

# Analysis of the waste situation in Poland by Polski Klub Ekologiczny

## Introduction

Municipal waste management in municipalities and cities in Poland is regulated not only by the Act on Waste, but also by the Act on Maintaining Order and Cleanness in Municipalities<sup>1</sup>. In 2012 and 2013 requirements of the European Directives were transposed into the Act. The Act requires that the municipalities ensure collection of paper, plastics, glass, metals, beverage cartons, biodegradable waste and other biologically degradable materials. Containers for separated waste collection must be easily accessible and their number must be sufficient to meet requirements of directives valid for the locality in question. Municipalities must also ensure collection of bulky waste, medicines, batteries, electrical waste, hazardous, construction and demolition waste and tyres, and ensure sufficient informing and public education.

## Actual state of municipal wastes in 2014 according Central Statistical Office

The amount of municipal waste generated in 2014 decreased compared to 2013 by 9% and amounted to 10.3 million tons. This means reduction of 293 kg to 268 kg per capita in Poland. We also highlight that the primary method of dealing with waste was depositing them in landfills. In 2014 53% of the total municipal waste was landfilled (ie. 5.3 million tonnes), 21% recycled (2.2 million tonnes), 15% incinerated (1.6 million tonnes) and 11% composted (1.2 million tonnes).

In 2014 519 thousand tons of electrical and electronic equipments were introduced in Poland. The biggest mass accounted for large household appliances (51% of total weight), IT and telecommunications equipment (11%) and audiovisual equipment (8%). In 2014 169 million tons of waste electrical and electronic equipment were collected (160 million tons from households). It means that 32% of waste electrical and electronic equipment was managed.

Most waste equipment collected were large household appliances (49%), IT and telecommunications equipment and audiovisual equipment (13%). In 2014 the level of WEEE collection was approx. 35% with 33% from households. Therefore per capita collection amounted more than 4 kg, fulfilling the target required by 2008.

## Recycling in Poland (2014)

60% of all packaging placed on the market has to be recovered (55% recycled). The achieved percentages in 2014 are seen below.

- Plastic packaging – 28,6%
- Aluminium packaging – 48,1%

- Steel packaging, of which steel sheet packaging – 55,5%
- Paper and cardboard packaging – 72,9%
- Household glass packaging excluding ampoules – 60,2%
- Packaging made of natural materials (wood and textiles) – 48,6%
- Oils – 55,2%
- Tires – 26,4%

According to data published by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) shows that separate collection of municipal waste increased from 19.8% in 2014 to 23,4% in 2015. However, according to the National Waste Management Plan and Waste Framework Directive transposed in the Waste Act, by 2020 Poland has to achieve 50% recycling for paper, metal, plastic and glass fractions. This will not be possible without drastic improvement in the level of separate collection.

According to the CSO, the number of illegal dumps decreased by 16.6 percent in 2015.

Also, from 2478 communities in Poland, in 640 separate collection was not introduced in accordance with the proposed provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Environment.

### **Problems we constantly meet**

1. Lack of public education on waste separation, despite years of transition period intended to prepare for the implementation of the Act.
2. Recurring lack of technological infrastructure (sorting and composting), enabling appropriate sorting / processing of waste by companies receiving waste.
3. Too slow progress in the collection of municipal waste, including separate hazardous waste collection from household waste.
4. Despite the success of the separation of packaging waste in the trade sector, failing to repeat that in households.
5. The lack of standardized procedures in relation to reporting of waste management in municipalities, so in fact it's difficult to evaluate the progress.
6. 26% of communities haven't implemented Regulation and are without waste separation.

Written by:

