

Circular economy country profile 2024 – Poland



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Introduction

The European Commission requested the EEA to produce EU country profiles that offer an updated view of the following elements:

- what circular economy policies are being implemented at a national level with a particular focus on elements that go beyond EU mandatory elements, and
- what are best practices with a focus on policy innovation.

With the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP 2020) "the Commission [...] encourages Member States to adopt or update their national circular economy strategies, plans and measures in the light of its ambition".

These country profiles originate in the work leading to the EEA More from less report (2016)¹, that presented an overview of approaches to material resource efficiency and to circular economy in thirty-two European countries. The More from Less report was followed by the 2019 EEA Report 'Resource efficiency and the circular economy in Europe 2019 – even more from less: An overview of the policies, approaches and targets of 32 European countries'².

It presented an updated and extended assessment of approaches and identified trends, similarities and new directions taken by countries in the connected policy areas of resource efficiency and the circular economy.

These reports, comprising a compilation of extensive survey responses from countries, were accompanied by 32 country profiles.

In the second quarter of 2022 a new survey with questions and guidelines was launched. Based on information reported by the Eionet network, in particular, the Eionet Group on Circular Economy and Resource Use, and after review and editing by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use (ETC CE), the 30 2022 CE country profiles³ were published alongside the EEA report 'Circular Economy policy innovation and good practice in Member States'⁴ (2022).

These 2024 CE country profiles are an update of the 2022 ones and based on the responses of 29 countries to the survey questions and guidelines that were launched in March 2024. The information in the countries' responses was again reviewed and edited by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use. A selection of Eurostat data was made to further complement these country profiles.

The main objectives of these assessments and its updates are to: • stimulate exchange of information and share good practice examples among country experts; • support policymakers in Eionet countries, the European institutions and international organisations by providing an updated catalogue of circular economy actions being undertaken in European countries.

This circular economy country profile is based on information reported by the Eionet network and, in particular, the Eionet Group members on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy in the second quarter of 2024. Proposals for the further development or amendment of policies represent the view of the reporting country. For Poland, the input was provided by the Waste Management Department in the Ministry of Climate and Environment, via the EEA/EIONET National Focal Point in the Department of Environmental Monitoring, Chief Inspectorate for Environmental Protection of Poland, and the mentioned NFP. The Department of Innovation and Industrial Policy in the Ministry of (Economic) Development and Technology has not delivered the requested input. Therefore, new information, when comparing to the previous profile, is limited to the waste area. The information was reviewed and edited by the European

¹ [More from less – material resource efficiency in Europe – European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://www.euro.peco.eu/en/more-from-less-material-resource-efficiency-in-europe)

² [Resource efficiency and the circular economy in Europe 2019 – European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://www.euro.peco.eu/en/resource-efficiency-and-the-circular-economy-in-europe-2019)

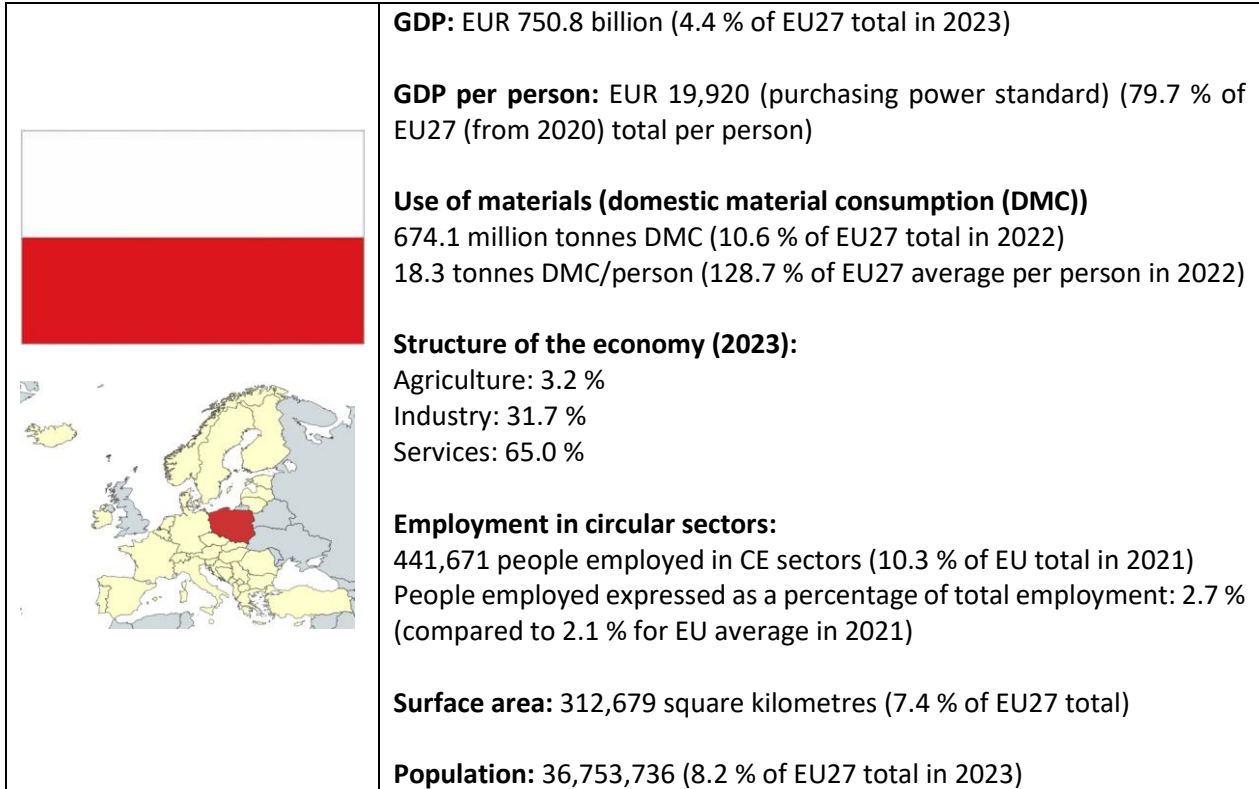
³ [Country profiles on Circular Economy in Europe – Eionet Portal \(europa.eu\)](https://www.eionet.europa.eu/portal/en/country-profiles-on-circular-economy-in-europe)

