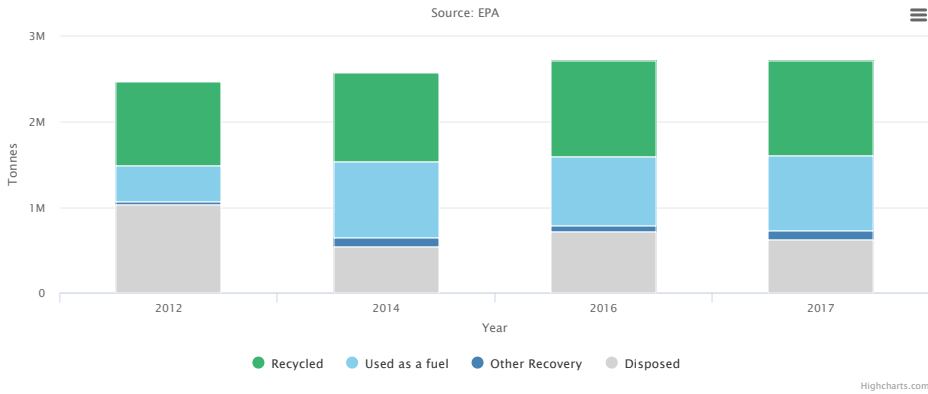




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Municipal waste recycled, used as a fuel and disposed to landfill (tonnes), 2012 - 2017



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### WHAT IS MUNICIPAL WASTE?

In our everyday lives we produce a general mix of waste in our homes, offices, schools and similar premises. This type of waste is called municipal waste. It is usually collected at kerbside or we can bring it to collection centres. The amount of municipal waste generated in our country is an important measure of how wasteful our everyday lives are.

Municipal Waste includes these following waste types:

- ▶ **Residual** (i.e. black bin) waste e.g. waste that cannot be recycled
- ▶ **Recyclable** (i.e. green bin) waste e.g. glass, plastic, paper & board, metals
- ▶ **Organic** (i.e. brown bin) waste e.g. food and garden waste
- ▶ **Bulky waste** e.g. waste that cannot fit in a wheelie bin such as broken furniture, carpets, toys etc.
- ▶ **Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE)**

### Key Trends

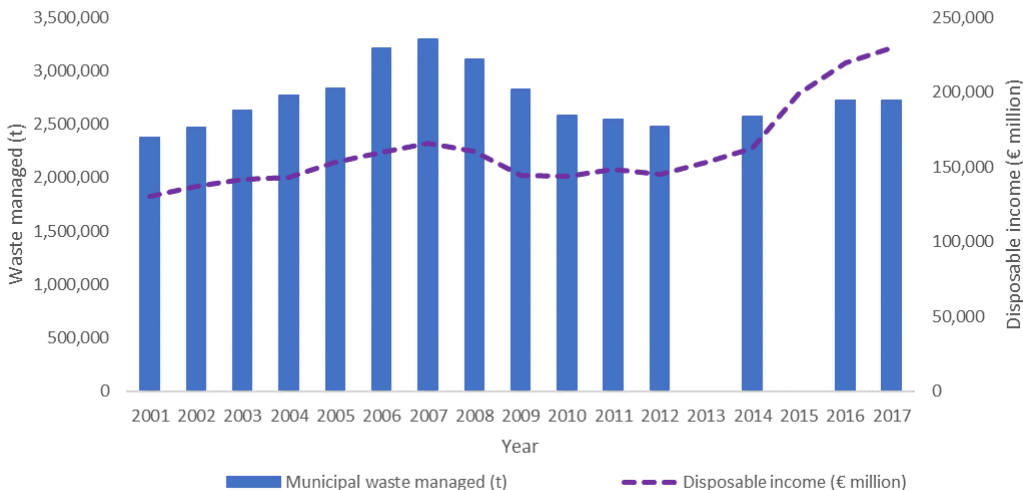
- ▶ Ireland generated 2,768,043 t of municipal waste in 2017, this is less than one per cent increase since 2016.
- ▶ Each person living in Ireland generated an average of 577 kg of municipal waste in 2017.
- ▶ In 2017, a total of 2,723,543 t of municipal waste was managed in Ireland. 'Managed waste' is waste collected and treated by the waste industry.
- ▶ The EPA estimates that 44,500 t was unmanaged in 2017. 'Unmanaged' is waste that is not collected or brought to a waste facility and is therefore likely to cause pollution in the environment because it is burned, buried or dumped.
- ▶ In 2017, over three quarters (77%) of municipal waste was recovered, this is an increase from 74% in 2016. 'Recovered' means the waste was recycled, incinerated for energy recovery or used to cover landfilled waste.
- ▶ The recycling rate of municipal waste managed in 2017 was 41%, this is the same as 2014 and 2016. The recycling rate of municipal waste generated in 2017 was 40%, this is a decrease from 41% in 2016. 'Recycled' means the waste was broken down and used to make new items and includes the breakdown of food and garden waste to make compost.
- ▶ Less than a quarter (23%) of municipal waste was landfilled in 2017, this is a decrease from 26% in 2016. 'Disposed' means waste was landfilled or burned in incinerators without energy recovery.

