

PRESS RELEASE

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Aluminium beverage can recycling in the EU 27 increases to 63%!

The overall recycling rate for aluminium beverage cans in the enlarged EU 27 including EFTA countries and Turkey further improved in 2008 and stands now at 63.1%. It has improved from 61.8% in 2007, respectively 57.7% in 2006. This 5.4% increase over the past two years represents an impressive extra carbon footprint saving of more than 310,000 tons of CO₂ equivalents.

The total number of aluminium beverage cans consumed in wider Europe rose from 32 billion in 2007 to nearly 34 billion units in 2008, resulting in an overall aluminium share of more than 70% on the total European beverage can market.

In Europe consumers use on average 42 aluminium cans per capita per year. The consumption of aluminium cans grew in Western Europe while consumption remained stable in most Central & Eastern European countries.

Sales of filled aluminium beverage cans for the wider European markets including exports to non-European countries grew by more than 5% to 39 billion units with strong growth in Western Europe of nearly 10% whilst Central & Eastern Europe increased by 3%.

Although recycling rates vary a lot by country, there is a continued clear upward trend across Europe. While most countries with well established deposit or take-back systems maintained their high recycling levels, other countries have improved as well.

Local authorities and waste management operators are increasingly aware of the high scrap value of well sorted aluminium, even in difficult economic times we are seeing increased investment in the latest available sorting and recycling technologies.

The aluminium industry supported by their partners, the can-makers, promote the sharing of best practices and additional collection and sorting activities at local level as key drivers in the continued recycling growth of used aluminium packaging.

End-of-life recycling of used aluminium beverage cans back into new cans or other highly valuable aluminium products such as bicycles, window frames or engine blocks saves up to 95% energy compared to primary production, helping our customers such as the food & drinks producers to lower their carbon footprint. It also fits very well within the proposed EU strategies regarding '2020' and the 'Raw Materials Initiative' in which resource saving has been identified as one of the key priorities.

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Annex: detailed overview per country

Aluminium Used Beverage Can Recycling Results, Europe 2008

Countries	Recycling rate %	Comments on the recycling results
EU 27		
Austria	50	Green dot scheme (whole metal packaging)
Belgium (+Luxembourg)	93	Green dot scheme (average for all beverage containers)
Cyprus	70	Green dot scheme (whole metal packaging)
Czech Rep. (+Slovakia)	60	Combined average results green dot scheme + metal packaging
Denmark	84	Deposit scheme (all beverage containers)
Estonia	58	Deposit scheme, exports excluded
Finland	92	Deposit scheme (cans only)
France	42	Green dot scheme (est. whole aluminium packaging stream)
Germany	96	Deposit scheme (cans only)
Greece	36	Green dot scheme + industry collection data
Hungary	41	Incentive based collection, reports scrap dealers + green dot
Ireland	47	Green dot scheme (extrapolations for cans)
Italy	58	Whole aluminium packaging stream
Netherlands	85	Mainly from bottom ashes at incinerators
Poland	67	Incentive based collection, combined industry reports
Portugal	40	Green dot scheme (whole metal packaging)
Romania (+Bulgaria)	34	Extrapolation industry data + official (green dot) data
Spain	59	Green dot scheme + data industry study
Sweden	91	Deposit scheme (cans only)
United Kingdom	51	Packaging Recovery Notes (PRN) trading only
EFTA + Turkey		
Switzerland	91	Levy based system
Norway (+Iceland)	92	Deposit scheme (cans only)
Turkey	75	Incentive based collection, incl. unregistered collection & recycling
Total EU + EFTA countries & Turkey	63,1	
Russia	75	Incentive based collection, incl. unregistered collection & recycling
Other C & E Europe	75	

Notes to the Editor:

A detailed overview per country is provided above. For the sake of consistency with official data, the can recycling rate per country is sometimes referred to as the rate for the "whole metal fraction" or otherwise (see comments). The 2008 reporting basis has been slightly changed compared to 2007 as no difference has been made anymore between Western and Central & Eastern countries within the EU. No recent data were made available from Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovenia.

Aluminium is all around us. It is light and strong, corrosion resistant and durable, formable and highly conductive; it has natural shine and is 100% recyclable. Aluminium provides intelligent solutions for present and future generations.

The European Aluminium Association, founded in 1981, represents the European aluminium industry from alumina and primary production to semi-finished and end-use products, through to recycling.

The European aluminium industry directly employs about 236,000 people.