



IVCIE

ACTIVITY
REPORT
2020





Message from the **Chair** and the **Director**

The coronavirus pandemic has challenged us all – and the IRPC is no exception, with 2020 being a particularly testing year. Never before have so many people been forced to work from home. Although all the software infrastructure was in place to enable us to do this efficiently, the situation also created some difficulties for the staff of the Permanent Secretariat. For example, the monthly meetings of the decision-making body could not proceed as in the past: two were cancelled, five went ahead online and two took place with a reduced number of participants so as to comply with social distancing rules. The limited opportunities to interact face-to-face hindered the consultation process and did not make it easy to keep the IRPC running smoothly.

Nevertheless, we managed to carry on our work regardless. The new recycling contracts and the cost-benefit analysis of the prevention plans are just two of the projects we have been busy with over the past year.

The widespread use of the new blue bag is an important aspect of Fost Plus's 2019-2023 accreditation. To ensure recycling of the highest possible quality, this bag will be sorted into at least 14 fractions. Sorting will take place entirely in Belgium and five new sorting plants are being specially built across the country for this purpose. Fortunately, the pandemic has not had any significant impact on the construction work. As from 2021, all plastic packaging will be collected throughout Belgium.

The IRPC was also closely involved in setting up new recycling contracts for plastics, with a view to achieving high-quality circular recycling in Belgium. Three contracts have already been awarded: mixed rigid plastics and mixed films, blue and clear PET bottles, and PE films. In addition, we did a lot of work on PET trays, HDPE and PP.

The cost-benefit analysis of the prevention plans was also launched in 2020. The benefits of the instrument were identified, in terms of both the individual and the sectoral packaging prevention plan. We were then able to weigh these against the financial and administrative burden of the instrument for both users and the supervisory authority.

The IRPC additionally initiated a study on the new reporting method, in line with the new European rules, to determine a method for calculating the results of Fost Plus and Valipac. The Belgian Regions were also involved. We await with interest the findings of the independent consultancy firm conducting the study.

Last but not least, the Cooperation Agreement of 4 November 2008 on the prevention and management of packaging waste was amended, thereby partially transposing several European directives – including the recent amendments to the Packaging Directive – as well as improving, supplementing and clarifying the legislation.



The updated Cooperation Agreement includes some very ambitious recycling targets. Firstly, the recycling rates to be achieved for each material are considerably higher. As from 2021, the following recycling targets will apply: 90% for glass, paper/cardboard, drink cartons and ferrous metals, 75% for aluminium, 50% for plastic and 80% for wood.

The target for plastic will then be gradually increased, making a distinction between household and industrial & commercial plastics. In the case of household plastics, minimum recycling rates of 65% and 70% will apply from 2023 and 2030, respectively. The corresponding figures for industrial & commercial plastics will be 55% and 65%.

Two new and particularly ambitious targets are also set for household packaging waste. As from 2022, at least 90% of beverage packaging must be collected and recycled. Furthermore, from 2025 onwards, at least 95% of household packaging will have to be collected for recycling.

In addition, the Cooperation Agreement clarifies the definition of “responsible company” (i.e. the party responsible for packaging), in response to the growth of e-commerce from abroad. As a result, e-commerce retailers based abroad who sell to Belgian consumers are also deemed to be “responsible companies” and must ensure that the packaging waste they place on the market is recycled.

Looking ahead, we have been making arrangements to process Valipac’s application for accreditation, which is expected in mid-2021. In anticipation of this, we hope you enjoy reading this Activity Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Schaar'.

Celine Schaar
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Adams'.

Marc Adams
Director



1.1. **The tasks** of the IRPC

The tasks of the IRPC include the following:

1. Monitoring whether companies (parties responsible for packaging, aka “responsible companies”) and accredited compliance organisations are fulfilling their reporting and take-back (i.e. recycling and recovery) obligations.
2. Checking the way in which the responsible companies and accredited compliance organisations meet their statutory recycling and recovery targets (expressed as a percentage).
3. Approving or rejecting prevention plans of companies (responsible companies).
4. Granting or refusing accreditation to the organisations responsible for promoting, coordinating and financing the selective collection, recycling and recovery of packaging waste.
5. Assisting and advising the Regional governments, for example by creating consultative forums, providing logistical support or proposing legislative amendments.
6. Conducting or commissioning studies and research into the management and prevention of packaging waste.
7. Processing notifications in order to issue approval for planned shipments of waste that that does not originate from Belgium and will not be treated there either. Additionally, processing shipment notifications relating to an approved notification.



1.2. The composition of the IRPC

The composition of the decision-making body in 2020 was as follows:

Flemish Region		Brussels-Capital Region		Walloon Region	
Full members	Alternate members	Full members	Alternate members	Full members	Alternate members
Ann De Boeck	Luc Goeteyn	Livia Spezzani / Marion Courtois	Valérie Verbrugge	Anne Dumont / Sylviane Bilgischer	Eloise Pignon / Guillaume Lepère
Victor Dries / Nick Vliegen	Anneleen De Wachter / Victor Dries / Roeland Bracke	Céline Schaar (Chair since 5 March 2020)	Grégoire Clerfayt / Stéphanie Thomaes	Joëlle Bastin / Vincent Brahy	Clément Poulain / Marie-Hélène Lahaye
Danny Wille (Chair until 4 March 2020) / Anneleen De Wachter	Roeland Bracke / John Wante	Olivier Bosteels / Stéphanie Uny	Janathan Bargiacchi / Milan Jousten	Martine Gillet	Jean-Yves Mercier



The organisational structure of the Permanent Secretariat in 2020:

Departments under the Director

Marc Adams

PREVENTION, RESEARCH,
DOWNSTREAM EXTERNAL AUDIT
AND TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

Caroline Auriel: Head of department

GENERAL AFFAIRS AND UPSTREAM
EXTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT

Linda Vanden Broecke: Head of department

ACCREDITATIONS, DECLARATIONS AND
INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT

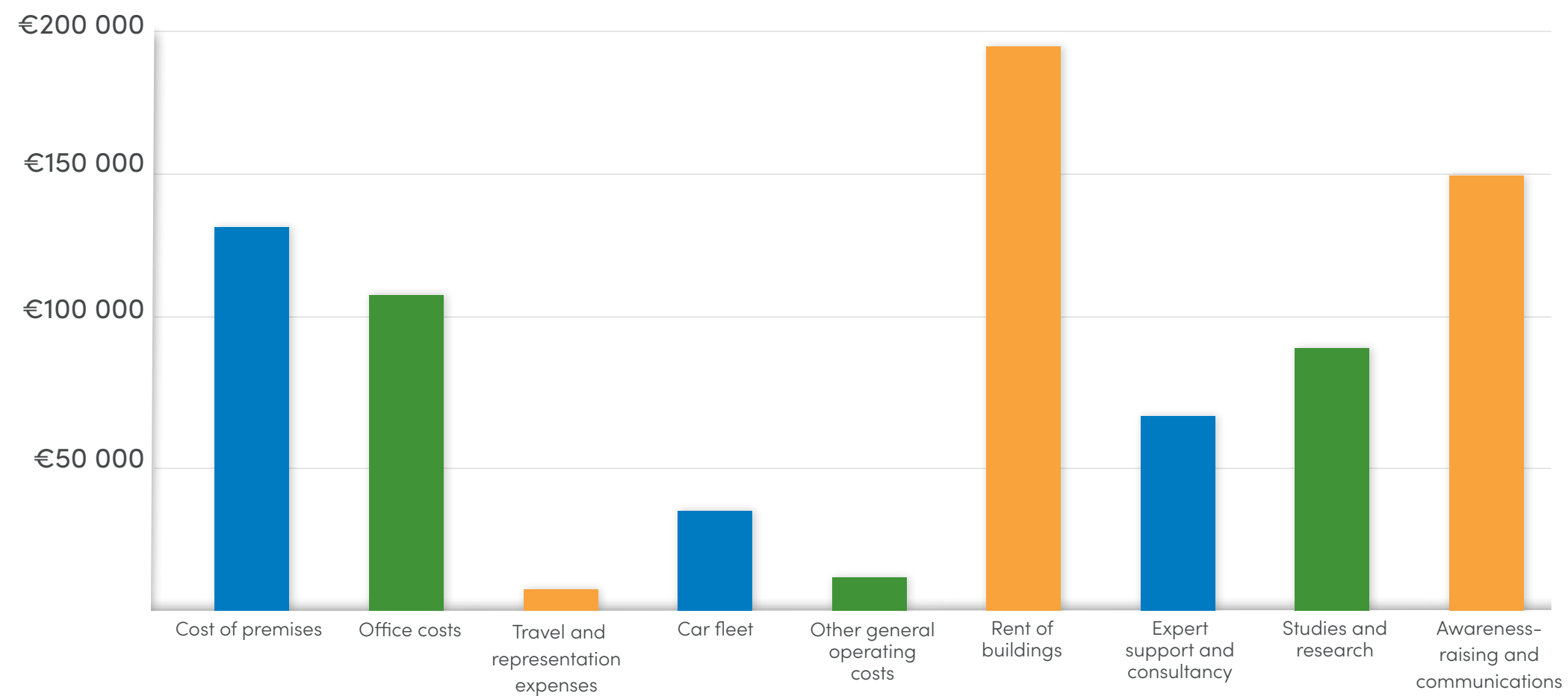
Quentin Mathot: Head of department

At the end of 2020, the Permanent Secretariat had a total of 18 members of staff.

