

Sources: INE (Statistics on the Collection and Treatment of Waste) and Eurostat.

Nearly 5.2 million tonnes in separate collection

In 2022, almost 5.2 million tonnes of waste were collected from separate collection. This figure does not include construction and demolition waste, unused medicines, rubber waste, or sanitary and biological waste.

Four types of waste accounted for 93.3% of the total

Paper and cardboard waste (28.9%) together with animal and vegetable waste (28.4%) accounted for more than half of the total. Glass accounted for 18.1% and mixed packaging and mixed containers for a further 17.9%. These four types of waste accounted for 93.3% of all separate municipal waste collection.

The rest progressively contributed less: wood (3.2%), electrical equipment and electronic equipment components (1.6%), textiles (0.9%), plastics (0.5%), metal (0.5%), batteries and accumulators (0.04%).



The largest amount in separate collection was paper and cardboard

In relative terms, there are large differences in the quantities of separately collected waste per inhabitant within each Autonomous Community.

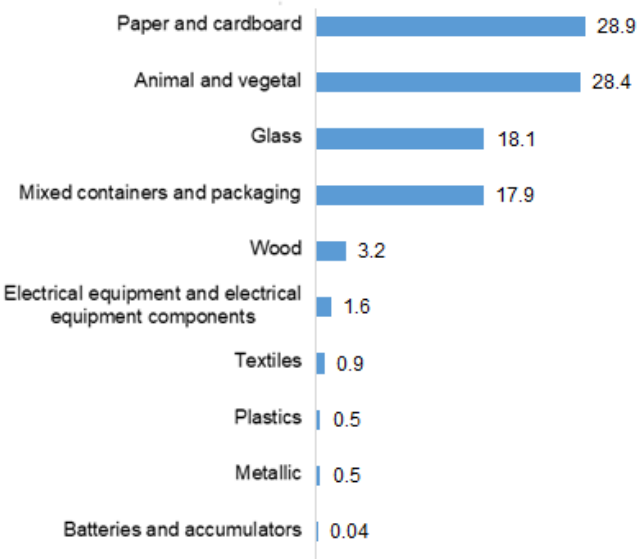
Paper and cardboard accounted for the largest quantities. The average was 31.3 kilograms per inhabitant per year, a figure that almost doubled in the Valencian Community (61.1) and fell to 9.5 in Cantabria.

The Balearic Islands was the biggest contributor in terms of glass and mixed packaging

For glass collection, the average was 19.6 kilogrammes per inhabitant, with a maximum in the Balearic Islands (40.2), which doubled that value, and a minimum of 9.1 in Extremadura.

For mixed packaging and mixed containers, the average figure was 19.4 kilogrammes per inhabitant, with the Balearic Islands again contributing the highest amount (38.4) and the Region of Murcia the lowest (9.8).

Separate collection by waste type. 2022
Percentage

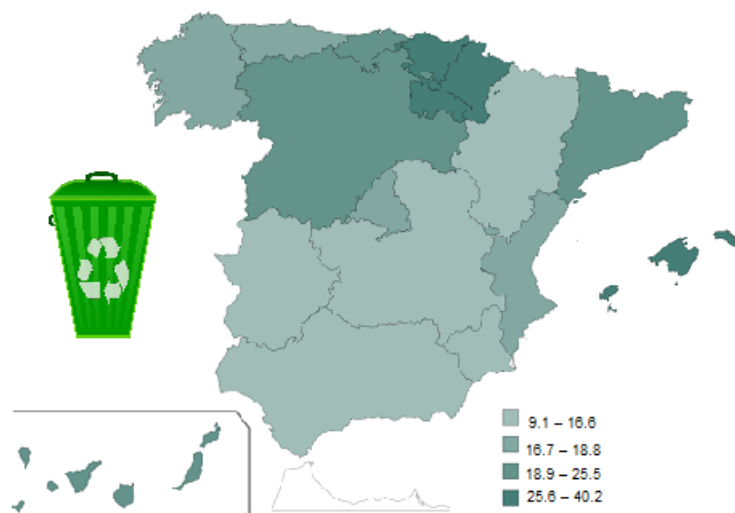


From household to treatment, passing through the container

There are various ways of organising separate collection, which starts in the household and ends at a specialised treatment centre. The intermediate stop is usually specific containers or recycling points, placed in urban areas according to the volume and frequency of the waste.

