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Environment in the EU

## Each person in the EU generated 475 kg of municipal waste in 2014

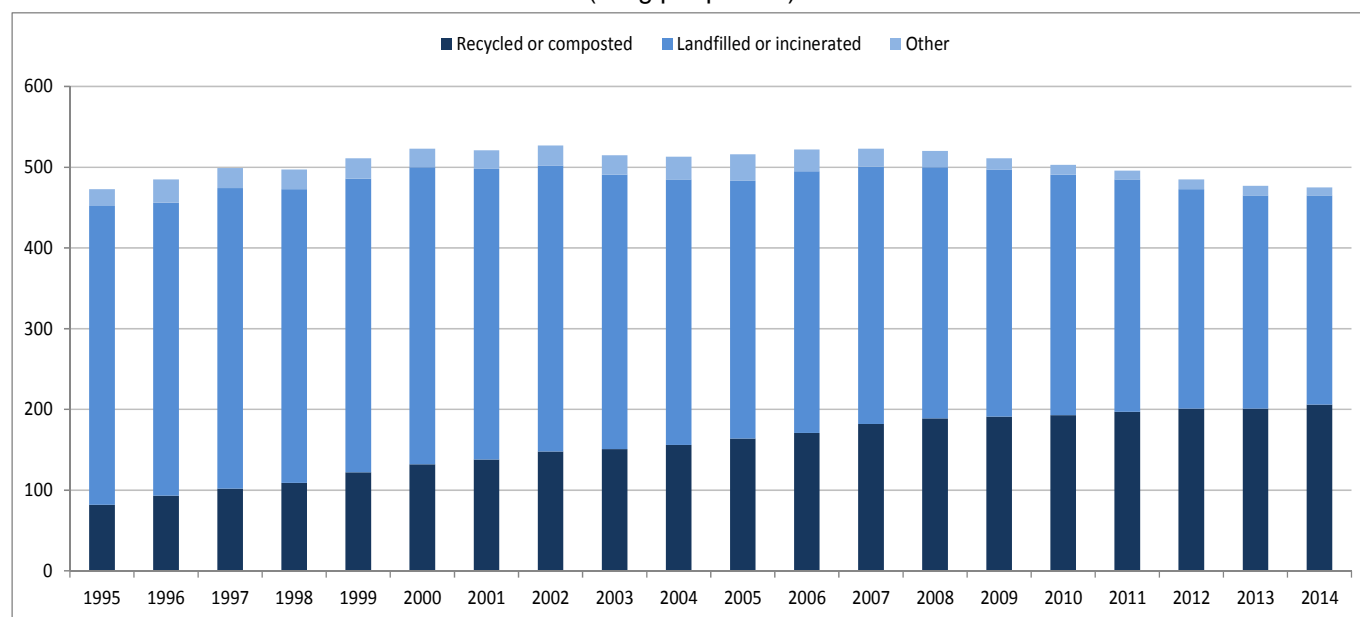
### 44% was recycled or composted

In the **European Union** (EU), the amount of municipal waste generated per person in 2014 amounted to 475 kg, down by 10% 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 475 kg of municipal waste generated per person in the **EU** in 2014, 465 kg per person were treated. This treatment followed different methods: 28% was recycled and another 28% landfilled, 27% incinerated and 16% composted. The share of municipal waste recycled or composted in the **EU** has steadily increased over the time period, from 17% in 1995 to 44% in 2014.

This information comes from a [report](#) issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

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



\* EU aggregate excluding Croatia for the years 1995 to 2006.

### Waste generated per person was highest in Denmark, Cyprus, Germany and Luxembourg

The amount of municipal waste generated varies significantly across the EU Member States. With less than 300 kg per person, **Romania** (based on 2013 data), **Poland** and **Latvia** had the lowest amounts of waste generated in 2014, followed by the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** (both just over 300 kg per person). At the opposite end of the scale, **Denmark** (759 kg per person) had the highest amount of waste generated in 2014, well ahead of **Cyprus**, **Germany** and **Luxembourg** with lower amounts but above 600 kg per person, and **Malta**, **Ireland** (based on 2013 data), **Austria**, the **Netherlands**, **France** 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 2014, almost half of municipal waste treated was recycled in **Slovenia** (49%) and **Germany** (47%). Composting was most common in **Austria** (32%), followed by the **Netherlands** (27%) and **Belgium** (21%). Together, recycling and composting accounted in 2014 for nearly two-thirds (64%) of waste treatment in **Germany**, followed by **Slovenia** (61%), **Austria** (58%), **Belgium** (55%) and the **Netherlands** (51%).

