Country profile

Overview of national waste prevention programmes in Europe

Latvia

2021

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European Environment Agency

General information

Name of the country/region	Latvia
Coverage of the waste prevention programme (national/regional)	National
Type of programme (stand alone or integrated into waste management plan)	Integrated into the waste management plan
Title of programme and link to programme	Atkritumu apsaimniekošanas valsts plāns 2021-2028 (National waste management plan 2021-2028) https://likumi.lv/ta/id/320476 and http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/documents/6951
Duration of programme	2021-2028
Language	Latvian
Development process of the programme/revision	The Latvian national waste management plan 2021-2028 was approved by Cabinet of Ministers in January 2021. It comprises the 'Waste prevention plan' (Chapter 9), the 'Waste prevention state programme' (Chapter 10), the 'Food waste prevention programme', (Chapter 11), the 'Packaging waste prevention programme' and Chapter 12 'Programme for development of re-use of goods and repair services' The national waste management plan for 2021-2028 is based on the study 'Investment needs assessment for the development of the national waste management plan for 2021-2028' by Geo Consultants Ltd, a multidisciplinary expert team, and proposals developed in that report. The plan also takes stock from the report 'Investment needs assessment for the development of the State waste management plan for 2021-2028', by Gateway Baltics Ltd
Budget envisaged for implementation of the programme	Estimated costs and financing options are included in the waste management plan. Sources of funding are EU funds, investments by economic operators, waste producers and operators, and waste management fees, which are applied in implementing the polluter pays principle and the principle of extended producer responsibility Budgeted actions specifically addressing waste prevention include the establishment of an infrastructure for the collection of goods and the creation of centres for repairing and preparing goods for reuse, and implementation of the food waste prevention programme

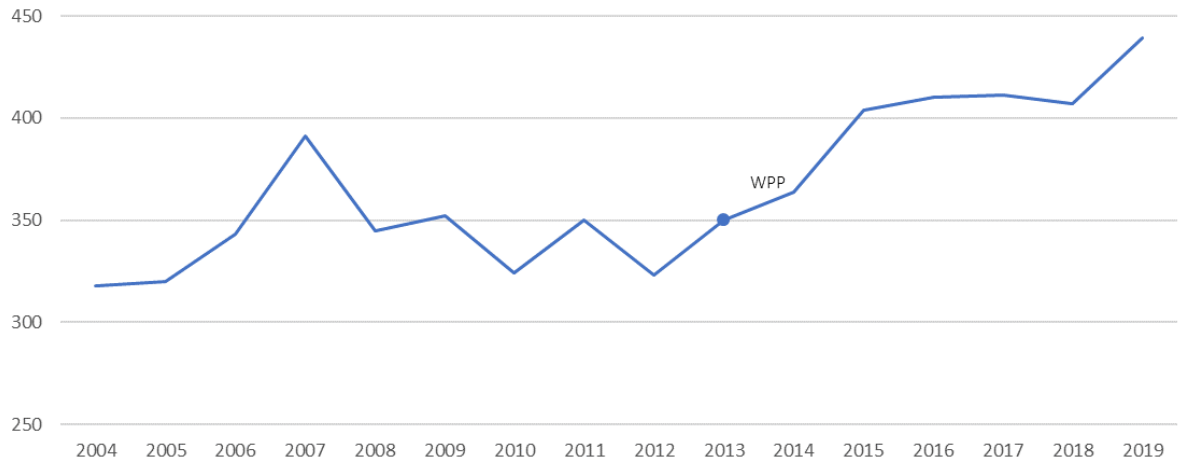
Waste generation

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

Municipal solid waste

- According to Eurostat, municipal solid waste (MSW) generation in Latvia increased from 318 kg per capita in 2004 to 439 kg per capita in 2019; however, the trend has been fluctuating, and a decrease in waste generation can be seen between the years 2007 and 2010.
- The generation of MSW per capita (see Figure 1) started to increase in 2013.
- Although waste generation has increased, it is still below the European average (489 kg per capita).
- Between 2008 and 2013 the trend stagnated at a lower level of between 330-350 kg per capita per year.
- The lower level towards the end of the first decade is similar to trends observed in other European countries and reflects the global financial crisis that developed shortly before this period.
- Latvia's first waste prevention plan (WPP) came into force in 2013. As MSW generation is influenced by many factors (e.g. household expenditure), the prevention measures in the WPP do not reflect the trend in absolute municipal waste generation.