⁴ [draft-report-for-dg-env_final.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://www.euro.peco.eu/en/draft-report-for-dg-env_final.pdf)

Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use. A selection of Eurostat data was made to further complement this country profile.

The information is current as of September 2024, when members of Eionet verified the content of this profile.

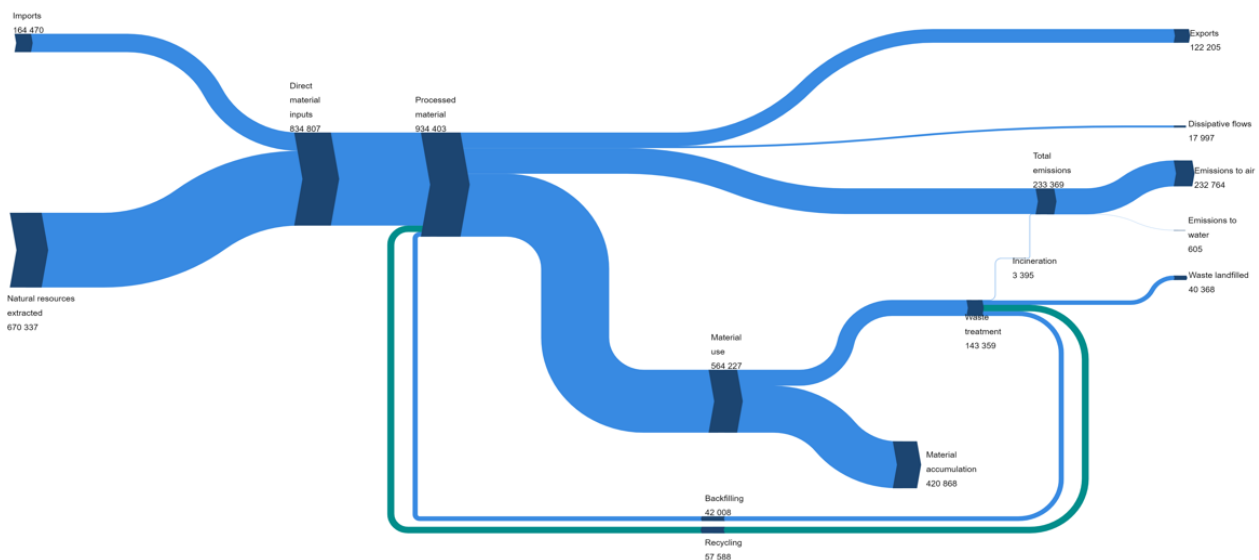
Poland – facts and figures



Note: all definitions and metadata used in this profile are taken, as shown, from Eurostat

