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KESHILLI I QARKUT KORÇE

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WASTE RREACT

“WASTE RREACT” PROJECT

“CONSULTANCY ON DRAFTING TECHNICAL GUIDELINES & SPECIFICATIONS OF A
MASTER PLAN, ON WASTE MANAGEMENT FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN THE REGION, IN THE
FRAME OF WASTE RREACT PROJECT, KORÇË, ALBANIA”

JUNE 2022



GENTI CUPI
EXPERTISE

IMPLEMENTED BY REGIONAL COUNCIL OF KORÇE,
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ABREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ARA	Albanian Recyclers Association
CIWM	Committee for Integrated Waste Management
DCM	Decision of Council of Ministers
EPR	The Extended Producer Responsibility
EU	European Union
INSTAT	Institute of Statistics
LGUs	Local Government Units
MoIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
MoTE	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
MSW	Municipality Solid Waste
NEA	National Environmental Agency
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NWMP	National Waste Management Plan
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PROs	Producer Responsibility Organisations
RAEs	Regional Environmental Agencies
RCK	The Regional Council of Korçe
SIEF	State Inspectorate of Environment and Forestry
SWM	Solid Waste Management
WCPs	Waste Collection Points
WCS	Waste Collection Site
WIS	Waste Information System

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Country background

In Albania, approximately 70 % of the population is currently served by waste collection services, mainly so in urban areas. The main system for waste collection in Albania consists of 'bring points' for residual (mixed) municipal waste, where citizens take their waste for collection. Where no waste collection service is provided, people often dump waste at roadsides or burn waste in the open. Albania has quite a low recycling rate, resulting in informal waste pickers collecting waste from dumpsites and bins. Separate collection for recycling is not common, and there are no clear enforcement mechanisms supporting separate collection and recycling.

A lack of funds is a key barrier to improving the management system for municipal solid waste (MSW) in Albania. According to Albanian legislation, municipalities' waste management costs should be covered by service tariffs, but in practice they are not. The funding system needs to be improved to cover all expenses arising from waste management, including providing funding for setting up separate collection systems.

The current waste management system in Albania is heavily reliant on disposal to landfill both legal and illegal. There are plans to close the illegal landfills and instead build waste incinerators and sanitary landfills. This will be done through the introduction of waste management zones, with at least one recycling centre and one waste treatment facility for residual municipal waste in each zone. Three incineration plants are currently planned to treat up to 30 % of all generated residual waste, which may create logistical problems and high waste management costs.

As the landfilling rates are planned to decrease, the capacities of the forthcoming residual waste treatment facilities may exceed future demand. Combined with a lack of reliable data and an increase in the quantity of waste generated, there is a significant risk of overcapacity for residual waste treatment, which may be a barrier to the development of the recycling

sector. The regional treatment facilities will also result in significantly longer waste transport distances, coupled with higher transport costs. The prevention of illegal dumping will thus be essential for the system of regional treatment facilities to be successful. The increasing waste management costs will be allocated to the municipalities, which already struggle to cover the costs of waste management. It is therefore important to ensure that the funds allocated to municipal waste management can support the enforcement of the new system.

Albania has a new national waste management plan (NWMP) for 2020-2035, which has key targets on waste management. The targets for increasing recycling and reducing landfilling are relatively ambitious, and require the development of key infrastructure. To reach the targets set in the NWMP, infrastructure development, the introduction of an extended producer responsibility scheme and regional waste management planning are required.

A successful transfer into a waste management system supporting the targets, requires the introduction of enforcement mechanisms and improved public awareness. Impunity is a barrier to the transition, as municipalities can avoid taking required measures. Finally, a separate collection system relying on separation at source by citizens cannot work without public awareness, preferably supported by a 'polluter pays' strategy, such as tariffs based on 'pay as you throw'. The main challenges in implementing the legal framework for municipal waste are related to public awareness and the lack of systems and infrastructure for separate collection and treatment, and to the lack of enforcement mechanisms.

