

Entering the European market for watering cans

Last updated:

03 December 2024

The European market for watering cans offers opportunities, but competition is strong. The mid to high-end segments are your best options, as mass-produced items dominate the lower ends of the market. To compete, you will need to add value to your products through your design, craftsmanship, functionality and sustainability. You must comply with mandatory (legal) requirements, as well as any additional buyer-specific requirements.

Contents of this page

1. [What requirements must watering cans meet to be allowed on the European market?](#)
2. [Through which channels can you get watering cans on the European market?](#)
3. [What competition do you face on the European watering can market?](#)
4. [What are the prices of watering cans on the European market?](#)

1. What requirements must watering cans meet to be allowed on the European market?

The following requirements apply to watering cans in the European market. For a more detailed overview, see our [study on buyer requirements for Home Decorations and Home Textiles \(HDHT\)](#).

What are mandatory requirements?

When exporting to Europe, you have to comply with the following legal requirements:

- General Product Safety Directive/Regulation
- restricted chemicals: REACH
- intellectual property rights
- packaging legislation
- upcoming sustainability legislation

General Product Safety Directive/Regulation

All non-food products marketed in the European Union (EU) must be safe to use. The current [General Product Safety Directive](#) (GPSD, 2001/95/EC) will be replaced by the [General Product Safety Regulation](#) (GPSR, EU 2023/988). The new regulation came into force in June 2023 and will apply from December 2024 onwards. The GPSR will ensure that products in the EU comply with the highest safety requirements, whether sold online or in traditional shops.

Unsafe products are rejected at the European border or withdrawn from the market. The EU uses the [Safety Gate](#) system to list and share information about such products.

Tips:

Read more about the new [GPSR](#).

Make sure you are in compliance with the GPSR by December 2024.

Use your common sense to ensure that normal use of your product does not cause any danger.

Search the [Safety Gate alerts](#) for watering cans for an idea of potential issues.

Restricted chemicals: REACH

The [REACH](#) regulation (EC 1907/2006) lists restricted chemicals in products that are marketed in Europe.

Restricted chemicals in the production of watering cans include:

- Lead in the paint and glazing on ceramics;
- Arsenic and creosotes as wood preservatives.

Tips:

Comply with the restrictions for the use of chemicals as laid down in [REACH](#).

Visit the website of the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) for information and tips. You can view their [list of all restricted chemicals](#) (REACH Annex XVII), [information for non-EU companies](#) and [questions & answers](#).

Intellectual property rights

When you develop products, you have to make sure they are not a copy of an existing design. [Intellectual property \(IP\) is protected in Europe](#), and products that violate IP rights are banned from the market. The European Commission's [IP action plan](#) gives European companies easier access to fast, effective and affordable protection tools.

Tips:

For more information, see the websites of the [European Union Intellectual Property Office](#) (EUIPO) and the [World Intellectual Property Office](#) (WIPO).

Keep track of developments via the [state-of-play of the implementation of the key actions](#) in the IP action plan.

European Green Deal

The [European Green Deal](#) provides a legal side to social and environmental sustainability. One of its main building blocks is the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#), which includes initiatives along products' entire life cycles.

In this context, many European laws are under revision and new legislation is being developed. Some of this legislation will apply to you directly, and some indirectly via your buyers. Some particularly relevant proposals for the watering can industry include the:

- Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation;
- Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive;
- Forced Labour Regulation;
- Green Claims Directive.

Packaging legislation

The [Packaging Directive](#) (94/62/EC) aims to prevent or reduce the negative impact of packaging and packaging waste on the environment. Buyers may therefore ask you to minimise the use of packaging and/or use sustainable (recycled) materials.

According to the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#), all packaging on the European market should be reusable or recyclable in an economically viable way by 2030. To help achieve this, the European Commission has proposed a new Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR).

