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Topic: Global Recycling Day 2026

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Global Recycling Day is an opportunity to recognise how recycling powers circularity in practice – closing the loop between production, consumption, and regeneration. The latest Pro Carton European Consumer Packaging Perceptions Survey, released this month, confirms that consumers increasingly view “ease of recycling” as the number one priority when it comes to sustainable packaging, and, by extension, of brand trust.

Our 2026 research found that more than one in three Europeans have switched brands due to packaging concerns (37%), while ease of recycling has become the top packaging requirement for 64% of Europeans. This clear signal shows how packaging has moved from being a functional protection to a driver of product value, perception, and loyalty.

What’s especially encouraging is that consumers are backing up their expectations with action. Almost six in ten Europeans (59%) say they are recycling more household waste, while 62% believe recycling is one of the most effective ways to combat climate change.

Fibre-based materials such as cartonboard have become a clear favourite and now command 87% consumer trust when it comes to successful recycling – more than any other material – and 84% of Europeans say they would prefer cartonboard over plastic when given the choice.

Even in a cost-of-living context, where affordability remains an important factor in purchasing decisions, sustainability and recyclability are still key priorities. This alignment between environmental values and economic realities shows how important circular solutions are for today’s consumer. As we celebrate Global Recycling Day, one message stands out: accelerating circularity depends on collective trust - in materials, systems, and the brands that help make recycling work for people and the planet.

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