

Beat: Politics

Each person in the EU generated 481 kg of municipal waste in 2013

43% was recycled or composted

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USPA NEWS - In the European Union, the amount of municipal waste generated per person in 2013 amounted to 481 kg, down by 8.7% 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 481 kg of municipal waste generated per person in the EU in 2013, 470 kg per person were treated. This treatment followed different methods: 31% was landfilled, 28% recycled, 26% incinerated and 15% composted. The share of municipal waste recycled or composted in the EU has steadily increased over the time period, from 18% in 1995 to 43% in 2013.

The amount of municipal waste generated varies significantly across the EU member States. With less than 300 kg per person, Romania, Estonia and Poland had the lowest amount of waste generated in 2013, followed by Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Latvia (all just over 300 kg per person). At the opposite end of the scale, Denmark (747 kg per person) had the highest amount of waste generated in 2013, well ahead of Luxembourg, Cyprus and Germany with lower amounts but above 600 kg per person, and Ireland, Austria, Malta, France, the Netherlands 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.

The treatment methods differ substantially between member States. In 2013, a third or more of municipal waste was recycled in Slovenia (55%), Germany (47%), Belgium and Ireland (both 34%) and Sweden (33%). Composting was most common in Austria (35%), followed by the Netherlands (26%), Belgium (21%) and Luxembourg (20%). At least half of the municipal waste treated in 2013 was incinerated in Estonia (64%), Denmark (54%) and Sweden (50%), while the highest shares of municipal waste landfilled were recorded in Romania (97%), Malta (88%), Croatia (85%), Latvia (83%) and Greece (81%). Recycling and composting together accounted for nearly two-thirds (65%) of waste treatment in Germany and for more than half in Slovenia, Austria and Belgium.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com

www.gna24.com