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0 Upcoming events

The 21st International Conference on Plastics Recycling, which will be held on 12/13 June 2018 in Bad Neuenahr, Germany, is titled ‘European Impulses for Plastics Recycling’. To register for the symposium, please go to: https://www.bvse.de/recycling/termine-recycling/2919-12-13-06-2018-21-internationaler-bvse-altkunststofftag.html#header. The two-day European industry event will provide visitors with the opportunity to discuss current topics of plastics recycling.

The conference starts with the Central Event on Tuesday 12 June 2018, at 13:30. It is aimed at discussing the ‘European Guidelines on Plastics Recycling’. Participants in the event will include representatives from the plastics industry (LyondellBasell, PlasticsEurope), from grocery groups (Procter & Gamble) and the Commission of the European Communities.

The Central Event will then be followed by two simultaneous workshops. Workshop A is titled ‘Science and Plastics Recycling : The Future of Plastics Recycling’. Presentations will, among others, be given by the following experts: Professor Dr Pretz, IFA, RWTH Aachen University; Professor Dr Hans-Josef Endres, University of Hanover, IfBB; Dr Thoden van Velzen, University of Wageningen, and Joris van der Meulen, Afvalfonds Verpakkingen, Leidschendam. The BKV Workshop, chaired by Dr Bruder, will be held under the motto ‘The Packaging Act as a Challenge: We are All Called Upon to Make a Contribution’.

The workshops will be followed by the traditional BBQ at 19:00 in the spa garden, which will provide visitors with the opportunity to socialise in a friendly atmosphere.

A workshop on packaging design, chaired by Dr Bosewitz, will be held on Wednesday 13 June 2018, at 9:30. The public meeting of the Working Group on International Plastics Markets will take place at the same time. The working group is aimed at discussing, among others, issues of cybercrime in international trade and the current situation of plastics exports to China.

The International Conference on Plastics Recycling is the central meeting of the plastics recycling industry. It is supplemented by an exhibitors’ forum and a product exhibition. The plastics recycling conference, attended by an average 450 participants, is the largest event on plastics recycling in Europe.

1 The primary plastics market

The ifo Business Climate Index, cf. www.cesifo-group.de, which was at 115.4 points in February, has dropped, reaching 114.7 points in March. The excellent mood in German boardrooms has deteriorated slightly. Business entrepreneurs have been slightly less satisfied with their current business situation, albeit at a higher level. Optimism, too, has been dwindling with a view to the next few months. The impending protectionism is weighing on business sentiment.

The situation in the processing sector can be described by the slogan ‘Excellent situation – dwindling optimism’. The manufacturing industry for rubber and plastics materials has recently been developing very favourably. According to official statistics, production in real terms was raised by 3.9 % last year, and the figures published recently (in January 2018) also indicate that this development will continue this year. Accordingly, the situational indicator has remained at an extraordinarily favourable level over the past few months. In March, it reached its highest level in more than six years.

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Standard plastics:

The average standard plastics price was listed at 1343 €/t in March 2018 and thus, 8 €/t lower than in the preceding month, when it reached 1351 €/t, cf. Table 1. LDPE and LLDPE fell by 25 €/t, HDPE by 20 €/t, PP by 20 €/t and PVC by 5 €/t. However, PS was listed 30 €/t higher. The average listings for March 2018 (1343 €/t) were thus 101 €/t below those for March 2017 (1444 €/t). Packaging PET was listed at an average 1210 €/t in March 2018 and thus, 20 €/t lower than in the previous month (1185 €/t). In March there was considerable supply of standard plastics. However, demand has been restrained because processors are hoping for prices to fall further.

Table 1: EUWID listings for standard plastics over the past five months; prices in €/t.

Prices in €/t	March 2018	Feb. 2018	Jan. 2018	Dec. 2017	Nov. 2017
LDPE film grade	1300- 1400	1320- 1430	1300- 1410	1300- 1410	1300- 1410
LLDPE film grade	1280- 1380	1300- 1410	1280- 1390	1280- 1390	1280- 1390
HDPE injection moulding	1260- 1310	1280- 1330	1260- 1310	1260- 1310	1260- 1310
HDPE blow moulding	1280- 1330	1300- 1350	1280- 1330	1280- 1330	1280- 1330
PS crystal clear	1660- 1720	1630- 1690	1530- 1590	1520- 1580	1430- 1500
PS high impact	1760- 1820	1730- 1790	1630- 1690	1620- 1680	1530- 1600
PP homopolymer	1350- 1400	1370- 1420	1330- 1380	1320- 1380	1310- 1370
PP copolymer	1400- 1450	1420- 1470	1380- 1430	1370- 1430	1360- 1420
PVC tube grade	880- 950	890- 950	880- 940	880- 940	880- 940
PVC film/cables	930- 990	940- 990	930- 980	930- 980	930- 980
Average Price	**1343 ± 266**	**1351 ± 256**	**1313 ± 229**	**1310 ± 226**	**1293 ± 200**

