



## Intergraf Currency+Identity 2023: uniting industry innovators in Bilbao

Intergraf Currency+Identity, Intergraf's neutral conference and exhibition, took place from October 18 to 20, 2023, in Bilbao. This event brought together central banks, governments, identity document authorities, security printing companies, and suppliers for a 2.5-day experience filled with learning and networking opportunities, inspirational keynotes, and technical insights, providing interactive discussions on the current challenges faced by the industry, as well as innovative ideas for the future.

The conference featured parallel sessions focusing on currency and identity, with 940+ attendees, 60+ speakers, and 100+ exhibitors from 70+ countries. Notably, on October 17, Intergraf Currency+Identity also offered Intergraf High sessions: attendance is by invitation only and restricted to a select vetted audience to ensure high-profile conversations, the sharing of best practices, practical resources, and cutting-edge solutions in a secure setting.

Additionally, the event organised a Certification Workshop, offering practical training sessions to equip companies in handling real-world challenges. A new addition was the News & Demo stage, showcasing innovative products and ideas. The Tender Tactics session emphasized the benefits of internationally recognized standards (INTERGRAF ISO 14298 and INTERGRAF 15374) for securing supply chains.

Several exhibitors took advantage of the opportunity to launch new products, and new partnerships were announced.

Exclusive networking events took place at prestigious local locations in Bilbao such as the iconic Guggenheim Museum, San Mamés football stadium and so forth.

The next Intergraf Currency+Identity will take place in Milan on 05-07 March 2025.

More info about the event is available [here](#).



## EU Parliament's ENVI Committee votes on Packaging Regulation definitions, impact on paper recycling

The EU Parliament's ENVI Committee (Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) voted on the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, endorsing definitions for 'recyclability' and 'high quality of recycling.' According to the paper and board industry, these definitions, as voted by the Committee, emphasize the importance of scientific evidence, however are not entirely in line with best practice in paper and board recycling.

The text that the ENVI Committee [approved](#) requires that packaging should be recycled and used again in a similar kind of product. However, this concept, while suitable for many materials, may hinder efficient paper and board recycling, as various paper products are effectively recycled together. Paper recycling within the same product application could create unnecessary barriers without enhancing recycling quality. An alternative approach, considering the quality of recycled materials and their potential to substitute primary raw materials, would have been more relevant.

The pulp and paper industry primarily relies on recycling for raw materials, reducing the need for wood. Over 75% of paper-based packaging is produced from recycled materials, highlighting Europe's leadership in recycling.

Representatives of the paper and board industry believe that recyclable and reusable options should complement each other. Prioritizing circular packaging models is essential, recognizing that paper packaging is highly recycled, sourced from renewable content, and resource-efficient.

While the ITRE Committee's (Committee on Industry, Research

and Energy) opinion on reuse targets and packaging format restrictions aligns with this approach, it was not considered in the vote. A circular model supports the benefits of packaging from renewable materials with strong recycling performance, allowing paper packaging to reach its potential without completely replacing it with new models largely based on fossil materials, whose environmental impact remains uncertain.



## Report: global print industry experiences decline, Western Europe leads in resilience

The print industry worldwide has seen a significant decrease in employment, with a 14.8% reduction since 2018, according to recent data from Smithers (via [PrintWeek](#)). During the same period, the number of print businesses also declined by 11.9%, dropping from 667,630 in 2018 to 587,934 in 2022.

Every region worldwide experienced a decline in the number of print businesses, although Western Europe had a more moderate decrease, with a 2% drop to 80,706 companies in the region. However, the region's employee numbers fell by 9.2% due to structural changes, including automation and workforce adjustments.

While automation allowed some companies to reduce costs and staff, technological investments also squeezed profits for smaller businesses. Smithers' director of research and reports, Adam Page, explained, "Better on-press automation and smarter software have improved overall print room efficiencies, primarily benefiting larger print houses with the capacity to invest in new equipment and innovations."

Page anticipates further consolidation in the printing industry from 2024 to 2028. The trend of reduced staffing will persist as automation and digital printing enhance operational efficiency but with fewer employees, partially compensating for the shortage of skilled print room staff.

The decline in publishing and commercial print demand, partly due to the transition to online content distribution, is at the core of the industry's overall decline. Print facilities and staff reductions have been common, with some exceptions, such as the growth of

the book printing sector and the packaging industry, which has been facilitated by new presses and automated processes.

