

What is an EUR/EPAL pallet?

The EUR/EPAL pallet, **celebrating its first 50 years on the market**, is the world's most used standardized pallet for the transport of consumer products.

Just to give an idea of its uptake rate, it is suffice to consider that a total of **66,816,972** EUR/EPAL pallets was produced and **22,918,526** repaired in 2010 by 425 producers and 1046 repairers, whereas, in Italy, in the same year as many as 5,918,089 units were manufactured and 3,195,854 repaired.

Who commissioned the research project???

The **Epal Technical Committee of Conlegno**, supported by **EPAL (European Pallet Association)** was firmly intent on conducting a research to measure the environmental impact of an EUR/EPAL pallet throughout its lifecycle.

The added value of the study comes from the massive body of data acquired through interviews with a sample of target companies carried out with the assistance of **Assoimballaggi/FederlegnoArredo**.

The study was commissioned to the Department of Chemistry, Materials and Chemical Engineering "Giulio Natta" at the **Polytechnic University of Milan**, which conducted it with the utmost care and in full compliance with **ISO14040** and **ISO14044** standards.


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What were the objectives?

The research study was designed to accurately, objectively and verifiably assess the **ecocompatibility of EUR/EPAL pallets** "from cradle to cradle", both in terms of greenhouse emissions (**Global Warming Potential**) and in terms of a multicategory eco-indicator (**Ecoindicator 99**).

Is the EUR/EPAL pallet an eco-compatible product?

The research study ultimately showed how the entire lifecycle of an EUR/EPAL pallet contributes to mitigating the greenhouse effect because every single pallet subtracts a total quantity of -18.4 kg of equivalent CO₂ from the atmosphere. This means that **-1,229,432 tons of equivalent CO₂** were subtracted from the atmosphere in 2010, which -108,893 tons in Italy.

The EPAL exchange system in Europe makes it possible, every year, to compensate for the emissions of climate-changing gases equivalent to the energy demand of the residential building stock of the city of Rome.

Wooden pallets vs. plastic pallets: any difference in environmental impact?

A recent study published by the **Pennsylvania State University** confirmed extremely favorable findings for wooden pallets in terms of equivalent CO₂ emissions. The environmental impact of a wooden pallet is **5 times lower** than that of a plastic pallet.

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