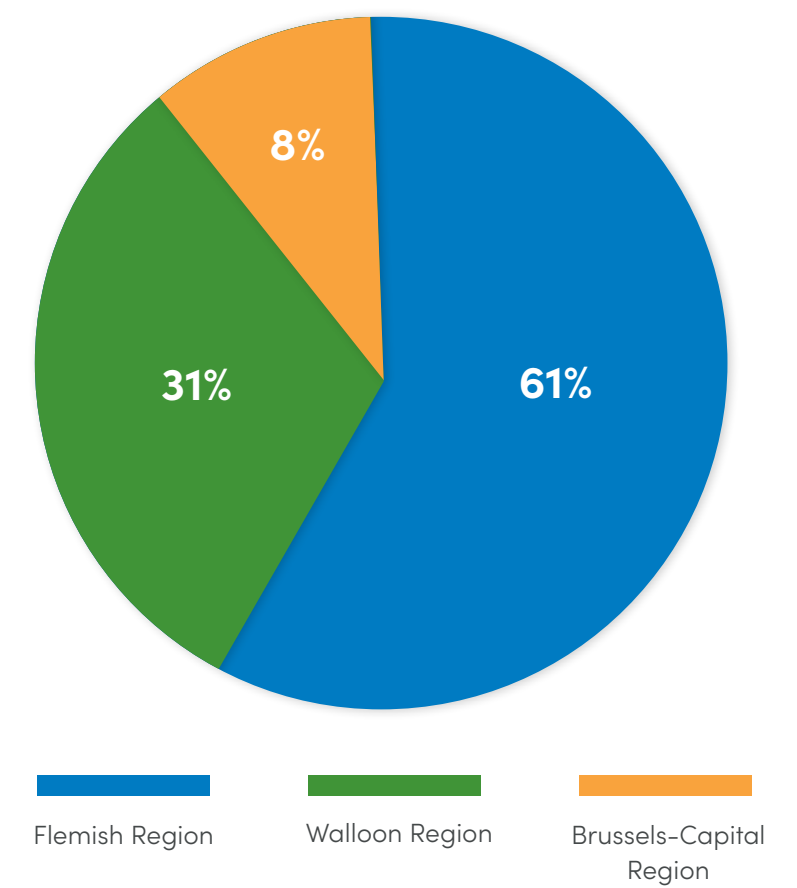


1.3. The 2020 budget of the IRPC

Budget – Actual expenditure IRPC 2020



Budget allocation key as set out in the Cooperation Agreement:





1.4. The Extended Producer Responsibility Interregional Platform (**EPRIP**)

The IRPC acts as secretariat for the Extended Producer Responsibility Interregional Platform, which was created in 2009.

Objective

Structure

How?

Developments
in 2020



2.1. Prevention plans 2019-2022

2.1.1. Individual prevention plans

The **IRPC** has assessed the effect of preventive measures, taking into account only the quantities of disposable packaging avoided.

The results show that,

on average, these measures prevent **39 tonnes of disposable packaging** per company each year,

representing **4.4% of the packaging** for which these companies are responsible.

The quality measures presented covered
a total of 14 000 tonnes of packaging.



2.1. Prevention plans 2019–2022

2.1.2. Sectoral prevention plans

The sectoral prevention plans were also assessed:

12 sectoral prevention plans were approved without comments

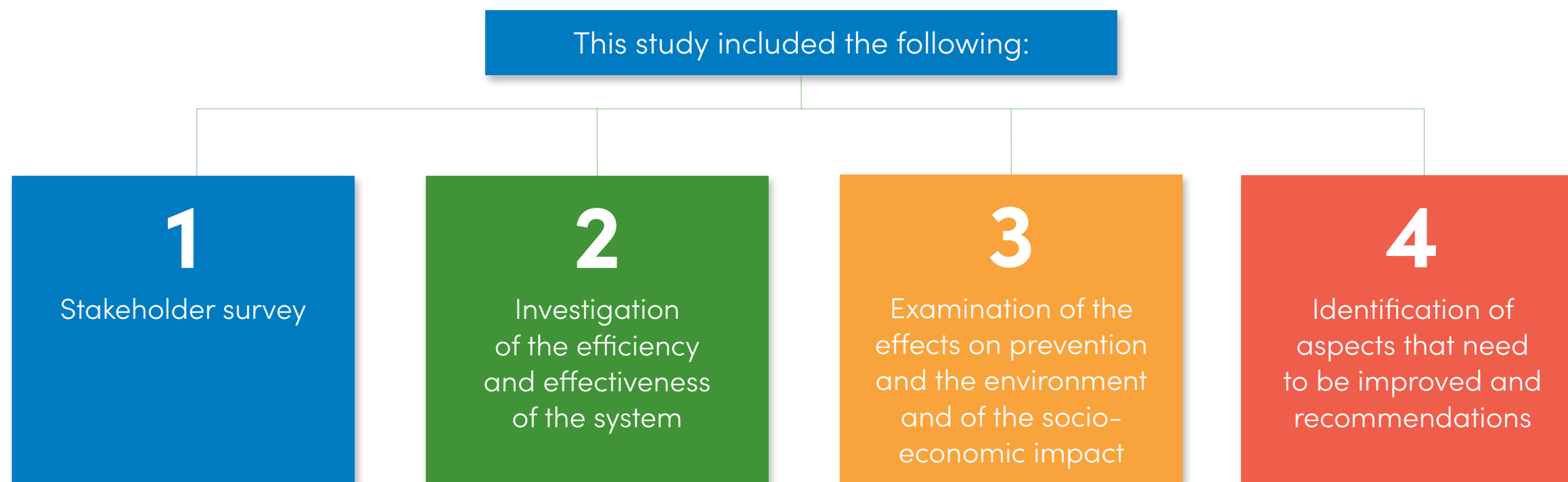
7 sectoral prevention plans were approved, subject to discussion

In the case of federations whose sectoral prevention plan scored **below 70%**, the IRPC invited them to a meeting to discuss possible ways of improving the content of their plan. The limiting factors included in the plans often lacked precision and/or the preventive measures described were poorly quantified, if at all.



2.2. **Cost-benefit study** of the “packaging prevention plan” instrument

The **IRPC** commissioned a cost-benefit study of the “packaging prevention plan” with the aim of identifying the benefits of this plan and weighing them against the financial and administrative burden of the instrument for both users and the Interregional Packaging Commission.





The results of the study conducted by consultants **Arcadis** reveal significant differences between companies and federations. For instance, **65% of the companies** regard the prevention plan as a purely legal obligation, compared with only **18% of the federations**. **Nine of the eleven federations surveyed** are even convinced that the sectoral prevention plan has a significant impact.

Based on the results, the consultants found no compelling reasons to discontinue the prevention plans. The costs are not excessively high and there are currently no other specific policy instruments that promote the prevention of packaging.

It should be noted, however, that the packaging prevention plan is not being used to its full potential. The following recommendations were submitted to the IRPC:





3.1. **Sorting** and **recycling**

The new blue bag has been available almost everywhere in Belgium since 1 April 2021; the entire country will be covered by the end of 2021. This bag will be sorted into a minimum of 14 fractions, with the aim of ensuring recycling of the highest possible quality.

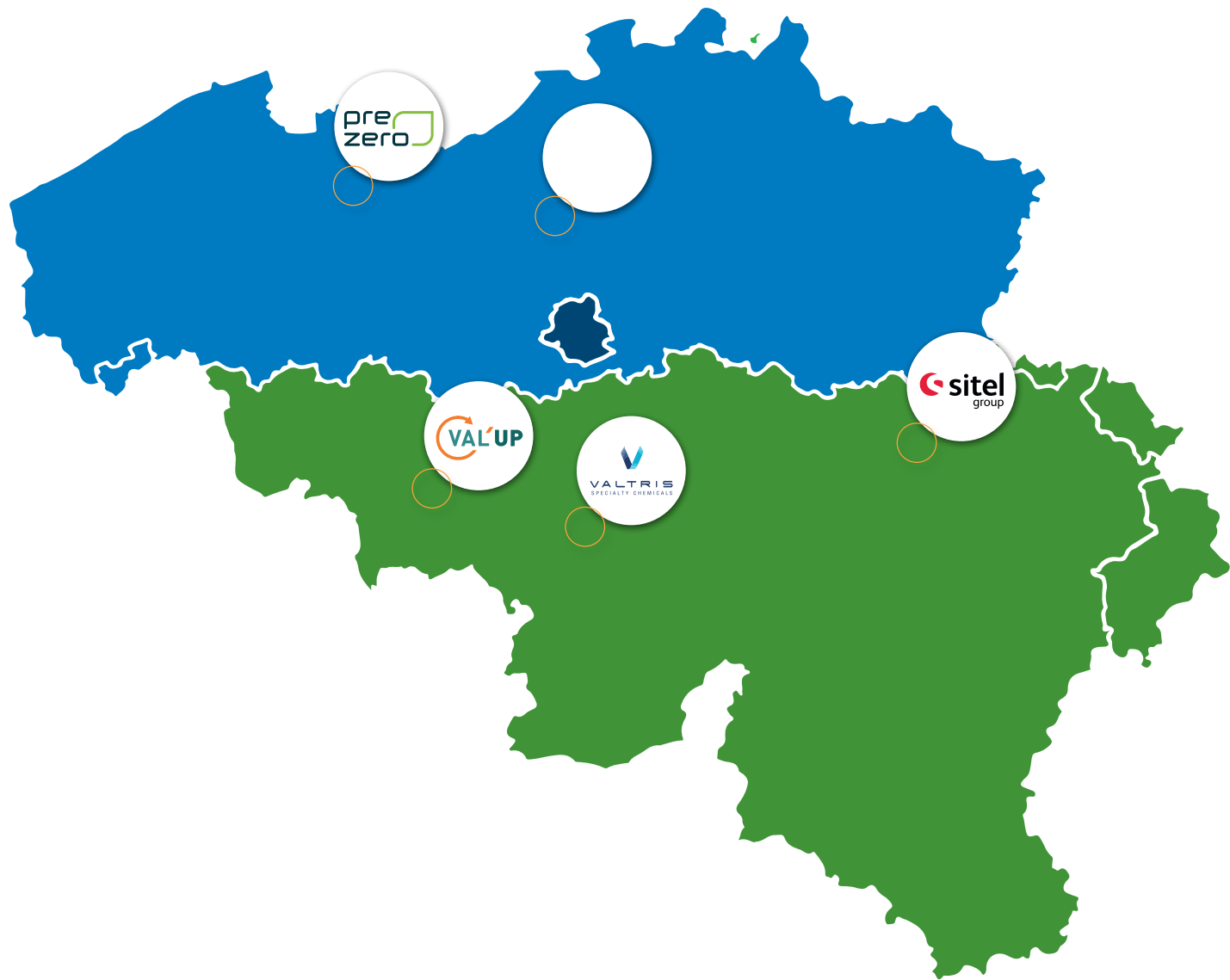
The sorted waste must be recycled in a qualitative way. We are therefore arranging new recycling contracts for plastics to ensure high-quality recycling that is as circular as possible.

