

23 November 2021

**Other environmental accounts: Waste accounts
Year 2019**

The Spanish economy generated 133.2 million tonnes of waste in 2019, 3.3% less than the previous year

A total of 42.4% of the treated waste was destined for recycling. This was 3.9% more in the annual rate and 19% more than in 2015

Generation of waste in the Spanish economy¹

The Spanish economy generated 133.2 million tonnes of waste in 2019, 3.3% less than the previous year. Of these, 3.3 million corresponded to hazardous waste (2.6% more than in 2018) and 129.9 million to non-hazardous waste (3.5% less).

Waste generated by type of waste². Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

	Total	Annual rate	Non-hazardous	Annual rate	Hazardous	Annual rate
Waste generated	133,257.0	-3.3	129,948.4	-3.5	3,308.6	2.6
Minerals	67,040.2	-7.3	66,493.8	-7.3	546.4	-6.5
Mixed waste	37,533.1	-0.8	37,440.7	-0.9	92.4	10.1
Animal and vegetal	9,230.1	-0.7	9,230.1	-0.7	..	..
Metallics	6,263.3	4.8	6,263.3	4.8	..	..
Paper and Cardboard	4,212.9	24.7	4,212.9	24.7	..	..
Chemical	2,362.1	1.6	987.5	0.6	1,374.6	2.3
Discarded equipment	1,475.5	-0.5	213.5	-30.1	1,262.0	7.2
Common sludge	1,337.3	-16.6	1,337.3	-16.6	..	..
Glass	1,272.2	8.7	1,272.2	8.7	0.0	-2.8
Wood	1,088.7	-2.4	1,087.8	-2.4	0.9	-5.5
Plastic	933.3	14.5	933.3	14.5	..	..
Others	508.3	7.9	476.0	8.8	32.3	-4.7

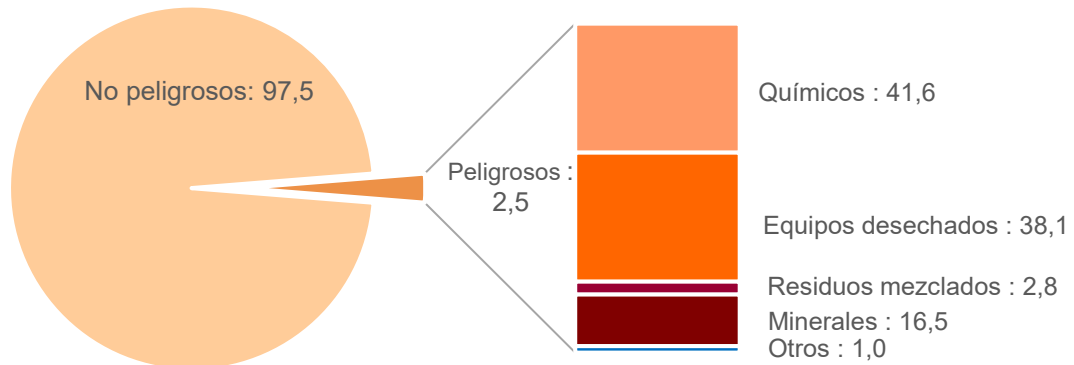
¹ A greater detail of the waste generated in the urban sphere can be consulted in the press release of the Statistics on the Collection and Treatment of Waste published today by the INE.

² The symbol “..” indicates the categories of waste not covered by Regulation (EC) No 2150/2002.

The most relevant categories of waste generated were *Mineral wastes* (67 million tonnes), *Mixed wastes* (37.5 million tonnes) and *Animal and vegetal wastes* (9.2 million tonnes).

In 2019, 97.5% of the waste generated was non-hazardous and 2.5% was hazardous. Of the total hazardous waste generated, 41.6% corresponded to *Chemical wastes*, 38.1% to *Discarded equipment* and 16.5% to *Mineral wastes*.

Waste generated in the Spanish economy (percentage). Year 2019



Generation of waste by activity sectors and households

82.9% of waste generated in 2019 corresponded to the *Activity Sectors* and 17.1% to *Households*.

