

Overview of national waste prevention programmes in Europe



Spain 

2021

Photo: © Mario Cvitkovic from Pixabay

General information

Name of the country/region	Spain
Coverage of the waste prevention programme (national/regional)	National
Type of programme (stand alone or integrated into waste management plan)	Stand-alone programme
Title of programme and link to programme	Programa estatal de prevención de residuos 2014-2020 (State programme for waste prevention 2014-2020) https://www.miteco.gob.es/es/calidad-y-evaluacion-ambiental/planes-y-estrategias/Planes-y-Programas.aspx#:~:text=El%20Programa%20Estatal%20de%20Prevenci%C3%B3n,los%20residuos%20generados%20en%202010.
Duration of programme	2014-2020
Language	Spanish
Development process of the programme/revision	
Budget envisaged for implementation of the project	It is stated that the actions performed by public bodies will be subject to the available budget, and some activities may be financed by the EU through the LIFE+ programme (p. 39)

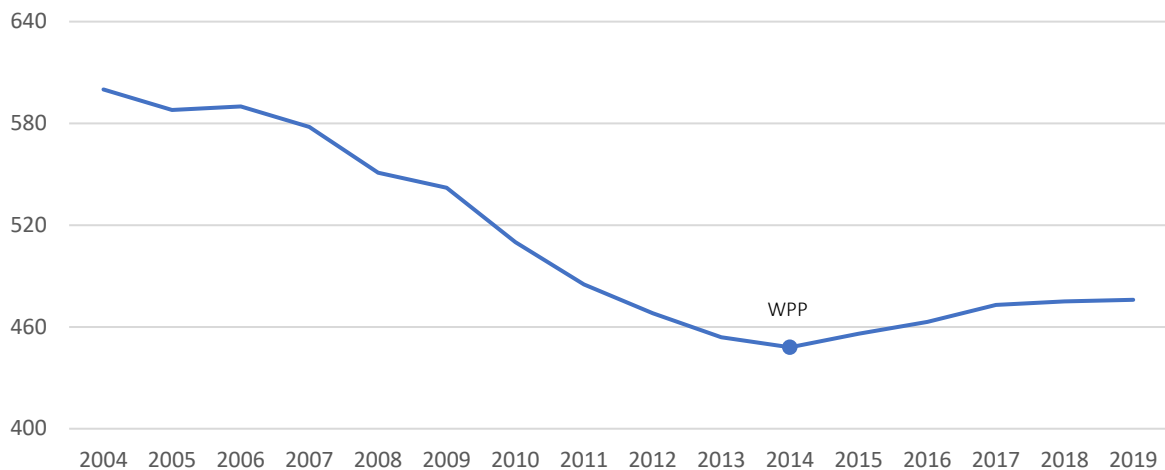
Waste generation

The following figures illustrate the progress towards waste prevention and decoupling of waste generation from economic growth in Spain.

Municipal solid waste

- The generation of municipal solid waste (MSW) per capita decreased steadily, from 600 kg per capita in 2004 to 476 kg in 2019 (Figure 1).
- The lowest level of waste generation was reached in 2014 (448 kg per capita), with the implementation of the first waste prevention programme (WPP). MSW generation slightly increased the following years and may be influenced by many factors (e.g. population, household expenditure).
- The steep decrease in MSW generation between 2009 and 2013 is most likely influenced by the global financial crisis, which occurred shortly before this period.
- Overall, Spain's MSW generation of 476 kg per capita is slightly below the European average of 502 kg per capita per year.

