

# Overview of national waste prevention programmes in Europe



## Bulgaria

2021

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## General information

Name of the country/region	Bulgaria
Coverage of the waste prevention programme (national/regional)	National
Type of programme (stand alone or integrated into waste management plan)	Waste prevention programme integrated into waste management plan
Title of programme and link to programme	Objective 1 of the national waste management plan 2021-2028: Reduce the harmful effects of waste by preventing its generation and encouraging its reuse — national waste prevention programme (‘Цел 1: Намаляване на вредното въздействие на отпадъците чрез предотвратяване образуването им и насърчаване на повторното им използване - Национална програма за предотвратяване на образуването на отпадъци’) <a href="https://www.moew.government.bg/bg/proekt-na-nacionalen-plan-za-upravlenie-na-otpaducite-2021-2028/">https://www.moew.government.bg/bg/proekt-na-nacionalen-plan-za-upravlenie-na-otpaducite-2021-2028/</a>
Duration of programme	2021-2028
Language	Bulgarian
Development process of the programme/revision	<p>In Bulgaria, the requirement to develop a national waste prevention programme (NWPP) was introduced in the Waste Management Act adopted in 2012, and the country’s first programme was developed by the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) and approved by the Council of Ministers in 2014 as part of the national waste management plan (NWMP). The NWPP for the period 2021-2028 is the second programme for the country. Given the high priority of food waste prevention at the global level and the requirements of Directive (EU) 2018/851 of 30 May 2018 amending Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC (WFD), a separate sub-programme for the prevention of food waste was prepared, following the steps for development and the philosophy of the current waste prevention programme</p> <p>The NWMP and NWPP have been developed in accordance with Art. 28 and Art. 29 of the WFD and Art. 49 and Art. 50 of the Waste Management Act of the Republic of Bulgaria. In addition to the legal requirements, a number of European and national programming and methodological documents have been taken into account in their development, such as the methodological guidance note of the European Commission Directorate-General for Environment: ‘Preparation of a waste management plan’</p>

Budget envisaged for implementation of the project	Implementation of the NWPP: BGN 239.48 million (approx. EUR 122.15 million) Implementation of the sub-programme for the prevention of food waste: BGN 75.45 million (approx. EUR 38.49 million)
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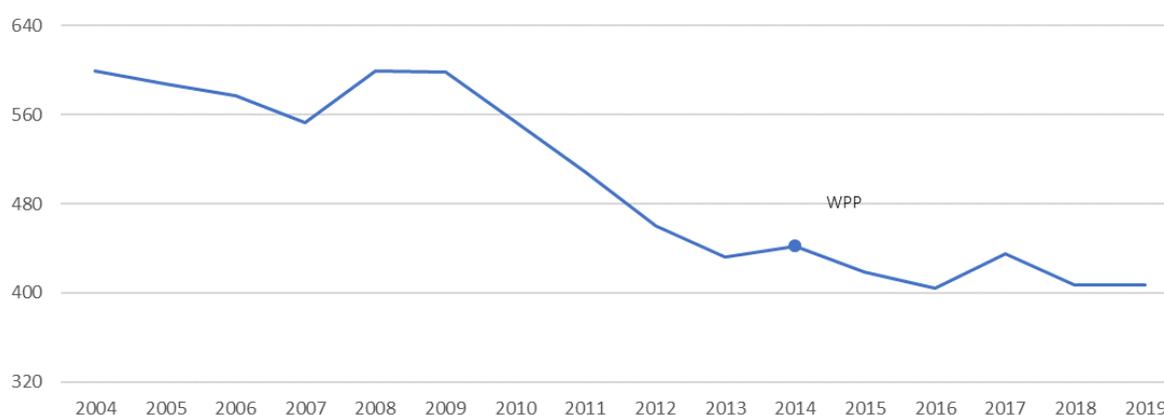
## Waste generation

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

### *Municipal solid waste*

- Figure 1 shows the generation of municipal waste per capita and indicates a significant decrease from 599 kg per capita (in both 2004 and 2008) to 404 kg in 2016. The level remained low (407 kg per capita) in 2018 and 2019.
- A decreasing trend was most obvious between the years 2009 and 2013, and the level has remained low, reaching a minimum in 2016.
- Bulgarian municipal solid waste (MSW) generation has remained under the European average (489 kg per capita/year) since 2012. This may have been positively influenced by the implementation of the measures introduced by the first Bulgarian NWPP, which started in 2014.
- In line with the positive progress in the generation of municipal waste per capita, the total amount of municipal waste generated also follows a downwards trend and, between 2008 and 2018, a decrease of about 36 % was observed.

