

Record Number of Used Aluminium Beverage Cans Recycled as Industry Drives Toward 100% Circularity by 2050

Aluminium beverage cans recorded an increase in the tonnes of aluminium recycled, up to 580,000 tonnes, saving 5.4 million tonnes CO_{2eq}¹

Brussels, 10 February 2025 – 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 was 75% (74.6%). Although a slight drop (1%), the total amount of aluminium recycled from cans continued to increase to a record level of 580,000 tonnes, an increase of 10,000 tonnes (or 1.7%) on the previous year. This represents a total Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions saving of 5.4 million tonnes of CO_{2eq} (equivalent to the annual amount of GHG produced by a European city of more than half a million inhabitants like Oslo or Genoa².)

The increase in recycled aluminium volume reflects a higher overall consumption of aluminium beverage cans in 2022 which resulted in more cans entering the recycling stream. However, a stable collection and sorting level meant that the recycling rate percentage decreased slightly due to the larger rise in total can production and consumption.

Beverage can manufacturers (members of [Metal Packaging Europe](#)) and their aluminium suppliers (members of [European Aluminium](#)) remain resolved to increase the recycling rate at European level. However, the evidence is clear that without improved national collection and sorting infrastructure, specifically increases in the number of Deposit Return Systems, EU Member States will struggle to reach 90% recycling or more.

The newly appointed Director of the Packaging Group at European Aluminium, Andy Doran, commented, *“Our continuing high recycling rates demonstrate our ongoing push for improvement. The recent results also show that this is a marathon, not a sprint. 2022 marked the beginning of a new phase of implementation for several Deposit Return Systems and as these schemes mature, recycling rates will grow further. But there is no time to waste, as our member companies continue to grow and invest in expanded recycling capacities in Europe and rely on increased high-quality scrap for recycling within the European circular economy”*.

“We are pleased with the latest achievements and believe the industry remains on the right long-term path towards 100% circularity of aluminium beverage cans by 2050. Aluminium is a ‘permanent’ material, which means that it can be recycled multiple times through high quality recycling processes without losing its inherent properties. Following the recent adoption of the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, we encourage Member States to implement well balanced and efficient Deposit Return Systems to help move to a fully circular solution for the aluminium beverage can via ‘can-to-can’ recycling,” said Krassimira Kazashka, CEO of Metal Packaging Europe

¹ Based on calculation of the GHG savings through Used Beverage Can (UBC) recycling using the substitution method, i.e. avoided primary production net of UBC remelting. Data from European Aluminium Environmental Profile Report 2024 (Year 2021 data)

² 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. Our members produce over 140 billion cans annually, supporting 66,000 direct jobs in Europe across 350 sites. 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, M: +32 471 80 20 98

Annex:

The annex provides a detailed overview of aluminium beverage can recycling rates by country in 2022. Recycling rates have been calculated from numerous industry and Government sources. In particular EUROSTAT aluminium / metal packaging data only becomes available up to two years after the reporting year. This leads to a delay in overall reporting.

