

Environment in 2024

30.06.2025

 **8.8%**

Increase in the amount of municipal waste collected separately compared to the previous year

In 2024, an increase was noticed in water withdrawal for the needs of the national economy and population (by approximately 2%) and the amount of generated industrial and municipal wastewater (by approximately 1%) compared to the previous year. There was a reduction of emission of particulate pollutants from plants of significant nuisance¹ to air quality by approximately 5% and gaseous pollutants by 3%. Almost 6 million tonnes of municipal waste were collected separately, which is almost 9% more than a year ago. The total amount of waste generated decreased by 5%, there was a decline of industrial waste by 6%.

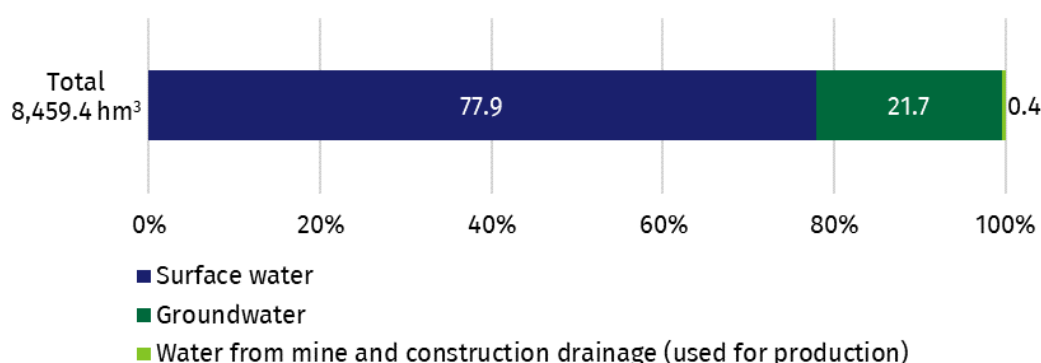
Water and wastewater

Water withdrawal and consumption

In 2024, there was an increase in water withdrawal, for needs of the national economy and population compared to the previous year from 8.3 km³ to 8.5 km³. The largest share of water withdrawal (approximately 64%) was for production purposes (5.4 km³, similar to 2023). Water withdrawal for the purpose of filling in and refilling fishponds slightly decreased (1%) compared to 2023 and amounted to 0.8 km³. Water withdrawal for the purpose of exploitation of water supply networks increased by approximately 2% in comparison with the previous year and amounted to 2.2 km³.

The main source of water supply for the national economy was surface water. In 2024, the withdrawal of surface water amounted to 6.6 km³ and it covered 78% of the needs. Surface water was mainly used for production purposes in industry. The withdrawal of groundwater was approximately 1.8 km³ and has increased compared to 2023 by approximately 3%.

Figure 1. Structure of water withdrawal for the needs of the national economy and population by source in 2024



In 2024, water consumption was approximately 8.0 km³, which was 102% of the total consumption of water recorded the previous year. As during the years before, the largest share of water consumption for the needs of the national economy and population was recorded by industry 68% (5.5 km³). Consumption of water by the fishing industry was approximately

In 2024, water withdrawal amounted to 8.5 km³

In 2024, 8.0 km³ of water was consumed (102% of the consumption recorded during the previous year)

¹ Plants with the highest emissions of pollutants into the air on a national scale.

10% (0.8 km³) of the total amount of water consumption for the purpose of the national economy. Water consumption by the municipal sector, for the purpose of operation of the water supply network, amounted to 1.7 km³ (approximately 21%). In 2024, water consumption by households, from the water supply system, was similar to the level recorded in the previous year, and it amounted to 1.3 km³.

Wastewater

In 2024, the amount of generated industrial and municipal wastewater, that required treatment, has increased compared to the previous year by approximately 3%, and it amounted to 2.2 km³, while the amount of untreated wastewater was approximately 0.1 km³. The amount of wastewater treated in wastewater treatment plants, with increased biogene removal increased by 2% compared to the previous year and amounted to 1.2 km³, which was 60.5% of treated wastewater, while the amount of wastewater treated with the use of mechanical treatment technology amounted to 0.3 km³ (15.8% of treated wastewater).

Some part of wastewater that required treatment (6.7%) was not subjected to the processes of treatment. In 2024, the amount of wastewater discharged without treatment was 145.2 hm³, compared to 135.8 hm³ in the previous year.

In 2024, there was a decrease in the number of industrial wastewater treatment plants (from 841 in 2023, to 821 in 2024). The number of municipal wastewater treatment plants (3,250) increased slightly, compared to the previous year (3,249). In 2024, the share of population connected to wastewater treatment plants was 76.2% (75.9% in 2023), while in urban areas it was 94.4% (94.8% in 2023), and in rural areas it was 49.3% (48.2 % in 2023).

Liquid waste

Due to insufficiently developed sewage infrastructure, some residents continued to use household wastewater disposal systems. In 2024, the number of septic tanks was 2.1 million, similar to the previous year. The amount of liquid waste, collected and delivered to wastewater treatment plants or dump stations, was 45.0 hm³ compared to 47.3 hm³ in 2023.

