

iarc 2025

International Automotive Recycling Congress

March 19 - 21, 2025, Antwerp, Belgium



“Added value throughout the cycle, from waste collection to the production of high-quality recycled materials.”

ABDERAMAN EL AOUFIR

CEO at



ICM: Please give us an overview of the recycling activities of the Derichebourg group.

Abderraman El Aoufir: Derichebourg Group is listed in the Paris stock market but controlled and managed by the DERICHEBOURG family. The group was founded in 1956, operating in 13 countries, mainly in Europe. In 2024, the Group produced above 5 million tons of recycled metals (steel, copper, aluminium, brass, stainless steel, zinc, etc.), backed by a dense territorial network of 280 collection and recycling facilities.

These new recycled materials are used in the steel and metal industries. They contribute towards the carbon neutrality targets, while promoting European independence in terms of strategic resources required to enable the green transition.

At the heart of the circular economy, Derichebourg's know-how enables it to serve its many partners (industries, businesses, local authorities, EPR schemes, private individuals), serving both the economy and the ecological transition.

Regarding extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes, Derichebourg has a long-standing expertise, since 2006, in the recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), with more than 15 dedicated plants in Europe.

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ICM: What is the importance of the automotive market for your activity?

Abderaman El Aoufir: End-of-life vehicle recycling is a major activity for the Group, with 650 000 tonnes of ELVs recycled in 2024, through more than 200 recycling plants in the EU, implying green jobs, huge investments and innovative technologies.

Derichebourg is a major player at EU level in ELV recycling, particularly in France, Spain and Belgium, through recycling plants equipped with dedicated technologies capable of producing high-level recycled materials. The ongoing improvement of the industrial process enables the Group to reach the mandatory recycling and recovery rates targets of respectively 85 % and 95 %.

ICM: What are the key challenges to achieving circularity in this market and how are you addressing them?

Abderaman El Aoufir: Achieving circularity in the field of ELVs requires for instance a much higher uptake of recycled plastics in new cars put on the market. For now, the draft End-of-Life Regulation (ELVR) proposed by the European Commission sets targets for recycled plastic content (25%), including in closed loops (25%). However, Derichebourg Environnement is highly concerned by the draft report of the European Parliament's rapporteurs, with much less ambitious goals (20% for the global recycled plastic content, and 15% for the closed-loop target). Watering-down the targets for recycled content for plastics would directly threaten investments and jobs that would make automotive more circular.

If the ELVR evolves towards a less ambitious mindset, the foreseen 30% recycling targets for plastics will never be reachable, and landfill or incineration of plastics will have to continue, at the detriment of circularity and reduction of waste.

On a more core-business issue, Derichebourg is testing technologies to increase the uptake of recycled steel from ELVs in the flat steel production which mainly relies currently on iron ore, in a complementary way to the long steel production through electric-arc furnaces (EAF, consuming a high rate of recycled steel). Indeed, flat steel is used by the car industry, which still has a lot of progress to make to raise the use of recycled steel in its processes. Derichebourg also continuously improves the quality of recycled aluminium and copper to meet the evolving requirements of the downstream customers.

ICM: You are hosting the plant tour at IARC 2025 to your new copper recycling facility in Northern France, what will our delegates visit?

Abderaman El Aoufir: This brand-new recycling facility is designed to recycle waste electrical cables from end-of-life vehicles, electrical and electronic equipment, demolition of buildings, or digital and telecommunications networks. This new plant was supported by the French Recovery Plan after the Covid crisis, focusing on projects in critical sectors and aiming at the reindustrialisation of Europe.

At a time when copper is on the list of critical and strategic materials in the European Critical Raw Material (CRM) Act, this industrial plant produces recycled copper for downstream industries, in the form of granules reaching 99,9% purity. This dedicated plant manages to separate the copper from the plastic which composes the cables, thanks to a sophisticated industrial process including shredders, granulators, sorting machines relying on optic sensors, density and water tables.

ICM: How is Derichebourg positioned to benefit from the opportunities of the recycling market and why should customers work with you?

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Derichebourg offers industrial-scale solutions for waste owners and waste management operators, with a high-level of technical expertise, a perfect knowledge of the global market and environmental regulations.

Derichebourg has historically been present through the whole value chain of metal recycling, be it through its very dense network of industrial plants which offers proximity to the end-users, or its large range of recycling technologies able to recycle complex mixed metal waste from various waste streams, such as municipal waste, industrial waste, construction and demolition waste. On lead batteries and aluminium, the Group is fully vertically integrated with its own refineries, in France and Spain, enabling the production of ingots, for a fully circular economy.

The Derichebourg Family has a long-term vision for the recycling industry, constantly looking to the future, developing technologies based on state-of-the-art techniques, which anticipate the increasingly complex recycling of future waste. In 2024, the Group invested nearly 200 million euros, mainly in ultra-efficient new recycling capacities and technologies, and has planned to invest 175 million euros in 2025.

ICM: How positive are you for the potential of this market (in Europe) for Derichebourg?

Abderaman El Aoufir: For the long term, Derichebourg is very confident in its business model with many projects aiming at switching blast furnaces to electric arc furnaces, hence an increasing demand for high-quality recycled steel. Additionally, the development of electric cars will also increase the demand for high-quality aluminium and copper.

Having said that, we are facing a critical issue: the need to tackle illegal export outside of the EU, of non-treated ELVs, under the cover of used vehicles. Controls of exports of whole vehicles is a key issue to stop exporting unroadworthy vehicles.

More globally, we remain convinced that the recycling industry has a key role to play in a context of decarbonisation and ecological transition.

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About IARC

24 years of shaping the Future of Vehicle Circularity!

The International Automotive Recycling Congress IARC is the leading global platform for knowledge exchange, innovation, and collaboration in the vehicle circular economy. Now in its 24th year, IARC connects industry leaders, policymakers, and innovators to advance sustainable vehicle recycling and prepare these industries for a sustainable future.