

# European Alliance for Best-in-Class Deposit Return Systems



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reloop



# European Alliance for Best-in-Class Deposit Return Systems

We are an Alliance united in the mission to accelerate the implementation of best-in-class Deposit Return Systems (DRS) across Europe (UK and European Union). We come from companies across the beverage packaging value chain, environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOS), and technology and green tech industry and experts. Our Alliance defines 'best-in-class DRS' as systems that are both ecologically and economically effective and designed to meet the specific needs of each region. Reloop will lead this initiative, serving as the knowledge hub to ensure members remain closely engaged with national legislative and implementation developments.

Reloop is marking its tenth year, during which it has built unparalleled European and global experience. Reloop's unique position at the centre of policymaking enables it to provide evidence-based data analysis, on-site learning, and access to experts worldwide. This will facilitate the critical knowledge transfer needed to achieve impactful DRS adoption for beverage packaging in Europe.

# Why Best-in-Class Matters

Deposit Return Systems (DRS) are a cost-effective, proven solution that play a pivotal role in addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. They also meet the need to deploy circular models which secure European resource resilience and economic development.

By enabling closed-loop recycling or reuse for beverage packaging, DRS contributes to:

- **Significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions:** Recovering and reusing valuable materials reduces reliance on virgin resources, cutting emissions across the value chain.
- **Reduced pollution:** Capturing beverage packaging in clean, sorted streams prevents waste mismanagement and litter, keeping our environment cleaner.

→ **Biodiversity protection:** Minimising pollution and conserving resources alleviates pressure on ecosystems, promoting healthier natural habitats.

→ **Beverage packaging circularity:** Eliminating the dependence of virgin resources or reducing material needs with high collection rates of quality materials, resulting in the substantial supply of post-consumer recyclate available to local markets. Prioritising closed-loop recycling allows for the continual reuse of materials, where packaging is perpetually recycled into new containers of the same type.

→ **Sustainable management of beverage containers:** Relooping of packaging material leads to economic development in the form of green jobs and green infrastructure, benefiting local communities.

Achieving a 90% collection rate for beverage packaging, as highlighted in Reloop's What We Waste report, is vital for returning sufficient high-quality materials to the recycling loop, enabling efficient and sustainable closed-loop systems.

## Vision and Objectives

We want to build on the achievements of the past two years, which culminated in the adoption of Article 50 of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). During this time, Reloop collaborated with beverage brands, industry associations, material suppliers, DRS operators, and ENGOs to deliver a unified message to policymakers.

We are now focused on the critical next phase. This involves ensuring the effective and timely implementation of Deposit Return Systems across EU Member States and the UK while also monitoring performance data from non-DRS countries to address possible inaccuracies in reported collection and recycling rates.

This could contribute to the development of closed-loop recycling systems, where materials are continually recycled back into their original form, such as bottle-to-bottle and can-to-can. Additionally, reuse may be integrated into system design, depending on regional reuse strategies and the requirements outlined in Article 29, which sets reuse targets for beverage packaging. Our goal is to drive meaningful progress by building robust, transparent, and results-driven systems that maximise circularity.







## Planned Activities and Deliverables

The Alliance's programme is designed to elevate the knowledge of its members, as well as key figures in government, industry, and the NGO community. This initiative will provide a structured and impactful approach to ensuring that each EU country and the UK implement the best possible DRS model suited to its specific regulatory and market context.

Through a combination of member-only stakeholder meetings, in-person events, quarterly DRS update newsletters, webinars, study tours, fact sheets, targeted communications, and direct engagement, the programme will facilitate a deep understanding of optimal DRS design while aligning with national implementation schedules. Recognising that no single DRS model fits all, this effort will ensure that the systems adopted are tailored to each country's regional characteristics, regulatory framework, and operational landscape.

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## The Reloop Advantage

Reloop's expansive network and unparalleled expertise are critical to the success of this initiative. With over a decade of experience, Reloop has collaborated with policymakers, ENGOs, and industry leaders to:

- Deliver robust, data-driven evidence and analysis to inform decision-making.
- Facilitate hands-on knowledge transfer from operational deposit systems across the globe.

- Foster a shared understanding of best practices for designing and implementing circular beverage packaging systems.
- Cultivate and engage with a diverse global network of experts, collaborating across regions to drive impactful change.