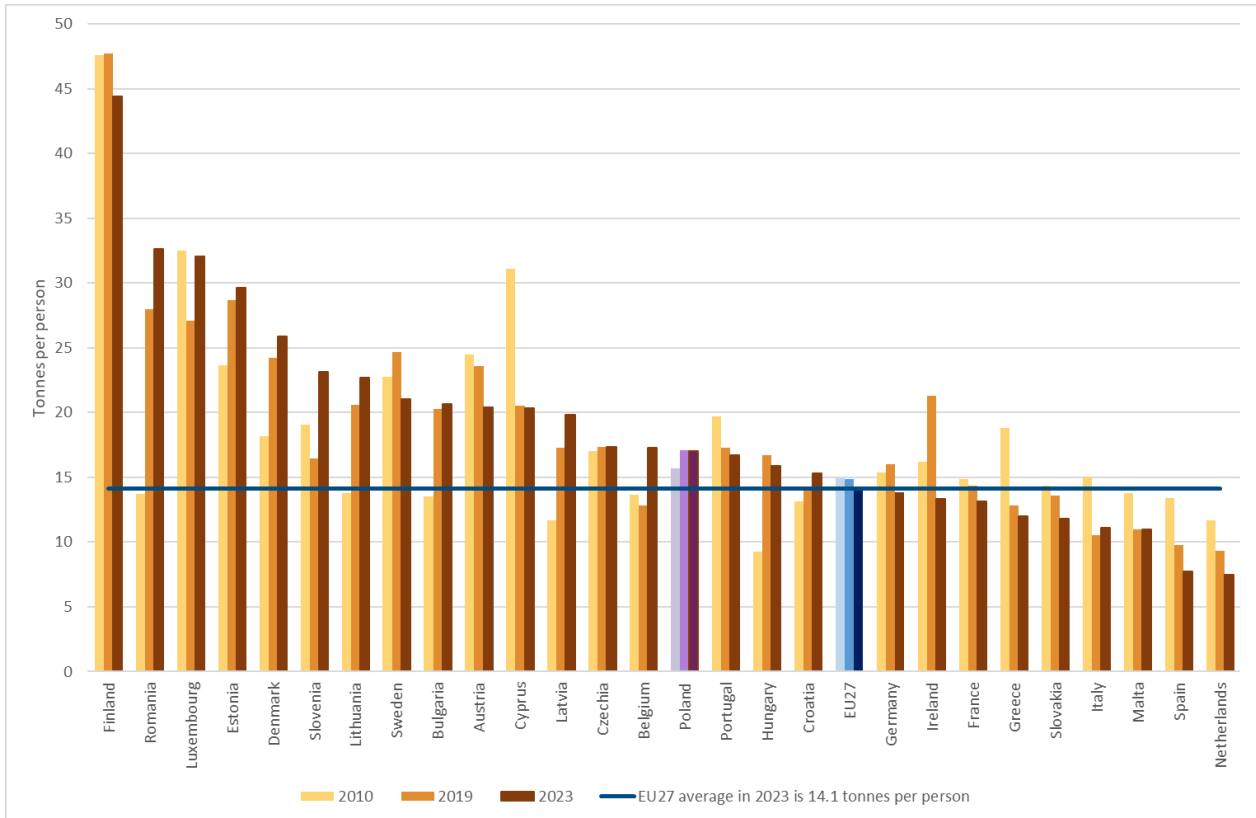
Source: Eurostat datasets, EU27 2021 EU27 2022 and EU27 2023 (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 1 Material flow diagram for Poland in 2022, thousand tonnes