Current situation in the sector

WASTE RREACT project approaches low recycling rates in Greece and almost zero in Albania with the implementation of different facilities/activities in each Region allowing direct comparison of the effects of each measure in the regions. All these results will be compiled in the updated Master plans and guidelines which will specify concrete activities to be done in the future in the participating areas. A number of new and innovative schemes will take place, such as the composting plant of source-separated bio-waste, green points which are a totally new concept for the participating countries, recycling at schools, etc. In addition, the monitoring platform is an innovative element, taking into account that will serve as an educational and informational point as well as a monitoring mechanism for waste

management in the participating countries. There are different sets of target audiences within the project and for this reason different awareness and dissemination methods will be used. It shall be noted that throughout the project it is expected that more than citizens, students, local stakeholders will be targeted, taking that the overall project area covers overall population.

Technical Guidelines and specifications on waste management for municipalities incorporating all project outcomes and results will be reflected in Updated Master Plans on waste management for the Albanian Regions by reaching EU targets. It is expected that the project significantly contributes to the program's objective by:

- identifying common problems and inefficiencies and creating opportunities of exchange and cooperation;
- promoting participation, public awareness and stakeholder involvement at local and regional level;
- encouraging technology transfer, know-how, and best practices on waste management on recycling and composting among the 7 regions and promoting cross-border cooperation;
- promoting the establishment and operation of innovative infrastructures and initiatives such as green points (recycling), composting plant, separate collection;
- strengthening the implementation of EU, national and regional policies on environmental protection and waste management;

1.2 Scope of work

Based on the terms of references the scope of the assignment consists on preparation of an updated draft master plan, technical guidelines & specifications on waste management for Municipalities in the Region, which must reflect:

Stage I – Updated Legal framework, strategies and targets in waste management

The Albanian framework law on integrated waste management aims to transpose the EU waste legislation, including targets for recycling and diversion of waste from landfill. The plan must give recommendation on the updated EU frameworks on waste management.

Stage II– Review of the existing planning framework

Comprehensive assessment of the existing situation and identification of the general trends of socio-economic development at the regional level. Furthermore, this stage will concentrate on the assessment of available data and information and accuracy of this data in terms of quantity, quality and its adequacy for the purpose of the preparation of the intended Master Plan.

Stage III - Stakeholder Consultations

The Master Plan shall adopt participatory approach by interactive sessions. Therefore, consultants shall devise effective strategy to conduct consultation with stakeholders including administrative bodies, civil society of both urban and rural areas, agriculture community, industrialists, traders, elected representatives, academicians, government and non-governmental organizations. Consultants may propose additional number of consultations, if needed.

Stage IV - Project results pilot zone municipality of Korçe

The master plan will identify the common waste problems and inefficiencies in pilot zone of Municipality of Korçe by suggestion: i. encouragement of best practices on waste management on recycling and composting by also promoting cross-border cooperation; ii. promoting the establishment and operation of innovative infrastructures and initiatives such as green points (recycling), composting plant, separate collection and new operational schemes used in those zones;

Stage IV- Draft Master plan recommendations

In preparing this section, focus should be placed on ensuring the sustainability and dissemination of project outputs. The contractor must also comply with the Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Actions laid down and published by the European Commission. (See https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/communication-visibility-requirements_en).>

2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Albanian Legislation

The Albanian framework law on integrated waste management aims to transpose the EU waste legislation, including targets for recycling and diversion of waste from landfill. However, the transposition pre-dates the revisions to EU waste directives adopted in 2018. These targets were also adopted in the previous NWMP. The plans are to prepare acts that fulfil the requirements of the framework law on integrated waste management, with one act transposing the European List of Waste into Albanian legislation and one act transposing the producer responsibility obligations of packaging producers. In the short term, measures will focus on drafting/updating the legal acts in accordance with the new EU directives/regulations, clarifying the institutions' roles and responsibilities in relation to waste management and establishing waste management reporting in all municipalities.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment, being a policy-making institution, has made progress in drafting and approving the legal framework in the field of waste in accordance with EU directives and regulations. One of the challenges arising from the legislation is its full implementation. The lack of applicability also comes as a fact of overlapping the powers of central and local institutions. There are also cases when some tasks are not covered by any of the institutions. The list of laws and by-laws passed on waste is long.

The legislation summary in the sector of waste is presented below in the following table.

Table 1. Albanian legislation framework related to waste

The main laws in the waste sector	Law no. 10463, dated 22.09.2011 "On integrated waste management", amended.
	Law no. 8094/1996 "On public waste disposal" provides the legal basis through which municipalities can contract the service to third parties with management contracts that can last up to 5 years

Secondary laws in the waste sector

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 99, dated 18.02.2005 "On the approval of the Albanian waste classification catalogue", amended.