Europe also has [requirements for wood packaging material and dunnage](#) (WPM) used for transport, such as packing cases and pallets. The goal is to prevent organisms that are harmful to plants or plant products from entering and spreading within the EU.

Tips:

For more information, see the EU's [packaging and packaging waste legislation](#) and [wood packaging material factsheet](#).

Stay updated on the [proposal for a new regulation](#).

Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and Forced Labour Regulation

Important upcoming Green Deal legislation includes the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and Forced Labour Regulation (FLR). In 2022, the [European Commission adopted a proposal for a CSDDD](#). This requires larger companies to identify and prevent, end or reduce any negative impacts of their activities on human rights and the environment. Both in the company's own operations and in its value chains. This means that the new rules may apply to you indirectly via your buyers. The [proposed FLR](#) bans products made using forced labour.

As these proposed laws have yet to be finalised, their exact implications are not yet clear. Nevertheless, you should familiarise yourself with them and prepare for their rollout.

Tips:

Read more about the [CSDDD](#).

See the FLR [questions and answers](#) and the [factsheet](#).

Stay updated on the proposed [rollout of the CSDDD](#) and [FLR](#).

Green Claims Directive

Another upcoming law is the Green Claims Directive. In a recent European screening of websites, [many green claims were believed to be exaggerated, false or deceptive](#). Via this 'greenwashing', companies pretend to be doing more for the environment than they really are.

In 2023, the [European Commission](#) proposed a Green Claims Directive to:

- Make green claims reliable, comparable and verifiable;
- Protect consumers from greenwashing;
- Contribute to a circular and green economy;
- Help establish a level playing field.

Tips:

For details, see the [questions and answers](#) and the [factsheet](#).

Stay updated on the proposed [rollout of the Green Claims Directive](#).

For help communicating your sustainable performance honestly and effectively, use the Netherlands' [guidelines regarding sustainability claims](#) and/or the British [guidance for businesses on making environmental claims](#).

What additional requirements do buyers often have?

Buyers often have additional requirements regarding:

- Sustainability;
- Crystalline silica;
- Labelling and packaging;
- Payment and delivery terms.

Sustainability

Social and environmental sustainability are becoming increasingly important in the European HDHT market because of the changing values of both consumers and buyers. Another reason is the new Green Deal legislation. Environmental sustainability focuses on your company's impact on the environment, for example via the use of certain raw materials and production processes. Social sustainability focuses on your company's positive impact on the wellbeing of your workers and the community. Key topics include fair wages and safe working conditions.

You can highlight your sustainable activities and policies in the 'story' behind your product and company. Buyers appreciate good storytelling that evokes an emotional connection.

Consumers value sustainability

The increasing importance of sustainability is reflected in a Maison&Objet Barometer, where **62% of HDHT retailers noticed a growing interest from their customers in ethical products**. 92% indicated that their customers think natural materials are (very) important, 77% stated that they value socially responsible production methods, and 71% said that they care about recyclable/recycled materials.

In addition to legal compliance, a growing number of European buyers would like you to comply with:

- **Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI)**: an initiative of European retailers to improve social conditions in sourcing countries. They expect their suppliers to follow the **BSCI Code of Conduct**.
- **Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)**: an alliance of companies, trade unions and voluntary organisations. ETI aims to improve the working conditions in global supply chains via their **ETI Base Code of labour practice**.
- **Sedex**: a membership organisation striving to improve working conditions in global sourcing chains. The **Sedex platform** lets you share your sustainable performance, based on a self-assessment.

You can learn about sustainable options from standards like **ISO 14001** and **SA 8000**. However, only niche market buyers demand certification.

If you adhere to such initiatives and standards, this may help your buyers comply with the proposed CSDDD and FLR, which require 'proof' of sustainable practices.

Tips:

Optimise your sustainability performance. Study initiatives like **BSCI** and **ETI** to learn what to focus on.

Demonstrate your sustainability performance for a competitive advantage. You can use self-assessments like those of the **Sedex platform**, or a code of conduct such as the **ETI Base Code**.

