

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, its management and treatment often absorbs more than one third of the public sector's financial efforts to abate and control pollution.

The main environmental concerns relate to the potential impact from inappropriate waste management on human health and the environment (soil and water contamination, air quality, land use and landscape).

Kilogrammes of municipal waste per capita – or “waste generation intensities” – are broad indicators of potential environmental pressure. They should be complemented with information on waste management practices and costs, and on consumption levels and patterns.

Definition

Municipal waste is waste collected and treated by or for municipalities. It covers waste from households, including bulky waste, similar waste from commerce and trade, office buildings, institutions and small businesses, yard and garden waste, street sweepings, the contents of litter containers, and market cleansing waste. The definition excludes waste from municipal sewage networks and treatment, as well as municipal construction and demolition waste.

Long-term trends

The quantity of municipal waste generated in the OECD area has risen from 1980 and exceeded 619 million tonnes in 2006 (580 kg per capita). Generation intensity – i.e. kilogrammes per capita – has risen at a lower rate than private final consumption expenditure and GDP, with a significant slowdown in recent years.

The amount of municipal waste also depends on national waste management practices. Only a few countries have succeeded in reducing the quantity of solid waste to be disposed of. In most countries for which data are available, increased affluence, associated with economic growth and changes in consumption patterns, tends to generate higher rates of waste per capita.

Comparability

The definition of municipal waste and the surveying methods used vary from country to country. For detailed footnotes please refer to the excel file available under StatLink.

The main problems relate to the coverage of household-like waste from commerce and trade, and of separate waste collections, carried out by private companies.

Data for Canada and New Zealand refer to household waste only.

Data for China do not cover waste produced in rural areas.

OECD total does not include the Czech Republic, Hungary, Korea, Poland and the Slovak Republic. Per capita value covers all OECD countries.

EU27 total refers to data provided by Eurostat.

Sources

- OECD (2005), *OECD Environmental Data Compendium 2004*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2006), *Environment at a Glance: OECD Environmental Indicators*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *OECD Environmental Outlook to 2030*, OECD, Paris.

Further information

Analytical publications

- OECD (2004), *Addressing the Economics of Waste*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2004), *Economic Aspects of Extended Producer Responsibility*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2004), *Toward Waste Prevention Performance Indicators*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *OECD Environmental Outlook to 2030*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *OECD Insights: Sustainable Development: Linking Economy, Society, Environment*, OECD, Paris.
- OECD (2008), *OECD Sustainable Development Studies: Conducting Sustainability Assessments*, OECD, Paris.

Web sites

- OECD Environmental Indicators, www.oecd.org/env/indicators.
- OECD Waste Prevention and Management, www.oecd.org/env/waste.