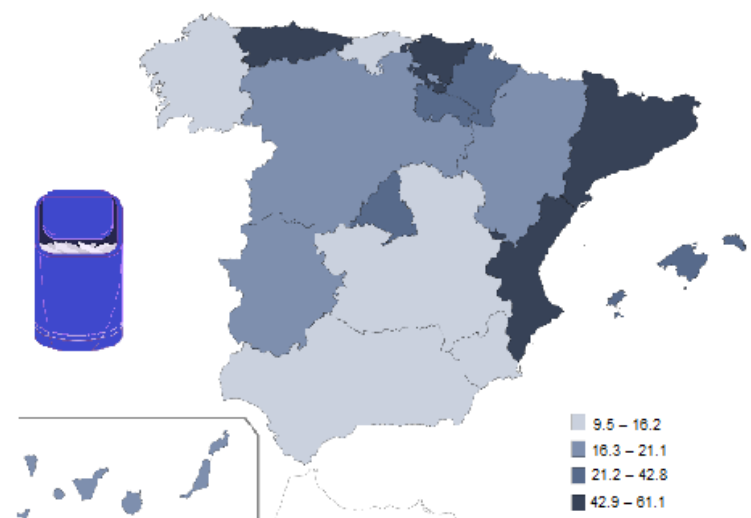
Glass

Kilograms per inhabitant



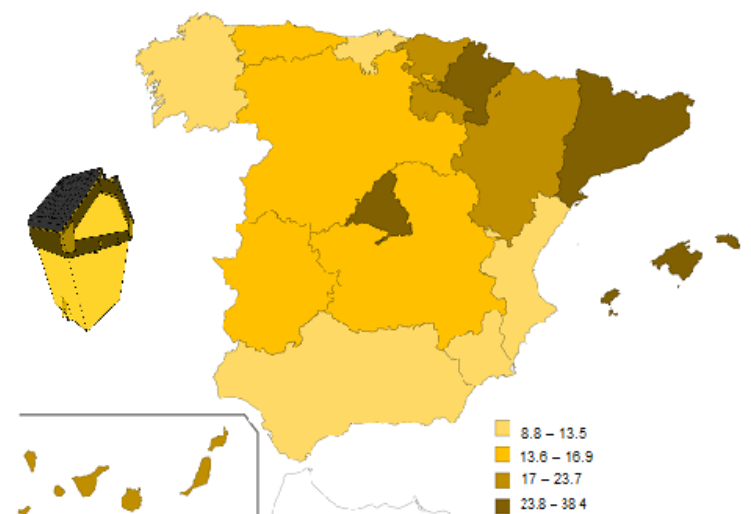
Paper and cardboard. 2022

Kilograms per inhabitant

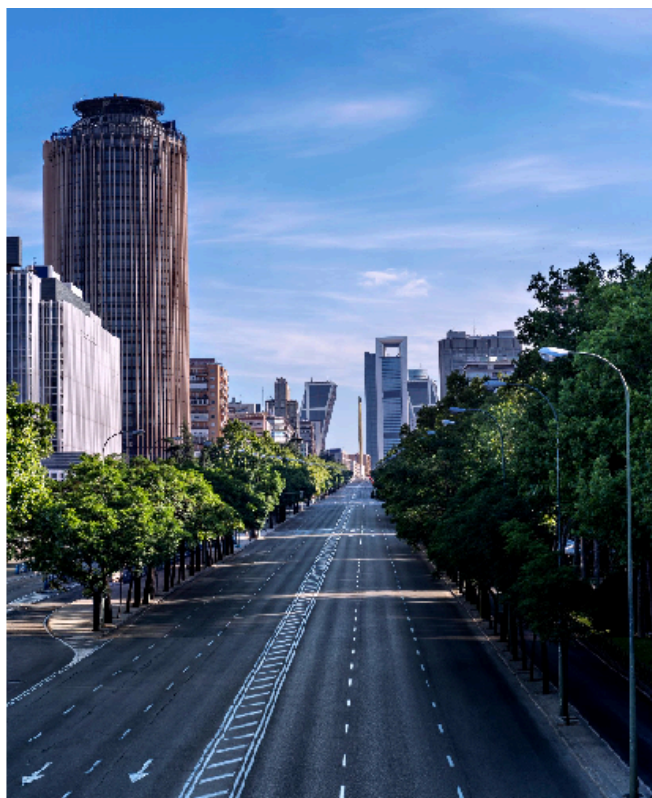


Mixed packaging and mixed containers. 2022

Kilograms per inhabitant



On the other hand, there were increases in the collected quantities of electrical equipment and electronic components (+41.3%), animal and vegetable waste, and mixed packaging and mixed containers (both up 7.2%).



The chart illustrates the volume of various waste types in the EU from 2010 to 2022. The Y-axis measures the volume in million tonnes, ranging from 0 to 1,600,000. The X-axis shows the years from 2010 to 2022. The waste categories tracked are: Paper and cardboard, Animal and vegetal waste, Glass, Mixed containers and packaging, Wood, Electrical equipment and electrical equipment components, Textiles, Plastics, Metallic, and Batteries and accumulators. Paper and cardboard consistently represents the largest volume of waste, starting at approximately 1,480,000 million tonnes in 2010, dipping to around 1,000,000 in 2014, and rising to about 1,500,000 in 2022. Animal and vegetal waste is the second largest, starting at around 950,000, dipping to 800,000 in 2012, and rising to 1,450,000 in 2022. Glass, Mixed containers and packaging, and Wood also show significant volumes, all starting between 600,000 and 800,000 in 2010 and rising to between 900,000 and 1,000,000 in 2022. The remaining categories (Electrical equipment and electrical equipment components, Textiles, Plastics, Metallic, and Batteries and accumulators) represent much smaller volumes, all starting below 200,000 in 2010 and rising to below 200,000 in 2022.

Year	Paper and cardboard	Animal and vegetal waste	Glass	Mixed containers and packaging	Wood	Electrical equipment and electrical equipment components	Textiles	Plastics	Metallic	Batteries and accumulators
2010	1,480,000	950,000	800,000	650,000	200,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