At the same time, efforts have been made to maximise the amount of sorting and recycling carried out in Belgium. New sorting and recycling plants are currently being built and will systematically come into operation in 2021 and 2022.





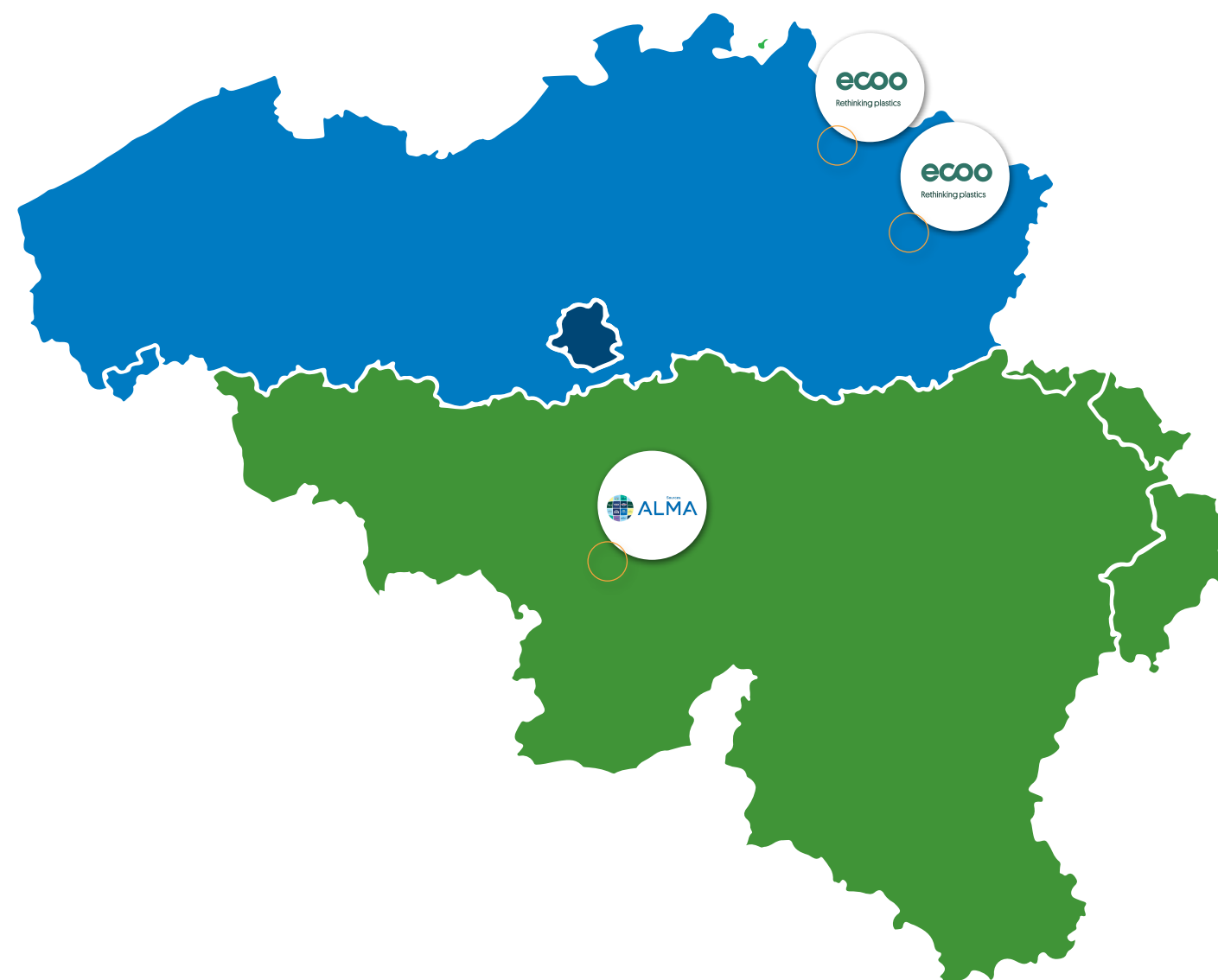
3.1.1. New sorting plants



The expanded PMD stream will be sorted entirely in Belgium. Five brand-new sorting plants are being specially built across the country for this purpose. Two of these were already fully operational at the beginning of 2021.



3.1.2. New recycling plants



Specific waste streams are and will continue to be treated to a high standard in Belgian recycling centres thanks to new and upgraded facilities and the fact that long-term contracts have been signed. Belgium is thus focusing on recycling within its national borders to ensure optimum quality and control.



3.1.3. Current recycling situation (transition period)

Currently, Fost Plus packaging waste is already recycled only in the European Union and 74.3% is even recycled in Belgium.

Material	Belgium (% per material)	France (% per material)	Germany (% per material)	Netherlands (% per material)	Spain (% per material)	Italy (% per material)	Portugal (% per material)	Austria (% per material)	Lithuania (% per material)	Latvia (% per material)	Total %
Glass	78.5%	0.0%	6.0%	14.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Paper/cardboard	96.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Drink cartons	0.0%	17.5%	31.1%	0.0%	51.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Metals	95.2%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Plastic	4.3%	24.0%	21.4%	49.0%	0.0%	0.04%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	100%
Total	74.3%	3.2%	6.6%	14.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

In the case of plastic packaging waste, only 4.3% of recycling took place in Belgium in 2019, at a total of four recycling centres. See addendum at the end of this section for details of household plastic recyclers.



3.2. Amendment of the Fost Plus fees

Waste streams are changing – this was the case in 2020, and 2021 will be no different. The Fost Plus fees have meanwhile been adjusted to reflect this complexity and the corresponding treatment required. This is partly due to the fact that a broader range of PMD is now being collected.

The main factors underlying the increase in the fees are as follows:

- **the separation of the different plastic streams into fractions** and the significant increase in tonnage and associated costs;
- **the breakdown of the collection and sorting costs by activity** according to the new blue bag scenario;
- **the overall increase in tonnage** and the different distribution of materials (e.g. steel – aluminium).

As from 2021, a strongly deterrent fee will apply for packaging that cannot be recycled or that is detrimental to the selective collection or sorting process.

€/Kg	2020	2021
Glass	4.03	4.99
Paper/cardboard	5.94	11.89
Steel	17.77	21.14
Aluminium	4.96	4.62
Clear PET	24.61	20.04
Blue PET	24.61	32.97
Other colours of PET	24.61	47.26
HDPE	35.78	36.47
Drink cartons	57.40	44.53
PP	71.12	47.54
PS	71.12	99.68
PET trays	71.12	133.37
Plastic films	71.12	91.02
Other films	71.12	91.02
HHW		111.33
Other recoverable	85.35	115.20
Other non-recoverable	106.68	144.00
Deterrent		226.74



3.3. Covering the costs of household hazardous waste (HHW)

Under the terms of its accreditation, Fost Plus must significantly contribute to the costs of selective collection and treatment of HHW. The IRPC has estimated the total quantity of HHW at 4,648 tonnes, and the costs of HHW collection and complete treatment at €2,924,859.87. This represents €444.50 per tonne for water-based paint and €739 for other HHW.





3.4. Addendum: **recycling of household plastics** 2019

Belgian recycling centres and waste streams

Recycling centre	Type of plastic
Ecoo Houthalen	Mixed plastics Plastic films Polypropylene
Kras Belgium Bvba	Polypropylene
Van Werven België	Polypropylene
VANHEEDE PLASTIC RECOVERY NV	Plastic films

European recycling centres and waste streams

Country	Type of plastic	Recycling rate
The Netherlands	Blue PET, Clear PET, Green PET, HDPE, PET trays, Other colours of PET, Polypropylene	53%
Germany	Green PET, HDPE, Mixed plastics, Other colours of PET	22%
France	Blue PET, Clear PET, Green PET, Other colours of PET, Plastic films	17%
Belgium	Mixed plastics, Plastic films, Polypropylene	6%
Lithuania	Blue PET, Clear PET	1%
Total		100%



4.1. **Expectations** for the **new accreditation**

Valipac's current accreditation is due to expire at the end of 2021 and we expect them to apply for re-accreditation in mid-2021. Analysis of the 2016 accreditation identified a few areas for improvement. In anticipation of the new accreditation application, the IRPC has set out what it expects of Valipac:

- Favour recycling in Europe (and preferably in Belgium);
- Impose complete transparency regarding final recycling on operators and, in particular, on traders, while ensuring that sensitive business data is treated confidentially;
- Give priority to recycling in circular applications;
- Maximise selective collection of industrial and commercial waste (not just packaging waste) by demanding transparency from all operators.



To clarify these expectations, the IRPC has identified the following eight focus points:

1

Circularity

2

Transparency

3

Recycling
in Europe

4

Eco-modulation

5

Selective collection
of industrial and
commercial waste

6

Prevention

7

Reuse

8

Incentives
and SME plan



4.2. Final destinations for recycling

Valipac checks that industrial and commercial packaging waste is selectively collected, sorted and transported to recyclers. With some streams, especially plastic films and paper/cardboard, some of the selectively collected waste is sold via traders; final recycling then often takes place outside the EU.

In practice, tracking final recycling of plastic films is by no means easy. This is why Valipac, in collaboration with the IRPC, has set up a special monitoring mechanism: mapping.

4.2.1. Overview of the final destinations for recycling

The figures shown below were obtained from reports by operators and traders, by extrapolating earlier data from the “Trading P/C” test project (2020–2021) and from Valipac’s own assessment.