At least half of the municipal waste treated in 2014 was incinerated in **Estonia** (56%), **Denmark** (54%), **Finland** and **Sweden** (both 50%), while the highest shares of municipal waste landfilled were recorded in **Latvia** (92%), **Malta** (88%), **Croatia** (83%), **Romania** (82% in 2013), **Greece** (81% in 2013), **Slovakia** (76%), **Cyprus** (75%) and **Bulgaria** (74%).

### Municipal waste, 2014

	Generated, (kg per person)	Treated, (kg per person)	Municipal waste treated, %			
			Recycled	Composted	Incinerated	Landfilled
<b>EU*</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	435	439	34%	21%	44%	1%
<b>Bulgaria</b>	442	416	23%	2%	2%	74%
<b>Czech Republic</b>	310	310	23%	3%	19%	56%
<b>Denmark</b>	759	759	27%	17%	54%	1%
<b>Germany</b>	618	618	47%	17%	35%	1%
<b>Estonia</b>	357	303	31%	6%	56%	8%
<b>Ireland**</b>	586	531	34%	6%	18%	42%
<b>Greece**</b>	509	509	16%	4%	0%	81%
<b>Spain</b>	435	435	16%	17%	12%	55%
<b>France</b>	511	511	22%	17%	35%	26%
<b>Croatia</b>	387	374	15%	2%	0%	83%
<b>Italy</b>	488	455	28%	18%	21%	34%
<b>Cyprus</b>	626	626	13%	12%	0%	75%
<b>Latvia</b>	281	281	3%	5%	0%	92%
<b>Lithuania</b>	433	425	21%	10%	9%	60%
<b>Luxembourg</b>	616	616	28%	18%	35%	18%
<b>Hungary</b>	385	376	25%	6%	10%	59%
<b>Malta</b>	600	545	8%	4%	0%	88%
<b>Netherlands</b>	527	527	24%	27%	48%	1%
<b>Austria</b>	565	547	26%	32%	38%	4%
<b>Poland</b>	272	272	21%	11%	15%	53%
<b>Portugal</b>	453	453	16%	14%	21%	49%
<b>Romania**</b>	254	214	5%	11%	2%	82%
<b>Slovenia</b>	432	257	49%	12%	0%	39%
<b>Slovakia</b>	321	282	6%	6%	12%	76%
<b>Finland</b>	482	482	18%	15%	50%	17%
<b>Sweden</b>	438	438	33%	16%	50%	1%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	482	473	28%	17%	27%	28%
<b>Iceland**</b>	345	345	38%	7%	6%	49%
<b>Norway</b>	423	414	27%	17%	54%	3%
<b>Switzerland</b>	730	730	33%	21%	46%	0%
<b>Montenegro**</b>	508	451	1%	0%	0%	99%
<b>FYR of Macedonia</b>	370	370	:	:	:	100%
<b>Serbia</b>	302	236	1%	0%	0%	99%
<b>Turkey</b>	405	363	0%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</b>	349	234	0%	0%	0%	100%

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

Data for the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Cyprus, Luxembourg and Poland are estimated and may be revised.

: Data not available

\* EU aggregate is estimated based on 2013 data for those Member States for which 2014 data are not available.

\*\* 2013 data instead of 2014.

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

## Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

## Methods and definitions

**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.

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.

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).

## For more information

Eurostat [Environmental Data Centre on Waste](#).

Eurostat [database](#) on waste.

Eurostat [metadata](#) on municipal waste.

Eurostat [Statistics Explained article](#) on municipal waste statistics.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

**Vincent BOURGEAIS**  
Tel: +352-4301-33 444  
[eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu)


 [ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

 [@EU\\_Eurostat](https://twitter.com/EU_Eurostat)

Production of data:

**Hans-Eduard HAUSER**  
Tel: +352-4301-37 795  
[hans-eduard.hauser@ec.europa.eu](mailto:hans-eduard.hauser@ec.europa.eu)

**Karin BLUMENTHAL**  
Tel: +352-4301-32 308  
[karin.blumenthal@ec.europa.eu](mailto:karin.blumenthal@ec.europa.eu)

 **Media requests:** Eurostat media support / Tel: +352-4301-33 408 / [eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu](mailto:eurostat-mediasupport@ec.europa.eu)