2 The secondary plastics markets according to the Plasticker Price Index

The plasticker internet platform, cf. http://plasticker.de, publishes quotes on an hourly basis. The present market report indicates the final monthly prices. It is only possible to represent the preliminary prices for April 2018. These listings thus merely reflect an interim situation that will not become definitive until the beginning of May 2018, cf. Tables 2 and 3.

2.1 Standard plastics:

The current March prices (537 €/t) are listed 9 €/t lower than in the preceding month (546 €/t), cf. Table 2. A comparison of the average prices for March 2018 (537 €/t) with those for the previous year (549 €/t) shows the current price to be 12 €/t lower. In March 2018, each of the listings was subject to considerable change. The following prices changed by more than ± 40 €/t: HDPE regrind +60 €/t, HDPE regranulates +80 €/t, LDPE regrind +50 €/t, LDPE regranulates -50 €/t, PP regranulates -160 €/t and PS regranulates -60 €/t. The March price index shows satisfactory demand for plastics. PP regranulate prices have been fluctuating wildly, reaching 880 €/t in January, 960 €/t in February, 800 €/t in March and a prospective 820 €/t in April. The PVC price fell, reaching its lowest level in several years (at 270 €/t).

The preview of the April listings shows that the average price remained more or less unchanged at 528 €/t. The April Price Index, as per 17 April 2018, shows restrained demand for plastics.

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Table 2: Listings for standard plastics in plasticker; prices in €/t.

	April 2018[6]	March 2018	Feb. 2018	Jan. 2018	Dec. 2017	March 2017
HDPE regrind[1]	610	590	530	540	550	620
HDPE regranulates[5]	840	930	850	750	840	950
LDPE bale goods[2]	240	240	230	240	250	270
LDPE regrind[1]	600	660	610*	550	570	460*
LDPE regranulates[5]	770	780	830	790	800	740
PP bale goods[3]	240*	200	190*	220	180	320
PP regrind[1]	530	550	570	570	530	550
PP regranulates[5]	820	800	960	880	820	770
PS regrind[4]	530	580	620	600	560	620
PS regranulates[5]	890	960	1020	900	790	940
PVC_P regrind[1]	300*	270	270	280	450	450
PVC_U regrind[1]	490	470*	490*	450*	450	460
PET bale goods	180	170	150	110	150	200*
PET regrind coloured	350	320	330	340	390	335
Average Price	**(528)**	**537**	**546**	**516**	**524**	**549**

*: Supply figure too low to attain statistical significance; [1]: equivalent to the grade 'post-industrial, mixed colours'; [2]: equivalent to K49; [3]: equivalent to K59; [4]: equivalent to 'standard, mixed colours'; [5]: equivalent to the grade 'regranulates, black'; [6]: preview that may be amended by additional quotes

2.2 Technical plastics:

In March 2018, the average technical plastics price in plasticker was listed at 1185 €/t and thus, 11 €/t lower than in the previous month, cf. Table 3. A comparison of the average prices for March (1185 €/t) with those for the previous year (1315 €/t) shows the current price to be as much as 130 €/t lower. The March price index shows demand for plastics to have improved compared to the preceding month. In March 2018 the following plastics price was the only one to change considerably, i.e. by more than ± 70 €/t: ABS regranulates +110 €/t. In March 2018 PA 6.6 regranulate prices, which were listed at 1920 €/t, almost reached the peak levels of October 2015 (1930 €/t).

A preview of the April listings, as per 17 April 2018, indicates that prices have been falling further, reaching 1173 €/t. The April price index shows demand for plastics to be restrained. POM regranulates, which were quoted at 1320 €/t, reached the low level listed in January 2016 (1340 €/t).

Table 3: Listings for standard plastics in plasticker; prices in €/t.