For more information, see our special **study on sustainability in HDHT**, our **tips to go green** and **tips to become socially responsible**, as well as our **webinars on sustainability in the European HDHT market** and **sustainable innovations for your HDHT business**.

Read more about **BSCI**, **ETI**, **Sedex** and **SA8000** in the ITC Standards Map. You can also conduct a **free online self-assessment**.

Crystalline silica

Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS) can cause lung cancer through inhalation. The ceramics industry mostly uses crystalline silica in the form of quartz and cristobalite. European buyers care about worker safety and may demand good handling practices for crystalline silica during production.

Tip:

See the **European Network on Silica** for access to materials such as a **Good Practice Guide**.

Labelling

The information on the outer packaging should match the packing list sent to the importer.

Outer packaging labels should include:

- Producer name;
- Consignee name;
- Quantity;
- Size;
- Volume;
- Caution signs.

Your buyer will specify what information they need on the product labels or on the item itself, such as logos or 'made in' information. This is part of the order specifications. In Europe, [EAN or barcodes](#) are commonly used on the product label.

Packaging specifications

You should pack watering cans according to the importer's instructions. They have their own requirements for packaging materials, filling boxes, palletisation and stowing containers. Always ask for the importer's order specifications, which are part of the purchase order.

Damage prevention

Proper packaging minimises the risk of damage caused by shocks. How an item is packaged for export depends on how easily it can be damaged. Packaging should ensure that the items inside a box cannot damage each other. It should also prevent damage to the boxes when they are stacked inside the container. Packaging therefore usually consists of inner and outer cardboard boxes. The inner boxes are filled with protective materials or clever partitioning with corrugated (ridged) cardboard.

Dimensions and weight

Packaging must be easy to handle in terms of size and weight. Standards are often related to labour regulations at the destination and must be specified by the buyer.

Cost reduction

Boxes are usually palletised for transport, and you have to maximise the use of pallet space. Nesting or stacking can reduce costs. Consider this when designing your products.

Packaging must provide maximum protection, but you must also avoid using excess materials or shipping 'air'. Waste removal is a cost for buyers.

You can reduce the amount and diversity of packing materials by:

- Partitioning inside the boxes, using folded cardboard;
- Matching inner and outer boxes by using standard sizes;
- Considering packing and logistical requirements when designing your products;
- Asking your buyer for alternatives.

Material

Importers are increasingly banning wooden crating and packaging. Economical and sustainable packaging materials are more popular. Using biodegradable materials can be a market opportunity. Some buyers may even demand it.

Consumer packaging

At retail level, watering cans are usually supplied without packaging. You should emphasise in your communication with buyers that any special labelling and packaging requirements will cost extra.

Tips:

Always ask for the importer's order specifications, including their packaging and labelling requirements.

See [Packaging Europe](#) for more information on the latest packaging developments, including news articles about biodegradable packaging.

Payment and delivery terms

Payment terms are usually confirmed in the buyer's order contract. They vary from buyer to buyer and are related to the volume and value of the order, the type of distribution partner, whether or not an agent is involved, and what delivery terms apply.

Delivery terms, known as [Incoterms](#), depend on the type of distribution partner. HDHT importers generally prefer Free On Board (FOB) or Free Carrier (FCA) arrangements.

Tips:

See our [tips to organise your export](#) for more information.

Study the different types of Incoterms, including your and your buyer's rights and obligations.

See our [study on terms & conditions](#) for a more detailed overview, including information on how to work with them and the benefits of having your own.

What are the requirements for niche markets?

Fair-trade practices and sustainability certifications are the most common niche market requirements.

Fair trade

The concept of fair trade supports fair pricing and improved social conditions for producers and their communities. Fair-trade certification can give you a competitive advantage, especially if the production of your items is labour-intensive. It often includes aspects of environmental sustainability too.