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

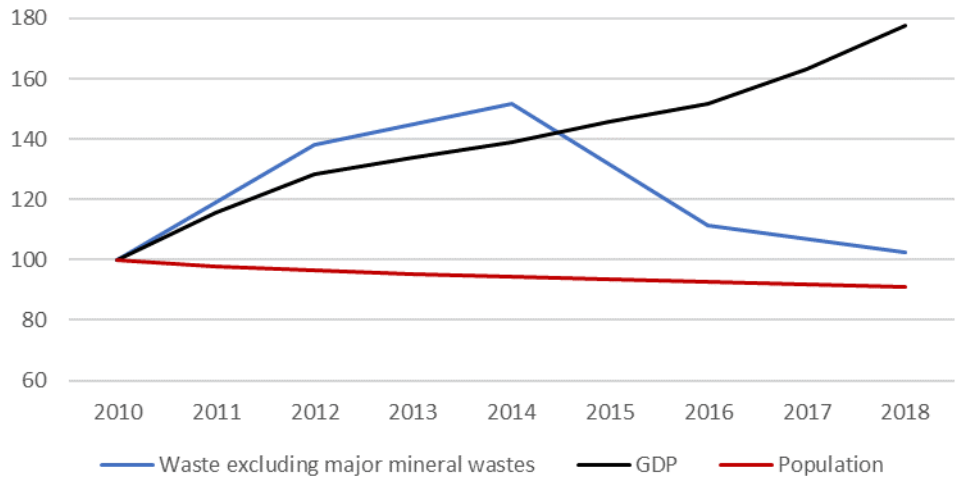


Source: Eurostat Circular Economy Monitoring Framework.

Total waste

- Latvia's waste generation (excluding major mineral wastes) increased significantly from 2010 to 2014, after which it declined, reaching the same level as in 2010 (Figure 2). During the same period, Latvia's GDP increased steadily.
- Although a longer time series is needed to confirm any conclusions on decoupling, since 2014 Latvia seems to have been on track to completely decouple total waste generation from economic growth.
- A link between waste generation and population growth, which declined slightly between 2010 and 2018, cannot be observed.

Figure 2: Growth rate of waste (excluding major mineral wastes), GDP and population in Latvia, 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)	The overarching objectives of the waste management plan are: • to prevent waste generation and to ensure a significant reduction in the total amount of waste generated, using the best available waste prevention options and best available techniques, increasing resource efficiency and promoting the development of a more sustainable consumer behaviour model • to ensure the rational use of waste as a resource following the basic principles of the circular economy and to ensure that resources are returned, as far as possible, to the economic circuit in a way that is useful to the economy • to ensure that the waste generated is not hazardous and presents a low risk to the environment and human health by promoting relevant product policies, restrictions on hazardous substances and substances harmful to the environment, and raising consumer awareness • to ensure that the amount of waste to be disposed of is reduced and that waste is disposed of in a manner that is safe for human health and the environment Of the above objectives, qualitative and quantitative prevention relates specially to the first and the third objectives
2.	Sectors covered	• The waste prevention programme links to the action plan for the transition and circular economy 2020-2027 and the specific actions and measures set out therein. Thus, no specific sector is excluded
3.	Priority waste types	• Food waste • Household waste • Hazardous waste • Electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) • Textiles • Furniture • Packaging • Building materials and construction products
4.	Target groups	All sectors, public, industry and households are included

Targets, indicators and monitoring

1.	Indicators proposed	The Latvian waste plan and prevention programme includes several indicators relating to the generation of household, industrial and hazardous waste. The target year is 2028
2.	Quantitative targets	• Amount of waste generated in households diminishes to 400 kg per capita and year from 409 kg/capita in 2018 • Total amount of municipal (household) waste generated to be < 650 000 tonnes per year. In 2018, generation was 785 074 tonnes per year • Total hazardous waste generated to decrease from 118 142 tonnes in 2018 to < 50 0000 tonnes in 2028 • Total recycled municipal (household) waste to increase from 43 % of annual waste generation in 2018 to 55 % in 2028 • Total recycled hazardous waste to increase from 31 % of annual waste generation in 2018 to 75 % in 2028 • Total recycled production waste to increase from 83.3 % of annual waste generation in 2018 to 85 % in 2028 • Disposal of total municipal (household) waste to decrease from 58.9 in 2018 to < 40 % in 2028
3.	Monitoring of programme	• Implementation will be followed up on a yearly basis
4.	Evaluation of the programme	See above

Prevention measures

Prevention measures implemented in accordance with Article 9 of the Waste framework Directive	Implemented waste prevention actions have been monitored on a yearly basis. The consolidated report is available at: http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/documents/4276 Quantitative targets relate e.g. to the generation of household, municipal and hazardous waste