The activities that experienced the greatest reductions were *Construction* (8.0% less) and *Industry* (4.4% less). On the other hand, waste generation rose by 8.8% in *Services*.

On the other hand, *Households* as consumers generated 0.4% more waste.

Waste generated by activity sectors and households. Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

	Total	Annual rate	Non-hazardous	Annual rate	Hazardous	Annual rate
Total	133,257.0	-3.3	129,948.4	-3.5	3,308.6	2.6
Industry (Including mining and energy production)	38,810.6	-4.4	37,617.7	-4.5	1,192.9	-0.3
Construction	35,043.8	-8.0	34,953.1	-8.1	90.7	61.1
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	23,930.9	-1.2	23,241.2	-1.5	689.7	7.7
Services	6,496.8	8.8	5,220.7	11.2	1,276.1	0.3
Agriculture, livestock breeding, forestry and fishing	6,184.0	-1.2	6,158.1	-1.2	25.9	-8.2
Households	22,790.9	0.4	22,757.6	0.4	33.3	11.0

By type of waste, the ones that had the greatest weight in those generated by *Households* were *Mixed Waste* (81.6% of the total), *Paper and Cardboard* (5.6%), *Animal and Vegetable Waste* (5.1) and *Glass* (4.0%).

On the other hand, the main wastes generated by the *Activity Sectors* were *Mineral wastes* (60.2% of the total) and *Mixed wastes* (17.1%).

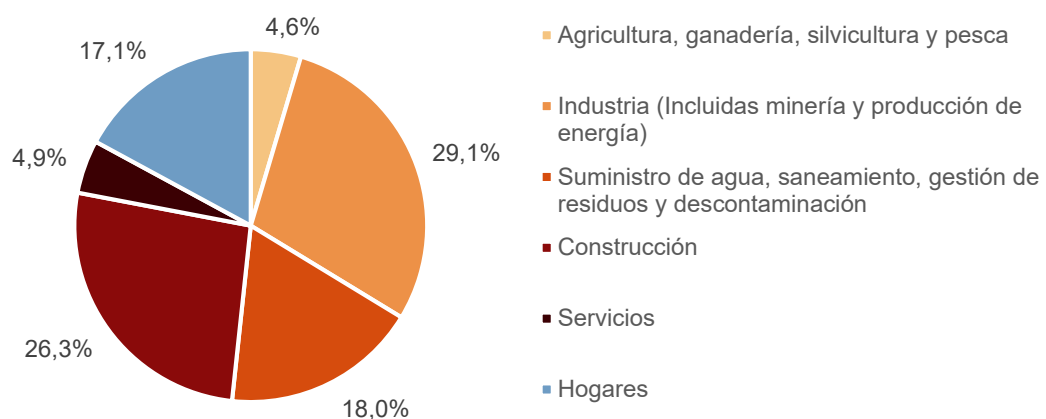
Types of wastes generated by activity sectors and households. Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

	Total	%	Activity sectors	%	Households	%
Waste generated	133,257.0	100.0	110,466.1	100.0	22,790.9	100.0
Minerals	67,040.2	50.3	66,518.6	60.2	521.6	2.3
Mixed waste	37,533.1	28.2	18,940.4	17.1	18,592.7	81.6
Animal and vegetal	9,230.1	6.9	8,061.4	7.3	1,168.7	5.1
Metallics	6,263.3	4.7	6,241.4	5.7	21.9	0.1
Paper and Cardboard	4,212.9	3.2	2,925.5	2.7	1,287.4	5.6
Chemical	2,362.1	1.8	2,357.2	2.1	4.9	0.0
Discarded equipment	1,475.5	1.1	1,413.0	1.3	62.5	0.3
Common sludge	1,337.3	1.0	1,337.3	1.2	..	..
Glass	1,272.2	0.9	367.2	0.3	905.0	4.0
Wood	1,088.7	0.8	949.3	0.9	139.4	0.6
Plastic	933.3	0.7	893.8	0.8	39.5	0.2
Others	508.3	0.4	461.0	0.4	47.3	0.2

The activities that generated the greatest amount of waste in 2019 were *Industry* (29.1% of the total) and *Construction* (26.3%).

