

Steep polymer price increases, panic among understocked converters

WEEK 10, 08. 03. 2026

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The prices of “commodity” polymers were affected by the following factors last week:

- **BRENT oil price** (06.03.2026) **92.690** USD/barrel, prices up sharply from the end of the previous week
- **NAPHTHA European**; (06.03.2026) **698.70** USD/t, steeply rising prices compared to the end of the previous week,
- **March contract monomer prices:**
 - **Ethylene (C2)** contract price **+50 EUR/t (1,145 EUR/t)**,
 - **Propylene (C3)** contract price **+35 EUR/t (1,000 EUR/t)**,
 - **Styrene monomer (SM)** **+73 EUR/t (1,423 EUR/t)**,
- **Dutch TTF Gas Futures** (06.03.2026) **52.80** EUR/Mwh, sharply rising prices compared to the end of the previous week,
- **EUR/USD** (06.03.2026): **1.16**, weakening euro compared to the previous week,
- **Polymer capacity news**
 - Persistent production problems
 - **Karpatneftekhim** (Kalush, unplanned shutdown, HDPE 110 kt/year capacity)
 - Ongoing maintenance/outages/malfunctions:
 - Expected maintenance/shutdowns:
 - **Rompetrol, Navodari** planned maintenance: **PP** (60 kt/year): February 19, 2026 – March 28, 2026; **LDPE** (60 kt/year capacity) February 27, 2026 – March 22, 2026)
 - **ORLEN, Plock** planned maintenance: **LDPE** (100 kt/year capacity) April 15, 2026 - 3, June 2026
 - **Basell Orlen Polyolefins, Plock** planned maintenance: **HDPE** (320 kt/year capacity), **PP** (480 kt/year capacity) 15 April 2026 - 3 June 2026
 - Unplanned shutdowns:
 - **Grupa Azoty Polyolefins**, unplanned shutdown (Police, Poland, 430 kt/y PP capacity affected). The restart is expected to take place in the third quarter of 2026.
 - **MOL Petrochemical** - preliminary news of a longer-term shutdown at one cracker and one or more polymer plants (HDPE, PP), details not yet known. There is availability for now, but a narrower supply of HDPE and PP should be expected in the spring season. So far, the closure of the **Friendship pipeline** has not resulted in feedstock supply problems.
 - **ORLEN, Plock unplanned** outage: **LDPE** (100 kt/year capacity).

- **ORLEN Plock unplanned** failure in one of the towers of the **olefins** plant (700 kt/year ethylene capacity). The reduced ethylene and propylene production also affects the supply of **Anwil** and **BOP**.
- **Indorama Ventures Poland Sp. z o.o.** unplanned shutdown, (Wloclawek, Poland 230 kt/year **PET** capacity),
- **UAB Orion Global PET UAB** unplanned shutdown, (Klaipėda, Lithuania 263 kt/year **PET** capacity),
- Permanent shutdowns/closures:

Monomer prices in March showed only a moderate, cautious price increase. The olefin monomer producers did not consider the emerging war situation critical, based on the experience of the summer 2025 bombings. Thus, they continued their cautious pricing policy and raised their prices in the price range (20-50 €/t) according to our forecast. Thus, the March contract price of ethylene monomer, published on Monday, increased by only 50 €/t compared to February. The price of styrene monomer (SM) also increased by only €73/t. Polymer producers have been holding off on publishing their price lists, but as early as Tuesday of last week there was a sense that a major price rise was on the cards for March.