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 177, dated 06.03.2012 "On packaging and their waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 178, dated 03.06.2012 "On waste incineration".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 452, dated 11.07.2012 "On waste landfills".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 705, dated 10.10.2012 "On the management of vehicle waste at the end of life".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 765, dated 07.11.2012 "On the adoption of rules for the separate collection and treatment of used oils".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 866, dated 4.12.2012 "On batteries, accumulators and their waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 957, dated 19.12.2012 "On waste from electrical and electronic equipment".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 117, dated 13.02.2013 "On the criteria based on which it is determined when certain types of scrap metal cease to be waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 967, dated 25.10.2013 "On the establishment of the working group for the Integrated Waste Management Committee".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 798, dated 29.09.2010 "On the approval of the regulation "for the administration of hospital waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 229, dated 23.04.2014 "On the approval of the rules for the transfer of non-hazardous waste and the information that must be included in the transfer document".

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Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 371, dated 11.06.2014 "On the approval of the rules for the delivery of hazardous waste and the document of their delivery".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 418, dated 25.06.2014 "On the differentiated collection of waste at source".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 608, dated 17.09.2014 "For determining the necessary measures for the collection and treatment of bio-waste, as well as the criteria and deadlines for their reduction".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 641, dated 01.10.2014 "On the approval of the rules for the export of waste and the transit of non-hazardous waste and inert waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 127, dated 11.02.2015 "Requirements for the use of polluted water sludge in agriculture".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 387, dated 06.05.2015 "On the rules for controlling the disposal of PCBs/PCTs, the decontamination or disposal of equipment containing PCBs/PCTs and/or the disposal of PCB waste /used PCTs".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 575, dated 24.06.2015 "On the approval of requirements for the management of inert waste".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 687, dated 29.7.2015 "On the approval of the rules for keeping, updating and publishing waste statistics".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 1104, dated 28.12.2015 "On the approval of requirements for the prevention of the discharge of waste, created by ships and surpluses from cargo, at sea".

Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 652, dated 14.09.2016 "On the rules and criteria for the management of waste from used tires".

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	Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 232, dated 26.4.2018 "On some changes and additions to decision no. 177, dated 6.3.2012, of the Council of Ministers, "On packaging and their waste".
	Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 319, dated 31.5.2018 "On the approval of measures for the costs of integrated waste management".
	Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 389, dated 27.6.2018 "On some changes and additions to decision no. 452 dated 11.7.2012, of the Council of Ministers, "On waste landfills".
	Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 660, dated 31.10.2018 "On the approval of requirements for the management of metal waste".
Other legal acts that are directly or indirectly related to waste management	Law no. 10431, dated 09.06.2011 "On environmental protection", amended.
	Law no. 139/2015 "On local self-government"
	DCM no. 247, dated 30.4.2014 "On determining the rules, requirements and procedures for informing and involving the public in environmental decision-making".
	Decision no. 103, dated 31.03.2002 "Regarding environmental monitoring in the Republic of Albania"
	Law no. 10440, dated 7.7.2011, "On Environmental Impact Assessment"
	Law no. 10081, dated 23.02.2009 "On licensing, authorization and permits in the Republic of Albania".

2.2 European Union waste legislation

Managing waste in an environmentally sound manner and making use of the secondary materials they contain are key elements of the EU's environmental policy.

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The European Union's policy on waste aims to make waste management more efficient throughout the Union, treating waste as a resource and moving towards a European recycling society in which the Member States can develop autonomous waste elimination systems.

EU waste policy aims to protect the environment and human health and help the EU's transition to a circular economy. It sets objectives and targets to:

- improve waste management
- stimulate innovation in recycling
- limit landfilling

EU waste policy aims to make waste management more efficient for the Union as a whole by managing waste as a resource and moving towards a European recycling society in which Member States can develop self-sufficient waste disposal systems.

2.2.1 The Waste Framework Directive

Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2018/851 of the European Parliament and the Council on amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste) is the EU's legal framework for treating and managing waste in the EU. It sets the basic concepts and definitions related to waste management, such as definitions of key concepts such as waste, end-of-waste status, re-use and recycling.