Waste generated by activity sectors and households (percentage). Year 2019



Types of wastes generated by activity sectors. Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

	Total Sectors	Industry (Including mining and energy production)	Construction	Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	Services	Agriculture, livestock breeding, forestry and fishing
Waste generated	110,466.1	38,810.6	35,043.8	23,930.9	6,496.8	6,184.0
Minerals	66,518.6	30,588.7	34,688.0	1,145.8	83.6	12.5
Mixed waste	18,940.4	945.0	48.8	16,669.4	922.7	354.5
Animal and vegetal	8,061.4	1,665.9	31.7	19.0	660.8	5,684.0
Metallics	6,241.4	1,963.7	94.0	3,696.2	478.9	8.6
Paper and Cardboard	2,925.5	677.8	49.8	213.1	1,971.1	13.7
Chemical	2,357.2	1,584.0	10.2	548.4	184.5	30.1
Discarded equipment	1,413.0	32.1	13.3	187.3	1,172.9	7.4
Common sludge	1,337.3	293.1	3.1	1,029.0	7.3	4.8
Wood	949.3	602.3	71.9	56.0	197.8	21.3
Plastic	893.8	253.5	24.8	273.5	306.0	36.0
Others	461.0	77.9	2.1	7.8	363.2	10.0
Glass	367.2	126.6	6.1	85.4	148.0	1.1

By sectors, Mineral waste was mainly caused by Construction (34.7 million tons, 7.9% less than in 2018) and Industry (30.6 million tons, 5.8% less). Mixed Wastes by Water Supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (16.7 million, 1.7% more than the previous year).

On the other hand, Animal and Vegetable Waste was generated for the most part by Agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishing (5.7 million tons, 0.6% less than in 2018).

Annual variation rates of waste generated by activity sectors. Year 2019

Units: percentage

	Total Sectors	Industry (Including mining and energy production)	Construction	Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	Services	Agriculture, livestock breeding, forestry and fishing
Waste generated	-4.0	-4.4	-8.0	-1.2	8.8	-1.2
Minerals	-7.4	-5.8	-7.9	-30.8	-8.5	-3.8
Mixed waste	0.6	1.0	37.5	1.7	-15.3	-8.2
Animal and vegetal	-2.7	3.9	-49.2	-1.6	-24.7	-0.6
Metallics	4.9	-0.4	25.8	1.4	92.9	-3.4
Paper and Cardboard	26.5	1.3	-21.7	-6.3	47.3	-4.2
Chemical	1.8	-0.7	15.9	6.7	11.5	-8.2
Discarded equipment	-0.7	15.5	177.1	33.7	-5.6	-3.9
Common sludge	-16.6	2.2	-26.2	-21.0	55.3	-9.4
Wood	-3.1	2.4	-50.1	18.1	9.9	5.4
Plastic	13.0	1.9	9.7	28.2	14.9	-10.0
Others	7.0	0.8	31.3	8.3	8.6	-3.8
Glass	9.4	5.1	-30.7	15.7	12.7	-15.4

Final waste treatment in the Spanish economy

Of the 133.2 million tons of waste generated in 2019, final waste treatment companies³ handled 115.9 million tons, which was 5.0% less than in the previous year.

Specifically, they treated 113.7 million tonnes of non-hazardous waste (5.0% less than in 2018) and 2.2 million tonnes of hazardous waste (4.6% less).

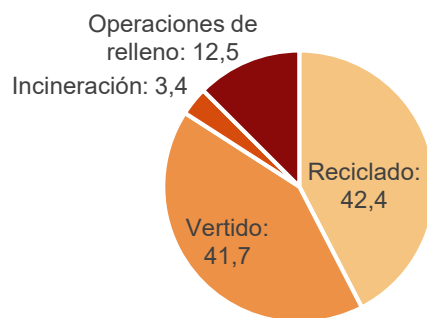
Final waste treatment. Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

Treated waste (by type of management)	Quantity	Annual rate
Total waste managed	115,879.8	-5.0
Non-hazardous	113,676.7	-5.0
Hazardous	2,203.1	-4.6
Recycled	49,109.7	3.9
Non-hazardous	47,572.8	4.3
Hazardous	1,536.9	-5.7
Dumped	48,291.5	-17.9
Non-hazardous	47,789.9	-18.0
Hazardous	501.6	-3.5
Incineration	3,931.6	5.7
Non-hazardous	3,767.0	5.8
Hazardous	164.6	3.0
Backfilling operations	14,547.0	19.4
Non-hazardous	14,547.0	19.4
Hazardous	..	..

