

During 2020, municipal waste generation decreased by 5.6 per cent over the previous year to a total of 331,553 tonnes.

Municipal Waste: 2020

Municipal waste generation

In 2020, the generation of municipal waste amounted to 331,553 tonnes, declining by 19,800 tonnes or 5.6 per cent over 2019. This decrease was reflected across all waste types, except for metal waste which increased by 520 tonnes. The biggest drop in absolute terms was registered in mixed municipal waste which went down by 9,470 tonnes or 6.0 per cent when compared to 2019 (Table 1). Upon considering the generated amounts per capita of both the national population and the net tourism registered in Malta during 2020, the figures reveal that the generation of municipal waste decreased by three kilograms per person, to a level of 630 kilograms (Table 2).

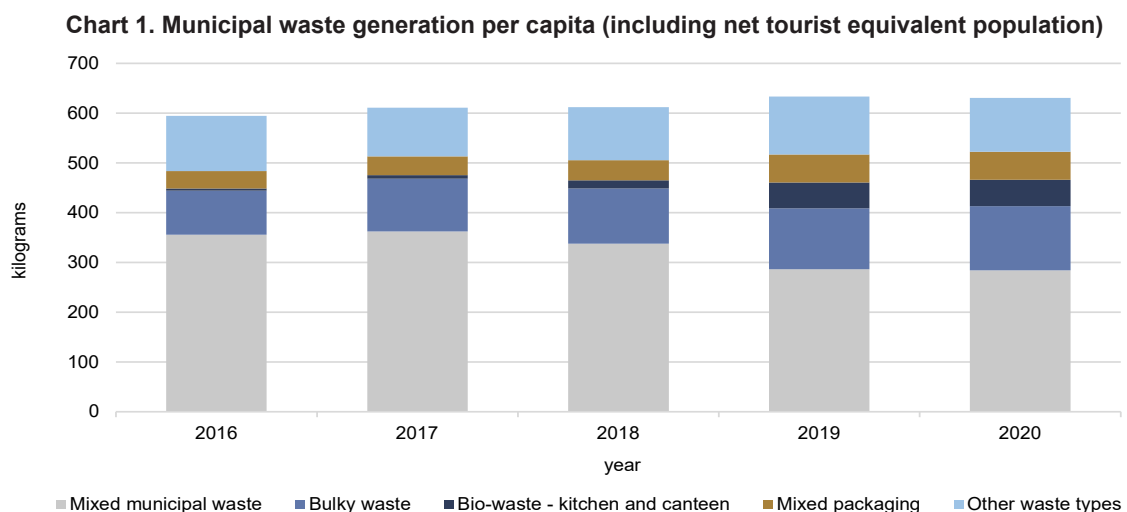
Data on municipal waste generation by waste collection source shows that decreases were registered across all categories except for the black bag collection from local councils and the door-to-door glass collection categories that increased by 3,055 tonnes and 243 tonnes respectively. On the other hand, the largest decrease was registered in the black bag collection from other sources category which fell by 12,524 tonnes or 28.8 per cent in comparison to 2019 (Table 2).



Municipal waste treatment

During 2020, the total amount of treated municipal waste decreased by 44,107 tonnes or 12.5 per cent over that recorded in 2019, to a total of 308,538 tonnes. The share that went to landfilling from the total treated municipal waste stood at 88.7 per cent, which is lower than the 90.9 per cent level that was recorded a year before. When viewed by waste type, the highest increase in landfilling was registered for mixed municipal waste at 47,512 tonnes. In contrast, waste that was landfilled for rejects coming from mechanical treatment decreased by 84,231 tonnes (Table 3).

When compared to 2019, the share of municipal waste recycling increased by 2.2 percentage points to 11.3 per cent of the total municipal waste treatment. Paper and cardboard was the most recycled material at 51.4 per cent of the total recycled waste. Increases in recycling were achieved for glass (168.1 per cent) and metal waste (20.0 per cent), while decreases were registered for waste electrical and electronic equipment (28.9 per cent), plastic (18.0 per cent), paper and cardboard (9.3 per cent) and other waste (24.6 per cent) (Table 3) ■



Statistics in this News Release should be interpreted in the context of the COVID-19 situation.

Table 1. Municipal waste generation by year and waste type

	tonnes				
Municipal waste type	2016	2017	2018	2019¹	2020
Paper and cardboard	18,927	17,699	20,273	20,920	19,536
Plastic	4,425	3,830	2,525	3,737	2,726
Metals	2,000	1,655	1,489	1,493	2,013
Glass	7,210	4,850	8,008	8,709	6,999
Wood	9,605	6,902	8,575	8,985	8,884
Waste electrical and electronic equipment ²	2,537	3,716	3,939	3,907	3,040
Mixed packaging	16,992	19,156	21,750	31,152	29,367
Mixed municipal waste	174,760	184,952	179,847	158,686	149,216
Bulky waste	43,802	53,962	58,909	68,084	68,067
Bio-waste - garden and park	4,334	5,002	4,228	5,562	5,284
Bio-waste - kitchen and canteen	2,188	3,625	8,664	28,892 ³	27,857
Clothes/textiles	323	977	1,194	1,813	1,475
Other ²	5,163	5,332	6,352	9,413	7,090
Total	292,268	311,659	325,751	351,353	331,553

¹ Revised (see methodological note 3).