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

Promote and support sustainable consumption models	• Specific governmental measures are not written into the waste prevention programme
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	• Specific governmental measures are not written into the waste prevention programme
Target products containing critical raw materials to prevent those materials becoming waste	• Under the current framework (European Commission's industrial strategy) ([1]), the storage and dismantling of end-of-life vehicles and waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) must ensure the separation of components containing critical raw materials • Promoting the reuse of products that are the main sources of critical raw materials to prevent these raw materials from becoming waste (including batteries, accumulators and WEEE) is included in the budget of the plan. A supporting regulation is planned to be drafted by 2022
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	• The programme includes actions relating to promoting reuse of EEE (scheduled by 2022) • Draft regulatory enactments will be developed during the programme • To have a baseline for further actions, the Latvian Waste Management Association conducted a study on consumer behaviour relating to donation and repair of textiles and shoes in 2020
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	• The size of the repair and reuse services sector has recently been estimated to assess the need for further actions • Further actions are planned, e.g. in relation to the action plan for the transition to a circular economy 2020-2027

([1]) https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/european-industrial-strategy_lv

Reduce waste generation in processes related to industrial production, extraction of minerals, manufacturing, construction and demolition, taking into account best available techniques	• Waste minimisation actions are generally applied in the commercial sector, in which the main goal is to make a profit, and the reuse of materials in technological processes is an opportunity to reduce operating costs. For example, in the repair of roads, the removed asphalt surface is used in the composition of the restored road surface. In construction and building, the purchase of construction materials is limited to ensure that no residues occur and only finishing (extra) materials that may be required by the customer during the warranty period are left
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	• The national plan on food waste prevention 'Pārtikas atkritumu rašanās novēršanas programma 2021-2028' will be implemented and further developed • The 'Food Bank Paēdušai Latvijai' (For a fed Latvia), is a food programme run by the Latvian Samaritan Association, which helps disadvantaged people by issuing food parcels. The parcels contain food donated by producers, processors and traders
Encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and reprocessing into non-food products	• Legal risks and liabilities for food donations are minimised through Regulation (EC) No 178/2002. Food may be donated to organisations that are engaged in charity work and are registered with the Food and Veterinary Service in accordance with regulatory enactments regarding the procedure for recognition and registration of food businesses. Only prepacked and clearly labelled food may be donated. In turn, charities must ensure the traceability of food for donation and adhere to the storage conditions, if any, on the label • Improving the potential for direct food donation from shops reduces food waste. Latvia will therefore specify in its regulatory enactments the conditions for donating food and non-food products and expand the range of organisations that may need to donate food products (e.g. nursing homes)

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	
Reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for reuse or recycling	• To promote waste prevention of waste currently sent to landfill, Latvia plans to further increase environmental tax rates for the disposal of municipal waste in municipal landfills
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	• Latvia plans to continue and improve the Environmental Education Foundation's annual campaign 'My Sea', which was first implemented in 2012. In 2019, the foundation developed guidelines for municipalities on actions to prevent marine polluting waste streams from priority sectors, including a compilation of good practice examples from the Baltic Sea region and other countries • Latvia will improve the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 on the reporting of lost nets and the recovery of lost fishing gear, as well as carrying out studies on the amount of plastic waste generated by fishing, aquaculture and shipping activities and on economic instruments to promote the reuse and recycling of such waste • Measures to reduce marine litter (marine pollutant waste) on land have been developed, based on the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helcom) regional action plan on marine litter
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	• Latvia will take measures to motivate companies to produce products that are strong enough to be reused and recycled and that use less harmful raw materials than at present, focusing on products that are more common in marine and coastal areas • Encourage voluntary agreements with retailers to reduce the consumption of plastic bags • Establish and implement a beverage deposit system and, where possible, promote refill systems • Provide special waste bins for cigarette butts and other used tobacco products in public smoking areas, such as beaches and outdoor restaurants, bars and ferries

	• Promote measures to reduce land-based marine pollution by providing sanitary infrastructure on the coast and inland nature tourism facilities • Facilitate the collection of waste from recreational craft in marinas (e.g. in accordance with the requirements of the eco-certificate 'Blue Flag' for waste reception and management in marinas)
Develop and support information campaigns to raise awareness about waste prevention and littering	• Promote educational activities on marine litter in synergy with other activities in the field of sustainable development and cooperation with civil society (including in relation to waste prevention and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production) • Promote curricula, including in the recreational sector (e.g. diving and sailing schools), which develop awareness, understanding and respect for the marine environment • Support participation in international, EU, Baltic Sea regional and national processes and initiatives for the prevention and reduction of marine pollution • To continue and improve the 'My Sea' campaign for monitoring and assessing beach waste and promoting public participation in the campaign • Run information campaigns for children, young people and consumers on the occurrence and prevention of marine litter (e.g. on collecting food and drink packaging or plastic bags after use), using materials already available and developing new graphic materials, including images of beaches

Additional implemented prevention measures, not covered by Article 9 of the Waste Framework Directive

Food waste prevention

Food waste generation
In 2018, the total amount of food waste generated in Latvia reached 319 000 tonnes, with primary production accounting for 5 % (16 000 tonnes), processing and production 37 % (117 000 tonnes), and trade < 1 % (2 000 tonnes). A total of 185 000 tonnes ended up in MSW, mainly generated by households and the catering sector. This fraction is equivalent to about 96 kg per person.

