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PRESS RELEASE

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HIGHLIGHTS: PRINT MATTERS 2024 CONFERENCE CONCLUDES IN BUCHAREST

The latest edition of the Print Matters conference brought together an impressive gathering of more than 85 industry professionals from over 20 countries. Co-organized by Intergraf and NOPA, the event took place on 14 June 2024 in Bucharest, Romania.

This annual event served as a platform for industry leaders to unite and discuss the latest developments and future prospects in the graphic industry. National printing associations, printers, suppliers, and high-level speakers from Europe and North America gathered to share their insights, expertise, and thought leadership.

The event fostered collaborative discussions on pressing industry issues, with a special focus on research on reading, business matters, and sustainability in the graphic industry. It highlighted emerging trends and technologies and showcased the industry's resilience. Delegates and speakers demonstrated a commitment to innovation and collaboration, driving the printing industry forward.

The Print Matters 2024 program was designed to offer a forward-looking perspective on the graphic industry's future. Attendees delved into the impact of Artificial Intelligence on printing, exploring both the risks and opportunities it presents. The conference showcased recent Intergraf research comparing print and digital communication in terms of efficiency, sustainability, and consumer preferences, offering invaluable insights to participants. The agenda among other things included case studies, discussions on EU legislation, analyses of supply chain risks, exploration of changes in print distribution dynamics, and the print industry's role in the development of literacy.

The Print Matters 2024 conference showcased a dynamic range of speakers who presented valuable insights and developments in the printing industry.

The conference was moderated by **Ulrich Stetter**, President of Intergraf and Managing Director of Druckhaus Mainfranken GmbH, and **Håvard Grjotheim**, President of NOPA and Working Chairman of Scandbook Holding AB.

Bernd Zipper, founder of the initiative online print (IOP) and CEO of zipcon consulting GmbH, delivered a **keynote** at Print Matters 2024 highlighting significant outcomes from **drupa 2024**, the world's largest trade fair. Dubbed "a higher – faster – further -drupa," the event showcased a shift from mass production to mass customization, focusing on more varied, smaller print runs tailored to specific regions, languages, and target groups. After an 8-year hiatus, drupa remains a crucial market barometer, especially as the industry recovers from the pandemic. Significant developments are anticipated for drupa 2028, with leading digital printing press manufacturers already making strides.

Dávid István, President of Transylvania Printers Association, introduced attendees to the Romanian printing industry. He revealed that the industry comprises 7000 companies with 18890 employees.

Riley McNulty, Vice President of Customer Experience and Consulting at Keypoint Intelligence, highlighted key developments in the European graphic industry. He noted substantial pricing pressures and a less sophisticated print buyer base. While inflation has notably declined in the first half of 2024, energy prices have stabilized but remain high. Additionally, there is a growing focus on sustainability within the EU, emphasizing reuse, recycling, and reduced energy consumption.

Cornel Porosnicu, General Manager at NX Print, shared insights on the company's successful transition from commercial print to packaging, aligning with emerging trends in the industry.

Pien Haks, the Intergraf Young Talent Award 2024 winner, provided valuable insights on how AI is transforming the workplace. She emphasized the importance of being AI-savvy for all professionals and discussed the potential impacts on the print industry, including associated risks and opportunities.

Kari Spjeldnæs, Associate Professor and Head of Department at Kristiania University College, underscored the power of printed materials for reading and comprehension, noting that reading on paper provides much better mental anchors compared to digital devices.

Jeremy Tawedian, Research Assistant at Intergraf, presented a comprehensive review of the “Print and Digital Media” project. This 2024 desk research, conducted by Jeremy, provides an in-depth comparison of print and digital communication tools, analysing over 78 studies. The report focuses on sustainability, reading, marketing, and the digital divide.

Eva Vati, CEO of VERIFY Agency of Sweden, highlighted key trends during her presentation on the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive. She noted that large printing companies will demand sustainable practices from their suppliers, impacting SMEs. Customers now expect environmental responsibility from all printing partners. Financial institutions are prioritizing ESG factors, making it easier for sustainable SMEs to secure funding.

Maja Drča, EU Representative at PEFC International, discussed the impact of the EUDR on the graphic sector and how established forest certification systems, like PEFC, can help companies meet EU compliance requirements.

The conference concluded with **Ulrich Stetter** sharing insights on how Druckhaus Mainfranken GmbH is preparing for the EUDR implementation.

The next Print Matters conference will take place on June 13, 2025 in Switzerland.

A media kit containing selected images of the event can be requested. More information about the Print Matters 2024 conference can be found [here](#).

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Notes to editor

The **European graphical sector** is made up of some 112,000 printing companies (95% SMEs), which employ 640,000 people, and generate a combined turnover of €82 billion (EU27 + UK, Switzerland, and Norway).

Intergraf (www.intergraf.eu) is the **European printing industry association**, representing employers in the graphical sector. We are a Brussels-based umbrella federation with 22 members from 21 countries and 11 Associate Members from across Europe. Our primary goal is to represent and advocate for Europe's printing industry, working with European Union to support the sector's competitiveness through advocacy, information-sharing, networking, social dialogue, and European projects.

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