PORTUGAL

Municipal waste generation and management: current situation and distance to target

Parameter	Value
Population 2013 (Eurostat)	
Total (inhabitants)	10.487.289
Waste generation 2013 (Eurostat)	
Total (thousand tons)	4.598
Total (kg/cap/y)	440
Waste management 2013 (Eurostat) (kg/cap/y)	
Total waste treatment	440
Recycling	57 (13%)
Composting	57 (13%)
Incinerated	104 (24%)
Landfill	222 (50%)
Balance (unaccounted)	0
Compliance with Targets	
Data on compliance with landfill directive targets, or distance to target remaining (if target not met)[1]	Target 2013 for Portugal: Max. 50% Performance 2013: 53%
Data on compliance with waste framework directive targets or distance to target remaining (if target not met)	Target 2020: 50% (calc. method 4)[2] Performance 2013: 26%

Analysis

Statistics show that landfill rates in Portugal remain very high (50%) and recycling rates are still too low (26%) to comply with the waste hierarchy and with the 50% recycling target set in the EU Waste Framework Directive (WFD) which has to be met by 2020.

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[1] The Landfill Directive sets out specific targets regarding bio-waste and how it should be disposed of in landfills. Specifically, by 2006, biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill must have been reduced to 75 % of the total amount of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) generated in 1995. This share is required to be further reduced to 50% and 35% by 2009 and 2016, respectively.

[2] According to Commission Decision 2011/753/EU of 18 November 2011 establishing rules and calculation methods for verifying compliance with the targets set in Article 11(2) of Directive 2008/98/EC.

Portugal took up the option of derogation for the targets referring to the years 2009 and 2016, effectively deferring these to 2013 and 2020. According to an APA report evaluating the progress towards EU targets, the goal was almost achieved for 2013, as 53% of the Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) was sent to landfills.

This reduction was mainly explained by new mechanical treatment and mechanical-biological treatment infrastructure in operation. A report from the Portuguese Environment Protection Agency (APA) suggests that achieving the 2020 target will depend greatly on whether new infrastructure is built in the manner anticipated.

Underlying problems

The underlying causes for the current distance to EU waste targets are:

- Lack of incentives to manage waste according to the waste hierarchy;
- Lack of co-ordination between the different administrative levels;
- Insufficient (door-to-door) separate collection of waste;
- Insufficient extended producer responsibility (EPR) systems.