

Aluminium enters 2019 with caution

At the turn of the year, the German aluminium industry's overall assessment of 2018 was satisfactory. Companies in the sector asserted themselves well in the market during the year. Demand from industrial markets and the German construction industry continued at a good level. The automotive sector in particular is furthering the use of the light metal.

However, economic risks have increased, which is why the German aluminium industry's expectations for 2019 are slightly subdued. Business climate had already cooled slightly last year. The risks for business activity in the aluminium sector have increased worldwide due to the increasing number of trade conflicts. At the European level, the unresolved issues surrounding Brexit and a possible further debt crisis in Italy have contributed to uncertainty.

We can continue to be optimistic in the medium term, though. Lightweight construction, electromobility, sustainability, digitalisation or additive manufacturing – these are some of the megatrends that will give the aluminium industry further impetus in the future. Demographic developments will stimulate the packaging sector. Our industry is well prepared for these challenges and we are already developing the products and solutions of tomorrow. As a globally available and versatile material with ever-newer possible applications, aluminium is the epitome of technical development in the 21st century.

We have seen how quickly things can change and need to do everything we can to support and protect our businesses. This applies to the entire value chain in our industry. It also includes keeping and sustaining aluminium smelters in Germany; Furthermore, recycling must be expanded as a further source of supply so that we have our own supply base for the future. Trade conflicts have demonstrated spectacularly that we cannot rely solely on supplies from other regions of the world.

GDA will continue to expand its information services and its materials expertise in 2019 and increase its focus on its members and clients. We want to further strengthen the industry's interests at a social, economic and political level. For this reason, besides our regular work in working groups and committees we will also be organising other events, such as seminars and the EAC European Aluminium Congress, which will take place on 25-26 November 2019 under the motto 'Aluminium and Mobility'.

We will be breaking new ground in the consumer communication field. As part of our social media activities, we are launching the go-live of a website called '*alles über Alu*' (everything

about aluminium) to provide end-users with information on our metal and our products and in doing so answer questions on topics such as health, resource efficiency and applications.

As you can see, there are interesting tasks awaiting us in 2019. We look forward to being able to take these tasks on, for you and together with you.

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