

6. Packaging waste

- EU targets for recovery and recycling of packaging waste were achieved in 2012.

6.1 Introduction

The EU Packaging Directive (94/62/EC as amended) seeks to promote the recovery and recycling of packaging waste. The Directive set recovery and recycling targets for Member States to be achieved by 2011 (both overall and material specific). The European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 282 of 2014) give effect to the EU Directive. The Regulations oblige packaging producers⁶⁰ to segregate their packaging and ensure that it is appropriately managed by an authorised recovery operator. Major producers⁶¹ under the Regulations have additional responsibilities with regard to the recovery of packaging waste from their customers. These obligations can be met either through self-compliance or membership of a compliance scheme. Repak is the only packaging compliance scheme in the State.

6.2 Packaging waste targets

The Packaging Directive set a target of a minimum of 60% packaging waste recovery to be achieved by December 2011. Figure 16 below shows the progress towards meeting and indeed exceeding this target since 2006. The recovery in 2012 was 87%.

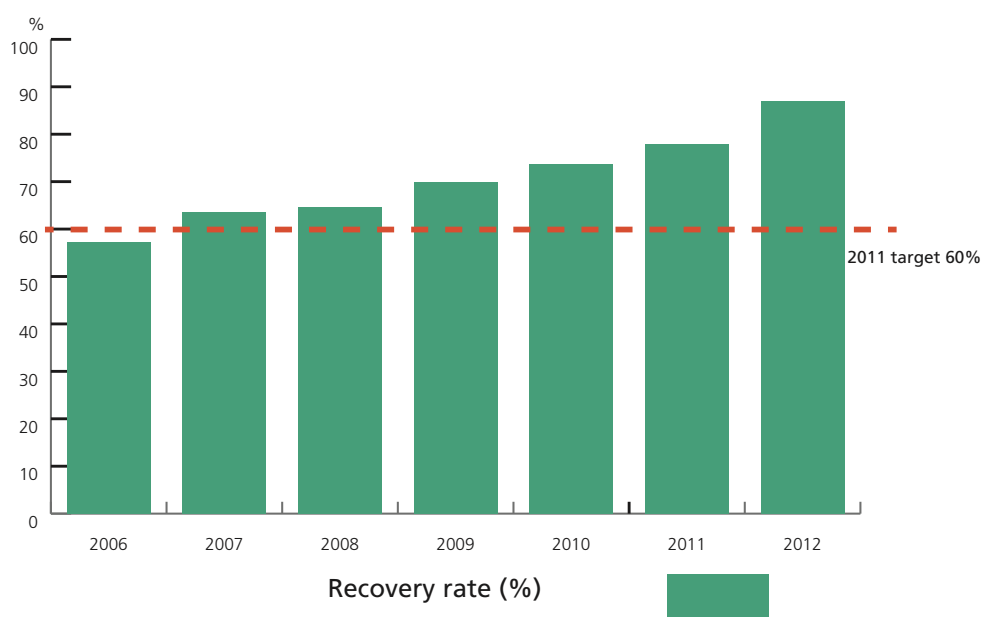


Figure 16: Recovery of packaging waste, 2006 - 2012, and progress towards targets

The Directive also sets recycling targets, both overall and material specific, to be achieved by the end of 2011. Details of these targets and the successful achievement of same in 2012 are given in Table 16 below.

The data in Table 16 are gathered from a number of sources; data provided by recovery operators and landfills through EPA surveys, data from self-compliers and data from Repak.

⁶⁰ Producer is defined under the Regulations as a person who, for the purposes of trade or otherwise in the course of business, sells or otherwise supplies to other persons packaging material, packaging or packaging products

⁶¹ Those who have an annual turnover in excess of €1 million and who place more than 10 tonnes of packaging on the Irish market.

The quantity of packaging waste landfilled is estimated using waste composition factors⁶² but as treatment of residual waste has changed substantially since the waste characterisation was carried out in 2008, the element of packaging in residual waste sent for energy recovery is also factored in.

The total amount of packaging waste generated (809,500 tonnes in 2012) has not changed significantly since 2011 (863,597 tonnes) but there was a decrease in the quantity landfilled: from 181,317 tonnes in 2011 to 108,764 tonnes in 2012. This decrease is a direct consequence of the diversion of residual waste from landfill to energy recovery.

