

PRESS RELEASE

GLASS PACKAGING RECYCLING RATE STABLE AT 74%

Brussels, 7 February 2019

Latest industry data on glass recycling confirms that over 12 million tons of glass bottles and jars are collected and recycled in Europe, with an average glass recycling rate in the EU28 of 74% (1). Glass remains the best performing food grade closed loop in the world. The latest industry data have a two-year time lag dating from 2016.

This figure should be set to rise. With the Circular Economy now at the forefront of the political agenda, EU Member States have committed to ambitious targets on municipal waste reduction and glass packaging recycling. This signals a renewed investment in separate collection for glass packaging in the coming years, which will engage consumers, municipalities, Extended Producer Responsibility schemes, recyclers and manufacturers in a collaborative effort to collect, sort and treat the glass that is currently leaking from the system.

“As an industry we commit to actually recycle all collected glass of sufficient quality in the closed loop. An estimated 90% of what is collected goes into creating new bottles from old ones, offering brands and consumers a food grade quality recycled material. Today, recycled glass is our most important raw material, which brings us major environmental benefits, and energy savings”, commented Adeline Farrelly, FEVE Secretary General.

Our recent study on glass packaging recycling (2) demonstrates that countries such as Austria and Sweden have gone beyond 90% collection for recycling rates by installing bottle bank systems and investing in consumer awareness. Tailored solutions will need to be found locally, but separating glass from the other materials is the best investment for public authorities to meet the new glass recycling targets. Our recent consumer research suggests that particularly for millennials, environmental credentials drive their product choice, and that the take-back culture for glass packaging is very strong where there is bottle bank infrastructure in place (3).

“Consumers have a strong connection with glass packaging, which is for them more than just a packaging”, she continued. *“Over ten years ago, the industry decided to invest in consumer communications (www.friendsofglass.com) to raise awareness about the importance of glass recycling and the other key assets of glass packaging.*



FEVE

The European Container
Glass Federation

"We want to help bridge the collection gap, but clearly cannot do so on our own. Efforts across the value chain are needed."

The average 74% EU glass collection for recycling rate masks a variety of situations between countries. If we look at performance rates, on the one side, we find countries in the 'Over 90%' top league: Belgium, Finland, Austria, Sweden and Slovenia where separate collection schemes for glass perform very well and provide a high quality secondary raw material for the industry. On the opposite side we find countries in the 'Under 40%' league: Greece, Hungary, Slovak Republic, Malta, Romania where the collection culture and, consequently the glass collection schemes have important potential for growth. Looking at overall volumes of glass collected, the picture in larger countries such as France, Italy, the UK, Poland or Spain is different. In conclusion, each country is different and will need its own focused and tailored strategy to ensure top class glass recycling. In conclusion, each country is different and will need its own focused and tailored strategy to ensure top class glass recycling.

- (1) - See FEVE Recycling Statistics published on the FEVE website www.feve.org
- (2) – See <https://feve.org/study-on-impact-assessment-of-deposit-return-schemes>
- (3) – See <http://content.presspage.com/uploads/1081/friendsofglass-reportonpackaging-2017.pdf?10000>
- (4) – See Friends of Glass Platform on www.friendsofglass.com



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About Glass

Made of natural minerals abundant in nature - sand, soda-ash, recycled glass and limestone - glass is a 100% recyclable material, manufactured in a one step process under one roof. Some ninety per cent of collected glass bottles and jars are used repeatedly to produce new food grade glass packaging in the closed loop system. Each time a bottle or jar is recycled into new containers, energy and raw materials are also saved and less CO₂ is emitted. By recycling glass, over 12 million tons of raw materials are saved each year and over 7 million tons of CO₂ are avoided - equal to taking 4 million cars off the road. We save 2.5% energy for each 10% of glass recycled in the furnace.

About FEVE

FEVE is the Federation of European manufacturers of glass containers. Its members produce over 20 million tons of glass per year. The association has some 60 corporate members belonging to approximately 20 independent corporate groups. Manufacturing plants are located across 23 European States and include global blue chip and major companies working for the world's biggest consumer brands. See more on www.feve.org

About the Container Glass Industry

The European container glass industry provides a wide range of glass packaging products for food and beverages as well as flacons for perfumery, cosmetics and pharmacy to their European and world customers. With its 160 manufacturing plants distributed all over Europe, it is an important contributor to Europe's real economy and maintains 125.000 direct and indirect jobs along the total supply chain. See more on www.feve.org

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