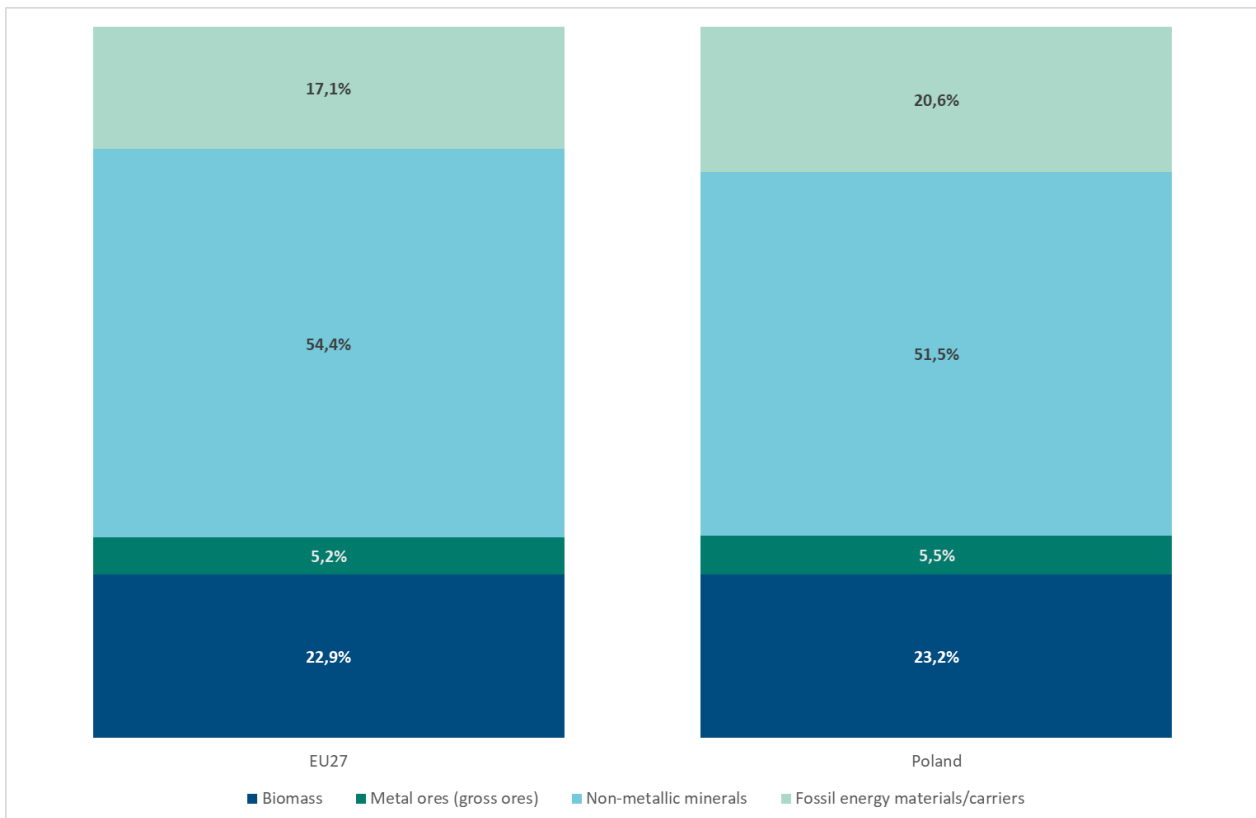
Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_mfa], [en_ac_sd], [env_wassd] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 2 Material footprint (raw material consumption), 2010, 2019 and 2023, tonnes per person



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_rme] (accessed 21 August 2024)

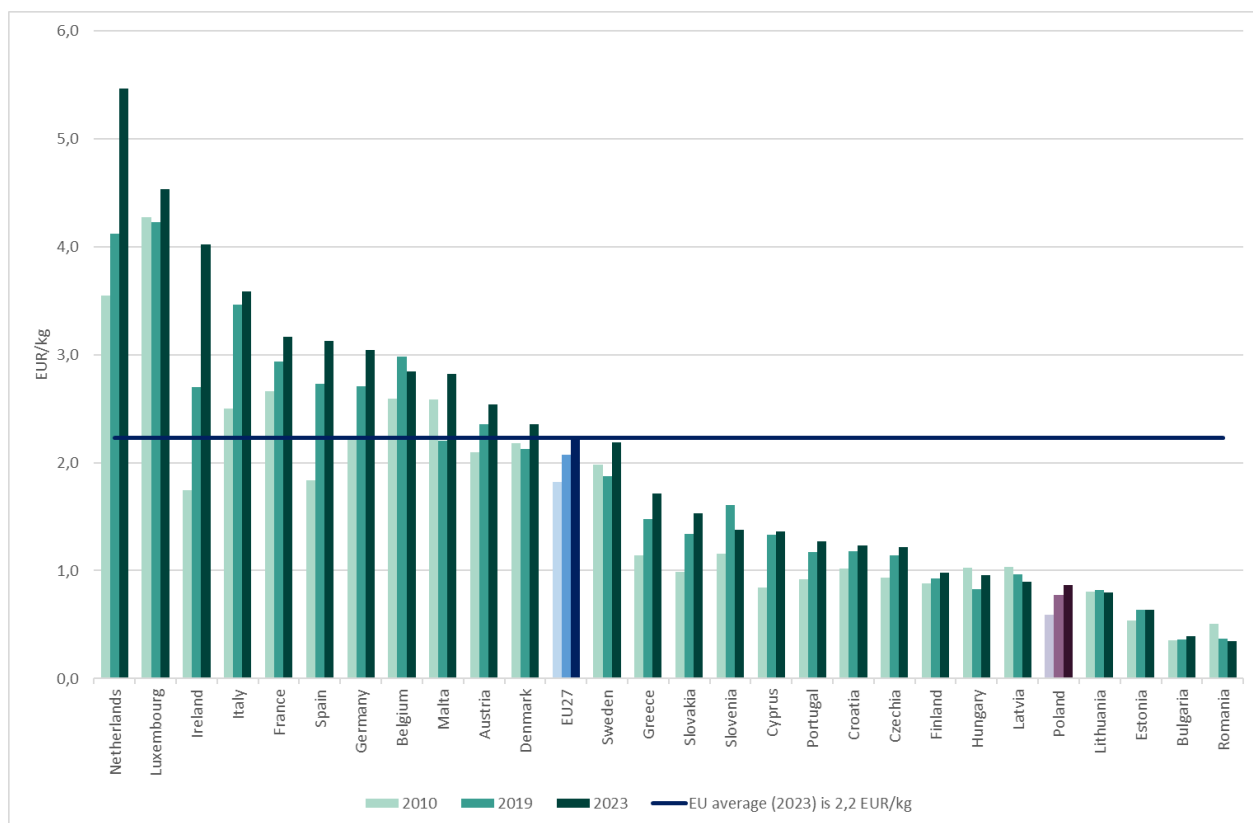
Figure 3 Domestic material consumption by selected material category, EU and Poland, 2023, per cent