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

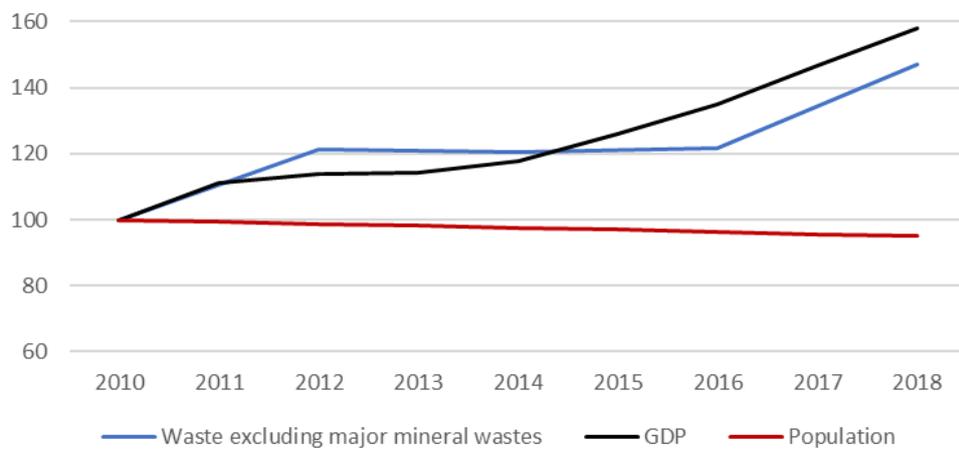


Source: Eurostat Circular Economy Monitoring Framework.

### *Total waste*

- The NWPP reports that in the period 2008-2018 there was an unfavourable upwards trend in the amount of industrial waste generated (35 %, despite fluctuations in some years during this period). This was the result of several large economic activities, mostly connected to building the infrastructure for energy, fuel, water supply, sewerage and waste management services. It has an obvious effect on Bulgaria's total waste generation excluding major mineral wastes (see Figure 2). This trend seems to be in line with the GDP of Bulgaria, which is constantly increasing.
- In the selected period, the aim of breaking the link between economic growth and the generation of waste was not achieved.
- The generation of waste is clearly decoupled from population growth in Bulgaria, as the population is following a decreasing trend.

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



Source: Eurostat.

## Waste prevention programme

### *Objectives and priorities*

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1.	Waste prevention objectives of the programme: quantitative objectives (waste reduction) and qualitative objectives (reduction of hazardous substances/environmental impacts)	To break the link between economic growth and improving human well-being, on one hand, and the increase in waste generation and the associated harmful effects on human health and the environment, on the other To reduce the amount of waste generated and the amount of harmful substances contained in the waste
2.	Sectors covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manufacturing and industry</li><li>• Households</li><li>• State administration</li><li>• Retail</li><li>• Infrastructure</li><li>• Service activities</li></ul>
3.	Priority waste types	As covered by the whole NWPP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• food waste</li><li>• household waste</li><li>• industrial waste</li><li>• construction waste</li><li>• hazardous waste</li></ul>
4.	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public institutions</li><li>• Households</li><li>• Municipalities</li><li>• Business</li><li>• Schools</li><li>• Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)</li></ul>

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## *Targets, indicators and monitoring*

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1. Indicators proposed	<p>In addition to the indicator of high importance — the rate of waste accumulation, presented as the amount of municipal waste generated per year per capita — the action plan of the NWPP 2021-2028 recognises a number of indicators based on the concrete activities/measures stipulated, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• generated industrial and construction waste per capita</li><li>• rate of food waste generation</li><li>• number of composters provided to households in each of the years of the programme</li><li>• number of waste prevention measures implemented by the municipalities</li><li>• number of campaigns with the topic of waste prevention implemented at national and municipal levels</li></ul>
2. Quantitative targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A decrease in the generation of household waste per capita by municipalities by 2028 in comparison with 2020</li><li>• Annual average growth rate of food waste during the period of the programme to be lower than the growth rate of GDP</li><li>• At least two 6-month waste prevention campaigns at the national level and at least 100 campaigns at the municipal level</li><li>• Composters to be provided to 100 000 households in each of the years of the programme</li></ul>
3. Monitoring of programme	<p>Monitoring of the NWPP will be performed simultaneously in the same way as for all components under the NWMP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information on progress under each of the measures in the individual programmes will be collected by the institutions and organisations that are indicated as leading/responsible for the implementation of the respective measure</li><li>• each of these institutions will designate a coordinating unit within its structure that is responsible for, among other tasks, submitting data and information on implementation of the measures to the MoEW no later than the end of February of the year following the reporting year</li><li>• based on that, the Directorate for Waste Management and Soil Protection of the MoEW prepares an annual progress report, which is to be approved by the Minister of Environment and Water, after its consideration by the Collegium of the MoEW</li></ul>
4. Evaluation of the programme	<p>Information on current indicators and target indicators for individual objectives will be collected through the integrated national waste management information system.</p> <p>As part of the Bulgarian Waste Management Act, the following requirements related to the monitoring and evaluation of the NWMP and NWPP are set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are to be evaluated and reported on at least every 6 years and updated when necessary</li></ul>

