, alkylphenol ethoxylates, halogenated solvents, phthalates, printing inks, toners and varnishes, and toluene recovery from rotogravure printing have to comply with specific requirements</li> </ul>
<b>3. Manufacturing and end-of-life</b>	<b>Product circularity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ non-paper parts of stationery paper products (e.g. metal bars or plastic covers) are easily removable so as not to hinder the recycling process</li> <li>✓ the product is suitable for repulping</li> <li>✓ adhesives may be used only if they are highly removable</li> <li>✓ the printed paper product is highly deinkable</li> </ul>
<b>4. Manufacturing – emissions into water and air</b>	<b>Reduced emissions into water and air:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the specific amount of Cr and Cu at the point of discharge from rotogravure printing does not exceed specific limits</li> <li>✓ specific requirements on volatile organic compounds (VOC) are met</li> </ul>
<b>5. Manufacturing – waste generation</b>	<b>Reduced waste generation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the facility where the product is manufactured has a system for handling waste in place that addresses and documents the measures taken to reduce the amount of solid and liquid waste, including waste paper, ink waste, cleaning agent solution and dampening solution waste as defined by local or national regulatory authorities</li> <li>✓ the amount of paper for recycling from the manufacturing process does not exceed specified thresholds</li> </ul>
<b>6. Manufacturing – energy consumption</b>	<b>Reduced energy consumption:</b> <p>Sites where EU Ecolabel products are manufactured shall establish an energy management system addressing all energy-consuming devices (including machinery, lighting, air conditioning and cooling). This system includes measures to improve energy efficiency, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the establishment and the implementation of an energy data collection plan</li> <li>✓ an analysis of energy consumption that includes a list of energy-consuming systems, processes and facilities</li> <li>✓ continuously improving objectives and targets on reducing energy consumption</li> </ul>
<b>7. Use – end-of-life</b>	<b>Extended life span and appropriate waste segregation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The product is suitable for its purpose</li> <li>✓ “Please reuse this bag” shall appear on paper bags, and “Please collect used paper for recycling” shall appear on printed paper products</li> </ul>



For more information, including on how to apply, visit [www.ecolabel.eu](http://www.ecolabel.eu)



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