	April[6] 18	March 18	Feb. 18	Jan. 18	Dec. 17	March 17
ABS regrind	650	650	650	650	620	640
ABS regranulates[5]	1390	1240	1350	1360	1380	1540
PC regrind	800	870	830	900	950	890
PC regranulates[5]	2010	2130	2060	2120	2010	1960
PBT regrind	460	440	430	460	480	480
PBT regranulates	1560	1530	1600	1670	1560	1600
PA 6 regrind	780	780	810	820	820	1660
PA 6 regranulates[5]	1790	1750	1790	1740	1510	1660
PA 6.6 regrind	900	820	840	850	840	940
PA 6.6 regranulates[5]	1740	1920	1860	1700	1640	1670
POM regrind	670	650	700	670	690	680
POM regranulates[5]	1320	1440	1430	1380	1470	2060
Average Price	**(1173)**	**1185**	**1196**	**1193**	**1164**	**1315**

[5]: equivalent to the quality grade 'regranulates, black; [6]: preview that may be amended by additional quotes.

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3 Evaluation of the secondary plastics markets

A comparison of the information provided by EUWID and plasticker for March 2018 shows that the post-user PE prices listed in the EUWID Price Watch have fallen by an average 20 €/t, while PVC has risen by an average 24 €/t. However, in plasticker average standard plastics prices were listed 9 €/t lower than in the preceding month. The difference in the listings can be explained by the price slump (- 160 €/t) in PP regranulates indicated by plasticker. According to both EUWID and plasticker, demand for used plastics was considerable in March.

3.1 Waste plastics:

Waste plastics supply in Germany continues to be high. Or to put it another way: in Germany, a sufficient supply of used plastics is available at sufficient quality. Plastics recyclers are only accepting waste film of very high quality.

As a rule, film grade is charged a higher price. The prices listed by EUWID for March show that film grade is slightly gaining in value. According to the EUWID listings, the necessary price additions have fallen by 20 €/t compared to the previous month. In March, post-user PE was thus listed as follows: film transparent mixed colours (< 70 µm) at -20 €/t to 0 €/t, LDPE farm film b/w (> 70 µm) at -20 €/t to 0 €/t, mixed film (90/10) at +20 €/t to +40 €/t and mixed film (80/20) at +10 €/t to +20 €/t. The listings for post-industrial PVC waste have risen by an average 25 €/t for PVC_U, by 15 €/t for mixed-coloured PVC_U and by 20 €/t for tube grade. PVC window frame regrind was quoted 30 €/t higher for the white and mixed-coloured grades, while the price rose by 50 €/t for the single-shade white grade.

3.2 Recyclates:

As a result of the continuing economic boom, plastics are still being sought as both primary materials and secondary materials. High-quality recyclates, which supplement virgin materials, are still selling well. Mixed film recycling is also booming. Plastics recyclers are only accepting plastics materials of the very best quality. The prices listed by the price indices only apply so long as a sufficient quantity is available at a sufficient quality.

As it is hardly possible to export waste materials to China. Regranulates in particular are now being sold to the Far East. According to reports by traders and brokers, regrind is also being shipped to this area.

Demand for PET beverage bottles is still high. The amount of bottles returned is likely to rise in spring. However, the ban on exports for waste plastics is not really having a positive impact on the PET quantities available in Germany. Recyclers think that the purchase prices of the used PET bottles listed are too high. Thus, the March listings showed that the prices of used and returnable PET beverage bottles were rising slightly. Transparent PET (95/5 to 100) was quoted 5 €/t higher, mixed-coloured PET (70/30 to 90/10) and coloured PET (< 70/30) remained unchanged. PET recycling is benefiting from the considerable demand for primary materials. Demand for regrind and regranulates is high.

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4 Explanatory information on the price listings

For a detailed analysis including information on price indices for virgin materials, used plastics and precursors, please go to EUWID Recycling und Entsorgung (Recycling and Waste Management), cf. www.euwid.de, or EUWID Plastics, www.euwid-kunststoff.de. EUWID: no guarantee for any of the prices. All EUWID prices are quoted ex works. As a rule, the prices quoted refer to quantities in excess of 20 tonnes.

The monthly quotes for **secondary plastics**, which are updated on an hourly basis, can be calculated using the price lists derived from the quotations published in the raw material exchange **plasticker** (www.plasticker.de). The prices listed in this index are quoted with reservation - as the majority of the quotes submitted are not necessarily equivalent to the sales prices. Plasticker offers the quality grades ‘regrind‘ and ‘regranulates’ both as virgin materials and as secondary materials. The term ‘bale goods’ refers to waste plastics only. Furthermore, plasticker does not distinguish between the following grades: transparent, mixed colours or colour-separated. Therefore, the information provided by plasticker may indicate different market behaviour than the prices quoted by EUWID.

Bonn, Wednesday 25 April 2018 Dr Thomas Probst, bvse