	Wood	Paper/cardboard	Plastic	Metal
Belgium	89%	28%	18%	61%
EU	11%	48%	23%	22%
Non-EU	/	24%	59%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%



4.2.2. Results of mapping

“

By working with the traders, Valipac can guarantee complete traceability of industrial and commercial plastic packaging waste. To ensure that these quantities are actually recycled, additional inspections are planned at the recyclers over the coming months.” - Xavier Lhoir



Under the terms of its accreditation, Valipac must map the final destinations of plastic streams. China made this more difficult by closing its borders to plastic waste from Europe in 2018. Valipac managed to reach an agreement with the major traders in 2020, making it possible to finalise mapping.

Reporting to the IRPC on the final destinations (mapping) of plastic streams 2019

A total of 58.8 kilotonnes (kt) of industrial and commercial plastic packaging waste were sent for recycling, of which 52.7 kt were recycled in Europe, Asia or Turkey.

Continent	Asia	Europe	Turkey	Total
Market share	39%	42%	19%	100%
Tonnage	20.8 kt	22.0 kt	10.0 kt	52.7 kt



5.1. **Fost Plus** results for 2019




	Paper/ cardboard	Glass	Plastics	Metals: iron	Metals: aluminium	Drink cartons	Other	Total
Recycling %			46.17%		91.50%	100.0%	1.43%	84.78%
Quantities from members	184 560 tonnes	299 958 tonnes	211 010 tonnes	46 187 tonnes	27 342 tonnes	16 164 tonnes	4 277 tonnes	789 499 tonnes
Of which recycled	184 560 tonnes	299 958 tonnes	97 414 tonnes	46 187 tonnes	25 017 tonnes	16 164 tonnes	61 tonnes	669 362 tonnes
								95.02%

The total recycling rate is **84.78%**. The target is **80%**.
The total recovery rate is **95.02%**. The target is **90%**.



5.2. Valipac results for 2019



	Plastic	Paper/cardboard	Metal	Wood	Other	Total
Recycling %	53.9%		78.1%	87.3%	9.9%	88.8%
Quantities from members	100 032 tonnes	425 119 tonnes	37 245 tonnes	179 887 tonnes	7 767 tonnes	750 050 tonnes
Of which recycled	53 877 tonnes	425 119 tonnes	29 080 tonnes	157 047 tonnes	773 tonnes	692 875 tonnes

Exceptionally, small quantities of plastic were excluded from the results in 2019 because their final destination could not be identified with absolute certainty. This has been the policy of the Interregional Packaging Commission and the accredited compliance organisation for many years now.

The total recycling rate is **88.8%**. The target is **80%**.
The total recovery rate is **96.5%**. The target is **85%**.



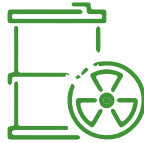


96.5%





5.3. The 2019 results of the **individual responsible companies**

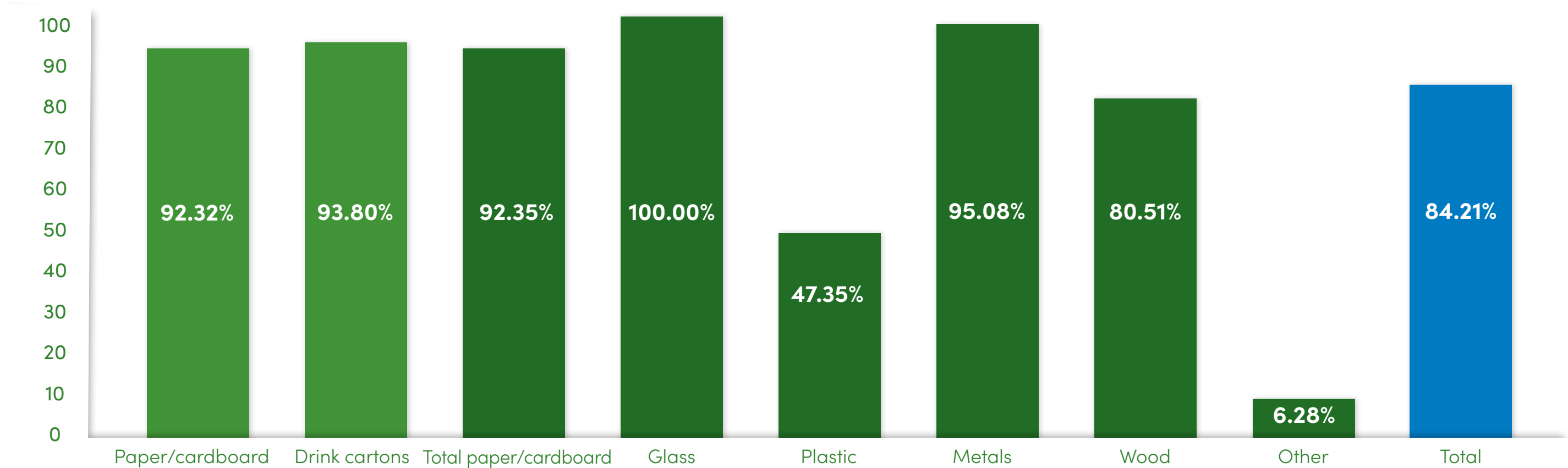
A total of 97 companies reported that they had fulfilled the take-back obligation themselves in the 2019 reporting year.

						
	Paper/cardboard	Plastic	Metal	Wood	Other	Total
Recycling %	83.07%	79.44%	66.15%	93.58%	0.87%	84.88%
Quantity of one-way packaging placed on the Belgian market	31 536.82 tonnes	2 693.16 tonnes	627.66 tonnes	11 908.81 tonnes	243.79 tonnes	47 010.24 tonnes

The average recycling rate is **84.88%**.



5.4. The **overall results** for 2019

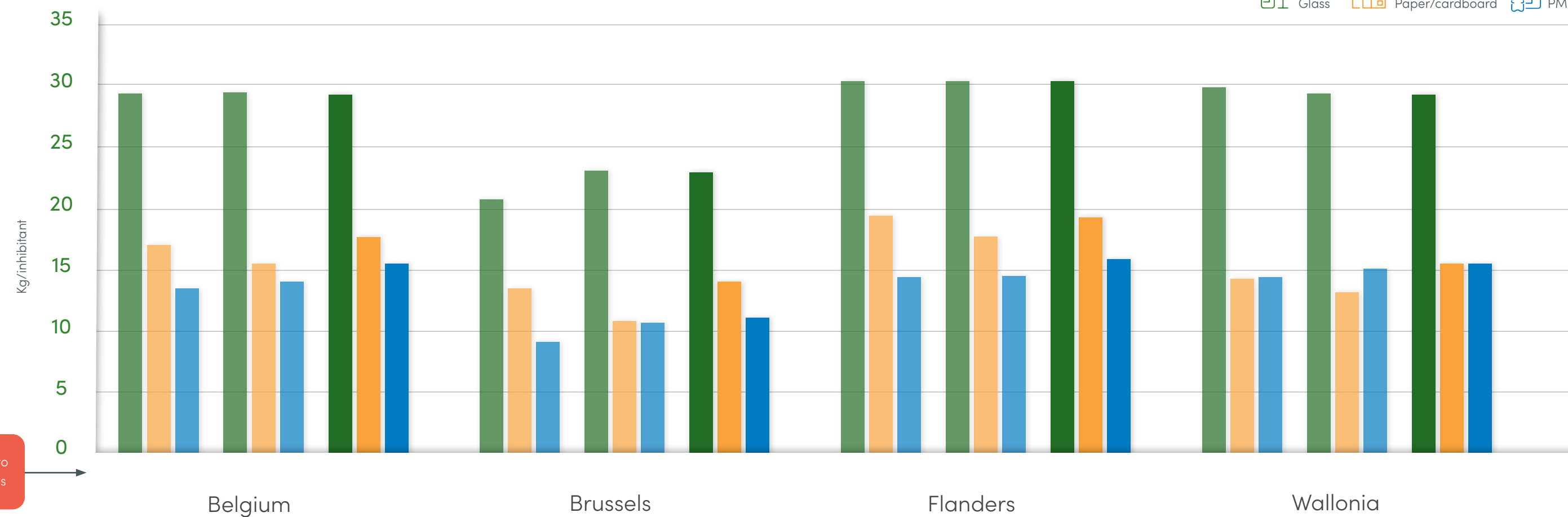


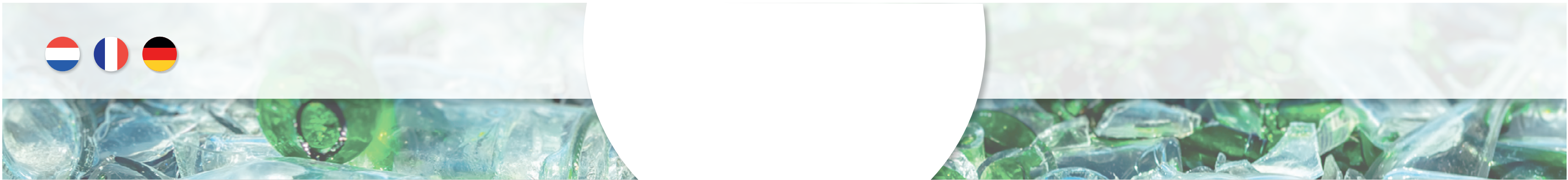
Due to the European Commission’s calculation method, the overall Belgian figures cannot be directly compared with the results of the accredited compliance organisations and the individual responsible companies.