Of the total waste treated, 41.7% ended up in landfill, 42.4% was recycled, 12.5% was reused in backfilling operations and 3.4% was incinerated.

Final waste treatment (percentage). Year 2019



The amount of recycled waste has increased by 19.0% between 2015 and 2019.

³ Only final treatments are included. The primary differences between the waste generated and that treated, as published in the Waste Account, are due, among other reasons, to exclusively accounting for final treatments, foreign trade in waste (imports and exports) and the differences in volume between the time when waste is generated and when it is finally treated.

Recycled waste. 2015-2019 Series

Units: thousands of tonnes.

	Quantity	% of total waste treated	Annual rate
2015	41,279.9	38.3	
2016	39,581.4	37.1	-4.1
2017	44,921.8	38.9	13.5
2018	47,245.1	38.7	5.2
2019	49,109.8	42.4	3.9

In 2019, 49.1 million tonnes of waste were recycled, 3.9% more than in 2018. Of this figure, 47.8% corresponded to *Mineral wastes*, 20.9% to *Metallic wastes*, and 8.0% to *Paper and cardboard*.

The recycled waste that presented the highest growth rates in 2019 were *Glass* (16.1%), *Others* (15.5%) and *Plastics* (12.0%). For its part, *Discarded Equipment* decreased 15.8% compared to 2018.

Recycling by waste category. Year 2019

Units: thousands of tonnes.

Recycled waste (by type)	Recycled	%	Annual rate
TOTAL	49,109.7	100.0	3.9
Minerals	23,497.0	47.8	11.1
Metallics	10,270.1	20.9	-4.4
Paper and Cardboard	3,904.8	8.0	-0.2
Mixed waste	3,621.2	7.4	-0.2
Animal and vegetal	1,780.2	3.6	0.5
Glass	1,295.2	2.6	16.1
Chemical	1,236.8	2.5	-2.9
Common sludge	1,104.6	2.3	-13.2
Wood	984.4	2.0	1.8
Plastic	722.9	1.5	12.0
Discarded equipment	480.4	1.0	-15.8
Others	212.1	0.4	15.5

Data Review and Update

The data published today are final. The results are available at INEBase.

Methodological note

The objective of the Environmental Accounts (EA) is to integrate environmental information into the central system of National Accounts in a coherent way. They include a set of satellite accounts, which are transmitted annually, compiled using the accounting formats applicable to the different sectoral and territorial areas, with a strong use of physical data.

The Waste Accounts are useful for organising information on the generation of waste and the management of its flows to recycling facilities, backfilling operations, incineration and controlled landfills. From this information, important indicators can be obtained to measure the pressure that the economy exerts on the environment. They also make it possible to monitor the objectives of waste reduction policies and evaluate improvements in management for the recovery of materials.

The study of waste includes the generation and treatment of waste in accordance with the guidelines established in Regulation (EC) 2150/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November on waste statistics, as amended by Regulation (EU) 849/2010.

The INE annually carries out the Statistics on Generation, Collection and Treatment of Waste with the aim of quantifying the origin and treatment thereof. This information, together with information from other bodies, mainly that provided by the Ministry of Ecological Transition, provides the basis for the preparation of the Waste Accounts.

For more information the methodology can be accessed at:

https://ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736177062&menu=metodologia&idp=1254735976603

The standardized methodological report is at:

<https://ine.es/dynt3/metadatos/es/RespuestaDatos.html?oe=30095>

INE statistics are produced in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for European Statistics, which is the basis for the institution's quality policy and strategy. For more information see the section on [Quality at INE and the Code of Best Practices](#) on the INE website.

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