2012	1,100,000	800,000	750,000	650,000	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2014	1,000,000	800,000	750,000	550,000	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2016	1,050,000	850,000	800,000	600,000	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2018	1,100,000	1,000,000	850,000	700,000	200,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2020	1,400,000	1,250,000	850,000	900,000	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
2022	1,500,000	1,450,000	900,000	950,000	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000



Municipal waste recycling. 2022

	Percentage
Germany	69.2
Austria	62.6
Slovenia	62.6
Netherlands	57.6
Luxembourg	55.6
Belgium	54.7
Italy	53.3
Latvia	50.8
Slovakia	49.5
European Union	49.1
Lithuania	48.4
Denmark	45.7
Finland	43.7
Spain	42.9
France	41.2
Poland	40.9
Sweden	39.7
Croatia	34.2
Estonia	33.2
Hungary	32.8
Portugal	30.2
Bulgaria	24.6
Greece	17.3
Cyprus	14.8
Malta	12.5
Romania	12.3
Czechia	:
Ireland	:

: Data not available.

Source: Eurostat



515 kilogrammes per inhabitant on average

In terms of population, 515 kilogrammes per inhabitant were collected within the European Union in 2022. The figure in Spain was somewhat lower (482). This total includes all types of municipal waste, both from separate collection and mixed waste.

Germany and Austria recycle the most

According to Eurostat estimates, 49.1% of municipal waste was recycled in 2022. The Member States with the highest recycling rates were Germany (69.2%), Austria, and Slovenia (both 62.6%); while Romania (12.3%), Malta (12.5%), and Cyprus (14.8%) had the lowest figures.

For packaging, on average, 65.3% was recycled, though the rate varied depending on the type of material used. Plastic packaging had the lowest recycling rates overall with an average of 40.7%, with paper and cardboard packaging having the highest recycling rate (83.1%).

13 point increase in Spain since 2015

In Spain, the recycling rate of municipal waste collected overall was 42.9%, a figure that has increased by 13 percentage points since 2015. 46.8% was sent to landfill and 10.3% ended up being incinerated.

Final treatment of municipal waste in Spain. 2015-2022 (%)