5.5. **Collection** of household packaging waste in **2019**

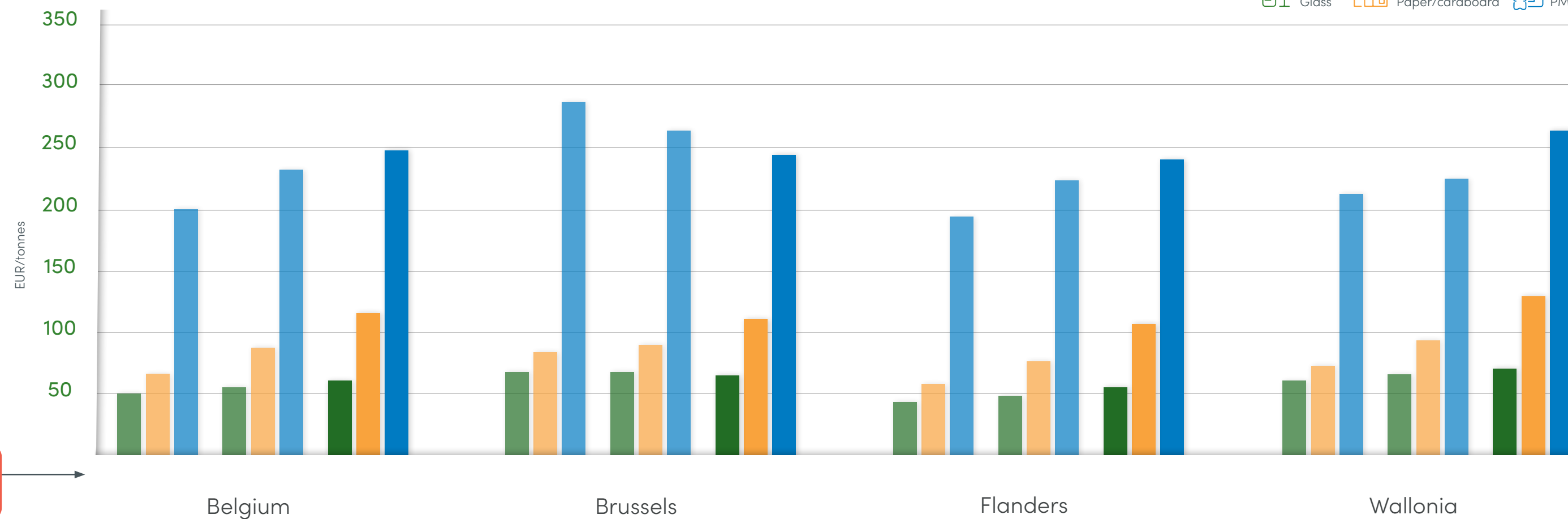
5.5.1. Trend in the collection results per material, per Region and for Belgium as a whole





5.5. **Collection** of household packaging waste in **2019**

5.5.2. Trend in the collection cost per material, per Region and for Belgium as a whole



Click on a year to
see more details



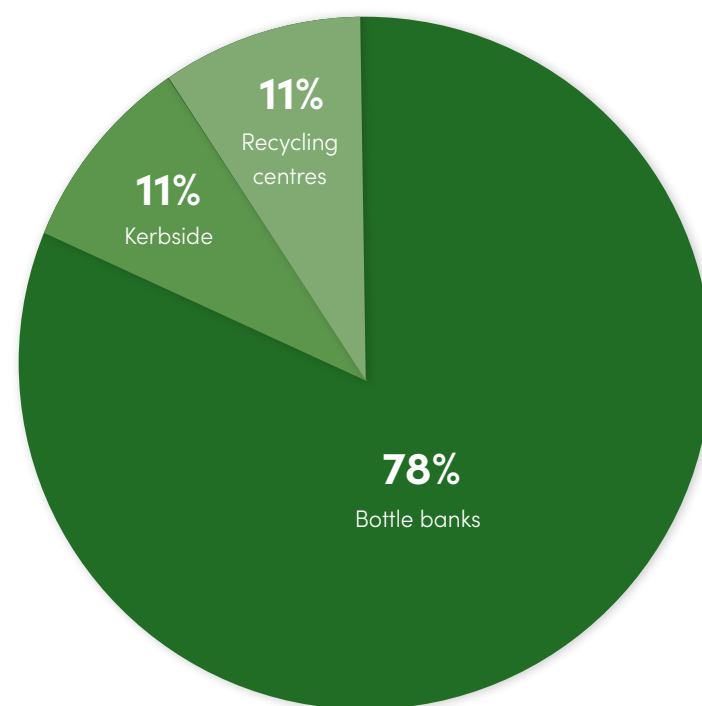
5.5. **Collection** of household packaging waste in **2019**

5.5.3 Per fraction, proportion of the result achieved by each collection method (2019)

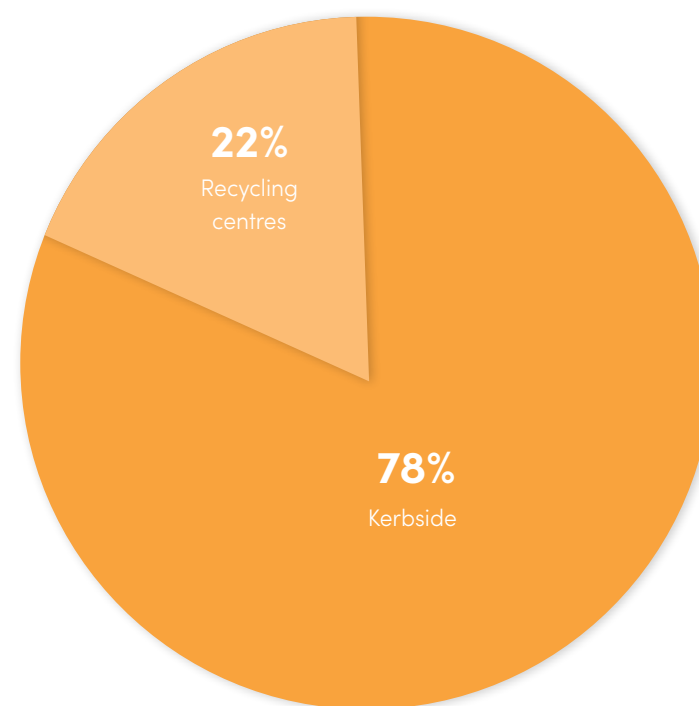
TONNES/METHOD



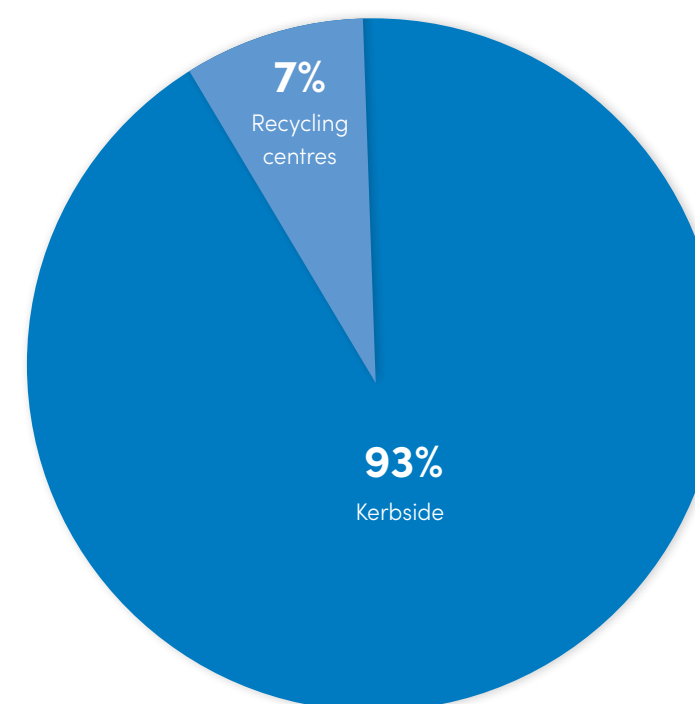
GLASS



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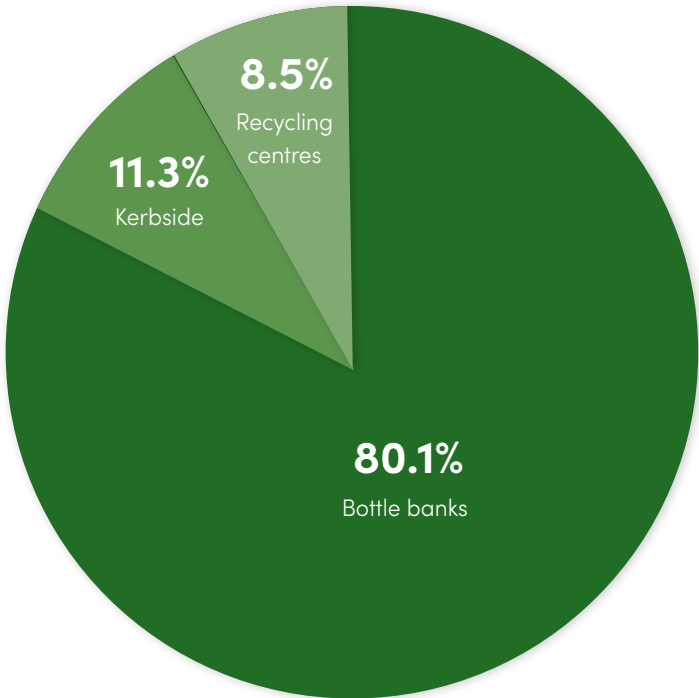
5.5. **Collection** of household packaging waste in **2019**