Common fair-trade labels are the [World Fair Trade Organisation](#) (WFTO) Guarantee System and [Fair for Life](#) certification. However, for most fair trade-oriented buyers in Europe, complying with WFTO's [10 principles of fair trade](#) is enough.

Tips:

Ask buyers what they are looking for. In the fair-trade sector in particular, you can use the story behind your product for marketing purposes.

Determine which label would be the best fit for you and apply if you can.

If certification is not feasible, work according to WFTO's [principles](#) without being officially guaranteed or certified. Carefully document your company's processes so you can support your story.

Read more about [Fair for Life](#) in the ITC Standards Map.

Recycled materials

The [Global Recycle Standard](#) (GRS) is a standard for products containing recycled material, with criteria for environmentally friendly production and good working conditions. Products containing $\geq 20\%$ recycled material can be GRS-certified, but only if the entire production process is certified. Additional social, environmental and chemical requirements must also be met. If the end product is not produced in a certified factory, it may not carry a GRS quality mark. For consumer-facing labelling, the product must contain at least 50% recycled content. If you use GRS-certified material, you can highlight in your communication that this material is certified.

Similarly, the Recycled Claim Standard (RCS) is intended for products containing $\geq 5\%$ recycled material. Unlike the GRS, the RCS does not address any social or environmental aspects of processing and manufacturing.

Tips:

Check for GRS or RCS-certified versions of the materials you use, as an alternative or addition.

Carefully check the specifications of the available certified materials. Sometimes composition changes due to the recycling process.

Make sure you correctly state in your communication which GRS or RCS-certified materials you are using.

Read more about the [GRS](#) and [RCS](#) in the ITC Standards Map.

2. Through which channels can you get watering cans on the European market?

Watering cans are put on the European market through importers/wholesalers that supply to retailers, as well as retailers that buy directly from suppliers. Your best opportunities are in the mid to high-end market.

How is the end market segmented?

The European market for watering cans consists of 3 segments: low, mid and high end (premium).

Figure 1: Watering can market segmentation in Europe



Source: Globally Cool, GO! Good Opportunity & Remco Kemper

Low-end market

The low-end segment focuses on accessible prices, functionality and basic designs. These consumers just use their watering cans to water their flowers and plants. Typical retailers include hypermarkets such as [Lidl](#), as well as garden centres. Because this segment is dominated by low-cost and mass-produced items, opportunities are limited for smaller manufacturers like you. Instead, you should focus on the mid to high-end market.

Mid-end market

The mid-end segment follows trends, combining functionality and style. Prices are reasonable, to appeal to consumers who want value for money and a functional but decorative watering can. Craftsmanship, natural materials and/or sustainable values play a role, especially in the higher mid-end segment. Important players in this market are garden centres such as [Intratuin](#) and interior stores like [Habitat](#). Watering cans in this segment also make nice gifts.

High-end/premium market

At the higher end of the market, watering cans are well-designed. Professional tools are included in this segment as well, which can also be used by keen home gardeners. These cans often have ergonomic handles and/or extra-long spouts for additional convenience. Professional watering cans may also be endorsed by famous gardens or horticultural societies. Interior stores like [Connox](#) play a role in this segment.

Figure 2: Outdoor watering can made of galvanised and powder-coated metal with accessories

Source: [Haws Watering Cans @ YouTube](#)

Through which channels do watering cans end up on the end market?

Market access channels for watering cans mainly follow the traditional HDHT patterns. Importers/wholesalers supply to retailers. Larger retail chains often bypass the importers/wholesalers and import for themselves, while more and more smaller retailers have also started buying directly from the supplier. In some cases, buying agents play a role.

Figure 3: Trade channels for watering cans in Europe



Source: Globally Cool, GO! Good Opportunity & Remco Kemper

Importers/wholesalers

Importers/wholesalers sell products to retailers in their own country or region, or re-export across Europe. Supplying to buyers in the project market is another distribution flow for them.