Pollution and protection of air

In 2024, the amount of emission of particulates, from plants of significant nuisance to air quality, amounted to approximately 15.3 thousand tonnes and it declined by 5% compared to the previous year. The main source of emission was industrial processing (by 61%) and also the entities that produce and supply electricity, gas, steam and hot water (by 29%).

In 2024, the amount of wastewater discharged without treatment was 145.2 hm³

In 2024, the number of septic tanks was 2.1 million

In 2024, there was a decline recorded in the amount of emission of particulate pollutants by 5%, compared to the previous year

Table 1. Emission and air pollutant reduction from plants of a significant nuisance to air quality

Specification	2023	2024
Number of plants	1,820	1,800
Emission of pollution in thousand tonnes:		
particulate pollutants	16.0	15.3
of which from combustion of fuels	7.8	6.6
gaseous pollutants	172,771.3	168,201.4
of which:		
carbon dioxide	171,853.8	167,301.3
sulphur dioxide	129.0	123.2
nitrogen oxides (expressed as NO ₂)	148.7	138.9
Level of reduction of generated pollution in %		
particulate pollutants	99.9	99.9
gases (without carbon dioxide)	74.1	74.0

In 2024, the gaseous pollutants emission from plants of significant nuisance to air quality was at a level of 168 million tonnes and it declined by 3% compared to 2023. Over 99% of the above-mentioned emissions were carbon dioxide and 0.1% each: sulphur dioxide, carbon oxide and nitrogen oxides. The predominant sources of industrial emission of gaseous pollutants were the entities that operated in the field of generation and supply of electricity, gas, steam and hot water (by 67%) and industrial processing plants (over 31%).

In 2024, with the use of air pollution control devices, 13.7 million tonnes (99.9%) of particulate and 2.6 million tonnes (74.0%) of gases (excluding CO₂) emitted by plants of significant nuisance to air quality, were retained. In 2024, the amount of retained or neutralised pollution, according to particular types of gaseous pollutants were: 94.0% of sulfur dioxide, 80.4% of hydrocarbons, 48.0% of nitrogen oxides, 38.3% of carbon monoxide, 43.4% of other pollutants (mainly ammonia, carbon disulphide, fluorine, hydrogen sulphide, organochlorine compounds).

Nature and landscape protection

Poland belongs to the group of European countries of high biodiversity, both in terms of the number of species and environmental values. At the end of 2024, the area of the sites under legal protection (including that parts of Natura 2000 sites located within the boundaries of areas under legal protection) was over 10.1 million ha, which was 32.2% of the total area of the country.

The indicator of areas of the sites under legal protection per capita was 2,699 m², compared to 2,685 m² in 2023.

In 2024, there was a decline in the amount of emitted gaseous pollutants by 3%, compared to the previous year

In 2024, the area of special natural value sites under legal protection did not change compared to the previous year, accounting for 32.2% of the total area of the country

Table 2. The area of special natural value under legal protection in 2024

Specification	The number of objects	Total area			
		in thousand ha	percentage	% of the total area of the country	in m ² per capita
Total	10,485	10,120.1	100.0	32.2	2,699.5
National parks	23	314.3	3.1	1.0	83.8
Nature reserves	1,580	177.4	1.8	0.6	47.3
Landscape parks ^a	126	2,522.9	24.9	8.0	673.0
Protected landscape areas ^a	394	6,930.1	68.5	22.1	1,848.6
Ecological areas	7,850	57.5	0.6	0.2	15.3
Documentation sites	190	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.3
Nature and landscape complexes	322	117.0	1.2	0.4	31.2

^a With the exception of nature reserves and other forms of nature protection located within the boundaries of landscape parks and protected landscape areas.

At the end of 2024, 35,066 natural monuments were registered, which is an increase by 197 objects compared to 2023.

Apart from forms of nature protection, including biodiversity, the creation of green areas are also a way of protecting the natural environment and its components. In 2024, the area of publicly accessible strolling-recreational parks amounted to 25.7 thousand ha, and the area of lawns 13.2 thousand ha, which is an increase in the area of strolling-recreational parks and lawns by 0.3 thousand ha each compared to 2023.