5.5.4 Per fraction, proportion of the cost incurred by each collection method (2019)

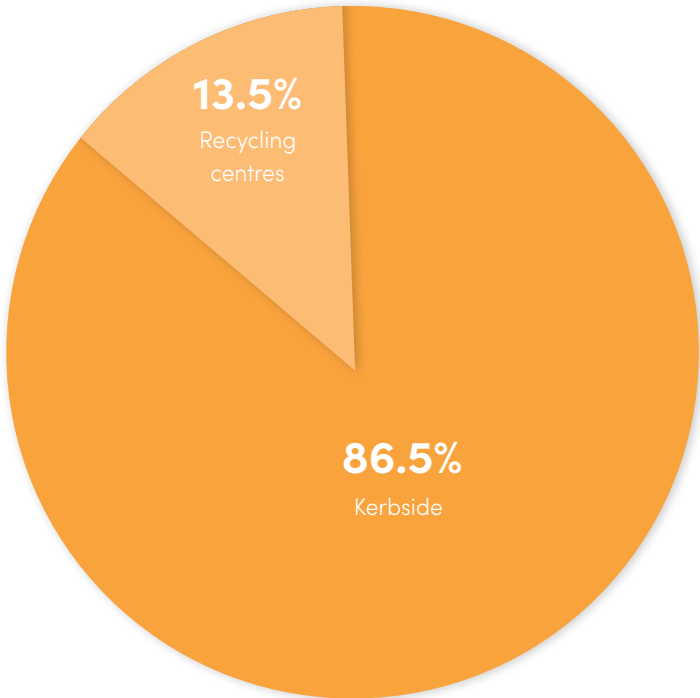
COST/METHOD



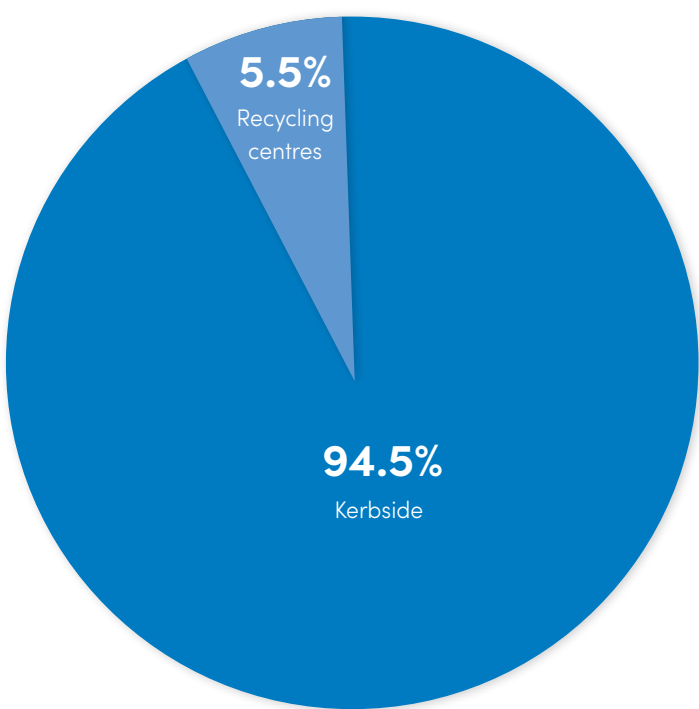
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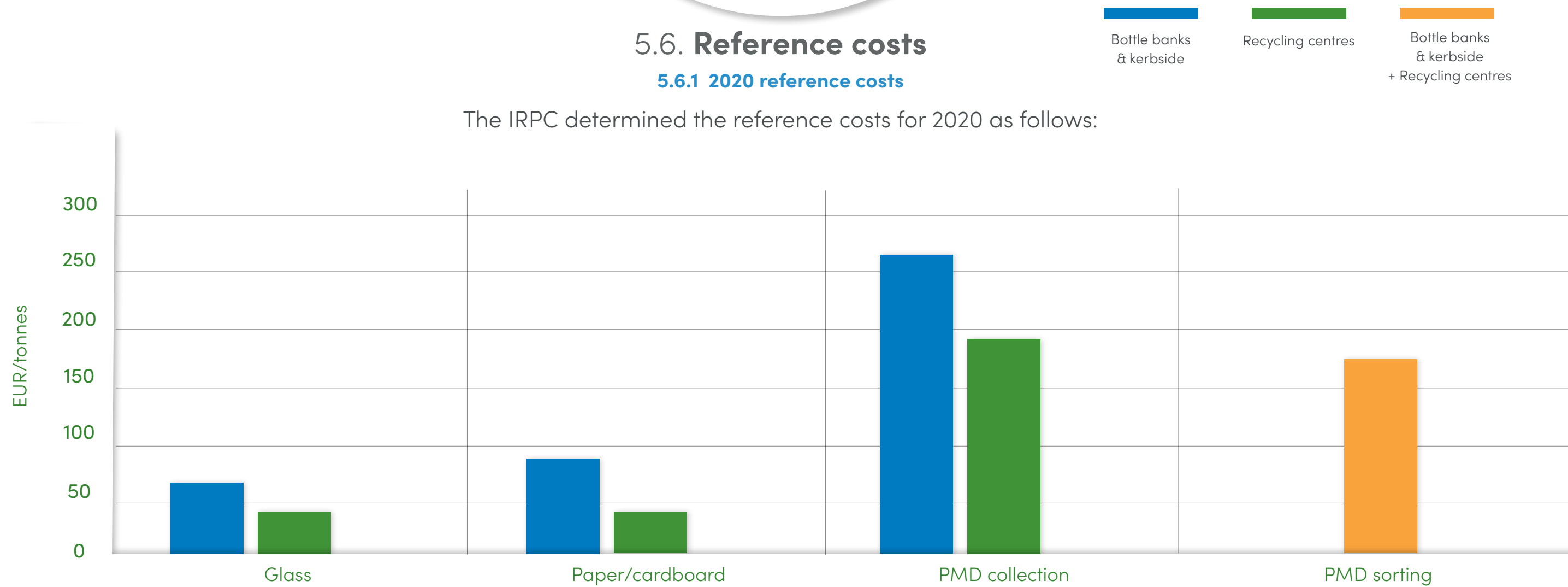




5.6. Reference costs

5.6.1 2020 reference costs

The IRPC determined the reference costs for 2020 as follows:



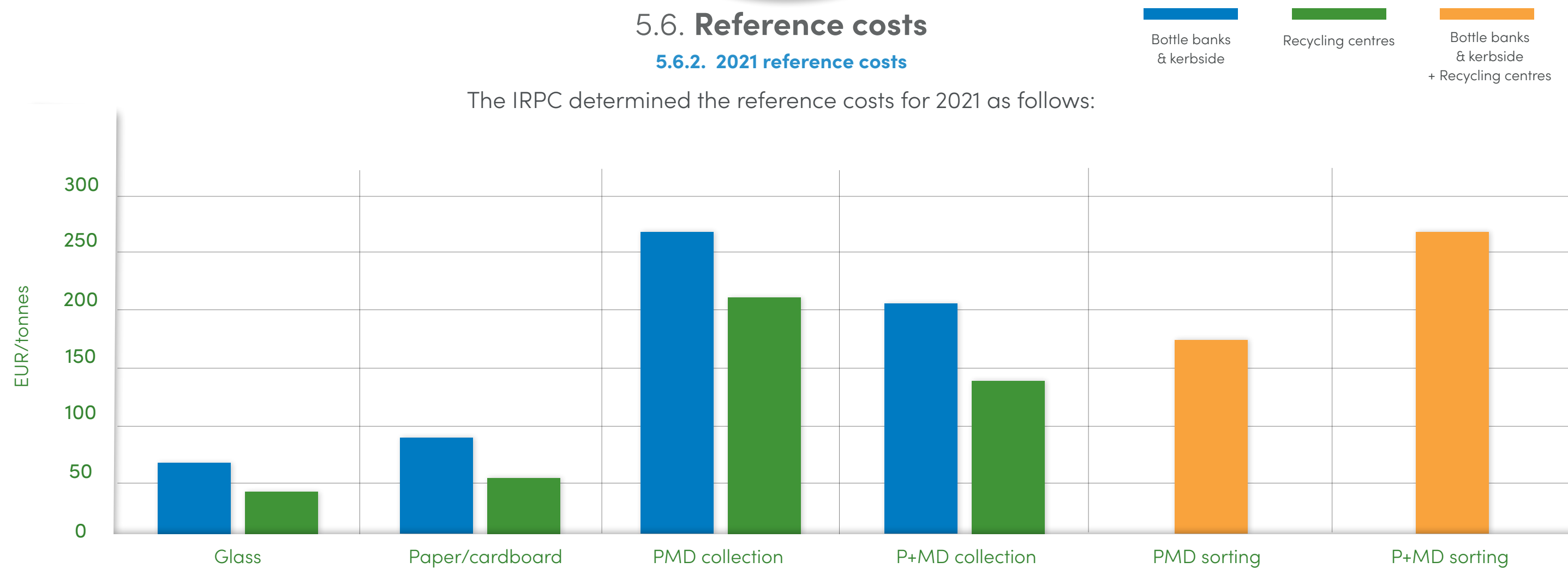
You can find a detailed overview of these reference costs and further information about the calculation method in the technical data sheet.



5.6. Reference costs

5.6.2. 2021 reference costs

The IRPC determined the reference costs for 2021 as follows:

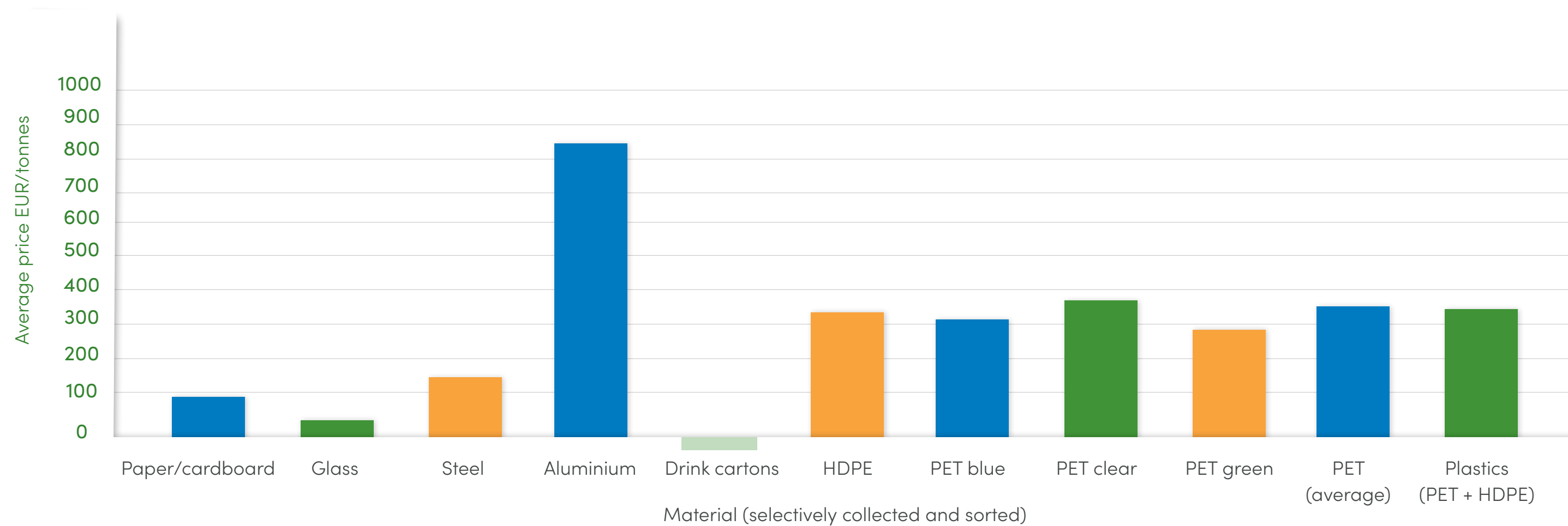


You can find a detailed overview of these reference costs and further information about the calculation method in the technical data sheet.