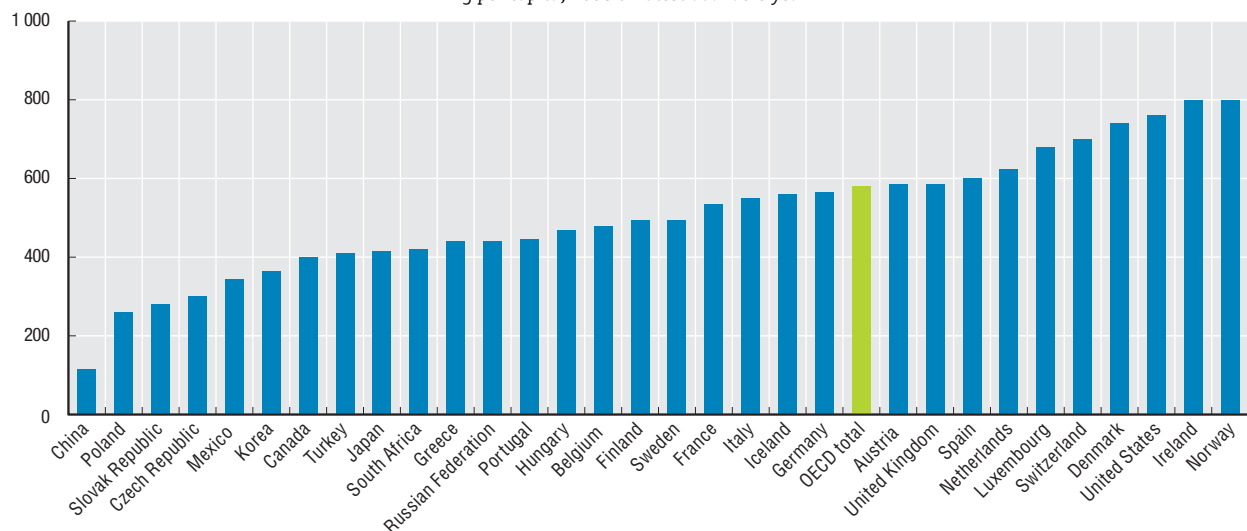
Municipal waste generation

	Total amount generated Thousand tonnes						Generation intensities kg/capita
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006 or latest available year	2006 or latest available year
Australia	10 000	..	12 000	..	13 200	..	..
Austria	..	..	3 200	3 480	4 260	4 850	585
Belgium	2 760	3 055	3 440	4 585	4 860	5 070	480
Canada	..	..	8 925	7 030	11 280	12 980	400
Czech Republic	..	2 600	..	3 200	3 435	3 040	300
Denmark	2 050	2 430	..	2 960	3 550	4 020	740
Finland	..	..	..	2 110	2 600	2 600	495
France	..	..	26 220	28 250	31 230	33 880	535
Germany	..	..	49 860	50 894	52 810	46 425	565
Greece	2 500	3 000	3 000	3 200	4 450	4 930	440
Hungary	..	..	5 500	4 750	4 550	4 710	470
Iceland	..	..	..	114	130	170	560
Ireland	640	1 100	..	1 850	2 280	3 385	800
Italy	14 040	15 000	20 000	25 780	28 960	32 508	550
Japan	43 940	42 095	50 260	52 220	54 830	52 730	415
Korea	..	20 990	30 650	17 440	16 950	17 665	365
Luxembourg	128	131	224	240	285	320	680
Mexico	..	..	21 060	30 510	30 730	36 135	345
Netherlands	7 050	6 930	7 430	8 470	9 770	10 170	625
New Zealand	880	..	1 140	1 430	1 540	..	..
Norway	1 700	1 970	2 000	2 720	2 755	3 680	800
Poland	10 055	11 090	11 100	10 985	12 230	9 880	260
Portugal	1 980	2 350	3 000	3 855	4 530	4 690	445
Slovak Republic	..	1 900	1 600	1 620	1 710	1 525	280
Spain	..	..	..	18 730	24 730	26 520	600
Sweden	2 510	2 650	3 200	3 555	3 795	4 500	495
Switzerland	2 790	3 400	4 100	4 200	4 730	5 230	700
Turkey	12 000	18 000	22 315	27 235	30 620	30 080	410
United Kingdom	..	..	27 100	28 900	33 955	35 480	585
United States	137 570	149 190	186 170	193 870	216 150	228 020	760
EU27 total	..	..	..	226 516	252 482	254 964	517
OECD total	377 176	405 268	488 861	527 433	589 699	619 430	580
Brazil	..	..	..	..	58 000	..	..
China	..	..	67 670	106 710	118 190	154 145	115
India	..	..	..	..	108 000	..	..
Russian Federation	22 000	24 800	28 000	50 000	51 850	63 075	440
South Africa	..	..	..	..	..	20 000	420

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/543571383548>

Municipal waste generation

kg per capita, 2006 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/537435847521>



From:
OECD Factbook 2009
Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2009-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2009), "Municipal waste", in *OECD Factbook 2009: Economic, Environmental and Social Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2009-67-en>

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