Note: totals may not sum to 100 % due to rounding

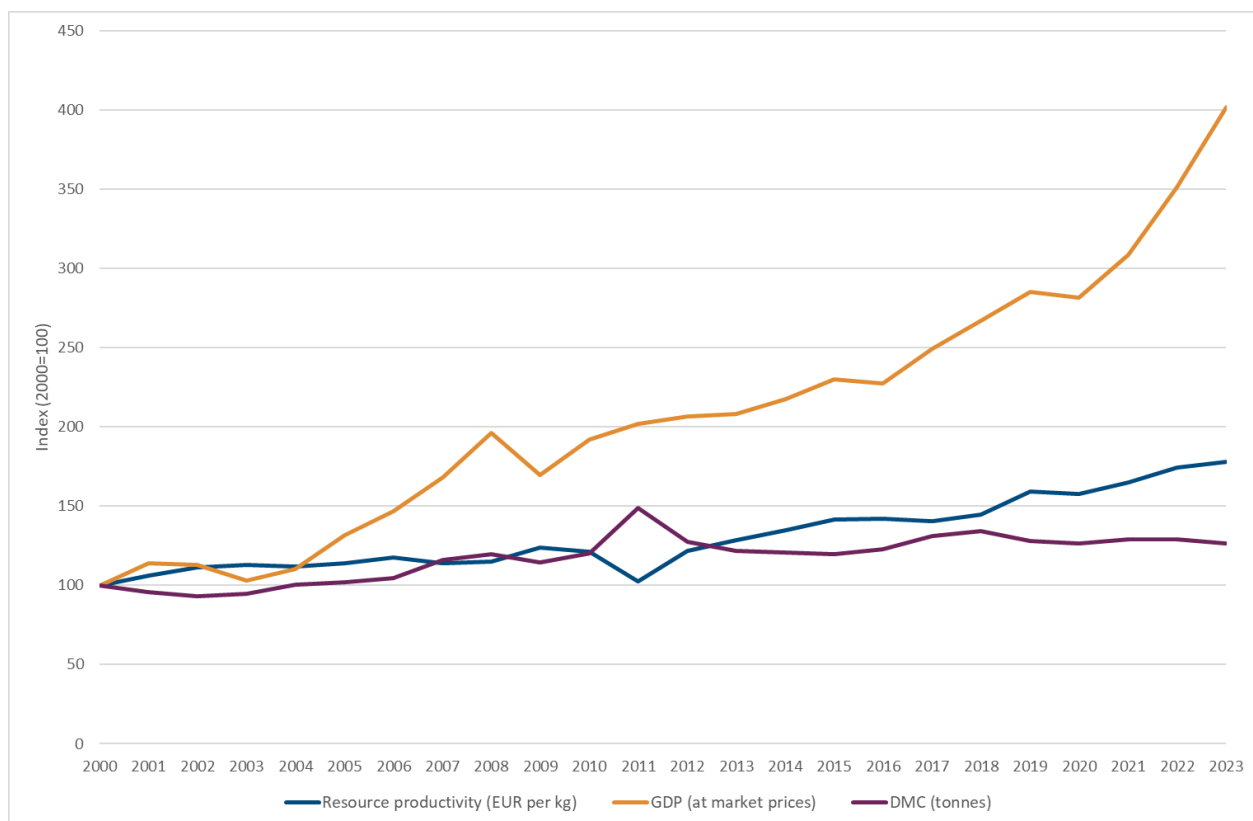
Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_mfa] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 4 Resource productivity (gross domestic product/domestic material consumption), EU27, 2010, 2019 and 2023, EUR per kilogramme