This proven track record positions Reloop as a trusted leader to drive meaningful progress towards best-in-class DRS implementation.



# Why Join the Alliance?

By joining the European Alliance, your organisation becomes part of a powerful coalition shaping the future of Deposit Return Systems (DRS) in Europe and the UK.

## Become a member and access the following benefits:

- **Direct access to leading industry experts, system operators and policymakers**
- **Direct access to Reloop's data-driven insights and policy expertise**
- **Company-wide training on Reloop's extensive data resources**
- **Stay ahead of regulation and implementation requirements - helping to minimise the need for external consultants**
- **Your logo on our Alliance's branded materials**

## Summary of Key Benefits for Alliance Members

### ✓ **Access to Exclusive Data & Insights**

Members receive early access to dashboards, reports, and policy briefings that help shape industry decisions.

### ✓ **Custom Communication Support**

Each fact sheet and major report includes tailored social media templates, graphics, or messaging kits, ensuring members can easily share key findings with stakeholders.

### ✓ **Strategic Engagement Opportunities**

Regular meetings, webinars, and training sessions enable members to stay ahead of regulatory changes and emerging trends.

### ✓ **Ongoing Compliance Support**

The Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Update ensures that members and their company staff remain fully informed of compliance developments, new policies, and operational changes in DRS implementation.

### ✓ **Enhanced Advocacy & Visibility**

Ready-to-use content allows members to amplify their influence in public and policy discussions with minimal effort.



## Details on Member Benefits:

### → Regular Knowledge Sessions

These sessions provide a structured forum for companies, SMEs, and civil servants to engage on country-specific and topic-specific DRS developments, ensuring stakeholders have access to timely, reliable insights. This helps understaffed government teams counter misinformation from vested local interests and facilitates continuous improvement by sharing real-world best practices.

### → Bespoke Training on Reloop Dashboards and access to second-level data

Alliance member companies and organisations will gain direct access to real-time beverage packaging data and two new dashboards launching in 2025. These dashboards will offer impact metrics (tonnes collected, return rates, climate benefits, and financial performance) at aregional level, equipping users with transparent data for evidence-based decision-making. This resource also reduces reliance on external consultants, saving members time and costs.

### → Quarterly DRS Update Newsletters

A trusted source of intelligence for members, these newsletters will track the progress of new system implementations in the EU and UK (e.g. Spain, Portugal, Greece, Poland) while also reporting on non-DRS market performance under the new recycling calculation method. This helps policymakers and industry stay ahead of regulatory changes, reduces free-riding by increasing transparency, and ensures that civil servants and SMEs do not waste time searching for scattered, inconsistent data.

### → Ready-to-Use Communications Materials

These fact sheets, case studies, and messaging guides on DRS performance, litter reduction, and best-in-class system elements will empower corporate and NGO communications teams, civil servants, and their networks with credible, accessible information. By ensuring alignment on messaging and reducing confusion, these materials help counter misinformation, accelerate policy acceptance, and streamline public outreach.

### → Webinars & Podcasts

Designed to demystify key elements of DRS for all stakeholders, these sessions offer deep dives into best practices, regulatory updates, and lessons learned from operational systems. These are particularly valuable for civil servants managing new DRS implementations, as well as SMEs navigating compliance (and not free riding) and larger companies ensuring alignment across markets. By creating an open knowledge-sharing platform, these outputs reduce knowledge gaps and susceptibility to undue influence from local vested interests.

### → Field Trips & Study Tours

Seeing successful Deposit Return Systems in action is one of the most effective ways to accelerate understanding and commitment. By organising guided visits to high-performing deposit systems in Europe, your organisation will be invited to participate in these tours, which will provide both civil servants and industry leaders with firsthand insight into what works, helping others understand operational realities while reducing resistance to change.

### → Bilateral Stakeholder Meetings

These exclusive meetings will convene Alliance members, policymakers, and industry stakeholders for direct information exchange and national updates. This structured dialogue will enhance collaboration, reduce free-riding by improving compliance awareness, and help counter misinformation that often misguides policy decisions.

## Call to Action

The need for harmonised and best-in-class DRS has never been greater.

The newly adopted PPWR mandates that Member States achieve at least 90% separate collection of single-use plastic bottles and metal beverage containers by January 1, 2029, primarily through mandatory DRS.

By joining this coalition, your organisation can play a vital role in shaping the rollout of DRS across Europe, ensuring these ambitious targets are met, while maximising environmental and economic benefits.