### Future Focus

Municipal waste generation, economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland follow similar trends over time, as illustrated in Figure 2 below. Inefficient consumption and missed opportunities for reuse and recycling lead to higher waste generation and greenhouse gas emissions.

As discussed in [Ireland's Waste Story](#), the future focus now needs to be on waste prevention and achieving a circular economy so we can make the most of our resources while protecting the environment.

Figure 2. Ireland's Municipal Waste and Disposable Income Over Time



Ireland's recycling rate has not changed significantly between 2012 and 2017 and is below future EU municipal waste recycling targets. Ireland will need to implement new initiatives and policies to improve municipal recycling rates if we are to achieve these future targets.

Please note, the EPA uses guidance on municipal waste data collection, which is available on the Eurostat website (the European Union's statistical Office), to compile municipal waste data.

Show Table 1 Municipal waste generated, managed and treated - 2012 to 2017

Treatment type	Recovery code(s)	2012 (tonnes)	2014 (tonnes)	2016 (tonnes)	2017 (tonnes)
Recycling	R2-R11 (excluding part of R3)	984,704	1,043,190	1,125,124	1,118,196
Incineration / energy recovery	R1	427,093	893,030	810,612	880,849
Other recovery	Backfilling	38,914	102,376	71,686	101,615
	<b>Total recovery</b>	<b>1,450,711</b>	<b>2,038,596</b>	<b>2,007,422</b>	<b>2,100,660</b>

Treatment type	Disposal code(s)	2012 (tonnes)	2014 (tonnes)	2016 (tonnes)	2017 (tonnes)
Incineration / disposal	D10	49	92	72	0
Landfill / disposal	D1-D7, D12	1,027,577	536,530	710,805	622,882
	<b>Total disposal</b>	<b>1,027,626</b>	<b>536,621</b>	<b>710,877</b>	<b>622,882</b>

<b>Total municipal waste managed</b>	<b>2,478,337</b>	<b>2,575,218</b>	<b>2,718,299</b>	<b>2,723,543</b>
<b>Total municipal waste generated (generated = managed + estimate household unmanaged waste) (see note)</b>	<b>2,692,537</b>	<b>2,619,023</b>	<b>2,763,167</b>	<b>2,768,043</b>

Note: The methodology for estimating household unmanaged waste was revised for 2014 reference year.

	2012	2014	2016	2017
% Recovery (of managed)	59%	79%	74%	77%
% Recycling (of managed)	40%	41%	41%	41%
% Disposal (of managed)	41%	21%	26%	23%
% Recycling (of generated)	37%	40%	41%	40%

Open in Excel: [Table 1 Municipal waste generated, managed and treated in 2012 to 2017 \(XLS 12KB\)](#)

Show Table 2 Municipal waste generated by origin and by type in 2017

Municipal waste generated by origin, 2017	Tonnes
Waste generated by households	1,520,290
Waste generated by other sources	1,247,753

Municipal waste generated by type of waste, 2017	Tonnes
Generation of household and similar waste	2,232,933
Generation of bulky waste	488,182
Generation of waste electrical and electronic equipment	46,928

Open in Excel: [Table 2 Municipal waste generated by origin and by type in 2017 \(XLS 11KB\)](#)

Show Table 3 Municipal waste managed 2007 to 2017

Reference Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Municipal waste managed (tonnes)	3,174,565	3,103,820	2,824,977	2,580,435	2,558,345	2,478,337	Note 1	2,575,218	Note 1	2,718,299	2,723,543

Note 1: 2013 & 2015 are interim reporting years and municipal waste managed data were not collected

Open in Excel: [Table 3 Municipal waste managed 2007 to 2017 \(XLS 10KB\)](#)