Figure 1: Municipal waste generation in Spain (kg per capita), 2004-2019

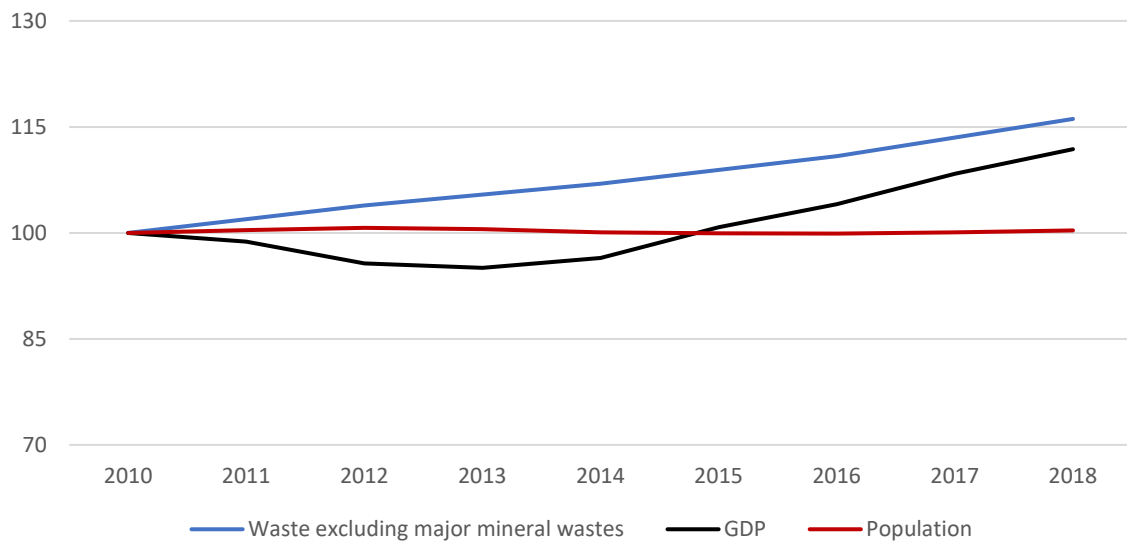


Source: Eurostat Circular Economy Monitoring Framework.

Total waste

- Total waste generation in Spain followed a continuous increasing trend between 2010 and 2018 (see Figure 2).
- A different trend can be observed for Spain's economic growth in terms of GDP, which decreased between 2010 and 2013 and then steeply increased the following years.
- Although a longer time series is needed to confirm any conclusions on decoupling, Spain does not seem to be on track to decouple total waste generation from economic growth.
- A link between population growth and waste generation cannot be observed.

Figure 2: Growth rate of waste (excluding major mineral wastes), GDP and population in Spain, 2010-2018 (2010 = 100)



Source: Eurostat.

Waste prevention programme

Objectives and priorities

1. Waste prevention objectives of the programme: quantitative objectives (waste reduction) and qualitative objectives (reduction of hazardous substances/environmental impacts)	<p>The main objective of the programme is to reduce annual waste generation (in tonnes) by 10 % by 2020 compared with 2010</p> <p>The programme has four strategic aims: (1) reduce the quantity of waste, (2) reuse products and extend their life, (3) reduce the content of harmful substances in materials and products and (4) reduce the environmental impacts of waste and its impact on human health (p. 26)</p>
2. Sectors covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agriculture• Mining, raw material processing• Construction and infrastructure• Manufacturing• Sale, retail, transport• Households• Private service activities/hospitality• Public services
3. Priority waste types	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food/organic• Construction and demolition (C&D) waste• Hazardous waste• Household/municipal waste• Paper• Packaging• Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)/batteries• Manufacturing waste• Bulky waste• Other
4. Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Producers, the distribution sector, the services sector• Consumers and end users• Public administration (p. 26)

Targets, indicators and monitoring

1. Indicators proposed	<p>The following indicators are proposed (p. 38):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• annual amount of waste generated in tonnes• annual amount of waste generated in tonnes in particular economic sectors (activity, p. 10)• annual amount of waste generated in tonnes in comparison with GDP• annual amount of municipal waste generated in tonnes• annual amount of hazardous waste generated in tonnes compared with industrial GDP (gross value added (GVA))• annual amount of C&D waste generated in tonnes compared with GDP (GVA)• annual amount of packaging waste generated in tonnes;• annual amount of WEEE generated in tonnes• annual number of end-of-life vehicles• annual number of end-of-life tyres• annual amount of waste from batteries and accumulators• number and economic value of research and development (R&D) and innovation projects implemented annually in relation to waste prevention and sustainable consumption• number of waste prevention awareness campaigns run annually• number of voluntary agreements accomplished annually (in relevant sectors)• number of operational reuse centres and number of associated new jobs• number of companies accredited under the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme and other environmental management systems annually
2. Quantitative targets	<p>The main objective of the programme is to reduce annual waste generation (in tonnes) by 10 % by 2020 compared with 2010 (pp. 26 and 38)</p>
3. Monitoring of programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To monitor the indicators, information available from the National Statistics Institute, the Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Energy, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment, the autonomous communities and local government will be used (p. 38)• The programme's results will be monitored every 2 years, with 2014 the reference year. Monitoring will be based on the development of the indicators
4. Evaluation of the programme	<p>The results of the evaluation will be made available in the annual report published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment, starting in 2014 (p. 38)</p>

Prevention measures

Prevention measures implemented in accordance with Article 9 of the Waste Framework Directive

Table 1: Specific waste prevention measures structured in accordance with Article 9 of the Waste Framework Directive

<p>Promote and support sustainable consumption models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop education and/or awareness campaigns to promote sustainable consumption of food in households, schools and hotels, also encouraging ‘cooking without waste’ (p. 29) • Include conditions in public procurement documentation to promote the reduction of packaging consumption and the use of reusable or refillable packaging (p. 31)
<p>Encourage the design, manufacture and use of products that are resource-efficient, durable (including in terms of life span and absence of planned obsolescence), repairable, reusable and upgradeable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the regulations related to electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) to foster its eco-design and reuse, envisaging the possibility of establishing differentiated tariff criteria to finance WEEE management (p. 32) • Encourage eco-design of packaging and the development and use of new, more easily recycled materials (p. 30) • Promote eco-design for vehicles, to facilitate dismantling and recycling at the end-of-life stage (p. 32)
<p>Target products containing critical raw materials to prevent those materials becoming waste</p>	
<p>Encourage the reuse of products and the setting up of systems promoting repair and reuse activities, including in particular for electrical and electronic equipment, textiles and furniture, as well as packaging and construction materials and products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the establishment of EEE repair shops (p. 33) • Promote the establishment of repair and second-hand shops for furniture, toys, books and textiles (p. 33) • Promote information facilitating the repair and reuse of EEE components and provide information to citizens about the products’ characteristics related to their management as waste (p. 32) • Increase the reuse of EEE components in the professional and business sectors (p. 32)
<p>Encourage, as appropriate and without prejudice to intellectual property rights, the availability of spare parts, instruction manuals, technical information, or other instruments, equipment or software enabling the repair and reuse of products without compromising their quality and safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the provision of information to assist those managing the dismantling of vehicles and facilitating the reuse of their components (p. 32)

<p>Reduce waste generation in processes related to industrial production, extraction of minerals, manufacturing, construction and demolition, taking into account best available techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the decree that regulates the generation and management of C&D waste to strengthen waste prevention in construction, demolition and rehabilitation projects; the possibility of establishing economic incentives could also be assessed (p. 29) • Develop selective demolition techniques (p. 29) and tools to assess the environmental performance of construction materials and their potential for reuse (p. 29)
<p>Reduce the generation of food waste in primary production, in processing and manufacturing, in retail and other distribution of food, in restaurants and food services as well as in households as a contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goal to reduce by 50 % per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and to reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put into practice the strategy ‘More food, less waste’ and local programmes to reduce food waste, while promoting proximity markets (shopping locally) (p. 29) • Promote R&D projects aimed at reducing food waste in the food supply chain (p. 29) • Support businesses to prevent waste and modify their production processes, logistics and sales to reduce food waste (p. 29)
<p>Encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and reprocessing into non-food products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create voluntary agreements with associations and social organisations, to make use of excess food items generated during the production and distribution phases of the supply chain (p. 29)
<p>Promote the reduction of the content of hazardous substances in materials and products, without prejudice to harmonised legal requirements concerning those materials and products laid down at EU level, and ensure that any supplier of an article as defined in point 33 of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council provides the information pursuant to Article 33(1) of that regulation to the European Chemicals Agency as from 5 January 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the regulations related to EEE to strengthen prevention aspects linked to the restriction of harmful substances in EEE (p. 32) • Substitute harmful substances in production processes (p. 31)
<p>Reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for reuse or recycling</p>	
<p>Identify products that are the main sources of littering, notably in natural and marine environments, and take appropriate measures to prevent and reduce litter from such products; where Member States decide to implement this obligation through market restrictions, they should ensure that such restrictions are proportionate and non-discriminatory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the packaging regulations to strengthen the prevention of over-packaging, the use of reusable packaging and the marketing of easily recyclable packaging (p. 30)

<p>Aim to halt the generation of marine litter as a contribution towards the UN Sustainable Development Goal to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds</p>	
<p>Develop and support information campaigns to raise awareness about waste prevention and littering</p>	<p>Develop education and/or awareness campaigns to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • incorporate waste prevention and particularly reuse into minor construction projects (p. 30) • emphasise the role that consumers and final users have in packaging waste reduction and reuse (p. 30) • promote the use of products equivalent to single-use/disposable items that can be reused or have a longer life (p. 31) • improve the delivery of used EEE to reuse centres and increase its subsequent reuse (p. 33) • encourage the delivery of furniture, toys, books and textiles to reuse centres and their resale (p. 33)
<p>Additional implemented prevention measures, not covered by Article 9 of the Waste Framework Directive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the marketing of products in reusable and refillable packaging (p. 30) • Promote the development of instruments (guarantees, certificates, etc.) to certify the quality of EEE in second-hand markets (p. 33)

Food waste prevention

Food waste generation

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment, the amount of food waste generated from households in 2020 amounted to 1 363 thousand tonnes.

Measures to prevent food waste

Responsibility for waste management in Spain mainly lies with the autonomous communities. Some have put into place or are currently preparing stricter regulations on food waste ⁽¹⁾. Changes in prevention strategies were introduced in 2020 by the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, which has passed a law covering the issue of food waste prevention throughout the value chain with more concrete measures ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾.