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_rp] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 5 Gross domestic product, domestic material consumption and resource productivity trends, Poland, 2000–2023, index (2000=100)



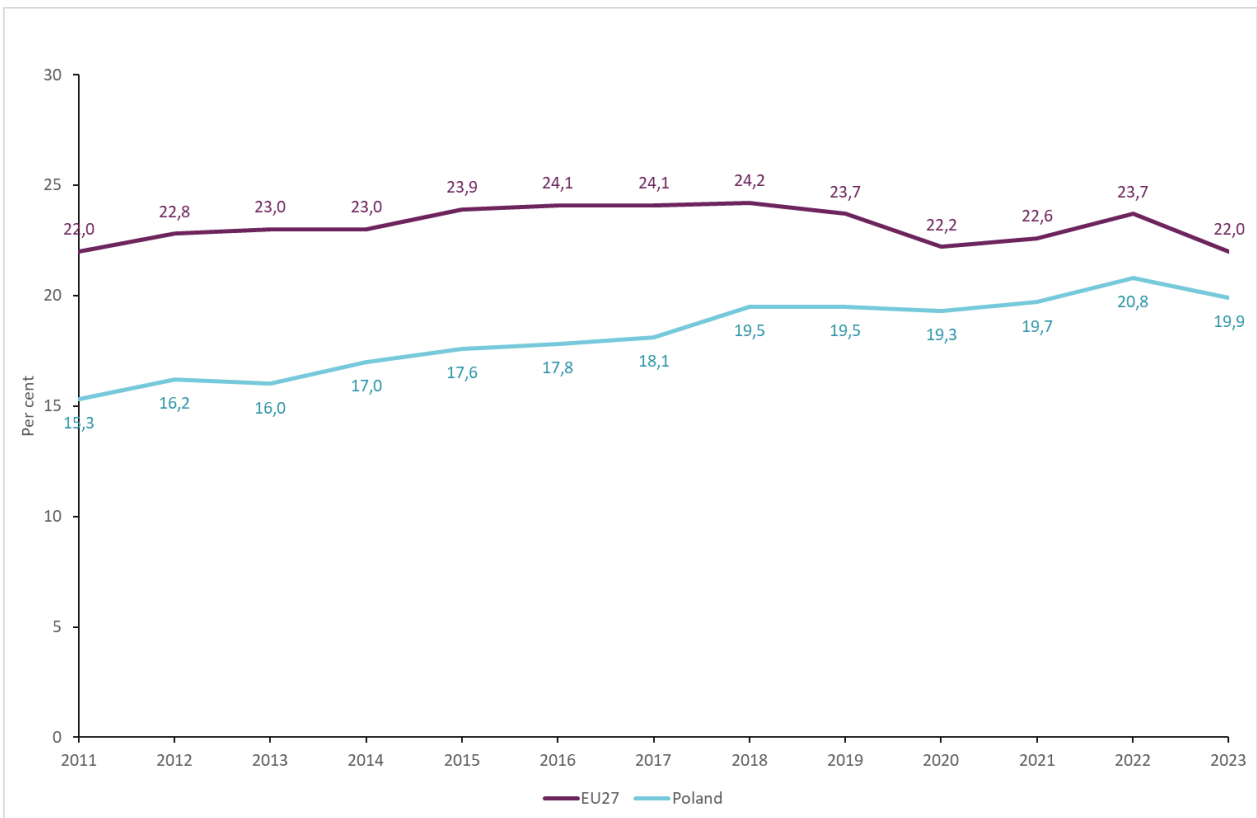
Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_mfa], [env_ac_rp] & [nama_10_gdp] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 6 Circular material use rate in Poland, 2011–2022, per cent



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env_ac_cur] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 7 Material import dependency in Poland, 2011-2023, per cent



Source: Eurostat (2024) [cei_gsr030] (accessed 21 August 2024)

Existing policy framework

Dedicated national and/or regional and/or local strategy, roadmap or action plan for circular economy

No new information has been received on this topic compared to the 2022 EEA circular economy country profiles.

