



Aluminium: The base metal for the green transition

The European aluminium industry offers one of the most fundamental materials for achieving climate and circularity goals, and provides our continent with enhanced strategic autonomy thanks to a resilient European value chain.

Our industry is poised to serve Europe's sustainability and industrial leadership ambitions. But an unlevel playing field puts Europe's advantage at risk vs. international competition. We call on policy makers to work with us to co-create the conditions for the world's number one base metal to continue to deliver for Europeans - and the world.

4 reasons why

European aluminium is Europe's foundation for today's green economy and tomorrow's future.

1. An essential enabler for a climate-neutral society

Aluminium is a key component for the technologies of tomorrow, from electric mobility, solar modules, wind turbines, electricity networks and battery storage to aerospace, satellites and energy-efficient buildings.

2. An exponential increase in demand from the energy transition

Studies project that the EU's energy transition will see aluminium demand rise by 4.5 million tonnes or 30% against current levels by 2040. Europe's domestic value chain has all it needs to supply the demand of the economy of the future.

3. A global leader in circularity and carbon emission reductions

Primary aluminium produced in Europe has a carbon footprint of only 1/3 of the Chinese average. Since the 1990s that footprint has decreased by more than 50%, while our recycled aluminium further boosts decarbonisation and circularity with a 95% reduction in GHG emissions and energy compared to primary production.

4. A thriving European value chain

With over 600 plants in 30 European countries and €40 billion annual turnover, our industry has been an industrial and social stronghold for decades. One of Europe's most complete raw material value chains, our sector has been a job engine across the length and breadth of our continent - from refining and primary production to semi-fabrication, scrap collection and recycling.

4 commitments for Europe

As an industry we are committed to playing our role in delivering Europe's goals in the following ways:

1. Strategic autonomy and climate neutrality through recycling

Our commitment to unlocking the full potential of the circular economy will allow us to supply 50% of the aluminium demand through recycling by 2050, reducing CO₂ emissions by an estimated 39 million tonnes or 46% of today's emissions and strengthening Europe's open strategic autonomy through material efficiency.

2. Heading to climate neutrality with innovation and dedication

Thanks to innovation breakthroughs, the benefits of recycling and a strong push for low-carbon energy use in our production processes, our sector is in full swing towards achieving climate neutrality before 2050. Our cross-sectorial Innovation Hub has played an essential role in bundling efforts in cutting-edge innovation and disruptive technologies beyond our own value chain.

3. Accelerating Europe's green energy transition

As an energy-intensive industry we have a vital role to play in the energy transition. We actively contribute to the accelerated deployment of large-scale renewable projects through Power Purchase Agreements or 'Green Pools', and innovative energy storage concepts such as 'virtual batteries' at aluminium smelters.

4. Providing leadership to the world

The European aluminium value chain is committed to a holistic and global approach to producing and offering a truly sustainable product - from low-carbon and circular to responsibly sourced and manufactured aluminium.

Our challenges

Since 2008, Europe has lost more than 30% of its primary aluminium production due to state-subsidised international competition, dumped imports, and high underlying energy prices in Europe. While other world regions continue to ramp up capacity, Europe's aluminium industry had to curtail or halt an additional 900,000 tonnes of primary production between September 2021 and today alone. The unlevel playing field with international competitors is increasingly hampering the viability of downstream sectors and recyclers. If the current situation carries on, we risk further investment – and carbon – leakage to China or the Middle East.

“ Europe has a choice. It can become increasingly dependent on carbon-intensive imports and unstable external suppliers to meet rising demand or it can create the conditions for the European aluminium industry to deliver on its promise of a carbon-neutral, circular and strategically autonomous sector.

- Ingrid Jörg, Chair of European Aluminium



Slow permitting processes prevent more renewables PPAs in our sector.



China's market dominance and unfair trading practices erode the European industry.



Power costs are significantly higher in Europe than elsewhere in the world.



Supply of aluminium to key ecosystems risks being outsourced to third countries.

4 ways you can help

1 Implement a holistic anti-carbon leakage practice

To transition to climate neutrality without deindustrialisation, Europe must better reconcile its sustainability and industrial leadership objectives. Differences in the world's carbon footprints show that net-zero can only be achieved on the basis of strong domestic decarbonisation champions who can lead the way – today and tomorrow.

Legislative initiatives must therefore translate political intentions into effective anti-carbon leakage measures that will not slow down or stall Europe's industrial activities.

2 Accelerate the transition from fossil fuels to renewables

Long-term Power Purchase Agreements for renewables are crucial to ensure production predictability and shield the aluminium industry against extreme fluctuations in the energy market. EU and national frameworks are needed to facilitate the production, accessibility, and consumption of decarbonised energy at globally competitive prices.

As an energy-intensive industry, access to a stable supply of affordable energy is of paramount importance.

3 Adopt a bold support framework to address unfair trade practices

For Europe to meet its sustainability objectives, we need to retain a strong domestic raw materials base. The risks of making the implementation of the European Green Deal excessively dependent on imports are far too high today.

To safeguard essential value chains, the EU has to continue to prevent dumped products from entering the Single Market and must work towards a structural solution to fight unfair trade practices at global scale.

4 Harness the circular potential of aluminium

Recycling of aluminium plays a central role in ensuring the security of supply and decarbonisation. Therefore, legislation must enhance access to scrap and ensure our material's continued circularity.

European recyclers have a long track record of transforming aluminium scrap into a valuable raw material to create new products. For the recycling sector to fulfill its potential and meet the increasing demand for recycled material, waste shipment rules and new product legislation must create the right framework conditions.