Despite some isolated growth in a few countries, Page predicts that the global decline in the number of printing businesses and employees is unlikely to ease, with most large countries in all regions facing such a scenario. China notably saw a 4.8% growth in operational establishments but a 19.1% reduction in employees due to staff reductions. India, on the other hand, is an outlier, expecting an increase in the number of companies and associated employees due to significant GDP growth stimulating demand.



## Charting the future of AI in media

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the field of news media brings with it extraordinary opportunities and challenges, particularly when it comes to upholding the integrity of information.

### WAN-IFRA joins RSF and international partners to craft "AI Charter in Media"

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and a consortium of international partners, including the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers WAN-IFRA, [are launching](#) a dedicated committee. This committee, under the leadership of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa, aims to formulate an "AI Charter in Media" to guide regulatory initiatives in this evolving landscape.

Comprising 21 members from 13 different countries, the committee represents a fusion of expertise from academia and journalism, as well as AI and digital technology professionals. The findings of the committee are expected to be unveiled by the end of 2023.

The committee's primary objective is to establish a comprehensive set of principles, rights, and

responsibilities that information professionals should adhere to when utilizing AI-based systems. RSF will spearhead this initiative in collaboration with prominent non-governmental organizations dedicated to defending journalism (FPU, EJNI, CPJ, IPI, GFMD), media representative organizations covering the print and broadcast sectors (WAN-IFRA, ABU, EBU), and investigative journalism consortia (ICIJ, OCCRP). With a diverse array of partner organizations and members, this initiative aims to become a significant reference point in the media industry.

### FIPP collaborates with publishing and journalism organisations on pioneering Global Principles for AI

FIPP, the International Federation of Periodical Publishers, in conjunction with 26 organizations representing creative professionals globally, has [unveiled](#) the "Global Principles for Artificial Intelligence (AI)," a set of guidelines aimed at ensuring the responsible development and deployment of AI systems and applications. These principles cover various dimensions, including intellectual property, transparency, accountability, quality, fairness, safety, design, and sustainable development.

This initiative aims to acknowledge the exciting potential of AI while highlighting the need to consider its practical and ethical implications.

The Global AI Principles call on developers, operators, and deployers of AI systems to:

- Respect intellectual property rights.

- Utilize efficient licensing models for training trustworthy AI systems.
- Provide granular transparency in training datasets.
- Attribute content to original publishers.
- Recognize publishers' contributions to content quality.
- Comply with competition laws.
- Ensure accuracy and reliability in AI-generated content.
- Avoid misrepresenting original works.
- Respect user privacy and disclose personal data usage

This collaborative effort aims to protect the interests of content creators, publishers, and consumers, fostering innovation within an ethical and accountable AI framework.



## Intergraf calls for the retention of paper leaflets in medicinal products in a new position paper

Intergraf has taken a firm stance in defence of consumer rights, particularly those related to medicinal products for human use. In a recent [position paper](#), Intergraf has urged the EU policymakers to reconsider Article 63.3 of the proposed Directive on Medicinal Products, emphasizing the crucial role of medical leaflets in pharmaceutical packaging.

The proposed directive is designed to ensure the accessibility and safety of patient information in a digital format. While this goal is admirable, recent Eurostat data from 2023 has shed light on a stark reality: 70.7% of Europeans possess only basic, low, or no digital skills, and 7.5% of European households have no internet access. This digital information approach could inadvertently exclude a significant portion of the population, especially those who are vulnerable due to age, lack of digital skills, or limited resources. The advancement of digital healthcare should not come at the cost of patient safety and accessibility.

Article 63.3 of the proposed directive suggests that patients can request free printed copies of digital-only leaflets. However, Intergraf points out that this idea lacks practical implementation solutions. Pharmacies, unlike printers, cannot meet the rigorous printing standards and security requirements necessary for medical leaflets.

Intergraf stresses the importance of a complementary approach, where electronic product information (ePI) and paper leaflets coexist. While ePI enhances access to medication information for some demographics, it cannot replace paper leaflets accompanying medicines. The exclusive use of ePI should only be considered in exceptional circumstances, such as when medicines are administered by medical professionals, for

example when it comes to in-hospital patients.