Waste

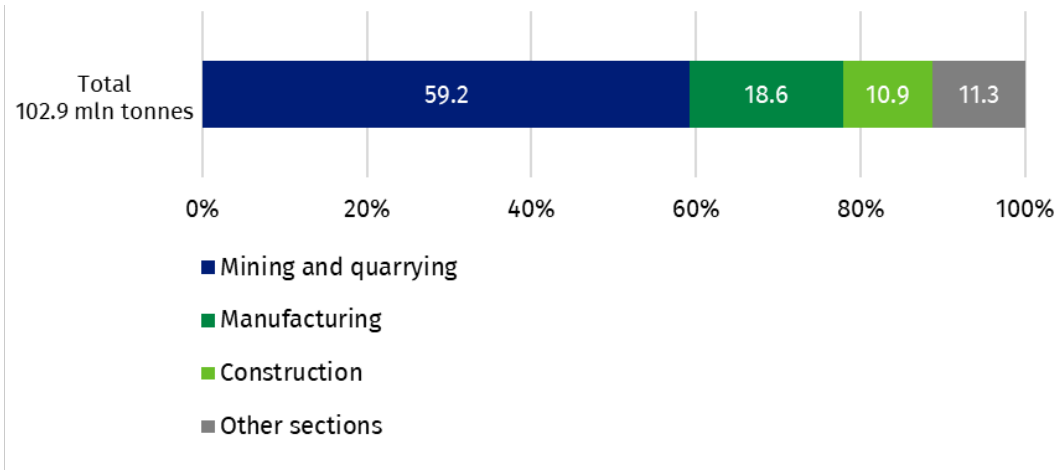
Industrial waste

In 2024, 102.9 million tonnes of industrial waste was generated (a decline of 5.9% compared to the previous year).

The main sources of waste were: mining and quarrying (60.9 million tonnes, which was approximately 60% of waste generated), manufacturing (19.1 million tonnes – almost 19%), construction (11.2 million tonnes – almost 11%).

A decline of 5.9% was recorded in the amount of generated industrial waste, compared to the previous year

Figure 2. Structure of generated waste by types of activities in 2024



The largest share in the amount of generated waste were waste resulting from exploration, mining, quarrying and physical and chemical treatment of minerals (62.2%), and waste from thermal processes (12.9%).

The predominant ways of treating waste that was generated in 2024 were recovery - 49.6% (48.8% in 2023) and landfilling - 44.5% (41.6% in 2023).

The share of recovered industrial waste was 49.6%

At the end of 2024, the amount of landfilled waste (accumulated) at the facilities of plants was 1,839 million tonnes. The non-reclaimed landfill area (excluding municipal waste) was 7.7 thousand ha, out of which landfills, mine waste treatment facilities, including heaps accounted for 53.2%, and tailings ponds accounted for 46.8%. During the year, 79.5 ha of the waste landfill area was reclaimed.

Municipal waste

In 2024, 14.2 million tonnes of municipal waste were collected (an increase of 5.3% compared to 2023). There was 376.9 kg of collected municipal waste per capita recorded, on average, an increase of 20.2 kg compared to the previous year.

There was an increase recorded of 5.3%, in the amount of generated municipal waste, compared to the previous year

Table 3. Generated municipal waste

Specification	2023	2024	
	in thousand tonnes		2023=100
Total	13,447.9	14,158.4	105.3
Collected separately	5,468.8	5,951.6	108.8
Mixed	7,979.1	8,206.8	102.9

In 2024 there was an increase recorded of 8.8% in the amount of municipal waste collected separately compared to the previous year

12.2 million tonnes of waste were collected from households, which was 86.2% of the total amount of generated municipal waste.

In 2024, there were 2,378 municipal waste separate collection points in operation (2,330 in 2023). Municipal waste collection service was provided by 1,366 entities (1,323 in 2023).

In 2024, collected municipal waste was designated for the following processes:

- recovery – 7,511.0 thousand tonnes (53.0%), including:
 - recycling – 2,596.5 thousand tonnes (18.3%),
 - biological treatment processes (composting or digestion) – 1,813.7 thousand tonnes (12.8%),
 - incineration with energy recovery – 3,100.8 thousand tonnes (21.9%),
- disposal – 4,260.3 thousand tonnes (30.1%), including:
 - incineration without energy recovery – 3.2 thousand tonnes (0.0%),
 - landfilling – 4,257.1 thousand tonnes (30.1%).

At the end of 2024, there were 247 landfills in operation that received municipal waste and they covered a total area of 1,627.4 ha. 93.9% of those landfills were equipped with degassing facilities, as a result of which 132,078 thousand MJ of thermal energy and 129,381 thousand kWh of electricity was recovered. In 2024, 7 landfills, of a total area of 13.9 ha, were closed down. In 2024, 12,726 uncontrolled landfill sites were closed down (9,804 in 2023), out of which a total of 39.5 thousand tonnes of municipal waste was collected (63.7 thousand tonnes in 2023). At the end of 2024, 2,728 uncontrolled landfill sites were reported (2,154 in 2023).

The share of municipal waste that was designated for recovery was 53.0%

In 2024, 12,726 uncontrolled landfill sites were closed down

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Prepared by:
Agriculture and Environment Department

Director Marta Wojciechowska

Phone: (+48 22) 608 31 28

Issued by:
Press Office

Mobile: (+48) 695 255 032

Phone: (+48 22) 608 38 04, (+48 22) 449 41 45,
(+48 22) 608 30 09

e-mail: obslugaprasowa@stat.gov.pl



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Terms used in official statistics

[Environment protection](#)

[Consumption of water](#)

[Wastewater](#)

[Liquid waste](#)

[Air pollution protection](#)

[Protection of nature](#)

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