Circular economy policy elements included in other policies

Circular economy policy element	Included in policy
Direction of intervention: Waste management towards a circular economy (chapters 7.7. and 8.7.)	The National Environmental Policy 2030 (PEP 2030)

The **National Waste Management Plan 2028 (KPGO 2028)** was adopted on 12 June 2023. The **National Waste Prevention Programme (KPZPO)**, including food waste, was developed as Annex to KPGO 2028 ⁽⁵⁾. KPGO 2028 indicates the directions of activities in the field of waste prevention and shaping the waste management system aimed at the circular economy, such as:

1. The application of measures to prevent the generation of municipal waste, in particular by:
 - a. Promoting the re-use,
 - b. Creating re-use points at municipal waste separate collection points or other places publicly accessible to the local community, enabling the exchange of second-hand products, including those giving the opportunity to leave functional and no longer needed, e.g. household appliances and to download other useful products,
 - c. The establishment of repair points for products whose owners would like to continue to use or transfer to other interested parties,
 - d. Organizing exchanges for various products, especially household appliances, clothes and footwear, furniture, or other household furnishings products,
 - e. Promoting the manufacture and use of products with an extended service life;
2. Organizing and conducting educational and informational activities at both the national and municipal level aimed at, among others:
 - a. Raising public awareness and knowledge of waste prevention, including biodegradable waste, with particular emphasis on proper, i.e. rational planning of purchases, purchases, storage and consumption of foodstuffs in order to prevent the generation of food waste – also in cooperation with representatives of the non-governmental sector who carry out statutory activities in the field of circular economy and waste prevention,
 - b. Proper handling of waste, including biodegradable waste, especially in the field of separate collection of municipal waste,
 - c. Raising the awareness of residents about the possibility of transfer of municipal waste to municipal waste separate collection points,
 - d. Promoting such bio-waste treatment technologies which result in a valuable and environmentally safe material for fertiliser or reclamation purposes,
 - e. Promoting the correct way of dealing with waste and the benefits resulting from it (broadly understood educational and informational activities addressed to various target groups, in particular pre-schoolers, pupils and students, general citizens, as well as local government administration);
3. Providing funding in the area of waste prevention in the field of raising public awareness and knowledge.

⁵ <https://dziennikustaw.gov.pl/MP/2023/702>; [Decision No. 96 of the Council of Ministers of 12 June 2023 on the National Waste Management Plan 2028](#) (in Polish)

Activities related to the waste prevention were supported by funds (National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management) and this support is and will be continued.

As part of the above-mentioned financial support, the following activities are planned in the KPGO 2028: Conducting informational and educational activities, including nationwide information and education campaigns on waste prevention (including food waste) and dealing with particular types of waste, including separate waste collection, providing residents with knowledge about the municipal waste management system, waste nuisance, waste management processes (i.e. collection and processing, including the essence of recycling) – also in the context of management costs, indicating the benefits for residents resulting from proper waste management, along with annual monitoring of the effectiveness of educational activities undertaken by surveying public awareness in this area.

Monitoring and targets

Assessment of circular economy performance

The European Commission has set up a [monitoring framework](#) to keep track of progress towards a circular economy. This framework provides a holistic view as it:

- measures direct and indirect benefits of 'becoming circular' and
- values the contribution of a circular economy in living well within the limits of the planet
- addresses energy and material supply risks.

It consists of **5 thematic sections** with a total of **11 statistical indicators**, some of which have additional sub-indicators. In some cases, policy targets exist which should be achieved in the future, and the indicators monitor progress towards these targets. The current monitoring framework is a revision of the original framework which was set up in 2018.

This section elaborates on the assessment of Poland's progress in terms of observed trends over the last 5 years and what country characteristics or policy actions may explain differences between the country its performance and the average EU performance.

Taking into account the **indicator “preparing for re-use and recycling of municipal waste”** it is important to note, that data showed by Eurostat, are not the same as data send by Poland to show performance according to goals for preparing for re-use and recycling set in Article 11(2) of Waste Framework Directive. Poland's effort to reach levels comparable to European average is noteworthy as it needed much more work.

Poland is one of the countries who began with very low recycling rate and very high rate of landfilling. For example, Poland's recycling in 2004 was 5%, European Union average – 32.5 %, Therefore, Poland needed to put more work in reaching targets set in European law than most other countries. Now, our **resource productivity** is even higher than European Union average (164 compared to 132). Resource productivity is defined as the gross domestic product (GDP) divided by domestic material consumption (DMC).