² Includes hazardous waste.

³ First full calendar year during which nationwide organic waste collection took place.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 2. Municipal waste generation by year and waste collection source

	tonnes				
Municipal waste collection source	2016	2017	2018	2019¹	2020
Bring-in sites	3,486	3,852	4,218	4,093	3,814
Civic amenity sites ²	18,236	16,559	19,415	23,283	22,574
Green/Grey bag collection	16,620	19,183	22,925	30,622	29,074
Door-to-door glass collection	493	1,553	1,962	3,295	3,538
Black bag collection - local councils	136,619	139,246	140,740	115,274	118,329
Black bag collection - other	38,141	45,707	39,107	43,411	30,887
Street cleaning	4,962	5,302	6,247	9,265	6,904
Organic waste collection	2,162	3,054	7,381	27,356 ³	26,600
Other ²	71,549	77,205	83,756	94,752	89,833
Total	292,268	311,659	325,751	351,353	331,553
Municipal waste generation per capita - kilograms ⁴	635	655	660	683	642
Municipal waste generation per capita (including net tourist equivalent population) - kilograms ⁴	594	611	612	633	630

¹ Revised (see methodological note 3).

² Includes hazardous waste.

³ First full calendar year during which nationwide organic waste collection took place.

⁴ See methodological notes 4 and 5.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 3. Municipal waste treatment by year, treatment category and waste type

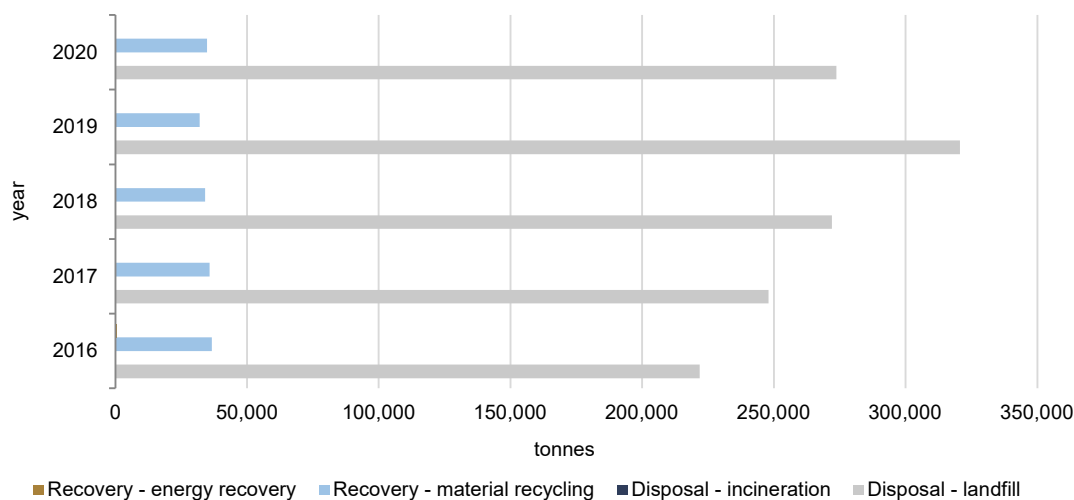
	tonnes				
Waste treatment by waste type	2016 ¹	2017 ¹	2018 ¹	2019 ¹	2020
Disposal - landfill	221,813	248,006	272,032	320,631	273,729
Wood	8,487	5,593	8,575	8,632	8,884
Mixed municipal waste	81,704	83,957	74,038	92,300	139,812
Bulky waste	42,014	53,727	58,732	68,084	68,060
Bio-waste - garden and park	3,977	3,584	4,178	5,007	4,582
Street-cleaning residues	4,625	5,302	6,119	8,537	6,450
Digestate from Anaerobic Digestion	7,118	9,516	9,931	11,402	3,898
Rejects from mechanical treatment of waste ²	73,450	85,774	110,089	126,206	41,975
Other	438	554	369	463	68
Disposal - incineration	28	20	16	17	14
Solvents, paints, inks, adhesives and resins ²	28	17	16	13	-
Other	-	4	-	4	14
Recovery - material recycling	36,696	35,826	34,099	31,997	34,796
Paper and cardboard	25,109	21,109	21,055	19,714	17,882
Plastic	3,393	2,994	2,125	3,069	2,516
Metals	3,028	5,076	2,825	2,000	2,401
Glass	3,297	3,878	5,231	3,452	9,254
Waste electrical and electronic equipment ²	1,656	1,413	1,443	2,170	1,543
Other	214	1,356	1,420	1,591	1,200
Recovery - energy recovery	806	-	-	-	-
Rejects from mechanical treatment of waste	806	-	-	-	-
Municipal waste treatment - Total	259,342	283,852	306,147	352,645	308,538

¹ Revised (see methodological note 3).