Intergraf is calling for the mandatory retention of paper leaflets in the packaging of medicinal products. This approach aims to strike a balance between embracing digital advancements and ensuring the continued availability of essential medical information for all patients, thus safeguarding patient rights and upholding accessibility and safety in healthcare.

The European Parliament has started discussions on the topic, and Danish MEP Pernille Weiss, the Rapporteur, has released a draft report. Intergraf met with the MEP in August in Denmark. While some of Intergraf's suggestions were considered, the option to eliminate paper leaflets remains on the table. However, other political parties, such as the Greens and Socialists, are more inclined to keep paper leaflets. We anticipate amendments will be proposed. The European Parliament aims to conclude its first reading in April 2024, just before the European elections.

Parallely to the discussions in the European Parliament, advocacy work can also be done at the Commission and national levels. The review of EU pharmaceutical legislation is officially underway, with the proposal now accessible in all EU languages. Stakeholders can contribute to the public consultation [here](#), running until November 8.







## European Commission releases final work programme ahead of mandate conclusion

Every year, the Commission adopts its annual work programme setting out a list of the most important actions it will take in the coming year. On 17 October, the Commission published its 2024 Work Programme and Annexes presenting 18 policy initiatives and 26 proposals and initiatives to rationalise reporting requirements for businesses. It additionally proposes 6 withdrawals and 16 evaluation and fitness checks. Finally, the Commission calls for swift approval of the 154 pending proposals before parliamentary recess in June, and the subsequent end of this mandate. In terms of timeline, inter-institutional negotiations need to be closed by mid-February at the latest in order to get approval during the Parliament's last plenary in April and aim for adoption.

With over 90% of the commitments made in the 2019 Political Guidelines marked as delivered and just a few months left until the 2024 European elections, the new initiatives outlined in the [Work Programme](#) are limited to those still needed to deliver on the Commission's commitments, or to tackle emerging challenges. The newly proposed initiatives build on President von der Leyen's 2023 State of the Union speech and letter of intent.

A central theme of the Commission's strategy is to reduce reporting burdens by 25%, without compromising policy objectives. To achieve this, the Commission has initiated simplifications in various policy areas, such as the reform of the Union Customs Code and revisions to statistical survey rules. These efforts aim to streamline reporting requirements, eliminate redundancies, and enhance digitalization. Some specific proposals include postponing the deadline for adopting sector-specific European sustainability reporting standards, changes to the scope of application of the Accounting Directive, and amendments to the Benchmark Regulation.

The Commission remains steadfast in delivering on commitments, focusing on the European Green Deal, growth, and ensuring a fair, smart, and inclusive green transition. Initiatives include dialogues with citizens and industry, support for vulnerable businesses through the Social Climate Fund, and strategic dialogues on the future of agriculture in the EU.

In 2024, the Commission's attention turns to addressing challenges related to labor and skill shortages, education, social dialogue, inflation, and ease of doing business. Support to Ukraine and partnerships with Africa, fair trade, and Member States' defense capabilities continue to be top priorities.

The Commission intends to work closely with the European Parliament and Council to facilitate swift agreements, ensuring that Europe's citizens and businesses can fully benefit from EU policy actions.



## European Paper Recycling Awards opens call for submissions

Every two years, the European Paper Recycling Awards acknowledge noteworthy projects, initiatives, or campaigns that contribute to the advancement of paper recycling in Europe. These awards play a significant role in supporting Europe's paper recycling rate objectives.

The competition is open to all entities based in Europe, including schools, universities, NGOs, national and regional authorities, companies, and associations. It features two award categories: Information and Education, and Innovative Technologies and R&D.

Projects, initiatives, or campaigns will be assessed based on the following criteria: relevance and originality, achievements, reproducibility, cost effectiveness.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their entries by December 4, 2023, for consideration.

The awards ceremony is scheduled to take place in February 2024 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

Submit your application [here](#).

The awards are organised by the European Paper Recycling Council (EPRC), which was set up as an industry self-initiative in November 2000 to monitor progress towards meeting higher paper recycling targets. Intergraf is a signatory of the EPRC.

## EVENTS

- Sectoral Social Dialogue for the graphical industry Plenary in Brussels, 6 November 2023.
- FTA Diamond Awards, Dusseldorf, Germany, 30 May 2024.

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