The past week has been characterized by dynamic pricing. Monday's prices showed little change, and as expected, the Serbian polyethylene producer's Monday morning prices showed a roll-over compared to the previous week. After the 50 euro monomer price increase published on Monday afternoon, the prices published on Tuesday showed a 70-100 euro increase in polyolefin prices, and those published on Wednesday showed a 150-200 euro increase. In some cases, Friday prices reached a price increase of close to 300 euro compared to the end of February. Due to the daily fluctuating prices, plastics converters perceived prices in a wide price range, which also included Tuesday and Friday prices. Most polymer manufacturers have switched to weekly pricing. Most price lists were only valid until Friday of the last week. The data in the report show the prices in force on Friday with availability. Next week, on Monday, European polymer manufacturers will publish new prices. This provides an opportunity for further price increases on the one hand and for price synchronization on the other. This means that even manufacturers who announced their prices in the first days of last week and fell significantly behind by Friday can now raise prices.

Due to the closure of the strait of Hormuz, several Asian polymer producers have also announced FM due to expected and looming feedstock supply problems. This means that the arrival of Asian imports has become uncertain, and in addition, container prices and insurance premiums are rising. Some of the importers have withdrawn their previously issued price lists, while others are still waiting for a price agreement. However, it is

certainly clear that import prices rose more than expected in February. Importers are likely to follow changes in European market prices. Polymer export prices (FOB) are rising at the ports of shipment, steeply in Asia, but so far only by \$20-30 in North America. However, due to the emerging tight supply, North American polymer manufacturers are also expected to seize the opportunity to increase prices.

In addition to global supply and demand problems, an extremely tight regional supply of polyolefin and PET is beginning to emerge in Central Europe. With the exception of the Czech Republic, polymer production is characterized by production problems and shutdowns in almost every country. The most significant impact is the breakdown of the Orlen cracker. The disruption affects both PVC and polyolefins production in all countries except the Czech Republic. The Romanian polymer producer is still under maintenance, the sales of Bulgarian and Serbian polyolefin producers are limited by sanctions, and the Hungarian polyolefin producer's feedstock supply is uncertain, partly due to the refinery fire and partly due to the uncertainty of crude oil supply. In the case of PET, one of the largest producers has closed down both its Polish and Lithuanian plants. In addition, the region's oil supply has become uncertain, not only due to the shutdown of the "Druzhiba" pipeline, but also due to the escalation of the war in the Middle East.

Overall European demand was weak in the past half year, polymer prices declined and polymer producers were under continuous selling pressure. Therefore, most converters waited, which allowed them to achieve cheaper prices in the second half of the months. After weak demand in February, the likely price rise did not encourage a significant share of converters to buy. Thus, by the beginning of March, the number of converters understocked had increased. With the arrival of spring, demand also increases in agriculture and the construction industry. Understocked converters are now in a panic and trying to secure their production for March and April. Moreover, even those converters who have sufficient stocks to secure their production in the long term are trying to buy. The feeling of shortage is significant in countries that have relied more heavily on imports from the Far and Middle East. These are typically the countries of the South Central European region (SCE). Many say the emerging price dynamics are similar to 2021, however, it is important to note that the demand dynamics are not comparable to either 2021 or 2022.

In summary, it is expected that demand will continue to strengthen and prices will continue to rise in the coming weeks. Sellers are not ruling out further steep price increases. However, if the war in Iran ends by early April, the Easter holidays should allow for a calming down and normalization of prices and a break in the price hike dynamics. And by June, the market could return to normal. However, it is difficult to model a case other than this.

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POLYETHYLENE GRADES

In the first week of March, **LDPE prices** were between **€1,240 and €1,350 per ton**. Compared to the previous week, both the upper and lower values of the price band increased. Although the Serbian manufacturer's price list was valid, it did not include availability so it was not taken into account. The past week was characterized by dynamic pricing and continuously rising prices. At the start of the week, prices were only €100 higher, but by Friday prices were €200 higher than a week earlier. Availability is tight, partly due to the shutdown of the Polish producer, partly due to planned maintenance at the Romanian producer, and now we are also seeing the effects of the half-year production cut at the Hungarian-Slovakian producer. Meanwhile, demand has increased, partly due to seasonality, but mostly due to panic. There are converters who buy everything that "comes into their sight". In the coming week, manufacturers who feel they are "behind" will also raise prices, so further price increases are expected. For now, it is questionable whether the price will exceed the 1,400 euro mark, but a possible further escalation of the war could cause a further significant price increase. Even next week.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
LDPE Film	1105-1200	1050-1180	1240-1350	135/150	1280-1350
LDPE GP	1120-1200	1050-1180	1240-1350	120/150	1280-1350

