

Environment in the EU

Each person in the EU generated 481 kg of municipal waste in 2013

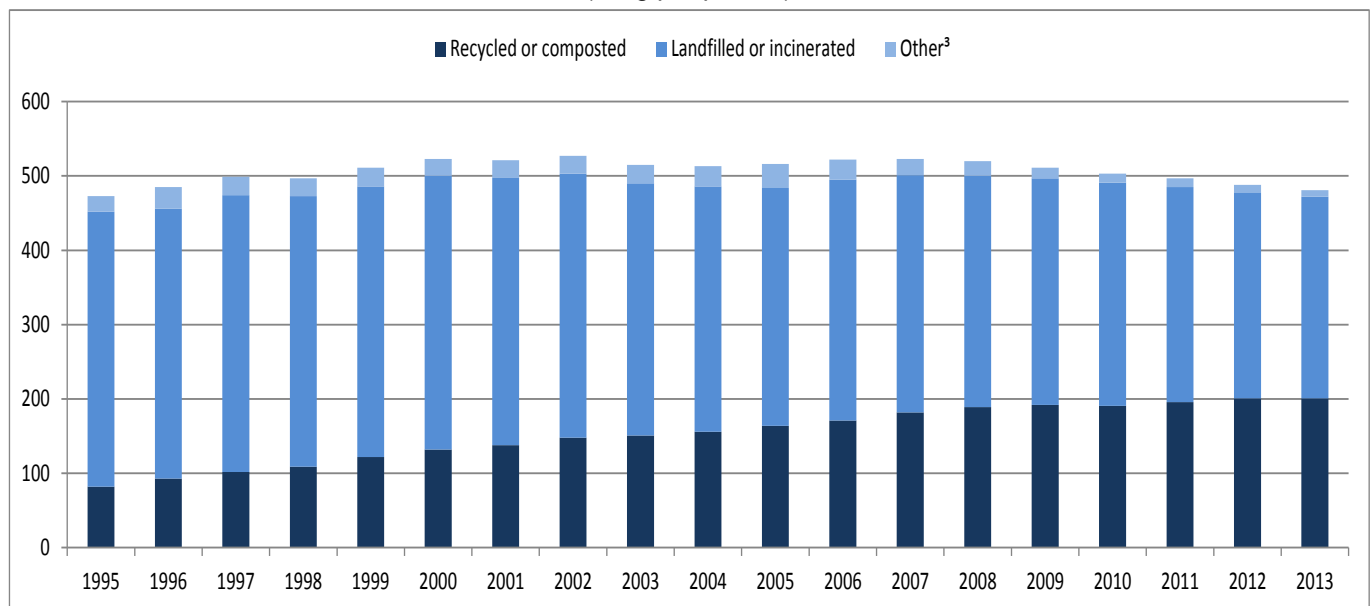
43% was recycled or composted

In the **European Union** (EU), the amount of municipal waste¹ generated per person in 2013 amounted to 481 kg, down by 8.7% compared with its peak of 527 kg per person in 2002. Since 2007, the generation of municipal waste per person has constantly decreased in the **EU** to below its mid-1990s level.

Of the 481 kg of municipal waste generated per person in the **EU** in 2013, 470 kg per person were treated². This treatment followed different methods³: 31% was landfilled, 28% recycled, 26% incinerated and 15% composted. The share of municipal waste recycled or composted in the **EU** has steadily increased over the time period, from 18% in 1995 to 43% in 2013.

These data⁴ are published in a report⁵ issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Municipal waste generation and treatment in the EU*
(in kg per person)



* EU refers to EU27 (excluding Croatia) for the years 1995 to 2006 and to EU28 from 2007 onwards.

Lowest waste generated per person in Romania, highest in Denmark

The amount of municipal waste generated varies significantly across the EU Member States. With less than 300 kg per person, **Romania, Estonia** and **Poland** had the lowest amount of waste generated in 2013, followed by **Slovakia, the Czech Republic** and **Latvia** (all just over 300 kg per person). At the opposite end of the scale, **Denmark** (747 kg per person) had the highest amount of waste generated in 2013, well ahead of **Luxembourg, Cyprus** and **Germany** with lower amounts but above 600 kg per person, and **Ireland, Austria, Malta, France, the Netherlands** and **Greece** with values between 500 and 600 kg per person. It should be noted that different coverage of municipal waste explains part of the differences between Member States.

