

Waste management has potential impacts on human health and ecosystems. However, there are also concerns about the treatment and disposal capacity of existing facilities, and on the location and social acceptance of new facilities. The economic, environmental and social impact of waste is relevant in regions also because waste disposal is usually managed at the local level. Many OECD countries have strengthened measures for waste minimisation, recycling, product life cycle management and extended producer responsibility.

The amount of municipal waste generated gives an approximation of the potential pressure on the environment, and the economic cost for management and treatment. Studies show that municipal waste can represent more than one third of the public sector's financial efforts to abate and control pollution.

In 2008, OECD countries municipal waste production varied from 833 kilograms per inhabitant in Denmark to 306 kilograms in the Czech Republic (Figure 30.1). The different amount depends on the level and pattern of consumption, the rate of urbanisation, lifestyle and also on national waste management practices. Between 1995 and 2008, the municipal waste generated decreased the most in New Zealand, Slovenia, Israel, Japan and Germany. These data have to be interpreted with great caution since they may be biased by changes in the methodology for collecting the information. Nevertheless they give an indication of the level and trend of municipal waste production in these countries.

When looking at regional data, the volume of municipal waste per inhabitant varies significantly among regions within and across countries. In 2008, from the whole sample of countries considered, the Russian Federation is the one with the highest disparities. The municipal waste per capita in the region of Volgograd represents 11% of the country average, while in the region of Kostroma this value is more than two times higher. Within the group of OECD countries, Germany had the highest regional variation. Indeed, the region of Sachsen-Anhalt had a municipal waste per capita almost two times higher than the national average, while the region of Berlin only accounted for 43% of the country average (Figure 30.2).

Differences in the local management of waste, as well as in citizens' environmental behaviour within countries, explain the large regional disparities in recycling rates. These disparities are particularly marked in Germany and Italy (Figure 30.3).

Outperforming regions can be found both in countries with high rates of recycling (the region of Trier in Germany, where almost all the waste is recycled), and in countries

where recycling is less common (Pomorskie in Poland, where 20% of the waste gets recycled, two times higher than the national average) (Figure 30.3).

Definition

Municipal waste is generally defined as the total waste collected by or on behalf of municipalities. It includes waste from households, commerce, institutions and small business, yard and garden; the definition excludes municipal waste from construction and demolition and municipal sewage.

Recycling rates are calculated as the % of municipal waste that undergoes material or other forms of recycling (including composting).

Source

National data: OECD Environmental Statistics.

OECD Regional Database <http://dotstat/wbos/>.

Eurostat and Istat for regional data on waste recycled.

See Annex B for data, source and country related metadata.

The sum of collected regional data on waste does not always match the OECD national data.

Reference years and territorial level

2008; TL2.

Latest available year for Australia 2003; France 2004; Canada and Spain 2006; Hungary, Korea and Russia 2007.

No regional data are available for Chile, Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Slovenia, Sweden, New Zealand, and the United States.

Further information

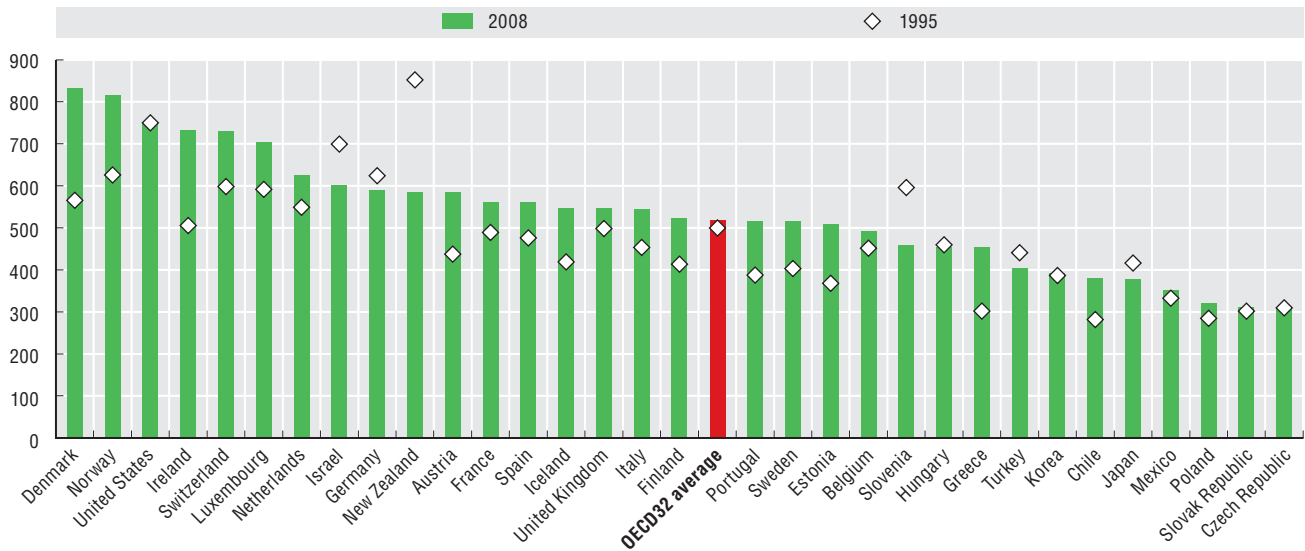
OECD Key environmental indicators (2008).

Figure notes

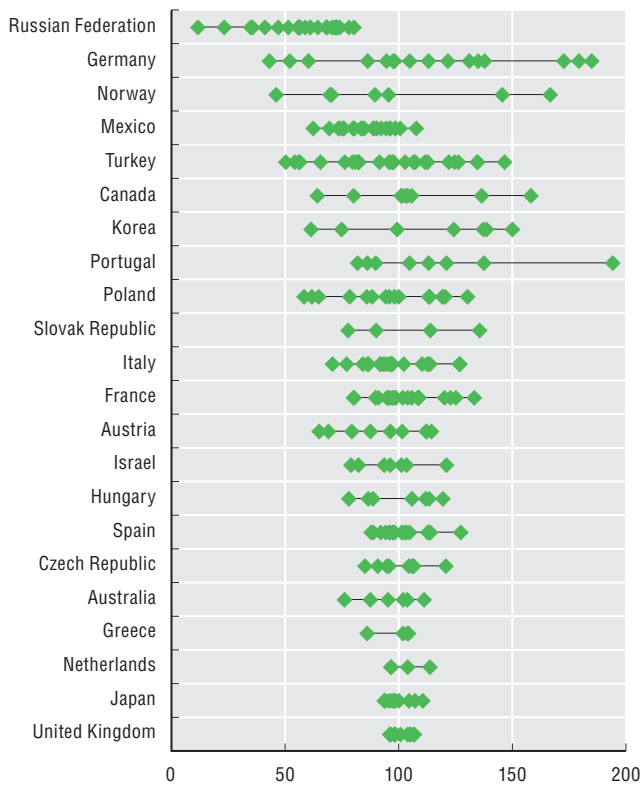
Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

30.3: Belgium and the Netherlands data are at TL3 level; Germany and United Kingdom data for 39 and 37, respectively, nationally defined regions. Austria, Norway and United Kingdom data refer to 2009.

30.1. Municipal waste (kg per capita), 1995 and 2008



30.2 Range in regional municipal waste per capita, TL2, 2008



30.3 TL2 regional range of municipal waste recycled (including composting), 2008



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932439957>



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