

Environment in the EU27

## Recycling accounted for a quarter of total municipal waste treated in 2009

In the **EU27**, 513 kg of municipal waste<sup>1</sup> was generated per person in 2009. The amount generated per person varied from 316 kg in the **Czech Republic** and **Poland** to 833 kg in **Denmark**.

On average in the **EU27**, 504 kg of municipal waste was treated<sup>2</sup> per person in 2009. Municipal waste was treated in different ways: 38% was landfilled<sup>3</sup>, 20% incinerated, 24% recycled and 18% composted.

This information<sup>4</sup> is published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

### Germany, Spain, Italy, France and the United Kingdom all generated around the same amount of municipal waste per person

The amount of municipal waste<sup>1</sup> generated varies significantly across Member States. **Denmark**, with more than 800 kg per person, had the highest amount of waste generated in 2009, followed by **Cyprus**, **Ireland** and **Luxembourg** with values between 700 and 800 kg per person, and **Malta** and the **Netherlands** with values between 600 and 700 kg. **Austria**, **Germany**, **Spain**, **Italy**, **France** and the **United Kingdom** all generated between 500 and 600 kg per person, while **Belgium**, **Portugal**, **Sweden**, **Finland**, **Greece**, **Bulgaria**, **Slovenia**, and **Hungary** were between 400 and 500 kg. Values of below 400 kg per person were found in the **Czech Republic**, **Poland**, **Latvia**, **Slovakia**, **Estonia**, **Lithuania** and **Romania**.

### Recycling and composting represent half or more of waste treatment in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden

The treatment methods differ substantially between Member States. In 2009, the Member States with the highest share of municipal waste landfilled were **Bulgaria** (100% of waste treated), **Romania** (99%), **Malta** (96%), **Lithuania** (95%), and **Latvia** (92%).

The highest shares of incinerated municipal waste were observed in **Sweden** (49% of waste treated), **Denmark** (48%), the **Netherlands** (39%), **Luxembourg** (36%), **Belgium** (35%), **Germany** and **France** (with 34%). In ten Member States incineration was equal to or below 1%.

Recycling was most common in **Germany** (48% of waste treated), **Belgium** and **Sweden** (both 36%), **Slovenia** and **Denmark** (both 34%), **Ireland** and the **Netherlands** (both 32%). The Member States with the highest composting rates for municipal waste were **Austria** (40%), **Italy** (32%), the **Netherlands** (28%), **Spain** and **Belgium** (both 24%) and **Luxembourg** (20%).

Recycling and composting of municipal waste together accounted for 50% of waste treated or more in **Austria** (70%), **Germany** (66%), the **Netherlands** (61%), **Belgium** (60%) and **Sweden** (50%). In seven Member States less than 10% of waste was recycled or composted.

## Municipal waste, 2009

	Municipal waste generated, kg per person	Total municipal waste treated, kg per person	Municipal waste treated, %			
			Landfilled	Incinerated	Recycled	Composted
<b>EU27</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	491	486	5	35	36	24
<b>Bulgaria</b>	468	450	100	-	-	-
<b>Czech Republic</b>	316	274	83	12	2	2
<b>Denmark</b>	833	833	4	48	34	14
<b>Germany</b>	587	564	0	34	48	18
<b>Estonia</b>	346	285	75	0	14	11
<b>Ireland</b>	742	730	62	3	32	4
<b>Greece</b>	478	474	82	-	17	2
<b>Spain</b>	547	547	52	9	15	24
<b>France</b>	536	536	32	34	18	16
<b>Italy</b>	541	594	45	12	11	32
<b>Cyprus</b>	778	778	86	-	14	-
<b>Latvia</b>	333	333	92	0	7	0
<b>Lithuania</b>	360	342	95	-	3	1
<b>Luxembourg</b>	707	707	17	36	27	20
<b>Hungary</b>	430	427	75	10	13	2
<b>Malta</b>	647	643	96	-	4	-
<b>Netherlands</b>	616	520	1	39	32	28
<b>Austria</b>	591	591	1	29	30	40
<b>Poland</b>	316	264	78	1	14	7
<b>Portugal</b>	488	488	62	19	8	12
<b>Romania</b>	396	308	99	-	1	0
<b>Slovenia</b>	449	495	62	1	34	2
<b>Slovakia</b>	339	311	82	10	2	6
<b>Finland</b>	481	481	46	18	24	12
<b>Sweden</b>	485	480	1	49	36	14
<b>United Kingdom</b>	529	538	48	11	26	14
<b>Iceland</b>	554	520	73	11	14	2
<b>Norway</b>	473	467	14	42	28	16
<b>Switzerland</b>	706	706	-	49	34	17

Data for the EU27, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Portugal and the United Kingdom are estimated.

0 equals less than 0.5%, "-" indicates a real zero

- Municipal waste consists to a large extent of waste generated by households, but may also include similar wastes generated by small businesses and public institutions and collected by the municipality; this part of municipal waste may vary from municipality to municipality and from country to country, depending on the local waste management system.  
For areas not covered by a municipal waste collection scheme the amount of waste generated is estimated. Wastes from agriculture and industry are not included.
- The reported quantities of waste generated and treated do not match exactly for some Member States, for the following reasons: estimates for the population not covered by collection schemes, weight losses due to dehydration, double counts of waste undergoing two or more treatment steps, exports and imports of waste and time lags between generation and treatment (temporary storage).
- Waste treatment refers to the following methods:  
**Landfill** is defined as the depositing of waste into or onto land, including specially engineered landfill and temporary storage of over one year.  
**Incineration** means thermal treatment of waste in an incineration plant.  
**Recycling** means any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes.  
**Composting** is the treatment of biodegradable matter.  
 In principle, data on treated municipal waste only refer to waste treated within the Member State, and does not take into account waste exported for treatment. However, recycling capacities may be limited in small countries. Luxembourg is a case where recycled amounts include exports.

4. For further information, please visit the web site of Eurostat, under Statistics / Environment / Environmental Data Centre on Waste.

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