Together, we can lead the way in creating a circular economy for beverage packaging and set the standard for sustainable practices across the EU.

Please contact us directly to express your interest in joining this exciting coalition. We look forward to partnering with you in this transformative journey.

# Funding Model for the European Alliance for Best-in-Class DRS

The European Alliance for Best-in-Class DRS is bringing together key stakeholders from the beverage sector, material suppliers, recyclers, and technology companies to drive the development and implementation of high-performing Deposit Return Systems (DRS) across Europe.

To ensure the Alliance has the necessary resources to advance this mission, we invite companies to support our work through an equitable funding model based on their annual turnover or employee base.

## European Alliance for Best-in-Class DRS

Membership Category	Who they are?	Why they joined?	Value of Annual Membership (to be pro-rated for 2025)
<b>Champions</b>	Very small companies, NGOs, and local organisations that are engaged, learning, and actively supporting proper implementation of DRS.	They want to stay informed, contribute where possible, and help advocate for best-in-class practices in their region(s).	Rates are based on the organisation's number of employees working in Europe and the UK. €250 → <8 employees €500 → 8-20 €1K → >21
<b>Operators</b>	Existing system operators and organisations that already run best-in-class DRS and lead by example.	They believe in setting the standard and sharing expertise to help others implement effective systems.	Not for profits that are well-established deposit system operators. Rates are based on the size of the country (by inhabitants) in which they operate. €1K → <5M inhabitants €2K → 5M-12M €3K → >12M
<b>Catalysts</b>	Consumer brands, packaging producers, beverage companies, retailers, and circular economy service and technology providers are united in their commitment to driving beverage packaging circularity, acting as catalysts for impactful change.	They recognise the value of well-functioning, transparent systems and actively support their development and expansion.  As a company, they gain significant benefits from the information, updates, and data transfer provided, which directly reduces their need to seek and pay for this support elsewhere.	Rates are based on the company's number of employees working in Europe and the UK. €1K → 1-14 employees €5K → 15 - 50 €10K → 51 - 200 €15K → 201 - 500 €20K → 501 - 900 €25K → 901 - 2,500 €30K → 2,501 - 5,000 €35K → 5,001 - 10,000 €45K → 10,001+



## 2025-2027 Calendar of Deliverables with Communications & Compliance Support

Our strategic timeline of planned activities, reports, fact sheets, compliance updates, and communication materials will maximise benefits for Alliance members. We will also have quarterly

meetings for updates and to address challenges in existing DRS implementation countries. We aim to have at least one of these Alliance meetings in person in Brussels.

# Alliance Calendar of Activities 2025 & 2026

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### Q2 (April – June 2025)

- Launch of the **Global Deposit Dashboard** (April) – A user-friendly platform offering real-time data on deposit return system (DRS) performance across Europe.
- **‘How-To’ Webinar:** Using the Global Deposit Dashboard – A training session on leveraging DRS data effectively.
- Launch of the **Circular Packaging Knowledge Hub** – A resource centre for stakeholders to access policy insights, research, and implementation guides.
- **First Quarterly Alliance Meeting:** A forum to discuss regulatory updates, best practices, and industry challenges with current DRS country implementation, like the status in Spain, Poland, Greece, Portugal and the UK.
- **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates:** A recurring meeting with all four Reloop Directors in the UK and Europe, offering compliance updates and discussions on new developments in DRS implementation.
- **Fact Sheet:** Impact of Deposit Return Systems (DRS) on Litter – Analysis of how DRS reduces litter
  - Communications Material: Custom infographic summarising key findings for Alliance members to use in social media, newsletters, and presentations.
- **Fact Sheet:** The role of producer fees in Deposit Return Systems (DRS) – An overview of producer fees in DRS worldwide, what they are, how they are set, etc.
- **Webinar:** Packaging and Waste Policy Updates – A discussion on upcoming regulations and what they mean for industry stakeholders.
- **In-person Event:** DRS for GreenWeek in Brussels – in collaboration with Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE)
- **Joint Conference:** Circularity through DRS in Poland – in collaboration with Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE)
- **Online Event:** Deep Dive into European Deposit Return Systems
- **Reloop Unpacks:** A conference held in Brussels, exploring future technologies and advances in packaging management (18 June 2025)

