

Methodology

The Global Waste Index is a comparative analysis of per capita waste management across the 36 countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The main sources for the study:

1. [Country Level Code Book and Country Level Dataset](#): The World Bank, 'What A Waste' Global Database (1993 - 2017). OECD country-level data is largely available from 2016 onwards.
2. [Municipal Waste Statistics](#): The European Union 'Municipal Waste Database' (2016 - 2017).
3. [National Waste Report 2018](#): Australian Department of Environment and Energy (2018).

Factors

On a per capita level, we uncovered the amount of waste in each country that ends up recycled, incinerated, on a landfill site, on an open dump, or unaccounted for - i.e. untraced - over a year.

1. **Waste Generated Per Capita**: the kilograms of waste produced per person.
2. **Recycled**: the kilograms of waste converted into new materials.
3. **Incineration**: the kilograms of waste disposed of via controlled combustion.
4. **Landfill**: the kilograms of waste disposed of via burial. All types of landfill site were included (unspecified, sanitary, controlled).
5. **Open Dump**: the kilograms of waste dumped illegally.
6. **Unaccounted**: the kilograms of untraceable waste.

Scoring

This index aims to identify the most environmentally-friendly countries for waste management. Therefore, each of the factors/techniques was allocated a number of positive or negative points relative to the amount of CO2 emissions and environmental contamination it causes on average.

Waste Generated Per Capita: considered a negative factor, a country could lose up to 3 points for its amount of waste produced per person (calculated according to waste produced on a country level / total population).

Recycling: considered a positive technique, a country could obtain up to 4 points for the amount of waste recycled.

Incineration: considered a positive technique, a country could obtain up to 1 point for its amount of waste disposed of via incineration.

Landfill: considered a negative technique, a country could lose up to 3 points for its amount of waste disposed of via landfill sites.

Open Dump: considered an extremely negative technique, a country could lose up to 6 points for its amount of waste illegally dumped.

Unaccounted: considered an extremely negative technique, a country could lose up to 6 points for its amount of untraced waste.

The differently weighted factors were normalized to a scale of 0 – 10 to make them comparable.

Final Ranking

The final scores were standardised from 0 to 100, with 0 being the lowest score, indicating the country worst at managing waste; and 100 the highest, indicating the country best at managing waste.