In the first week of March, the total price range in the MFR 0.6-1, **PCR**, transparent/translucent segment was **€800-900/t**, unchanged from the previous week. The bottom of the price band has started to rise. The direct cause is the increase in waste prices. In addition to the seasonal effect, the shrinking waste supply also plays a role. The expected rise in energy prices is also likely to be a good argument for a price increase.

Prices for grades with lower MFRs below 0.6 ≥, typically based on PIR, ranged from **€800 to €950/t**. It didn't change over the previous week. However, we expect a price rise in March. Due to the rising price and scarce availability of virgin polymer.

The prices of grades that are available in large quantities, guaranteeing a low gel count, and containing partially virgin LDPE are typically between **€1,350 and €1,450**. Compared to the previous week, prices have risen.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
rLDPE (MFI 0,6-1)	780-950	780-950	800-950	20/0	820-1000

In the first week of March, HDPE prices in Central Europe were between **€1,060 and €1,300 per ton**. The lower price band is the price published at the beginning of the week, and the upper price band is the price offered on Friday. We still know little about the success of the latter, i.e. whether they will sell at this price. Demand is strong due to the threat of price increases. Converters are trying to secure their supplies. Demand is particularly strong and supply is tight for medium-density grades. The price lists of most European polymer manufacturers expired last Friday, so we expect further price increases in the new price lists in the coming week. A break through the 1,300 euro price level is unlikely for now, unless the Iran war escalates further and converters panic. The supply of HDPE manufacturers from Central Europe is limited, and import availability is primarily from North American sources.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
HDPE BM	860-1100	880-1100	1060-1250	200/150	1100-1300
HDPE Film	910-1100	910-1100	1090-1250	180/150	1120-1300

HDPE IM 860-1090 910-1090 1100-1300 240/210 1120-1330

In the first week of March, Central European **HDPE-100 (Black & colored)** prices were between **€1,230 and €1,300 per ton**, with RC grades €30-50 higher. Demand has picked up in the past week and prices have definitely risen by €100-200. The lower end of the price range is the price of manufacturers who published their prices "early" on Tuesday. Import offers have suddenly disappeared from the market, importers are looking for the right price. If demand were to increase beyond the current level, it is possible that the average price of non-RC grades could also exceed 1,300 euros.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
HDPE Pipe (100)	1060-1160	1040-1160	1230-1300	170/140	1250-1330

In the first week of March, **LLDPE C4** prices were between **€1,050 and €1,250 per ton**. Prices have risen by €150-200 as a result of the war, well above previously expected levels. The smallest price increase is related to the Egyptian grades, but these are still prices as of Monday afternoon. By Friday, the cheapest prices were approaching €1,100. The supply of Middle Eastern grades is limited, so further price increases are expected, with average prices expected to be around 1,200 euros at the beginning of the week.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
LLDPE C4	840-950	850-980	1050-1250	210/300	1200-1300

In the first week of March, **(m)LLDPE (C6)** prices were between **€1,100 and €1,450/t**. The price of C6 undoped LLDPE ranged from **€1,100 to €1,250/t**, while **mLLDPE** ranged

from €1,200 to €1,450/t. Prices have increased significantly by 200-250 euros, and the price increase is expected to continue in the coming week. Both European producers and importers have increased prices. The availability of undoped LLDPE C6 is limited, so further price increases are expected.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
(m)LLDPE (C6)	850-1230	950-1300	1100-1450	250/220	1230-1500

POLYPROPYLENE GRADES

In the first week of March, **PPH Raffia** prices were in the €950-1,200/t price range. The cheapest were the prices of FCA, the Serbian manufacturer. The past week was characterized by dynamic prices, rising day by day. The price lists of most polymer manufacturers expired on Friday. From Monday, we can expect new price lists and higher prices, with even the cheapest prices exceeding 1,000 euros. Due to the strengthening of demand, it is clearly visible that the supply in Central Europe is tight. And Orlen's reduced cracker production will keep it tight.