**This quarter establishes key data-sharing platforms and equips members with exclusive, ready-to-use communication materials to engage policymakers and the public.**

## Q3 (July – September 2025)

- Release of the **Target90 Dashboard** – A tool to easily offer members the ability to track and evaluate national progress toward EU recycling and recycled content targets. The dashboard also offers Alliance members access to key analysis which considers the potential for virgin procurement reductions based on the performance of the DRS.
  - **Webinar:** Understanding Closed-Loop vs. Open-Loop Recycling – A practical guide on the importance of material recovery systems.
  - **Fact Sheet:** Economic Impacts of DRS on Municipalities
    - Communications Material: A short, animated explainer video highlighting key takeaways.
  - **Second Quarterly Knowledge Hub Meeting:** A forum for industry leaders to discuss progress on EU circular economy targets.
  - **Report on End-Use Applications of Beverage Packaging:** A study on how beverage containers are used after recycling.
  - **Webinar:** End-Use Applications and Market Implications – A stakeholder discussion on the future of packaging materials.
  - **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates**
- This period equips members with practical tools for compliance while tailored communication resources enhance public awareness campaigns.**

## Q4 (October – December 2025)

- **Special Update on the Global Deposit Book:** An overview of new and emerging DRS policies in key markets.
  - **Fact Sheet:** DRS in Rural Areas and Vertical Cities – Analysis of DRS performance across different geographic settings.
    - Communications Material: Social media templates for members to highlight regional benefits of deposit return systems.
  - **Third Quarterly Knowledge Hub Meeting:** This covers EU secondary legislative developments and current implementation challenges.
  - **Webinar:** Data Insights for Circular Economy Implementation – a training session on using new data tools.
  - **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Update**
- End-of-year communications will help members showcase their role in achieving EU waste and recycling targets, supporting advocacy efforts.**

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## Q1 (January – March 2026)

- **‘How-To’ Webinar:** on Using the Global Deposit Dashboard – A training session on leveraging DRS data effectively.
  - **Fact Sheet:** Making DRS and Kerbside Recycling Work Together – Policy recommendations for harmonising collection systems.
    - Communications Material: A one-page briefing document for use in advocacy meetings and public consultations.
  - **Fourth Quarterly Knowledge Hub Meeting:** Member updates on deposit return expansion and industry innovations.
  - **Launch of What We Waste: Beverages Dashboard Update 2026:** An analysis of beverage packaging reuse, recycling and waste over two decades.
  - **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates**
- This quarter ensures members have access to critical training and tools to inform their engagement with policymakers.**

## Q2 (April – June 2026)

- **Updated Report on Digital and Serialised Deposit Return Systems:** A policy review of emerging digital DRS models.
  - **Fifth Quarterly Knowledge Hub Meeting:** This covers evolving legislation and new technology adoption.
  - **Webinar:** Beverage Packaging Data-Walkthrough of the latest industry insights and regulatory compliance guidance.
  - **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates**
- This period supports members in preparing for upcoming legislative requirements with targeted communications for policymakers and the public.**

## Q3 (July – September 2026)

- **Launch of What We Waste: Packaging Dashboard:** A tool tracking all packaging waste trends across 25+ countries.
- **EU Policy Briefing:** Single-Use Plastics Directive Implementation – A report analysing progress and challenges and success after implementation of the SUPD.
- **Fact Sheet:** Benefits of DRS for Retailers – A guide on how retailers benefit from deposit return programmes.
- **Communications Material:** Social media toolkit for retailers to engage customers on the benefits of DRS.
- **Sixth Quarterly Knowledge Hub Meeting:** A discussion on trends in extended producer responsibility (EPR) and material recovery.
- **Final Report on Best Practices in Deposit Return Implementation:** An in-depth case study review of successful DRS models.
- **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates**

## Q4 (October – December 2026)

- **Final Knowledge Hub Meeting for 2026:** Wrap-up of key circular economy developments and future priorities.
- **Webinar on Target90 Compliance:** Technical guidance on achieving EU waste reduction targets.
- **Fact Sheet:** Retailer Participation in Circular Packaging – A case study-based guide to retailer engagement in sustainable packaging.
- **Communications Material:** Newsletter-ready content for members to promote corporate sustainability actions.
- **Monthly EU & UK DRS Status Updates**

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## Q1 (January 2027 – April 2027)

- To be determined in January 2026



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