² Includes hazardous waste.

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Chart 2. Municipal waste treatment



Methodological Notes

1. Data for this news release is sourced from WasteServ Malta Ltd. and the Environment and Resources Authority. Data for 2020 should be considered as provisional.
2. Data presented in this news release is based on the methodology that is applied for the Municipal waste data reporting which is submitted on an annual basis by NSO to Eurostat. This methodology follows the provisions as laid down in the document 'Guidance for the compilation and reporting of data on municipal waste according to Commission Implementing Decisions 2019/1004/EC and 2019/1885/EC, and the Joint Questionnaire of Eurostat and OECD' version of 12/08/2021' may be accessed <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/342366/351811/Guidance+on+municipal+waste+data+collection/>
3. Revisions have resulted from data validation processes that were carried upon the National Waste Inventory data that is sourced from the Environment and Resources Authority. These revisions have affected data for the municipal waste generation of 2019 and the municipal waste treatment of the period 2016 to 2019.
4. Eurostat data on municipal waste generation and treatment which is expressed in kilograms per capita, is based on data regarding the total population as at 1st January. In this news release, the municipal waste generation per capita is calculated according to the total population as at 31st December.
5. Municipal waste generation per capita (including net tourist equivalent population) is a national indicator that has been included in this news release since all the waste that is generated by tourists forms part of municipal waste. It is calculated by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Municipal waste generation - kilograms}}{(\text{total population} + \text{inbound tourist equivalent population} - \text{outbound tourist equivalent population})}$$

The inbound tourist equivalent population is calculated by dividing the total nights spent in Malta by tourists by the number of nights in the year. The outbound tourist equivalent population is calculated by dividing the total nights spent by Maltese residents abroad by the number of nights in the year.

6. Table 3 presents data for the four final treatment categories under which municipal waste that was treated from 2016 to 2020 can be classified. Data is inclusive of waste exports to overseas final treatment facilities occurring due to the limited waste treatment capacity in Malta.
7. The difference between municipal waste generation and municipal waste treatment occurs mainly as a result of moisture gains and losses in organic waste, variations in stocks of waste that are held in storage prior to the final treatment operation and waste that is exported for pre-treatment operations (consequently the final treatment operation is not known).
8. Definitions:
 - **Municipal waste:** Waste that is generated from households as well as waste that is similar in nature and composition to household waste that is generated by businesses and institutions. This waste is collected by or on behalf of municipal authorities and disposed of through the waste management system.
 - **Bring-in sites:** Collection depots for clean source segregated recyclable materials. Four types of materials are collected: glass, metals, plastic and paper/cardboard.
 - **Civic amenity sites:** Collection depots for the separate disposal of household bulky waste and recyclables. Up to 2020 there were six sites operated by WasteServ Malta Ltd.
 - **Green/Grey bag collection:** Door-to-door collection of mixed paper, metals and plastics from households on pre-determined weekdays. This service commenced in 2011.
 - **Door-to-door glass collection:** Door-to-door collection of glass from households on pre-determined days, usually taking place once a month. This service commenced in 2014.
 - **Black bag collection:** Door-to-door collection of mixed waste primarily from households but also including waste from businesses and institutions on pre-determined weekdays. As from the 31st October 2018 households are expected to refrain from disposing of organic waste in this bag.
 - **Organic waste collection:** Door-to-door collection of organic waste from households on pre-determined weekdays. This collection started as a pilot project covering a limited number of localities in 2015 and was extended nationally from the 31st October 2018 onwards.
 - **Disposal - landfill:** Disposal of waste into or onto land, including specially engineered landfill, covered by Disposal codes D1, D5 and D12.
 - **Disposal - incineration:** Incineration without energy recovery refers to the thermal treatment of waste and is considered as a disposal operation classified under code D10.

- **Recovery - material recycling:** Any waste recovery operations by which disposed materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes, except for use as fuel. These recovery operations are classified under codes R2 to R9 and R11.
- **Recovery - energy recovery:** Incineration with energy recovery is considered as a recovery operation whenever both the conditions and energy efficiency thresholds which are provided in the 'Guidelines on the energy efficiency formula for incineration facilities' related to the Waste Framework Directive are met. This treatment operation is classified under code R1.

9. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Statistical Concepts: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/reports.aspx?id=23>

Classification: [List of recovery and disposal operations](#) (Annex I and Annex II of Directive 2008/98/EC)

10. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.

11. A detailed news release calendar is available on:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx

European statistics comparable to data in this news release are available at:

[EUROSTAT Website/Homepage/Statistics Database](#)

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