Information and awareness campaigns

Measures focus on information and awareness campaigns on food loss and waste prevention. The Spanish government has developed education programmes in schools to reduce food waste and foster awareness about the causes and impacts of food waste ⁽⁴⁾.

Guidelines

In 2019, the Catalan Food Safety Agency developed a *Guide to good hygiene practices for food waste reduction in restaurants and retail trade* ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ https://ideasen.llorenteycuencia.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/03/180321_Food-wastage_ENG.pdf

⁽²⁾ <https://askwonder.com/research/sustainability-food-waste-european-markets-e8a0enluj>

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2020-08/fw_lib_fwp-strat_law-3-2020.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.eu-fusions.org/index.php/country-reports/reports/300-spain>

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2020-01/fw_lib_gfd_esp-cat_good-hygeine-practices.pdf

In 2020, the ELIKA-Basque Foundation for Agro-food Safety of the Basque Country developed ‘Guidelines on food donation of surplus food’

Initiatives

The legislator approved tax incentives on food donations and promises regulatory benefits for companies that save food.

The voluntary agreement ‘Stop wasting food’, promoted by a Spanish non-governmental organisation, involves stakeholders along the food supply chain and aims to make the value chain more efficient. Moreover, with voluntary agreements such as ‘Feeding implies no waste, use it all!’ producers and retailers aim to introduce measures to study and reduce food waste ⁽⁶⁾.

An exemplary measure introduced by the Castilla-La Mancha region is an official seal to identify companies or producers voluntarily participating in the fight against food waste ⁽⁷⁾. In some regions the implementation of measures such as the separate collection of bio-waste for composting, door-to-door collection or pay-as-you-throw systems have started ⁽⁸⁾.

Reuse of products

Data

With regard to the Commission Implementing Decision (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2021.010.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2021%3A010%3ATOC), this section will be updated by the EEA accordingly.

Measures to support reuse

In 2015, Spain transposed the EU Directive 2012/19 on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) into national law. With the national decree, Spain introduced the first national, legally binding, preparatory measures for the reuse target for e-waste, separate from recycling. The reuse target from 2018 is 3 % for large appliances and 4 % for IT equipment ⁽⁹⁾.

An exemplary measure that supports the reuse of products is the Spanish ‘Campaign for the reduction of packaging waste’, presented at the European Week for Waste Reduction. Directly, the campaign raises awareness by promoting reusable items, e.g. reusable cups and bottles. Indirectly, the campaign makes people more aware of waste prevention by providing information about the issue of packaging waste and by showing the environmental benefits of less-packaged products ⁽¹⁰⁾.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://www.eu-fusions.org/index.php/country-reports/reports/300-spain>

⁽⁷⁾ <https://toogoodtogo.ch/de-ch/movement/politics/europe>

⁽⁸⁾ <https://zerowasteurope.eu/2018/11/national-and-regional-environmental-groups-unite-their-strength-to-form-alianza-residuo-cero-a-zero-waste-alliance-in-spain/>;

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_es_en.pdf

⁽⁹⁾ [Making-CEP-more-ambitious-through-more-reuse-and-repair-FINAL.pdf \(rruse.org\)](#)

⁽¹⁰⁾

<https://www.aragon.es/documents/20127/13719664/Campa%C3%B1a+para+la+reducci%C3%B3n+de+residuo+s+de+envases.pdf/c7854874-8064-2c8e-e37a-0fac13e9c24f?t=1568363335455>

Best practice examples

Zero Waste Alliance in Spain

In Spain, members of the Zero Waste Alliance are Greenpeace, Ecologistas en Acción, Surfrider España, Rezero, Retorna and Amigos de la Tierra. The goal of this alliance is to work with municipalities and regions to support the transition to a circular economy. It aims to make progress on waste reduction and fees for preparing items for reuse and recycling. The members agree that a change in production and distribution models is needed to reduce waste and implement more efficient waste collection and treatment systems by prioritising the preparation of items for reuse and recycling rather than sending them for landfill or incineration ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://zerowasteurope.eu/2018/11/national-and-regional-environmental-groups-unite-their-strength-to-form-alianza-residuo-cero-a-zero-waste-alliance-in-spain/>

Links to the circular economy

Topic	Addressed in the programme	Comments
Eco-design	Yes	E.g. promotion of eco-design in EEE
Repair, refurbishment and remanufacture	Yes	E.g. facilitation of dismantling, repair and reuse of EEE
Recycling	Yes	E.g. recycling of vehicles
Economic incentives and finance	Yes	E.g. in the C&D sector
Circular business models	Yes	E.g. repair/refurbishment/second-hand shops
Eco-innovation	No	
Governance, skills and knowledge	Yes	E.g. best prevention practices as competitive strategy, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises