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Environment in the EU27

Landfill still accounted for nearly 40% of municipal waste treated in the EU27 in 2010

In the **EU27**, 502 kg of municipal waste¹ was generated per person in 2010, while 486 kg of municipal waste was treated² per person. This municipal waste was treated in different ways³: 38% was landfilled, 22% incinerated, 25% recycled and 15% composted.

The amount of municipal waste generated varies significantly across Member States. **Cyprus**, with 760 kg per person, had the highest amount of waste generated in 2010, followed by **Luxembourg**, **Denmark** and **Ireland** with values between 600 and 700 kg per person, and the **Netherlands**, **Malta**, **Austria**, **Germany**, **Spain**, **France**, **Italy**, the **United Kingdom** and **Portugal** with values between 500 and 600 kg. **Finland**, **Belgium**, **Sweden**, **Greece**, **Slovenia**, **Hungary** and **Bulgaria** had values between 400 and 500 kg, while values of below 400 kg per person were recorded in **Lithuania**, **Romania**, **Slovakia**, the **Czech Republic**, **Poland**, **Estonia** and **Latvia**.

This information⁴ is published by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the European Union.

Incineration represents half or more of waste treatment in Denmark and Sweden

The treatment methods differ substantially between Member States. In 2010, the Member States with the highest share of municipal waste landfilled were **Bulgaria** (100% of waste treated), **Romania** (99%), **Lithuania** (94%) and **Latvia** (91%).

The highest shares of incinerated municipal waste were observed in **Denmark** (54% of waste treated), **Sweden** (49%), the **Netherlands** (39%), **Germany** (38%), **Belgium** (37%), **Luxembourg** (35%) and **France** (34%). In ten Member States incineration was equal to or below 1%.

Recycling was most common in **Germany** (45% of waste treated), **Belgium** (40%), **Slovenia** (39%), **Sweden** (36%), **Ireland** (35%) and the **Netherlands** (33%). The Member States with the highest composting rates for municipal waste were **Austria** (40%), the **Netherlands** (28%), **Belgium** (22%), **Luxembourg** (20%), **Denmark** (19%) and **Spain** (18%).

Recycling and composting of municipal waste together accounted for 50% of waste treated or more in **Austria** (70%), **Belgium** and **Germany** (both 62%), the **Netherlands** (61%) and **Sweden** (50%). In five Member States less than 10% of waste was recycled or composted.

Municipal waste, 2010

	Municipal waste generated, kg per person	Total municipal waste treated, kg per person	Municipal waste treated, %			
			Landfilled	Incinerated	Recycled	Composted
EU27	502	486	38	22	25	15
Belgium	466	434	1	37	40	22
Bulgaria	410	404	100	-	-	-
Czech Republic	317	303	68	16	14	2
Denmark	673	673	3	54	23	19
Germany	583	583	0	38	45	17
Estonia	311	261	77	-	14	9
Ireland	636	586	57	4	35	4
Greece*	457	457	82	-	17	1
Spain	535	535	58	9	15	18
France	532	532	31	34	18	17
Italy*	531	502	51	15	21	13
Cyprus	760	760	80	-	16	4
Latvia	304	304	91	-	9	1
Lithuania	381	348	94	0	4	2
Luxembourg	678	678	18	35	26	20
Hungary	413	413	69	10	18	4
Malta	591	562	86	-	7	6
Netherlands	595	499	0	39	33	28
Austria*	591	591	1	30	30	40
Poland	315	263	73	1	18	8
Portugal	514	514	62	19	12	7
Romania	365	294	99	-	1	0
Slovenia	422	471	58	1	39	2
Slovakia	333	322	81	10	4	5
Finland	470	470	45	22	20	13
Sweden	465	460	1	49	36	14
United Kingdom*	521	518	49	12	25	14
Iceland*	572	531	73	11	14	2
Norway	469	462	6	51	27	16
Switzerland	707	708	-	50	34	17
Croatia	369	363	96	-	3	1
Turkey	407	343	99	-	-	1

* Estimated by Eurostat

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, except the use as fuel.
Composting is the biological treatment (anaerobic or aerobic) of biodegradable matter resulting in a recoverable product.
 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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