These importers/wholesalers handle the import procedures. They take ownership of the goods when they buy from you (unlike agents), taking on the risk of the onward sale of the products. Developing a long-term relationship can lead to a high level of cooperation on appropriate designs for the market, new trends, use of materials, types of finishing and quality requirements.

Importing retailers

Retailers come in many sizes: large and part of a chain, or small and independent. Larger retail chains in particular often import directly from their suppliers in developing countries. Many even have their own buying offices in developing countries. Others – mainly smaller independent stores – order in Europe from wholesalers.

There is a tendency towards consolidation in European retail: large retail brands are becoming more widespread and more 'lifestyle-centred', offering home decoration and textiles as well as fashion accessories.

Buying agents, buying houses and sales agents

You can encounter several types of intermediaries when doing business with European buyers:

- European buying agents represent European buyers in sourcing countries, and do not import products themselves. Sometimes they have a more limited role, such as checking the quality of the products. They can work individually or as part of a purchasing company.
- Buying houses are comparable to buying agents, but they are based in your country and usually offer more services. These can range from raw material sourcing to design and sampling services.
- European sales agents can help you find European buyers. However, you should be careful before entering into agreements with commercial agents, because [European legislation protects their position](#).

Agents and buying houses mostly work on commission. They may approach you, or your buyer may request an intermediary. However, you should always try to work with your buyer directly. This saves on commission and allows you to communicate directly with your buyer.

E-commerce

E-commerce has grown in recent years. Your easiest way to benefit is by supplying to a European wholesaler or retailer with a strong online presence. This is usually not a separate channel. Retailers often combine online and offline channels, and the way of supplying to them is the same. Companies that only sell online also need to take stock before they can sell.

Direct business-to-consumer (B2C) sales

Selling directly to European consumers via your own website can be complicated and costly. You are responsible for factors like aftersales obligations and payment systems for consumer use. For most exporters from developing countries this is not feasible. In addition, according to Dutch consumer association Consumentenbond, [Dutch consumers bought less from non-EU web shops](#) after [new EU VAT rules](#) were rolled out in 2021. This makes direct online sales even less attractive.[A1]

Tips:

To find buyers, search exhibitor lists or attend the main trade fairs in Europe: [spoga + gafa](#) (June) in Cologne, [Ambiente](#) (January/February) in Frankfurt and [Maison&Objet](#) (January and September) in Paris.

See our [tips for finding buyers](#).

For more information about trading directly with smaller retailers and e-commerce, see our [study about alternative distribution channels](#).

What is the most interesting channel for you?

Importers/wholesalers are the main channel between exporters in developing countries and European retailers. They are interesting if you want to develop a long-term relationship. These importers usually know the European market well, so they can provide you with valuable information and guidance on market preferences. They generally prefer FOB or FCA Incoterms.

Figure 4: Incoterms



Source: Globally Cool, GO! Good Opportunity & Remco Kemper

Large retailers are increasingly importing for themselves to cut out the margins of importers/wholesalers, reduce time to market and to have more control over product design and finish. This could offer you opportunities. Smaller, independent retailers need to set themselves apart from retail chains through value-added service, specialised offers and authenticity. Buying directly from producers in developing countries is an interesting way for them to do so. They typically prefer small order quantities per item, small total order volumes, and delivery to their doorstep via Delivered Duty Paid (DDP) or Delivery At Place (DAP). Repeat orders are less likely.

The trend of direct sourcing is expected to continue. This may create more opportunities for you, as a growing pool of buyers could improve your bargaining position. Because importing retailers order for their own shops, they can place orders much quicker than importers/wholesalers who may need to show samples to their retailers before ordering. You need to calculate if trading directly with (smaller) retailers is cost-effective for you.

Tips:

Consider targeting retailers directly to improve your bargaining position and potentially close deals faster.