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- Every 3 years, the MoEW will submit a report on the progress of the implementation of the objectives and measures of the programme to the Council of Ministers. The report should contain an assessment of the results of the implementation of the programme, i.e. trends and the degree of implementation of the programme's objectives

The reports on the implementation of the NWMP and NWPP will be published on the website of the MoEW to inform the public

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## Prevention measures

Prevention measures implemented in accordance with Article 9 of the WFD	<p>It is envisaged that the objectives will be achieved through specific measures/activities, which are presented in the action plan to support the NWPP. For each measure, the implementation deadline, value and possible sources of funding, expected result from implementing the measure, indicators for monitoring the progress and implementation of the measure, and responsible institutions (lead and partner(s)) are indicated</p> <p>The measures are formulated as a result of the review of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the exemplary measures for prevention of waste generation, according to Appendix No 4 to Art. 50, para. 3, item 2 of the Waste Management Act and Annex IV to Art. 29 of the WFD</b></li> <li>• <b>the measures set in the NWPP 2014-2020</b></li> <li>• <b>good practices applied in Bulgaria and in other countries in recent years</b></li> <li>• <b>measures arising from documents adopted at EU level (directives, decisions, etc.)</b></li> </ul>
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Table 1: Specific waste prevention measures structured in accord with Article 9 of the Waste Framework Directive

Promote and support <b>sustainable consumption</b> models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of the knowledge base on the circular economy, monitoring waste and material flows through various projects</li> </ul>
Encourage the design, manufacture and use of products that are <b>resource-efficient, durable</b> (including in terms of life span and absence of planned obsolescence), <b>repairable, reusable</b> and <b>upgradeable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of a procedure for financing projects and implementation of projects for the development of new product designs and technologies requiring fewer natural raw materials and generating less waste after the use of the products, and development of products and technologies with improved 'environmental credentials'</li> </ul>
Target products containing <b>critical raw materials</b> to prevent those materials becoming waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the measures set out in the strategy for transition to a circular economy relating to products containing raw materials of critical importance for the EU and the country, to prevent the possibility of products containing such raw materials being turned into waste</li> </ul>
Encourage the reuse of products and the setting up of systems promoting <b>repair</b> and <b>reuse activities</b> , including, in particular, for electrical and electronic equipment, textiles and furniture, as well as packaging and construction materials and products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the patent tax under the Local Tax Act to the minimum permissible for those taxable individuals whose activity directly leads to the reuse of certain products (e.g. repair of shoes, furniture, clothes, household appliances) and hence to waste prevention</li> <li>• Applying procedures for financing and implementing projects for acquiring or improving qualifications in crafts related to repair services and repair of products</li> <li>• Increasing the number of containers/points for collection of textile waste for reuse is seen as a desirable practice and the need to include this</li> </ul>

	waste stream in the extended producer responsibility scheme over the coming years is recognised
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	
Reduce waste generation in processes related to industrial production, extraction of minerals, manufacturing, construction and demolition, taking into account best available techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusion of voluntary agreements between the MoEW and branch organisations for cooperation in the field of preventing the generation of industrial waste</li> </ul> <p>This topic is covered by other components of the Bulgarian NWMP 2021-2028 (e.g. by the programme for achieving the goals for the recycling and use of construction and demolition waste)</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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and dissemination of a guide for preventing the generation of household food waste</li> <li>• Development of municipal waste management programmes, including goals and measures for food waste prevention, and their implementation into practice</li> <li>• Application of a procedure for financing and implementing projects focused on technologies/product design that lead to the reduction and prevention of food waste generation in the food industry</li> <li>• Implementation of continuous targeted campaigns for clarification and provision of information on food waste at the central and municipal levels, including on the importance of distinguishing between the ‘best before date’ and ‘date of expiry’ of commercial food products (at least four 6-month campaigns to be conducted at the national level and 50 campaigns at the municipal level)</li> <li>• Implementation of demonstration projects for food waste prevention</li> </ul>
Encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and reprocessing into non-food products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusion of voluntary agreements between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and branch organisations in the field of food production and processing and between the Ministry of Tourism and branch organisations in the field of restaurants and tourism, for cooperating on reducing food waste and implementing the measures</li> <li>• Elimination of the requirement for labelling food from commercial establishments/public catering establishments if they wish to donate food</li> </ul>