This information was generated using the methodology and guide approved by the EU for the determination of food waste and surpluses. The methodology was adapted to the Latvian situation and to the needs of enterprises and households in 2019. As not all producers of food waste and surpluses are obliged to report the amount of waste generated, the information summarised above is indicative.

Measures to prevent food waste
The Latvian waste prevention plan includes various measures to prevent food waste relating to facilitating food donations, awareness raising, and research and development support for zero waste actions and technologies. For example:

Improving the food donation system by:
- continuing to improve the regulations on food donation systems;
- preparing food donation guidelines (by 2024);
- developing food donation and HSP prevention activities;
- providing information to promote food donation.

Preventing food waste in production by:
- cooperating with industry associations and preparing industry guidelines for food waste prevention (by 2025);
- continuing to support the promotion of food trade directly from producers (by 2023).

Raising awareness and informing consumers about food waste prevention and reduction through:
- dialogue with producers, processors and traders on reducing the generation of food waste;
- supporting the implementation of zero waste technologies and solutions;
- promoting good practice in food waste prevention;
- awareness-raising information events for consumers (especially target groups of children and young people) on preventing and reducing food waste;
- providing information for consumers to increase their understanding of the shelf life of food and reducing food waste;
- informing the public about food donations.

Measuring and monitoring food waste through:
- developing the food waste monitoring system (2023/2027).

Supporting research and innovation aimed at reducing food waste generation.

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), this section will be updated by the EEA accordingly.

Measures to support reuse
Recently, the repair and reuse sector in Latvia has undergone a preliminary assessment to generate a baseline against which to measure progress.

Policy work includes evaluating and, if necessary, improving the accounting system for enterprises by introducing the accounting of reused materials and the accounting of goods written off to charity. Also, regulatory specifications or guidelines will be established for procedures used to prepare waste for reuse and this information provided to those undertaking these procedures.

In terms of supporting reuse and repair, Latvia's waste prevention programme specifically refers to EEE, vehicles, packaging (plastics), furniture, textiles, and building materials and construction products.

Support for the reuse of construction materials in construction processes involves inclusion in green public procurement standards, especially for the reuse of topsoil and asphalt. Measures include promoting waste minimisation construction practices (training, inclusion of criteria in tenders for the best construction and awards for the most environmentally friendly construction).

The reuse of clothing and shoes is already well-established in the Latvian market. To reduce the importation of second-hand clothes and to encourage the reuse and repair of clothes placed on the market, extending the extended producer responsibility scheme is seen as important. Moreover, more purposeful public education is planned to further support the use of services provided by local small businesses and the potential for reusing household items.

Non-governmental organisation activities include repair cafe events organised on a voluntary basis. Repair cafe RĪGA (https://repaircafe.lv/) and Ziedot.lv list drop-off points for the donation of unwanted, but still usable, items in Riga.

In addition, Latvia's plan for modernising the equipment used for preparing materials for reuse and recycling is focused on selected flows, such as construction waste, EEE and end-of-life vehicles.

Best practice examples

Food bank

The Food Bank Paēdušai Latvijai (For a fed Latvia), is a food programme run by the Latvian Samaritan Association, which helps those in need by issuing food parcels. The parcels contain food donated by producers, processors and traders. It accepts an unlimited number of high-quality, usable products that do not require special temperatures for storage. Perishable products with a short shelf life at room temperature will be accepted only if they can be delivered quickly to the beneficiary. The Food Bank also accepts hygiene and household items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, washing powder, shampoo, baby nappies and other items. Food parcels are distributed to residents throughout Latvia in cooperation with local charities and municipal social services. No brokerage or commission is charged on donations and all donations are used in food parcels.

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 Latvian waste prevention programme.

Topic	Addressed in the programme	Comments
Eco-design	Yes	For example, promoting eco-design of packaging and substitution of plastic with biodegradable materials
Repair, refurbishment and remanufacture	Yes	Promotion of repair businesses, e.g. for textile and shoes
Recycling	Yes	Increasing material recycling is mentioned, e.g. in combination with preparation for reuse
Economic incentives and finance	Yes	The programme includes a list of planned economic policy tools
Circular business models	Yes	Actions are planned to align with the EU's circular economy strategy
Eco-innovation	Yes	For example,. promoting the development, implementation and application of eco-innovations in product packaging and design
Governance, skills and knowledge	Yes	For example, by integrating waste prevention into curricula