Share your offer and terms with the targeted retailer (large/small). Ask your existing buyers how they operate if you are unsure. The better informed you are, the better you will be able to set prices.

Build a relationship based on mutual benefits by offering services like fast delivery and after-sales support.

If you are interested in selling to small independent retailers, make sure to have a policy in place before you participate in international trade fairs. You must have appropriate terms of trading, like low minimum order quantities or pre-stocking.

3. What competition do you face on the European watering can market?

Europe's leading supplier of watering cans is likely China, although no specific trade data are available for watering cans. A lot of these supplies consist of mass-produced items for the lower-end segments. Instead of competing with mass-producing companies, your best opportunities are in the mid to high-end segments. There, you will be competing with suppliers from countries like Türkiye, Poland and India.

Because no specific trade data are available for watering cans, these statistics cover agricultural and horticultural watering appliances.

Europe imports most of its agricultural or horticultural watering appliances from within Europe. Its leading suppliers are Italy (15%), Germany (12%), France (10%), Spain (7.6%) and Austria (7.0%). China follows as the largest non-European supplier, with 5%. Because these data also include industrial agricultural and horticultural appliances, they do not accurately reflect the supplies of watering cans for domestic use. In that context, this study highlights China, Türkiye, Poland and India as competing countries.

Re-exporters or producers

European countries have different roles in the HDHT market. Some are mainly importers and others are mainly manufacturers. Western European countries are mainly importers. Most Western European importers are re-exporters. They do not just sell their products in their own country, they also distribute them across the continent.

European production mainly takes place in Eastern Europe, mostly because of relatively low transport and labour costs. This can make these countries a good alternative for European buyers to source low to mid-end products. Western and Southern Europe also produce some high-end products by well-known premium brands with a long history.

Which countries are you competing with?

Source: UN Comtrade & ITC TradeMap

China dominates the (low-end) market

China is the 6th largest supplier of agricultural or horticultural watering appliances to Europe, after intra-European trade from various countries. However, its supplies dropped from a peak of €51 million in 2021 to €28 million in 2023. This translated to an average annual rate (CAGR) of -9.8% from 2019 to 2023, and a direct import market share that fell from 9.7% to 5%. China mainly supplies the lower-end market, often with plastic items.

China benefits from its large-scale and highly mechanised production systems, low-cost workforce, availability of raw materials and efficient shipping to Europe compared to other Asian countries. However, its rising labour costs in the last 10 years have affected its price competitiveness. In the coming years, China's trade war with the United States and other disruptions may affect exports.

To avoid competition from Chinese suppliers on cost, you should make your product range stand out and stay away from mass-produced objects. Focus more on handmade products, sustainability and the story behind your product. Smaller European importers are increasingly looking for suppliers from other Asian countries, such as India, Vietnam, Indonesia or Thailand. They want to diversify their collection and become less dependent on China as a single supplier. This also goes for importers whose designs require handwork.

Türkiye's exports to Europe are growing

Türkiye has the advantage of being close to the European market, as well as a relatively well-developed production system and low-cost workforce. The country's supplies of agricultural or horticultural watering appliances to Europe grew from €10 million in 2019 to €12 million in 2023, at a CAGR of 4.6%. This included a peak of €18 million in 2022.

As a result, Türkiye's direct import market share fluctuated between 2% and 3%. This made the country Europe's 14th largest supplier. The recent devaluation of the Turkish lira may have boosted exports, making Turkish products more affordable for European buyers.

Poland is an important regional supplier

As an Eastern European country, Poland also benefits from being located close to the Western European market. This allows suppliers to offer short delivery times. At the same time, labour is relatively affordable compared to Western Europe. Suppliers have a good understanding of the European consumer and have well-established and efficient production lines. In addition, products that are 'Made in Europe' are increasingly popular. This makes Poland an attractive alternative to China.