5.7. Reference values

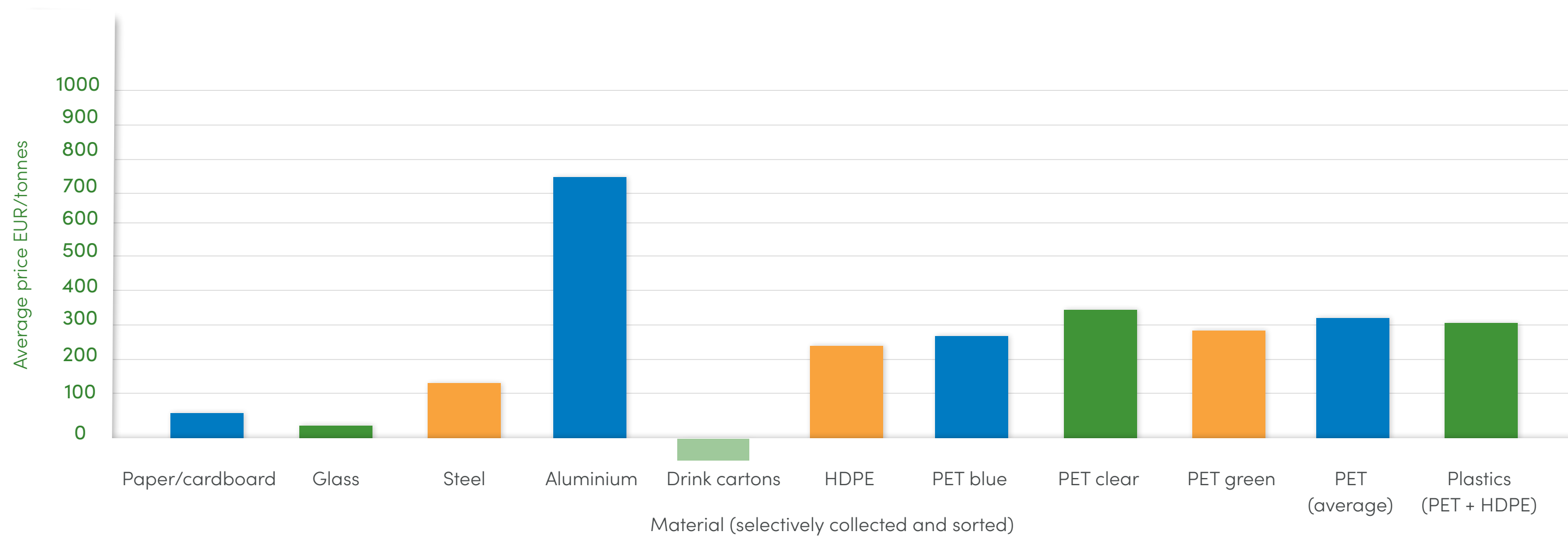
5.7.1 2019 reference values





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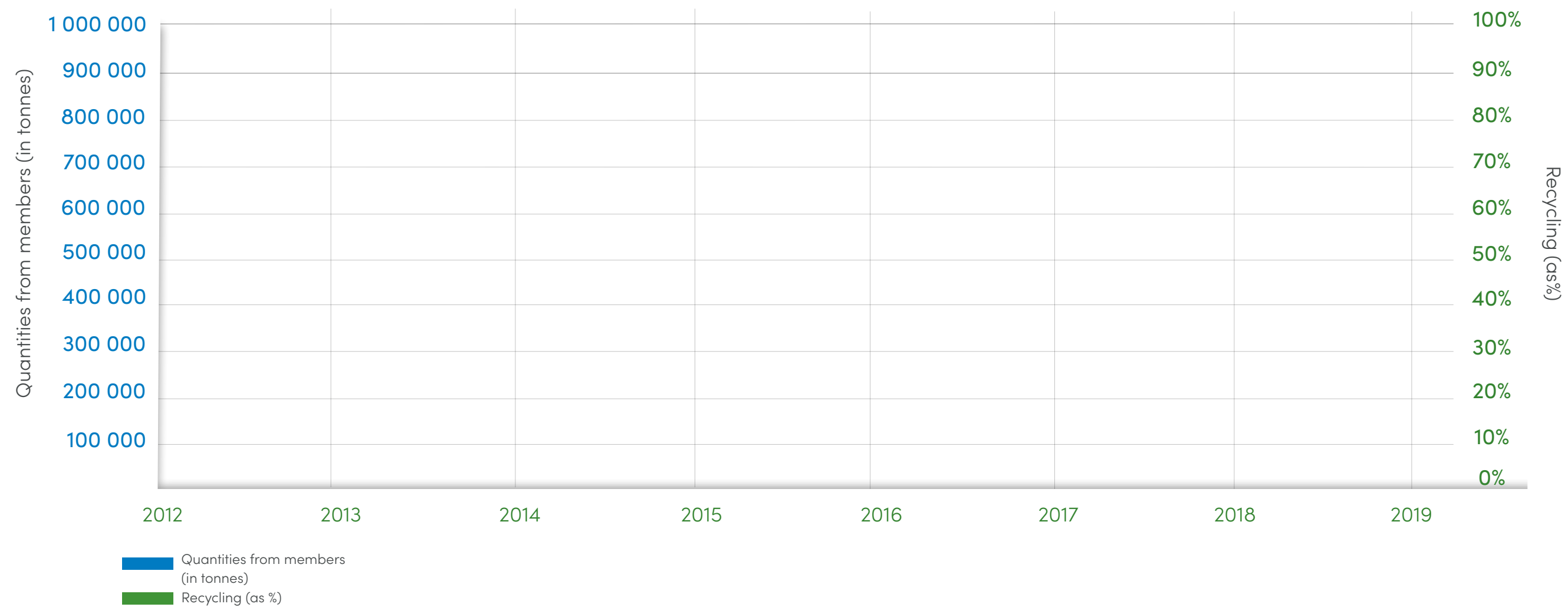
5.7.2 2020 reference values





5.8. Fost Plus and Valipac figures in the longer term

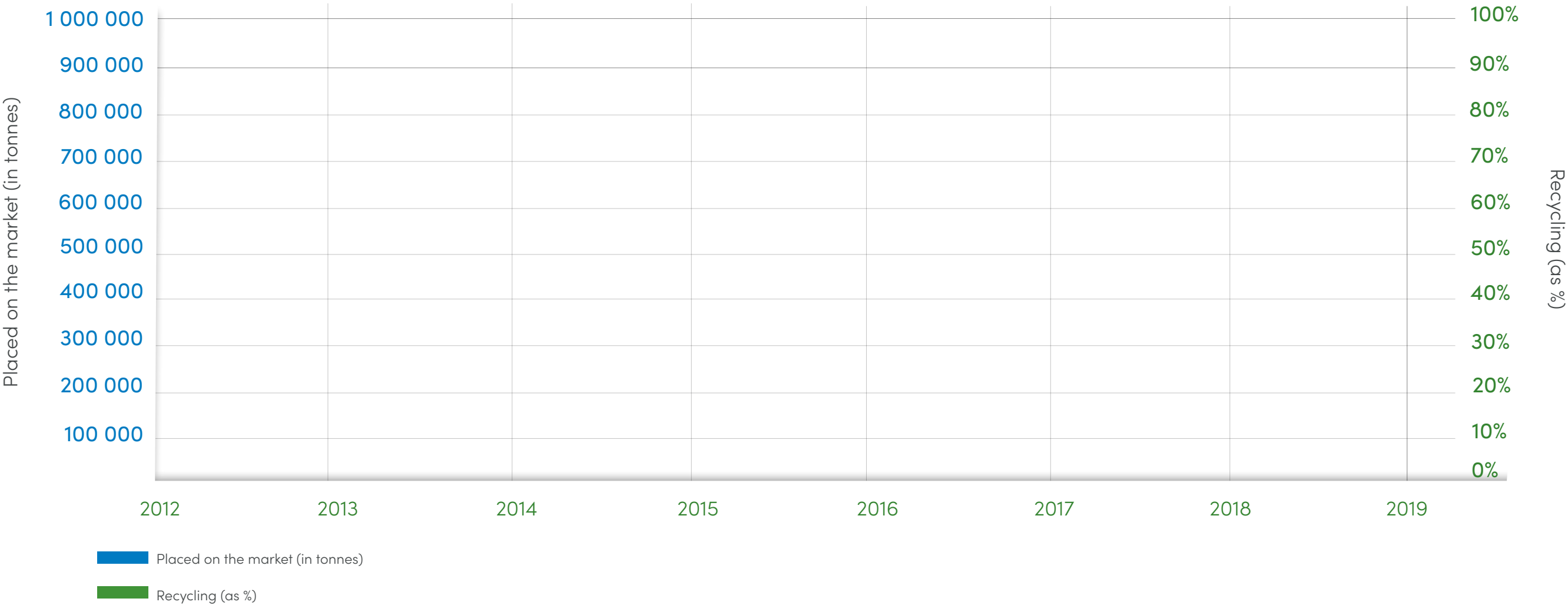
The trend in the Fost Plus figures



Click on one of the buttons below to see more details



5.8. **Fost Plus and Valipac** figures in the longer term
The trend in the Valipac figures



