

# Aluminium beverage can recycling in 2021 at a new record level of 76%

Aluminium beverage can recycling achieved a new record level of 570,000 tonnes, saving 4,7 million tonnes CO<sub>2eq</sub>

**Brussels, 21 February 2024 – The latest report by Metal Packaging Europe and European Aluminium shows that the overall recycling rate for aluminium beverage cans in the European Union, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland went up by 3.2% to a new record level of 76% (76.1%). The total amount of aluminium recycled from cans reached a record level of 570,000 tonnes, an increase of 60,000 tonnes on the previous year. This represents a total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions saving of 4,7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2eq</sub> (equivalent to the annual amount of GHG produced by a European city of more than half a million inhabitants like Antwerp or Poznan<sup>1</sup>.)**

Beverage can manufacturers (members of [Metal Packaging Europe](#)) and their aluminium suppliers (members of [European Aluminium](#)) are pleased with the increased recycling rate at European level which is a testament to the ongoing industry and supply chain efforts to improve recycling. However, several EU Member States still struggle to reach 90% recycling or more. The industry supports more ambitious separate collection targets for beverage containers like aluminium beverage cans as referred to in the proposed EU Packaging Regulation.

*“We are proud of the latest achievement and believe the industry is on the right path towards 100% circularity of aluminium beverage cans by 2050. Today, beverage cans are one of the most recycled packaging formats on the European market. Can manufacturers recently joined other industry leaders at COP 28 in a call to accelerate aluminium beverage can circularity and contribute to Net Zero 2050.”* said Krassimira Kazahska, CEO of Metal Packaging Europe, adding that “Aluminium is a ‘permanent’ material which means that it can be recycled multiple times through high quality recycling processes without losing its inherent properties”.

*“We encourage Member States to implement well balanced Deposit Return Systems (DRS) as this will help move to a fully circular solution for the aluminium beverage can via ‘can-to-can’ recycling. Although used beverage cans (UBC’s) can easily be recycled into other aluminium products like automotive or bicycle parts, customers are increasingly looking for high recycled content in their new cans. We can do this, providing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes supply our remelting plants with sufficient quantities and quality of separately collected and sorted UBC’s. Only DRS can guarantee this”,* according to Maarten Labberton, Director Packaging Group at European Aluminium.

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<sup>1</sup> If a yearly GHG emission of 9,2 tonnes is assumed per EU citizen as used in the Product Environmental Footprint methodology, see Normalisation method and data for Environmental Footprints – Deliverable 2 of the AA Environmental Footprint and Material Efficiency Support for Product Policy (No. 70307/2012/ENV.C.1/635340)

## Notes to the editor:

### About Metal Packaging Europe:

Metal Packaging Europe is the united voice of Europe's rigid metal packaging industry (steel and aluminium), bringing together manufacturers, suppliers, and national associations. We proactively position and support the positive attributes and image of metal packaging through joint marketing, sustainability and technical initiatives. Metal packaging actively contributes to the Circular Economy and supports numerous value chains and applications, like beverages, food, fish, chemicals, paints, aerosol and others. For further information: MPE Secretariat, T: +32 2 897 04 90, info@mpe-eu.com

### About European Aluminium:

European Aluminium, founded in 1981 and based in Brussels, is the voice of the aluminium industry in Europe. We actively engage with decision makers and the wider stakeholder community to promote the outstanding properties of aluminium, secure growth and optimise the contribution our metal can make to meeting Europe's sustainability challenges. Our 100+ members include primary aluminium producers; downstream manufacturers of extruded, rolled and cast aluminium; producers of recycled aluminium and national aluminium associations, representing more than 600 plants in 30 European countries. Aluminium products are used in a wide range of markets, including automotive, transport, high-tech engineering, building, construction and packaging. For media requests: Kelly Roegies, Senior Manager Communications, [roegies@european-aluminium.eu](mailto:roegies@european-aluminium.eu), M: +32 471 80 20 98

## Annex:

The annex provides a detailed overview of aluminium beverage can recycling rates by country in 2021. Recycling rates have been calculated on the basis of the new EU reporting rules, insofar available.

