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Metal Packaging Europe and European Aluminium Call for Urgent EU Action to Safeguard Aluminium Circularity

A successful breakfast debate at the European Parliament sparked discussion on aluminium circularity, exploring policy options to retain high-quality aluminium scrap in Europe, support closed-loop recycling systems, strengthen environmental standards for scrap exports and secure a level playing field for European Industry. Metal Packaging Europe (MPE) and European Aluminium (EA) are urging policymakers to take immediate action to safeguard aluminium circularity.

The event brought together influential voices from policy and industry, including Iuliu Winkler MEP (EPP/Romania), Vice-Chair of the Committee on International Trade, Mathias Bach Kirkegaard, Environment Attaché at Denmark's Permanent Representation to the EU, and John O'Maoileoin, Group Global Sustainability Director at CANPACK Group and board member of MPE. Their valuable contributions highlighted the urgency of aligning EU trade, environmental, and industrial strategies to ensure a resilient aluminium value chain.

Between 2019 and 2024, EU aluminium scrap exports surged by 53 percent, with over three-quarters destined for Asia. In the first quarter of 2025 alone, exports to the United States rose by 273 percent. Meanwhile, Europe's reliance on foreign aluminium continues to grow, with imports up 30 percent since 2019. These trends threaten Europe's ability to retain valuable secondary raw materials and close the loop on aluminium recycling.

Krassimira Kazashka, CEO of Metal Packaging Europe, stated: *"Every tonne of used beverage container scrap shipped out of Europe is a missed opportunity, compromising the circularity of aluminium beverage cans and industry efforts to reach climate neutrality. Policy changes are urgently needed to keep European aluminium scrap within the EU. This is a crucial piece of the circularity puzzle."*

Andy Doran, Director of the Packaging Group at European Aluminium, added: *"Aluminium is a critical material. We need smart, strategic policies that keep this valuable resource within the EU, enabling high-quality recycling and supporting our climate and industrial goals. Europe has the infrastructure, the expertise, and the ambition. Now we need the right policy tools to match."*

The two industry associations are jointly urging the European Commission to introduce export fees on high-quality aluminium scrap, prioritise closed-loop recycling systems like can-to-can, and ensure fair competition for Europe's aluminium beverage can industry against heavily subsidised competitors abroad. The full joint call is available at metalpackagingeurope.org.

Aluminium recycling reduces energy use by up to 95 percent compared to primary production. It is essential to Europe's strategic autonomy and climate ambitions, and its full potential can only be realised through urgent and coordinated policy action.

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MPE is the united voice of Europe's rigid metal packaging industry (steel and aluminium), bringing together manufacturers, suppliers, and national associations (metalpackagingeurope.org). Metal packaging actively contributes to the Circular Economy and supports numerous value chains and applications, including beverages, food, chemicals, aerosols and others. MPE members produce over 140 billion units annually across 300 manufacturing sites in Europe.

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