The **BOPP** grades were priced between € 980 and € 1,150/t. They rose steeply. The cheapest are contract prices, which still show the previous month's price level. However, spot prices are already around €1,050 or even above. Further price increases are likely due to tight import supply and growing demand. Average spot prices are expected to exceed €1,100.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026

PPH Raffia 850-950 800-950 950-1200 100/250 1000-1230

In the first week of March the prices of **PPH IM** non-specialty grades with low and medium melt flow index were in a range of **1,000-1,230 €/t** and the prices of PPH IM with high melt flow index were in a range of **1,000 - 1,230 €/t**. Prices have increased significantly due to the changed geopolitical and supply situation. The cheapest prices were those of the Serbian manufacturer FCA, but they are expected to increase in the coming week. Supply is tight, demand is growing. For the time being, there is no panic, as end-user demand is not strong. Further price increases are likely in the week ahead, with the cheapest prices reaching €1,100.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
PPH IM	895-1050	895-1050	1000-1230	105/180	1050-1250
PPH IM HMFR	900-1050	900-1050	1000-1230	100/180	1050-1250

In the first week of March, **PPC** prices were between **€1,100 and €1,350/t** in Central Europe. Prices have increased by 150-200 euros. The lower price band is the price published at the beginning of the week, and the upper price band is the price offered on Friday. The latter were of the extrusion (pipe) grade. Demand is also strong in the IM segment due to the threat of price increases. Import prices, which used to play a major role, have disappeared from the market. Importers are now thinking about new prices. They are expected to be announced next week. Quotations from European polypropylene manufacturers expired on Friday, with new price lists to be published on Monday and Wednesday. Further price increases are expected, with the cheapest prices likely to exceed €1,200. We expect a narrowing of import supply in the coming months.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first	Price band change (first week March -	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the
				week March -	

	FEBRUARY 2026	FEBRUARY 2026	week of MARCH 2026	first week February)	second week of MARCH 2026
PPC	950-1120	990-1120	1100-1350	150/230	1180-1350

In the first week of March, the typical prices of MFI (8-15, 15-30) re-granulates of good quality, homogeneous color and narrow flow index range were in a range of **€600-950/t**. The price range has not changed from the previous week. Demand remains weak, coupled with an extremely wide supply across the entire price range.

PIR based MFI (20-40), high quality re-granulates were priced between **800-950 €/t**. The price range has not changed from the previous week. The price of some PPC re-granulates from cars exceeds €1,100.

If the price of virgin PP continues to rise, it will be accompanied by tight supply. It is expected that the prices of higher quality rPP, primarily PIR-based grades, will start to rise as early as March.

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rPP	600-950	600-950	600-950	0/0	600-950

In the first week of March, **PPR IM** prices were between **€1,190 and €1,380/t**. Prices have increased significantly, by 150-200 euros compared to the previous week. At the beginning of the week, there were still deals around €1,150, but by Friday even the cheapest prices were approaching €1,200. Most polymer manufacturers are preparing to issue a new price list, with a price increase expected on Monday.

Prices for colored pipe grades range from **€1,450 to €1,670/t**. The price increase was moderate, primarily because many buyers had a price-formula price. However, due to changing market conditions, the price of items above the contracted quantities was already well over 1,500 euros.