It should be also emphasized that the municipal waste generated per capita in Poland **is much lower than the EU average**. It was 364 kg in Poland compared to the EU average 513 kg in 2022 ⁽⁶⁾. It has to be noted that it is better not to produce waste at all than generate it and recycle. It also means that Polish people consume less, use products longer as well as may “recycle” them in their households which strongly supports the circular economy.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Municipal_waste_statistics

Circular economy monitoring frameworks and their indicators beyond the ones from Eurostat

The **National Waste Management Plan 2028** ⁽⁷⁾ includes indicators for monitoring the implementation of waste prevention measures. These are:

- Decoupling economic growth from growth in the total amount of waste generated
- Reduction of the mass of generated mining waste in relation to the volume of mineral extraction
- Reduction of the mass of generated energy waste in relation to the amount of energy produced
- Reducing the environmental burden of waste by increasing the number of eco-labelled products produced in Poland
- Sustaining economic growth with a low rate of municipal waste generation
- Reduction of the weight of packaging waste in relation to the weight of products
- Development of re-use
- Increase in the weight of equipment recovered for re-use
- Increase in reusable equipment and parts from end-of-life vehicles
- Development of municipal waste separate collection points accepting products for re-use and repair points
- Mass of food obtained by the Federation of Polish Food Banks from retail chains and food producers
- Reducing the weight of food waste generated

Circular economy targets

The National Waste Prevention Programme sets out targets for the implementation of waste prevention measures towards a circular economy. At the same time, it should be noted that no specific values were specified, only the desired trend.

Innovative approaches and good practices

Examples of public policy initiatives (national, regional or local)

→ *Good practice example: Financial support programmes targeting circular economy*

The GreenEvo – Green Technology Accelerator ⁽⁸⁾

The Ministry of Climate and Environment implements “The GreenEvo – Green Technology Accelerator”, an innovative program to support the international transfer of environmental technologies, provided by Polish small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. The program helps them to get into new markets, at the same time disseminating the idea of doing business with due regard for the environment. The implementation of the GreenEvo program is also an important instrument supporting the process of creating sustainable development in Poland and in the world. The project stimulates the transition towards a circular economy, particularly by supporting and promoting innovative and environmental technologies in all key areas of the economy.

⁷ <https://dziennikustaw.gov.pl/MP/2023/702> (in Polish)

⁸ <https://greenevo.gov.pl/en/>

→ *Good practice example: Education and awareness-raising / Changing consumption patterns and consumer behavior*

Surface Project – Smart Urban Reuse Flagship Alliances in Central Europe ⁽⁹⁾

The project was implemented in cooperation with the Department of the Environment of the Marshal's Office in Toruń (Kujawsko-pomorskie voivodeship) as part of the Interreg Central Europe program. The main goal of the project is **improving environmental management and quality of life in urban areas**. The current element of the project is the STAJNIA Repair Café. The STAJNIA Repair Cafe continues to operate to this day.

In accordance with the Act of 13 September 1996 on Maintaining Cleanliness and Order in Municipalities (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 399), municipalities ensure cleanliness and order in their area and create the conditions necessary for their maintenance, and in particular, may establish and maintain repair and re-use points for products or parts of products that are not waste.

Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 19 February 2021 amending the **regulation on the detailed management of tangible movable assets** of the State Treasury (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 578).

According to the above-mentioned regulation, redundant or worn-out elements of tangible movable property may be the subject of sale, rent or lease, free transfer or donation.

The Act of 11 September 2019 – **Public Procurement Law** ⁽¹⁰⁾ (Journal of Laws of 2023, item 1605 as amended) indicates the possibilities of taking into account environmental aspects in public procurement. A collection of documents in this area, including guidelines, guides and good practices, is available at

On the website of the Ministry of Climate and Environment you can find informational and educational materials as well as information about campaigns to support and enable the transition to more **sustainable and circular consumption** ⁽¹¹⁾⁽¹²⁾.

Below you will find a link to a page where you can find the **results of awareness surveys** ⁽¹³⁾ on waste management, waste prevention and research on reuse.

The way forward

Identifying and addressing barriers and challenges

No new information has been received on this topic compared to the 2022 EEA circular economy country profiles.

Future policy plans

No new information has been received on this topic compared to the 2022 EEA circular economy country profiles.

⁹ <https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/SURFACE.html>, <https://www.kawiarenkanaprawczastajnia.org/> (in Polish); <https://www.kawiarenkanaprawczastajnia.org/segreguj-odzyskuj> (in Polish)

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.pl/web/uzp/publikacje-z-obszaru-zzp> (in Polish)

¹¹ <https://www.gov.pl/web/klimat/odpady-komunalne> (in Polish); <https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-ekologiczna/produkt-w-obiegu> (in Polish)

¹² https://naszesmieci.mos.gov.pl/images/dla-przedsiębiorcow/infografiki/Infografika_slad_srodowiskowy.pdf (in Polish); https://naszesmieci.mos.gov.pl/images/filmy/12/Digitalizacja_NAPISY.mp4 (in Polish)

¹³ <https://www.gov.pl/web/klimat/badania-swiadomosci-ekologicznej> (in Polish)

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