Table 16 Quantities of packaging waste generated in Ireland, and recycled and energy recovered in Ireland and abroad in 2012

Material Type	Packaging waste generated (t)	Packaging waste landfilled (estimate) ⁶³ (t)	Material recycling and other recycling (t)	Energy recovery(t)	Total recovery (t)	Packaging Directive target for recycling %	Material recycling and other recycling rate %	Packaging Directive target for total recovery %	Total recovery rate %
Glass	147,865	21,483	126,382		126,382	60	86		86
Plastic	168,582	43,278	68,147	57,156	125,303	23	40		74
Paper and board ⁶⁴	358,923	30,726	298,039	30,158	328,197	60	83		91
Metals ⁶⁵	Aluminium	4,899	4,761	0	4,761	50			
	Steel	38,739	6,405	31,906	31,906			60	
	Total	48,399	11,732 ⁶⁶	36,667	36,667		76		76
Wood	84,778	590	69,780	14,408	84,188	15	82		99
Other ⁶⁷	955	955		0	0		0		0
Total	809,501	108,764	599,015	101,722	700,737	55	74		87

⁶³ Estimated using waste characterisations study factors and deducting for packaging in residual waste which is sent for energy recovery.

⁶⁴ Includes composites (beverage cartons).

⁶⁵ This figure contains some incidental packaging contained in the general ferrous metal stream.

⁶⁶ Metals total includes 428 tonnes of other metals.

⁶⁷ Mainly textiles.

6.3 Packaging waste exported for recovery

Although there has been a significant increase in the quantity of packaging waste recovered in Ireland (see Section 6.1), the majority of packaging waste generated in Ireland is recovered abroad. There is no glass manufacturing facility, metal smelter or paper mill in the State, therefore these waste streams are exported for recovery. Table 17 below details the quantities of packaging waste exported for recovery.

Table 17: Packaging waste exported for recovery, 2012

Material		Material recycling (t)	Energy recovery (t)
Glass		115,685	0
Plastic		48,810	13,034
Paper & board		249,544	6,134
Metals	Aluminium	4,761	0
	Steel	31,736	0
	Total	36,497	0
Wood		773	0
Other			168
TOTAL		451,309	19,336

6.4 Packaging waste imported for recovery

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A relatively small amount of packing waste is imported into Ireland for recovery. In 2012 recovery operators reported treating 71,835 tonnes of packaging waste generated abroad. See Table 18 below.

Table 18: Packaging waste generated abroad and treated in Ireland in 2012

Material	Recycling (t)	Energy recovery (t)
Glass	241	
Plastic	66,094	1,265
Paper & board	3,542	594
Wood	52	
Steel	47	
TOTAL	69,976	1,859

6.5 Packaging self-compliers

Producers of packaging waste can either join a compliance scheme or self-comply. The majority of organisations favour joining a compliance scheme. Repak recovered approximately 84% of the total packaging generated in 2012.

Local authorities are responsible for enforcement of the Packaging Regulations, including enforcing the obligations of self-complying producers. Information on packaging self-compliers was gathered from local authorities, and the data provided is outlined in Table 19. Four local authorities had no registered self-compliers in their area in 2012 (Donegal, Leitrim, Waterford County and Wexford).

All self-complying producers have a legal obligation to submit reports to the relevant local authority on packaging placed on the market and waste packaging reused, recovered and disposed. It is essential that these reports are submitted so that local authorities can determine whether self-complying producers are meeting their legal obligations with regard to recovery and recycling targets.

Table 19: Packaging self-compliers registered in local authority areas in 2012

Local authority	Number of companies	Number of premises	Local authority	Number of companies	Number of premises
Carlow	1	1	Limerick County	4	5
Cavan	4	4	Longford	3	3
Clare	2	4	Louth	5	6
Cork City	2	2	Mayo	3	3
Cork County	7	14	Meath	6	7
Donegal	0	0	Monaghan	4	4
Dublin City	17	20	North Tipperary	1	3
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	7	8	Offaly	1	3
Fingal	17	17	Roscommon	5	7
Galway City	3	11	Sligo	1	1
Galway County	4	15	South Dublin	24	24
Kerry	2	3	South Tipperary	2	2
Kildare	2	3	Waterford City	2	3
Kilkenny	3	3	Waterford County	0	0
Laois	1	1	Westmeath	1	4
Leitrim	0	0	Wexford	0	0
Limerick City	1	3	Wicklow	1	2
Total number of companies	136⁶⁸				
Total number of registered premises	186				

(Source: Local authority survey)

Table 20 compares packaging self-complier data for 2009 to 2012, in terms of number of companies and number of premises registered and the tonnage of packaging placed on the market. Local authorities reported that a small number self-complying producers failed to provide their full 2012 packaging recovered data in quarterly reports, therefore the packaging recovered tonnage is an incomplete dataset (Table 20).

68 Representing 104 unique producers (some companies are registered in more than one local authority functional area).

Table 20: Packaging self-compliers, 2009 to 2012

Year	Number of registered self-complier companies	Number of premises	Packaging placed on the market (t)	Packaging recovered (t)
2009	108	205	61,475	15,576
2010	106	181	45,387	20,196
2011	139	187	57,462	20,423
2012	136	186	54,525	19,082

(Source: Local authority surveys)