

# Aluminium beverage can recycling in Europe hits record 74.5% in 2017

31 billion cans recycled, or 420,000 tons of aluminium

**Brussels, 14 October 2019 - The overall recycling rate for aluminium beverage cans in the European Union, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland in 2017 rose 2.3% from 2016 (72.8%), to reach an all-time record 74.5% in 2017. Almost 31 billion cans were recycled in the EU and EFTA countries in 2017, representing a total of more than 420,000 tons of aluminium and underscoring its contribution to the European circular economy. All aluminium cans are equally recyclable, no matter the colour, design, format or size.**

Recycling aluminium consumes 95% less energy than producing it from raw material, while the recycling process generates only 5% of the greenhouse gas emissions produced from raw material production. Can recycling therefore saves the annual equivalent of approximately 3 million tons of GHG emissions - or the annual emissions of a mid-sized European town like Belfast, Malmö or Thessaloniki<sup>1</sup>.

Can manufacturers (members of Metal Packaging Europe) and their aluminium suppliers are confident that the European can recycling rate will increase further in the coming decade, primarily through a combination of measures such as improved PMD collection systems ('yellow' or 'blue' bags and bins) and incentive based initiatives such as modern deposit return and voluntary take back ('cash for cans') schemes.

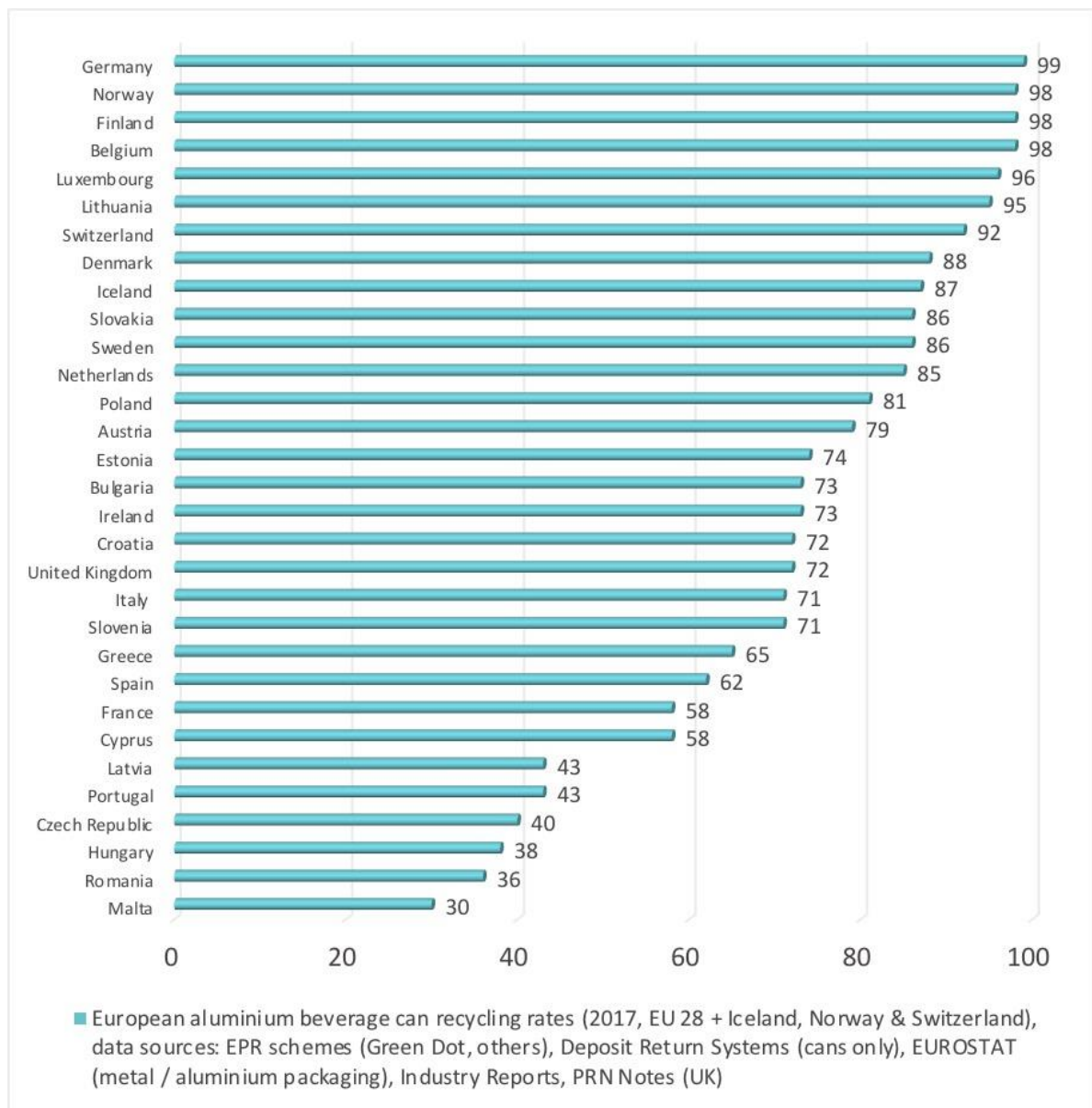
Can manufacturers and aluminium recyclers are ready to invest in additional recycling capacities, providing other stakeholders, such as public and private waste management operators, are equally prepared to invest in additional and modern sorting facilities.

Leonie Knox-Peebles, CEO of Metal Packaging Europe, stated: "We believe that the new European calculation method will hardly impact the final recycling rates being achieved for aluminium beverage cans." Maarten Labberton, Director Packaging Group at European Aluminium, added: "As we move towards our 100% recycling rate target, what matters most is the recycling yields; aluminium is well positioned for the future given its very low losses during recycling."

The annex provides a detailed overview of aluminium beverage can recycling rates by country in 2017. Recycling rates have been calculated on the basis of the present EU reporting rules.

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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)



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