Almost two-thirds of municipal waste recycled or composted in Germany

The treatment methods differ substantially between Member States. In 2013, a third or more of municipal waste was recycled in **Slovenia** (55%), **Germany** (47%), **Belgium** and **Ireland** (both 34%) and **Sweden** (33%). Composting was most common in **Austria** (35%), followed by the **Netherlands** (26%), **Belgium** (21%) and **Luxembourg** (20%). At least half of the municipal waste treated in 2013 was incinerated in **Estonia** (64%), **Denmark** (54%) and **Sweden** (50%), while the highest shares of municipal waste landfilled were recorded in **Romania** (97%), **Malta** (88%), **Croatia** (85%), **Latvia** (83%) and **Greece** (81%).

Recycling and composting together accounted in 2013 for nearly two-thirds (65%) of waste treatment in **Germany** and for more than half in **Slovenia** (61%), **Austria** (59%) and **Belgium** (55%).

Municipal waste, 2013

	Generated, (kg per person)	Treated, (kg per person)	Municipal waste treated, %			
			Recycled	Composted	Incinerated	Landfilled
EU	481	470	28%	15%	26%	31%
Belgium	439	440	34%	21%	44%	1%
Bulgaria	432	428	25%	3%	2%	70%
Czech Republic	307	307	21%	3%	20%	56%
Denmark	747	747	28%	17%	54%	2%
Germany*	617	617	47%	17%	35%	0%
Estonia	293	253	14%	6%	64%	16%
Ireland	586	531	34%	6%	18%	42%
Greece	506	506	16%	4%	0%	81%
Spain	449	449	20%	10%	10%	60%
France	530	530	21%	17%	34%	28%
Croatia	404	396	14%	2%	0%	85%
Italy	491	474	26%	15%	21%	38%
Cyprus	624	624	12%	9%	0%	79%
Latvia	312	312	11%	6%	0%	83%
Lithuania	433	421	21%	8%	7%	64%
Luxembourg	653	653	28%	20%	35%	17%
Hungary	378	378	21%	5%	9%	65%
Malta	570	526	6%	5%	0%	88%
Netherlands	526	526	24%	26%	49%	1%
Austria	578	550	24%	35%	37%	4%
Poland	297	249	16%	13%	8%	63%
Portugal	440	440	13%	13%	24%	50%
Romania	272	220	3%	0%	0%	97%
Slovenia	414	287	55%	7%	1%	38%
Slovakia	304	278	4%	8%	12%	77%
Finland	493	493	19%	13%	42%	25%
Sweden	458	458	33%	16%	50%	1%
United Kingdom	482	476	28%	16%	21%	35%
Iceland	345	345	37%	8%	6%	49%
Norway	496	489	24%	16%	58%	2%
Switzerland	702	702	34%	17%	49%	0%
Montenegro	507	450	1%	0%	0%	99%
FYR of Macedonia	384	384	0%	0%	0%	100%
Serbia	336	268	0%	0%	0%	100%
Turkey	406	336	0%	1%	0%	99%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	311	234	0%	0%	0%	100%

The treatment operations may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Data for Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania and Turkey are estimated and may be revised.

* Germany: data on incineration include treatment for disposal.

1. 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. Waste from agriculture and industry is not included.
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.
For areas in which municipal waste is not collected, the amount of waste generated is estimated.
2. 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).
3. The following waste treatment methods are considered:
Landfill means 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, except use as fuel.
Composting means the biological treatment (anaerobic or aerobic) of biodegradable matter resulting in a recoverable product.
4. Further information is available in the Eurostat Environmental Data Centre on Waste:
<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/waste/overview>
5. Eurostat, Statistics Explained article "**Municipal waste statistics**" available on Eurostat's website:
http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Municipal_waste_statistics

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