Poland increased its exports of agricultural or horticultural watering appliances to Europe, from €5.7 million in 2019 to €8.2 million in 2023. This translates to a CAGR of 9.8, and makes Poland Europe's 18th-largest supplier. Poland mainly competes in the more price-sensitive lower- and lower-middle ends of the market. Instead, you should focus on higher-end segments through sustainable materials, special design value, craftsmanship and the story behind your product. Make sure you offer a high level of service to build strong, lasting relationships.

India's exports fluctuate

With skilled labour and transport at competitive costs, India is well-positioned to take a bigger share of the market. Indian exports of agricultural or horticultural watering appliances to Europe grew from €1.1 million in 2019 to €1.6 million in 2023, at a strong CAGR of 10%. This included a peak of €2.3 million in 2022.

India has a rich craft culture, with an abundance of producers and easy access to various materials. This allows India to target higher market segments than China with its mass-produced products. India also increasingly offers an effective combination of handmade and mechanised production techniques. More and more Indian suppliers are complying with standards related to social and environmental sustainability and investing in relevant certifications and labels.

As it becomes more difficult for buyers to order short runs from China, India is becoming a popular alternative. Especially since European lifestyle buyers already source broad HDHT collections from India and one-stop-shopping is becoming increasingly possible.

Which companies are you competing with?

The following companies are examples of the type of competition you face in the European market for watering cans.

Aras Metal, Türkiye

Türkiye's [Aras Metal](#) offers a wide range of galvanised metal products for the home and garden. Its artisans combine traditional artistry and craftsmanship with modern production techniques and designs. The company's collection of watering cans includes both indoor and outdoor products in a variety of designs and finishes.

With its factory and showroom conveniently located close to both Istanbul's airport and seaport, Aras Metal can benefit from relatively easy access to the European market. The company collaborates with [Metal Recycles Forever](#) to promote the recycling of their products. According to founder and CEO Anto Kosedag, 'Crafting a sustainable future, one metal masterpiece at a time. That's Aras Metal's commitment.'

Vasap Design, Brazil

[Vasap Design](#) produces plant pots, (outdoor) accessories and furniture. The award-winning company focuses on the combination of design and sustainability. Their products are made from 100% recycled polyethylene and are developed in partnership with renowned Brazilian designers. As such, they 'are a green solution for conscious consumers, a stylish solution for trendsetters, and an intelligent solution for anyone looking to transform their spaces'. Vasap Design estimates to have already removed >2500 tonnes of trash from the environment by recycling bottle caps, packaging, market boxes, beer crates, toys and other plastic materials that otherwise would be discarded.

The company's Flua watering cans are designed by Guto Índio da Costa, who also considers 'the act of watering a plant [...] an act of self-care'. With their sleek fluid design, they won an [iF DESIGN AWARD](#) in 2024. The watering cans come in a range of colours, which may vary in tone due to the recycled character of the material.

Noah's Ark, India

[Noah's Ark](#) is an Indian handicraft business, specialising in metalcrafts in brass, iron and aluminium. The company offers 'quality, ethically produced handmade products at competitive prices'. Their catalogue includes a variety of watering cans, but they can also produce custom designs upon request.

As a WFTO Fair Trade Guaranteed company, Noah's Ark prides itself on its social responsibility. Their factory is also Sedex SMETA-certified, further supporting their commitment to ethical business practices. They pay fair wages (10-15% above local standards) and have created the Noah's Ark Handicrafts & Artisan Welfare Society to support the artisans and their families. This NGO funds initiatives for clean water, sanitation, education, health, capacity building and women's empowerment.

Which products are you competing with?

Competition for watering cans mostly comes from within the product category itself. Consumers can choose between various materials and designs, as well as between a focus on functionality or decorative value. Some gardeners may prefer to water their plants directly from the hose, if they are not too delicate. For indoor use, consumers may also simply use a drinking glass to water their plants or flowers.