The Waste Framework Directive takes into account the precautionary principle laid down in the Treaty on European Union and is based on three main principles such as the waste hierarchy, the Polluter Pays principle and the Extended Producer Responsibility and sets out separate collection targets.

The waste hierarchy

The waste hierarchy applies as a priority order in waste prevention and management legislation and policy. It is the cornerstone of EU waste policies and legislation and is laid down in the EU waste framework directive. Its aim is twofold:

- to minimize adverse impacts of the generation and management of waste; and
- to improve resource efficiency.

The hierarchy is generally depicted in the form of an inverted pyramid with the most preferred options at the upper end and disposal at the bottom as the last-resort solution to managing waste.



Figure 1. Waste hierarchy

Referring to the "waste hierarchy", preventing waste is the preferred option, and sending waste to landfill should be the last resort. Prevention refers to two aspects: prevention of waste and prevention of the harmful effects of waste. Taking a life-cycle approach, the Directive puts waste prevention at the top of the hierarchy of waste options to be applied by Member States when developing their national waste policies, followed by preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery (notably energy recovery) and disposal.

- **Prevention.** Measures, taken before a substance, material or product has become waste, that reduce:

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- the quantity of waste, including through the reuse of products or the extension of the life span of products;
 - the adverse impacts of the generated waste on the environment and human health; or
 - the content of harmful substances in materials and products.
- **Preparing for reuse.** Checking, cleaning or repairing recovery operations, by which products or components of products that have become waste are prepared so that they can be reused without any other preprocessing.
 - **Recycling.** Any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances, whether for the original or other purposes. It includes the reprocessing of organic material (e.g. composting) but does not include energy recovery and reprocessing into materials that are to be used as fuels or for backfilling operations.
 - **Other recovery (e.g. energy recovery).** Any other operation the principal result of which is waste serving a useful purpose by replacing other materials which would otherwise have been used to fulfil a particular function, or waste being prepared to fulfil that function, in the plant or in the wider economy.
 - **Disposal.** Any operation which is not recovery, even where the operation has as a secondary consequence the reclamation of substances or energy (e.g. landfilling, incineration)

Polluter-pays principle

Polluter-pays principle is laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and aims to prevent and remedy environmental damage. In accordance with this principle, the costs of waste management shall be borne by the original waste producer or by the current or previous waste holders.

Extended producer responsibility:

Extended producer responsibility aims to strengthen the re-use and the prevention, recycling and other recovery of waste. However, implementation is at the discretion of Member States.

It should be noted that often these principles are not translated into concrete policies as it is up to Member States to implement them, taking into account their specific national context and circumstances. The Court of Justice has even ruled that the Member States are free to transpose the polluter-pays principle as they see fit.

The general framework on waste is laid down in the Waste Framework Directive as brief described above but there are other levels of legislation and other specific policies with relevance to waste such as:

Legislation with relevance for Municipal Waste

- **Landfill Directive** (Directive 2018/850 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste). It aims to prevent or reduce the adverse effects of the landfill of waste on the environment. It defines the different categories of waste and applies to all landfills. It also classifies the types of landfills and obliges Member States to minimize biodegradable waste to landfills.
- **Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive** (Directive 2018/852/EC 2018/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste). It sets out measures and requirements for the prevention, re-use and recovery of packaging wastes in Member States. Member States must ensure that packaging placed on the market complies with the essential requirements. The Directive implies the Producer Responsibility principle.
- **Single Use Plastic Directive** (Directive 2019/904 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment). It intends to reduce the consumption of this type of plastics and states that Extended Producer Responsibility is involved in the targets as well as calls the Member States to ensure separate collection. It also sets out a list of SUP products.

