

MUNICIPAL WASTE

The amount of municipal waste generated in a country is related to the rate of urbanisation, the types and patterns of consumption, household revenue and lifestyles. While municipal waste is only one part of total waste generated in each country, its management and treatment often absorbs more than one third of the public sector's financial efforts to abate and control pollution.

The main concerns raised by municipal waste are the potential impacts from inappropriate waste management on human health and the environment (soil and water contamination, air quality, land use and landscape).

Definition

Municipal waste is waste collected by or on behalf of municipalities. It includes household waste originating from households (i.e. waste generated by the domestic activity of households) and similar waste from small commercial activities, office buildings, institutions such as schools and government buildings, and small businesses that treat or dispose of waste at the same facilities used for municipally collected waste.

The kilogrammes of municipal waste per capita produced each year – or “waste generation intensities” – provide one broad indicator of the potential environmental and health pressures from municipal waste. They should be complemented with information on waste management practices and costs, and on consumption levels and patterns.

Comparability

The definition of municipal waste, the type of waste covered and the surveying methods used to collect information vary from country to country and over time. Breaks in time series exist for: Denmark, Estonia, Greece,

Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Norway, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey.

The main problems in terms of data comparability relate to the coverage of household like waste from commerce and trade, and of separate waste collections that may include hazardous waste from households such as waste batteries or waste electric and electronic equipment (WEEE) and waste collected by the private sector in the framework of extended producer responsibility schemes.

In some cases the reference year refers to the closest available year.

Data for Estonia exclude packaging waste separately collected for recycling and thus under-estimate the amount of municipal waste generated.

Sources

- OECD (2015), *Environment at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2015), “Municipal Waste”, OECD Environment Statistics (Database).

Further information

Analytical publications

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- OECD (2013), *Greening Household Behaviour: Overview from the 2011 Survey*, OECD Studies on Environmental Policy and Household Behaviour, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2012), *Sustainable Materials Management: Making Better Use of Resources*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2004), *Addressing the Economics of Waste*, OECD Publishing.

Methodological publications

- OECD (2009), *Guidance Manual for the Control of Transboundary Movements of Recoverable Wastes*, OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2008), *Guidance Manual on Environmentally Sound Management of Waste*, OECD Publishing.

Websites

- Resource productivity and waste, www.oecd.org/environment/waste.

Overview

During the 1990s, municipal waste generated in the OECD area has risen (19%), mostly in line with private consumption expenditure and GDP. As of the early 2000s, this rise has been slowing down. Today, the quantity of municipal waste generated exceeds an estimated 650 million tonnes (522 kg per capita). The amount and composition of municipal waste vary widely among OECD countries, being related to levels and patterns of consumption, the rate of urbanisation, lifestyles, and national waste management practices.

More and more waste is being diverted from landfills and incinerators and fed back into the economy through recycling. Landfill nonetheless remains the major disposal method in many OECD countries.



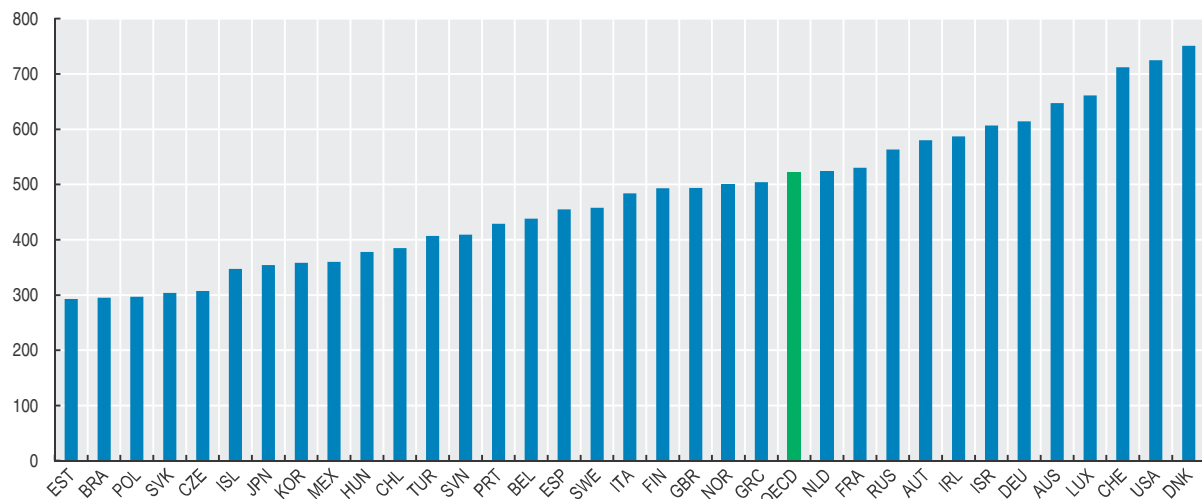
Municipal waste generation

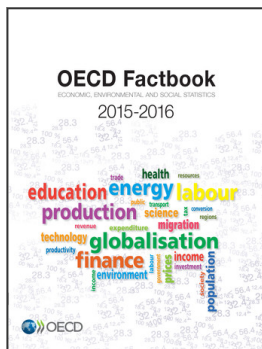
	Generation intensities kg per capita							Total amount generated thousand tonnes
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2013 or latest available year	2013 or latest available year
Australia	680	..	..	..	694	..	647	14 035
Austria	..	..	417	437	539	575	580	4 883
Belgium	280	310	345	455	476	483	438	4 905
Canada	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chile	204	225	249	282	329	353	385	6 517
Czech Republic	..	..	..	302	334	289	307	3 228
Denmark	399	475	..	521	610	662	751	4 192
Estonia	..	..	..	371	459	435	293	386
Finland	..	..	..	413	502	477	493	2 682
France	..	..	..	476	514	530	530	34 828
Germany	..	..	628	623	642	565	614	49 780
Greece	259	302	295	301	407	437	504	5 585
Hungary	..	..	530	460	446	461	378	3 738
Iceland	..	..	..	426	462	517	347	112
Ireland	188	..	..	513	601	736	587	2 693
Israel	..	..	..	..	631	590	607	4 894
Italy	249	265	353	454	509	540	484	29 595
Japan	375	348	407	416	432	413	354	45 359
Korea	..	514	715	387	361	367	358	17 881
Luxembourg	352	357	585	587	654	678	661	355
Mexico	..	..	..	323	305	330	360	42 103
Netherlands	..	478	497	539	598	599	525	8 845
New Zealand	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Norway	547	592	555	637	620	430	501	2 518
Poland	283	298	292	287	320	319	297	11 295
Portugal	203	..	301	387	440	452	429	4 598
Slovak Republic	..	..	..	302	317	273	304	1 645
Slovenia	..	..	..	596	513	494	409	853
Spain	..	..	..	476	614	592	455	20 931
Sweden	302	317	374	386	428	477	458	4 399
Switzerland	448	527	611	602	659	664	712	5 708
Turkey	270	359	..	441	454	435	407	30 920
United Kingdom	..	..	473	498	577	591	494	30 890
United States	605	634	757	740	783	779	725	227 604
EU 28	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
OECD	..	..	502	521	554	554	522	656 169
Brazil	..	..	..	..	336	328	295	57 900
China	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
India	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Indonesia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Russian Federation	..	294	..	..	354	402	563	80 564
South Africa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933336776>

Municipal waste generation

kg per capita, 2013 or latest available year


 1 2 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933335704>



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