	<p>before the expiry date (amendment of the regulations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for the activities of institutions that organise and carry out food donation before the expiry date (based on the ‘Food and basic material support programme 2021-2027’, a grant agreement with organisations in the field of donating food before the expiry date, including an extensive information campaign)</li> <li>• Increasing food donation opportunities by overcoming barriers to food donation through VAT enforcement mechanisms</li> </ul>
<p>Promote the <a href="#">reduction of the content of hazardous substances</a> 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"> <li>• Application of a procedure for financing and implementing projects for the development of new product designs and technologies for materials/products containing less hazardous substances and generating less waste after their use, and products and technologies with improved ‘environmental credentials’</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for reuse or recycling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of free household composters for green and other biowaste</li> <li>• Reduction of waste paper and other office consumables through the implementation of national and sectoral programming documents for ‘e-government’</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Identify</a> products that are <a href="#">the main sources of littering</a>, notably in natural and marine environments, and <a href="#">take appropriate measures to prevent and reduce litter</a> 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"> <li>• Extending the range of plastic shopping bags for which a product fee is charged</li> <li>• Annual thematic inspections carried out by the Regional Inspectorate for Environment and Water to ensure compliance by the retail sector with the requirements of the Regulation on plastic shopping bags</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Aim to halt the generation of marine litter</a> as a contribution towards the UN Sustainable Development Goal to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regulation determining the procedure and amount of the product fee to be paid for plastic shopping bags has been adopted</li> </ul>
<p>Develop and support <a href="#">information campaigns to raise awareness</a> about waste prevention and littering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of continuous targeted campaigns to explain and provide information on waste prevention policies</li> <li>• Involving waste prevention issues in the information campaigns of the producer responsibility organisations under the extended producer responsibility scheme</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering incentives to expand the participation of NGOs, schools, universities, municipalities and other central and regional institutions and business organisations in the European Week for Waste Reduction</li> </ul>
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Additional implemented prevention measures, not covered by Article 9 of the WFD

Measures of a different nature are included in the action plan of the programme, namely information-educational, economic, administrative-regulatory or normative. Some of the measures are aimed at several target groups and others at a specific target group (households, businesses, students, etc.)

Several measures aim to promote and implement waste prevention in general through state administrative institutions, e.g. the preparation of recommendations for waste prevention as part of the guidelines of the MoEW for the development of municipal waste management programmes for the period 2021-2028. The aim is for all municipalities in the country to have waste management programmes that include waste prevention goals and measures

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## Food waste prevention

### *Food waste generation*

In Bulgaria, precise data on the generation of food waste by sectors measured according to the EU methodology for food waste adopted in 2019 are not yet available. However, based on data from the Executive Environment Agency and in view of Regulation No 2/2014 on waste classification, estimates show that, in 2018, the total amount of food waste in Bulgaria reached almost 500 000 tonnes, of which the main source was households (almost 58 %), followed by the food processing and production sector (38 %) and primary production (3 %).

### *Measures to prevent food waste*

The Bulgarian Food Bank was established in 2012. It is currently the leading national organisation in the country specialising in the collection, storage and distribution of donated food products with a short shelf life, in accordance with all food safety standards. With the help of a network of partner organisations and volunteers across the country, food is distributed to thousands of people in need.

In line with global goals and EU food waste policies, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry has begun developing a comprehensive national programme to prevent and reduce food loss, which will include measures targeting food loss and generation of waste from the farm to the table.

The action plan of the sub-programme for food waste prevention sets a strategic goal and operational goals consistent with the objectives of the NWPP 2021-2028 and envisages implementing various measures and activities to prevent food waste to a total value of around BGN 75.5 million (approximately EUR 38.5 million).

The measures are mostly information-educational and administrative-regulatory in nature and are aimed at several target groups, including public institutions, households and business. Their implementation will contribute to:

- improving the quality of information and tracking of the quantities of food waste generated, reused, recycled and recovered;
- raising public awareness of the issue of food loss through food waste;
- raising awareness of preventing food waste in various target groups (municipalities, NGOs, businesses, households, etc.);
- encouraging food donation.

For a more comprehensive mapping of country efforts to prevent food waste, please visit the [European Commission's Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub](#).

## 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](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*

Activities and measures targeting reuse are mostly covered by other components of the Bulgarian NWMP 2021-2028 (e.g. the programme for achieving the objectives of preparation for reuse and recycling of municipal waste).

