



Key Trends

Packaging

This content has been collated to provide information on the **Packaging** industry in Scotland. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan).

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Sourcing Packaging for your Product:

- ◆ [Scottish Packaging Society \(SPkgS\)](#) and [Scottish Plastics & Rubber Association \(SPRA\)](#) – these societies are affiliated to IOM3(Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining) and aim to represent the interests of packaging professionals in Scotland. The website also offers event listings, industry resources and news.
- ◆ [The British Contract Manufacturers and Packers Association \(BCMPA\)](#) – this organisation offers a map of member companies, which may help finding local suppliers, and online resources which include tips for start-ups.
- ◆ [WRAP](#) is a collaborative organisation with global offices, promoting the role of waste prevention and recycling. They offer various online guides and resources and research into packaging.
- ◆ [The Metal Packaging Manufacturers Association \(MPMA\)](#) is a trade association representing companies in the metal packaging industry. The Association supports and represents members' interests on industry matters related to operational, regulatory, and environmental issues.
- ◆ [Web Packaging](#) is an information portal for consumer-packaged goods. Here you can search the directory of [packaging suppliers](#) for your product.
- ◆ [Packaging News](#) is an online magazine covering various industry news. This also includes information on various markets, industry events and a supplier directory.

About the Packaging Industry:

- ◆ The United Kingdom sustainable packaging market grew by 2.5% in 2025 to reach a value of \$15,888.7 million. In 2030, the United Kingdom sustainable packaging market is forecast to have a value of \$18,726.3 million, an increase of 17.9% since 2025. The United Kingdom sustainable packaging market grew by 0.9% in 2025 to reach a volume of 21,104.9 thousand metric tonnes. In 2030, the United Kingdom sustainable packaging market is forecast to have a volume of 22,182.5 thousand metric tonnes, an increase of 5.1% since 2025. (GlobalData Explorer, United Kingdom - Sustainable Packaging, Jan 2026). This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026
- ◆ The European flexible packaging market grew by 2.6% in 2025 to reach a value of \$53.5 billion. In 2030, the European flexible packaging market is forecast to have a value of \$69.4 billion, an increase of 29.5% since 2025. Food & beverages is the largest segment of the flexible packaging market in Europe, accounting for 60% of the market's total value in 2025. Europe accounts for 19.9% of the global flexible packaging market value in 2025. (GlobalData Explorer, *Europe - Flexible Packaging*, Feb 2026). This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026
- ◆ The top packaging trends include: Smart packaging enabling traceability and freshness with clearer data and safer products for consumers; Biobased packaging lessening the reliance on fossil fuel and increasing packaging sustainability; Hyper-personalization (AI) to tailor packaging design and messaging in turn offering further individualised customer preferences; Mono-materials of single material to improve recycling qualities and effective

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waste management; Refillables and Reusables to decrease waste. (GlobalData Explorer, *Industry Insights: Top Trends in Packaging 2026*, Feb 2026). This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026

- ◆ Output in the Paper Packaging market is projected to amount to £1.55bn in 2026. A compound annual growth rate of 3.06% is expected (CAGR 2026–2031). Import in the Paper Packaging market is projected to amount to £1.52bn in 2026. A compound annual growth rate of 2.31% is expected (CAGR 2026–2031). Export in the Paper Packaging market is projected to amount to £626.18m in 2026. A compound annual growth rate of -3.16% is expected (CAGR 2026–2031). The number of employees in the Paper Packaging market is projected to amount to 7k in 2026. (Statista, Market Insights Paper Packaging United Kingdom, January 2026).
- ◆ The paper packaging sector has experienced significant growth despite digitalisation. Although the increased use of digital media has caused global graphic paper production to fall more than 40 percent since 2010, packaging paper and paperboard production has increased considerably during this period to a value of 277.85 million metric tons in 2024. One of the biggest drivers of this growth has been the rise of e-commerce. (Statista, *Global paper packaging industry - statistics & facts*, January 2026).
- ◆ The European flexible packaging market had an estimated total value of more than 60 billion U.S. dollars in 2024. It is forecast that the flexible packaging industry in Europe will see the market value increase to nearly 77 billion U.S. dollars in 2029. Flexible packaging applications for food is expected to be the main driver of this increase over that timeframe. (Statista, Flexible packaging market value in Europe 2024-2029, November 2025).
- ◆ The Metal Packaging Manufacturers Association estimate production to be around 22 billion units in the UK each year and the industry employs nearly 3500 people in 46 factories in the UK. Their [Facts & Figures](#) also include Kantar statistics that nearly 2.8 billion units of canned food were sold in the UK in 2024 with 99.4% of UK households buying from the canned food category each year. Recycling rates in the United Kingdom are Steel 86.6%, aluminium 81% of beverage can), 68.5% of all aluminium packaging.
- ◆ Since April 2024, the **UK Plastic Packaging Tax** has been £217.85 per tonne, increasing to [£223.69 per tonne from 1st April 2025](#). The rate of plastic packaging tax (PPT) will rise in line with the consumer price index (CPI) to £228.82 per tonne from 1 April 2026. The aim of the tax is to incentivise the use of recycled material in the production of plastic packaging. Guidance on the tax and who needs to pay can be viewed on the UK Government's webpage [Plastic Packaging Tax: steps to take](#).
- ◆ **National Library of Scotland** – free registration offers access to [eResources for Business](#) and online access to various databases and their reports such as: **IBISWorld** reports *Cardboard Packaging & Paper Bag Manufacturing in the UK*, *Light Metal Packaging Manufacturing in the UK*, *Paper & Paperboard Packaging Manufacturing in the UK*, *Plastic Packing Goods Manufacturing in the UK*, *Packaging Services in the UK* for insights on the sector; **COBRA Business Information Factsheets on Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2015 (Jul 2024)** and **Single-use Carrier Bag Charge (Feb 2024)**; and in person access to **Mintel** reports which may cover packaging trends, household packaging, and more.

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