Click on one of the buttons below to see more details

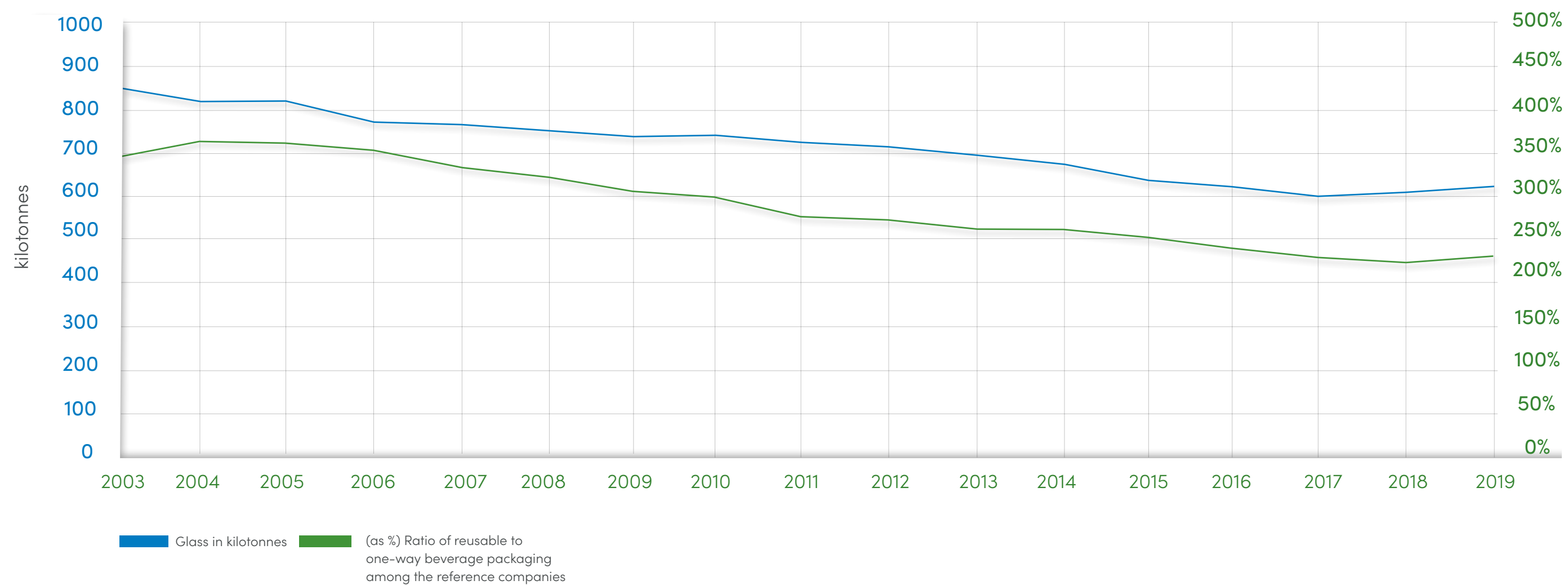


	Household packaging waste	Industrial/commercial packaging waste
One-way packaging (in kilotonnes)	789 kilotonnes (789 498 987 kg)	750 kilotonnes (750 050 tonnes)
Reusable packaging (in kilotonnes)	707 kilotonnes (707 225 615,58 kg)	3 102 kilotonnes (3 102 263 tonnes)

There is a great deal of reusable packaging on the market. This is mainly reusable industrial and commercial packaging that has great growth potential for the future.

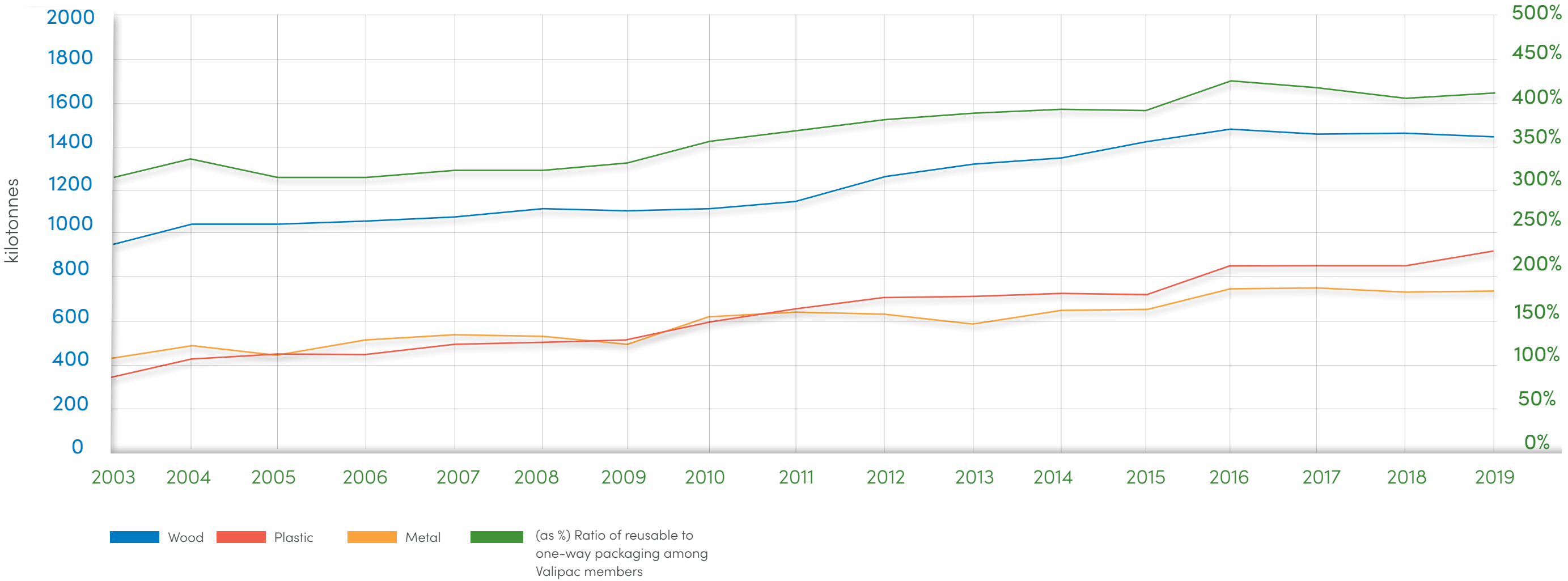


6.1. Overall trend in reusable household packaging





6.2. **Overall trend** in reusable industrial and commercial packaging





The IRPC processes notifications and shipment declarations of waste that is subject to the notification procedure and that is only in transit through Belgium. The waste in question does not therefore originate from Belgium, and Belgium is not its final destination either.

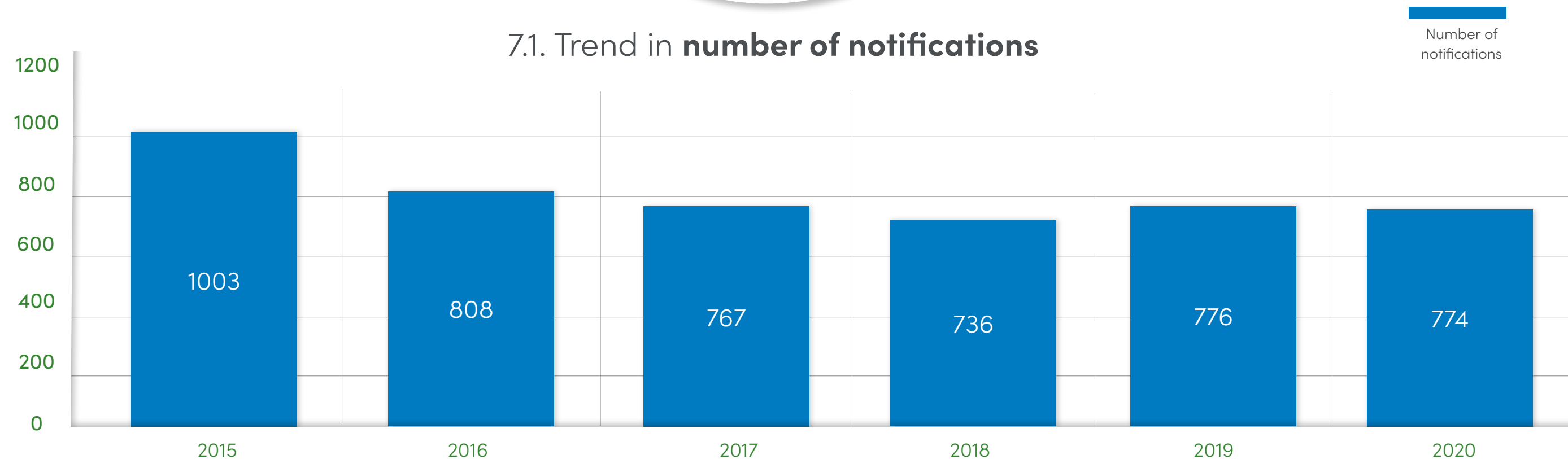
A notifier submits a **notification** when he wishes to have a quantity of identified waste shipped during a given period of time in the future:

- spread over one or more separate shipments;
- via the same shipment routes each time;
- from the same point of departure, to the same destination and with the same type of content.

As the Belgian transit authority, the IRPC must first approve the notification before the series of shipments may proceed.



7.1. Trend in **number of notifications**



The notifier must also declare in advance each individual shipment relating to the notification. These are known as **pre-notifications**, and include the following:

- which notification the shipment comes under;
- when the shipment will take place.

The carrier is given the actual transport document pertaining to the shipment. The notifier sends a copy of it to the IRPC, indicating the planned date of departure.



7.2. Trend in the **number of shipments registered**