Figure 6: Garden watering can design

Source: [Born in Sweden @ YouTube](#)

Tips

Compare your products and company to the competition. You can use the [ITC Trade Map](#) to find exporters per country.

Focus on special techniques and designs, craftsmanship, functionality, the story behind your product and your sustainable values to stand out.

4. What are the prices of watering cans on the European market?

Prices for watering cans vary across market segments. After adding logistics costs, wholesaler and retail margins and Value Added Tax (VAT), European consumer prices are about 4-6.5 times your selling price.

Table 1 gives an overview of watering can prices across market segments. Be aware that these are just an indication, since prices vary depending on technique, size, material, design, brand and other ways of value addition, including a strong sustainable concept.

Table 1: Indicative consumer prices of watering cans in Europe

	Low-end	Mid-end	High-end
--	---------	---------	----------

Watering can indoor	€2-10	€10-40	€40 or more
Watering can outdoor	€8-18	€18-50	€50 or more

Consumer prices depend on the value perception of your product in a particular segment. This is influenced by your marketing mix.

Figure 7: Marketing mix - the 4 Ps



Source: Globally Cool, GO! Good Opportunity & Remco Kemper

The European consumer price of your watering cans is about 4-6.5 times your **FOB** price. In addition to energy, labour and transport costs, FOB prices depend heavily on the availability and cost of raw materials. Occasional cost increases are not directly passed on to the consumer, so they put pressure on margins in the supply chain. However, recent disruptions have resulted in longer-term cost increases. This continuing pressure made many retailers raise their consumer prices. When costs drop again, consumer prices may follow.

Consumer prices generally consist of:

- your FOB price
- shipping, import, handling costs
- wholesaler margins
- retail margins
- VAT - varies per country, about 20% on average

Figure 8: Price breakdown indication for watering cans in the supply chain



Source: Globally Cool, GO! Good Opportunity & Remco Kemper

For example, in Table 2 the FOB price is set at €10. Depending on the segment for which your product is designed, the consumer price ranges from €41 (low-end) to €65.50 (high-end).

Table 2: Example of the price breakdown per market segment

	Low margin	Middle margin	High margin	
FOB price	€10.00	€10.00	€10.00	Your FOB price
Transport, handling charges, transport insurance, banking services (20/15/15%)	+2.00 €12.00	+1.50 €11.50	+1.50 €11.50	Landed price for the wholesale importer

Wholesalers' margins (50/75/90%)	+6.00 €18.00	+8.60 €20.10	+10.40 €21.90	Selling price from the wholesale importer to the retailer
Retailers' margins (90/110/150%)	+16.20 €34.20	+22.20 €42.30	+32.70 €54.60	Selling price excluding VAT from the retailer to the end consumer
Selling price including VAT (20%)	+6.80 €41.00	+8.50 €50.80	+10.90 €65.50	Selling price including VAT from the retailer to the end consumer

The FOB price of €10 includes your own margins. These depend on your efficiency and price setting. Margins in the lower segment are generally smaller than in the middle and higher segments.

Examples of consumer prices are:

- Powder-coated steel watering can with acacia wooden handle, [IKEA](#), €12.99;
- Galvanised steel watering can with wooden handle, [Intratuin](#), €16.99;
- Plant mister made of recycled glass, [Oasis of Life](#), €19.25;
- Rectangular metal 9.5l watering can with wooden handle, [by Benson](#), €95.

Tips:

Study consumer prices in your target segment to determine your price and adjust your cost accordingly. Your quality and price must match your target segment.

Recalculate your prices regularly and carefully, especially if the prices of your raw materials fluctuate. When raw material prices put pressure on your margin for a longer period, consider increasing your price or finding an alternative.

Understand your segment. Offer a correct marketing mix to meet consumer expectations. Adapt your business model to your position in the market.

[Globally Cool](#) carried out this study in partnership with [GO! GoodOpportunity](#) and [Remco Kemper](#) on behalf of CBI.

Please review our [market information disclaimer](#).