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	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
PPR	1060-1170	1060-1170	1190-1380	130/210	1230-1350

POLYSTYRENE

In the first week of March, typical **EPS (white)** prices were in the range of **€1,420-1,580/t**. The cheapest prices were the large-lot prices of Central European manufacturers. Most polystyrene manufacturers came out late with their prices, increasing them by 70-120 euros. There are no import offers yet, although the quantity has also decreased. Importers are currently considering new prices. Demand is good, with insulation board producers considering a price increase of 7-12%. However, despite the start of the construction season, demand for insulation materials is weak because the production from recent months is still in building material stores.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
EPS	1350-1420	1330-1420	1420-1580	70/160	1450-1580

GPPS prices in the first week of March were between **€1,300 and €1,400/t**. Typical **HIPS** prices were in a range of **1,350-1,500 EUR/t**. Prices increased significantly compared to both the previous week and month. Polystyrene manufacturers only published their prices on Thursday, with a price increase of 70-120 euros. The importers' latest price lists are not yet known. They are not expected to be released until Monday. They probably follow European prices. Supply is expected to shrink due to the expected permanent loss of Middle Eastern and Iranian shipments. Demand is good, and converters are trying to secure production for the coming months.

The following table shows the typical prices of the last week in Central Europe, €/t (full truckload 20-22.5 t):

	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
GPPS	1150-1350	1150-1350	1300-1400	150/50	1300-1450
HIPS	1250-1400	1200-1400	1350-1500	100/100	1350-1500

In the first week of March, natural **ABS** prices were between **€1,450 and €1,800/t**. The lower value of the price band increased compared to the previous week. The price of European grades has increased by 40-100 euros. In the case of imports, the new prices are not yet known. A decrease in import volumes and an increase in prices are expected.

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ABS (natural)	1350-1750	1400-1750	1450-1800	100/50	1450-1800

POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE

In the first week of March, prices for Central European virgin PET Bottle grades were between **€1,020 and €1,120 per ton**. Prices have increased significantly compared to the previous week. The clear reason for the price increase is the narrowing of supply. In addition to the shutdown of two Indorama plants, the narrowing of import availability is causing problems. In the case of imports, a narrower supply is expected in the coming months. While peak bottle season is just starting. Buyer and seller opinions suggest that further price increases, even triple digits, are possible in March.

For rPET granules, prices for the **European** 'clear food-grades' ranged from **€1,250 to €1,350 per ton**, depending on quality. They did not change compared to last week.

However, now that the virgin supply is shrinking and the season is starting, a three-digit price increase is possible.

Prices of transparent rPET flakes: were between **€950 and €1,050/t**. Both the cheapest and average prices increased compared to the previous week.

For color blended rPET flakes, prices ranged from **€650 to €750/t**. Prices have increased compared to the previous week.

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PET bottle grade	840-920	870-930	1020-1120	180/200	1050-1150

POLYVINYL CHLORIDE

In the first week of March, **European PVC (K67-68)** supplies were between **€840 and €1,020/t** on Friday. At the beginning of the week, prices around 800 euros were typical. However, prices have risen sharply since the middle of last week. European PVC manufacturers have uniformly increased their prices by 80-100, and in some cases by 120 euros. However, on the buyer side, prices around 800 euros are still considered acceptable. However, due to the expected contraction in import supply, Far Eastern PVC prices will also rise in the coming week. Moreover, a price increase is also expected for North American PVC. Availability at the Polish manufacturer has been limited due to ethylene supply problems. Part of Polish demand was thus redirected to Hungarian and other European manufacturers. The Central European supply seems to be narrowing, which provides a basis for further price increases. European PVC producers are determined to restore profitability. Thus, converters have to accept significantly higher prices.

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	TYPICAL polymer price ranges in the first week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the fourth week of FEBRUARY 2026	TYPICAL polymer price bands in the first week of MARCH 2026	Price band change (first week March - first week February)	EXPECTED polymer price bands in the second week of MARCH 2026
S PVC powder	760-920	760-920	840-1020	80/100	880-1060