In the action plan of NWPP 2021-2028 (as part of the NWMP), a significant measure to support reuse envisages an amendment to the Local Tax Act introducing a patent tax at the minimum permissible rate for those taxable individuals whose activity directly leads to the reuse of certain products (e.g. repair of shoes, furniture, clothes, household appliances). The indicator for this measure is set as the

number of municipalities whose municipal councils voted for a minimum patent tax rate for services related to the reuse of products and hence to the implementation of waste prevention policies.

A rich variety of used goods and vintage items can be given another life at one of the flea markets in the streets of Bulgarian cities, mostly held as informal gatherings of vendors who want to sell things they no longer use. The largest flea market, known as Bitaka, takes place every weekend in Sofia.

To support the reuse of products, a number of second-hand online shops operate on Bulgarian websites, while one of the reuse initiatives sometimes hosts pop-up events in Sofia. Some of the online shops focus on selling clothes, shoes and accessories (e.g. [modeteka.bg](http://modeteka.bg), [remix.bg](http://remix.bg), [mania.bg](http://mania.bg)) or even offer textiles for rent, while others offer a wide variety of used furniture and other goods (e.g. [bazar.bg](http://bazar.bg), [olx.bg](http://olx.bg)).

## Best practice examples

### *Textile reuse in Bulgaria*

The Association of Recyclers and Traders of Second Hand Clothes was founded to sustain the industry — which has social and economic importance for the development of the circular economy — and to control compliance with EU and national legislation concerning textile processing and trade in textiles. It unites over 40 companies in Bulgaria that specialise in the collection, sorting and sale of reusable textiles. Separately collected textile waste is sent to sorting centres where it undergoes a number of processes before it is converted into second-hand clothes and shoes of various quality. Some of these items are marketed in Bulgaria but most are exported to other countries.

### *Free compost campaign*

The capital of Bulgaria has facilities for processing green waste and other biowaste, such as the ‘Han Bogrov’ facility for biological treatment, producing compost and electricity. Since 2014, all biowaste, including food from restaurants, kindergartens, markets, retail chains and green waste, such as branches, leaves or grass, are collected separately and processed. This led to an initiative introduced at the beginning of 2015, in which the municipality provides up to 10 kg of compost free of charge to all Sofia residents who have paid a municipal waste tax. Some of the compost produced is also used in the gardens and parks of Sofia.

### *Sofia municipality campaign — ‘Compost at home’*

In 2010, the municipality of Sofia launched a home composting programme named ‘Compost at home’, which aims to encourage citizens to reduce their production of household food and green waste, as well as encouraging them to recycle these types of waste. Over the years, many thousands of 700-litre composters, activators, aerators and information materials have been provided to households, schools, kindergartens and parks that wanted to become partners of the municipality in all of its 24 metropolitan areas.

One of the waste prevention measures included in the NWPP 2021-2028 builds on these achievements and sets Bulgarian municipalities the target of providing 100 000 composters to households by 2028.

## Links to the circular economy

Waste prevention is an integral part of the comprehensive transformation towards a circular economy. It reduces not only the input of natural resources into the economy but also the efforts required to collect and recycle waste.

Approaches to improving circularity are often linked to successful waste prevention. The following table shows which circular strategies are explicitly integrated into the Bulgarian waste prevention programme.

Topic	Addressed in the programme	Comments
Eco-design	Yes	Support for projects covering eco-design is anchored in the measures of the NWPP action plan
Repair, refurbishment and remanufacture	Yes	For example, concrete tax incentives and financial support for projects encouraging repair and refurbishment are planned
Recycling	No	Provisions and plans related to recycling are covered by other components of the Bulgarian NWMP 2021-2028
Economic incentives and finance	Yes	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new requirements under the waste management legislation strengthening the ‘polluter pays’ principle</li> <li>• favouring activities directly leading to the reuse of certain products (e.g. repair of shoes, furniture, clothes, household appliances) through tax incentives</li> </ul>
Circular business models	Yes	For example, the extended producer responsibility scheme, which is successfully applied to packaging, end-of-life vehicles, waste electrical and electronic equipment, waste oils and petroleum products, batteries and accumulators and tyres
Eco-innovation	Yes	For example, implementation of the programme for scientific and development activities and for innovations in waste prevention as part of the activities of the Research Fund
Governance, skills and knowledge	Yes	Initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guidelines developed by the MoEW dedicated to all central and regional government institutions and to the municipalities for preparation of a plan for prevention of waste generation in their daily life</li> <li>• preparation and implementation of plans for waste prevention by the municipalities in their social, health, educational and other units and enterprises</li> </ul>