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- **Plastic Bags Directive** (Directive 2015/720 of the European Parliament and of the Council 2015 amending Directive 94/62/EC as regards reducing the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags). It is an amendment to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC) and was adopted to deal with the unsustainable consumption and use of lightweight plastic carrier bags.
- **Batteries Directive** (Directive 2006/66/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directives 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles, 2006/66/EC on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators, and 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment). It establishes rules regarding the placing on the market of batteries and accumulators and, and a prohibition of those which contain hazardous substances. It also includes rules for the collection, treatment, recycling and disposal.
- **WEEE Directive** (Directive 2012/19/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) (recast 2018/849/EC)). The WEEE Directive establishes an obligation to collect WEEE separately for sorting and recycling, it sets a detailed framework for Extended Producer Responsibility and aims to provide incentives to improve the design of electrical and electronic equipment to facilitate recycling. It was introduced to prevent the generation of WEEE and to promote reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery.
- **Waste Shipment Regulation** (Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on shipments of waste). It specifies the procedures for controlling waste shipments to improve environmental protection and sets out a system of control for the movement of waste. It concerns almost all types of waste shipped.
- **Basel Convention on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal**. It is an international treaty that aims to reduce the movements of hazardous waste between nations.
- **Eco-design Directive** (Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the setting of eco-design requirements for energy-related products (recast). It provides EU-wide rules for improving the

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environmental performance of products, such as household appliances, information and communication technologies or engineering. It sets out minimum mandatory requirements for the energy efficiency of these products.

- **Industrial Emissions Directive** (Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control, recast). It aims to prevent and control the environmental impact of industrial activities. All industrial installations, including waste incineration and co-incineration plants in the EU, must have an environmental permit based on the requirements imposed by this directive. The Waste Incineration Directive and legislation on titanium dioxide was replaced by the IED.
- **Waste Statistics Regulation** (Regulation (EC) No 2150/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council on waste statistics). It creates a framework for the production of waste management statistics at EU level, which provides the EU with data in order to monitor the implementation of the Community policy on the generation, recovery and disposal of waste.
- **PCB/PCT Disposal Directive** (Council Directive 96/59/EC on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls and polychlorinated terphenyls (PCB/PCT). It addresses the controlled disposal of these substances, the decontamination or disposal of equipment containing PCBs and/or the disposal of used PCBs in order to eliminate them completely.

Other Waste Legislation that does not come under municipal waste:

- **End-of-life Vehicles Directive** (Directive 2000/53/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on end-of-life vehicles, amended by Directive 2018/849). It aims to limit the production of waste arising from end-of-life vehicles and to increase reuse, recycling and recovery of end-of-life vehicles and their components. It establishes a collection rate for reuse, recovery and recycling. This Directive implies the manufacturers product responsibility.
- **Directive 2005/64/EC on the type-approval of motor vehicles with regard to their reusability, recyclability and recoverability** and amending Council Directive 70/156/EEC. It requires vehicle manufacturers to comply with minimum thresholds for the reuse, recycling and recovery of the component parts and materials of new

vehicles. The aim is to ensure that vehicles are designed to facilitate processing at the end of their life cycle.

- **RoHS Directive** (Directive 2011/65/EU on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, recast). It requires the substitution of various heavy metals by other substances in new electrical and electronic equipment entering the market.
- **Animal By-products Regulation** (Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation). This Directive is linked to food safety but also to biodegradable operations. It lays down rules for composting and biogas plants which treat animal by-products.
- **Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive** (Council Directive of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste water treatment (91/271/EEC). It concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors. It aims to protect the environment from the adverse effects of the urban waste water discharges.
- **Sewage Sludge in Agriculture Directive** (Directive of 12 June 1986 on the protection of the environment, and in particular of the soil, when sewage sludge is used in agriculture (86/278/EEC). It regulates the use of sewage sludge in agriculture to prevent harmful effects on environment and health. It sets maximum values of concentrations of heavy metals.
- **Mining Waste Directive** (Directive 2006/21/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 on the management of waste from extractive industries and amending Directive 2004/35/EC). It provides for measures, procedures and guidance to prevent or reduce any adverse effects on the environment and human health, brought about as a result of the management of waste from the extractive industries.

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Moreover, there are a number of relevant European Commission's communications which are worthy of particular attention due to the strong link to the EU waste policy and circular economy:

- **The European Green Deal** (11/12/2020) provides the overall EU strategy to achieve the efficient use of resources by moving from a linear to a circular economy model and aims to restore biodiversity and cut pollution. In particular, it identifies a need to reduce waste generation and foresee changes in the EU waste collection.
- **The Circular Economy Action Plan 2.0** (11/03/2020) announces specific strategies to move from a linear to a circular model on a wide range of materials (plastics, textiles, food, batteries, construction, etc.) and foresees waste reduction targets as well as actions to promote reuse, repair and recycling.
- **EU Methane Strategy** (14/10/2020) aims to reduce emissions of methane from anthropogenic sources derived from energy, agriculture and waste sectors. It intends to promote biogas, digestate (as soil improver) and bio-materials production from municipal waste, agriculture waste, manure and water waste. In particular, it foresees promotion of composting and anaerobic digestion.
- **Critical Raw Materials Strategy** (03/09/2020) establishes 10 actions in order to boost research and innovation on critical raw materials and foster energy transition while reducing **EU reliance on non-EU countries**. In particular, the strategy foresees research on second life (re-use and re-purposing), collection rates, recycling efficiency and recovery of materials, recycled content and extended producer responsibility; but also domestic mining.
- **EU Renovation Wave** (14/10/2020) intends to improve the energy performance of buildings by at least doubling renovation rates in the next ten years and make sure renovations lead to higher energy and resource efficiency. Particularly, it proposes to promote the development of standardised sustainable industrial solutions and the reuse of waste material and the revision of the material recovery targets set in EU legislation for construction and demolition waste by the end of 2024.

- **European Sustainable Investment Plan** (14/01/2020) is the investment pillar of the European Green Deal and will apparently mobilise at least €1 trillion of sustainable investments over the next decade. It intends to facilitate and stimulate the public and private investments needed for the transition to a climate-neutral, "green" economy.
- **8Th Environment Action Programme** (14/10/2020). This is a proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union that will guide the European environment policy until 2030. It establishes 6 priority objectives linked to the transition to a circular economy, the zero-pollution ambition, the restoration of the biodiversity or a climate-neutral continent by 2050, to mention just a few.

3 GENERAL SITUATION AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL

Having been granted EU candidate status in 2014, Albania is on the path to EU integration and is actively working to align environmental standards with those of the EU. Towards this goal, as of 2020, Albania has reached mid-level transposition progress of 48% for Chapter 27 Environment, of the EU acquis.

Although substantial progress has been made in transposition, actual implementation of standards and legislation lags behind while capacities to meet them catch up. Strengthening administrative capacities is a key measure required to gradually enable the transposition and implementation of the environmental and climate change legislation. While at the national level progress towards the transposition of the EU acquis is making important headway, it is at the local level that capacity and resources are most required to implement and deliver the services to the citizens.

The sustainable use of natural resources in Albania is challenging, highlighted by the limited effective control of waste disposal. To overcome this challenge there is a need to enhance administrative skills; clearly define roles, responsibilities and accountability; and improve data collection and analysis of waste quantities and composition that improve planning and informs decision making. This also includes the need for regulatory and administrative capacity, financial resources, and physical infrastructure.

According to INSTAT in 2019, Albania managed approximately 1 million tons of household waste. Some 78% was treated in land-fills and disposed with varying degrees of environmental control, while about 19% was segregated for recycling. Regarding climate change, organic waste which represents approximately 50% of the composition of disposed waste, contributes substantially to the generation of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Landfill gases and leachate pollute water, soil endangering agriculture and drinking water supplies as well as the climate.

The current practice of waste management in Albania continues to be dominated by a linear approach of collect and dispose rather than adopting any integrated sustainable waste management approaches. The recently adopted National Waste Management Strategy

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(2020 – 2035), establishes the roadmap towards integrating the principles of Circular Economy and Extended Producer Responsibility.

The concept of the polluter-pays principle is not currently well developed and recovering the cost of providing a basic minimum standard of service from waste producers is a reality in just a few cities. Due to lack of resources and competing demands, many municipalities report being overwhelmed by the need to modernise their services. Low recycling rates and inadequate regulation of packaging and single-use products also leads to unnecessarily high consumption of primary raw material with associated climate change pollutants released during production cycles.

3.1 Collection coverage and separate collection

In most municipalities in Albania, there is no reliable data on waste collection rates (the amount of municipal waste generated versus the amount of municipal waste collected). Although the municipalities report the collected amounts of waste annually to MIE, due to the lack of bridge scales in the municipal landfills, the reported data can be considered as rough calculations. Even the existing on-site sanitary landfills in Bajkaj or Busha: are only used inappropriately and the collected data regarding the amount of delivered waste is not integrated into a digital information system for waste.

Therefore, the reported data are not considered stable. The first reliable data is expected to be made available as soon as the new sanitary landfill site in Korça becomes operational, whose weighbridge has been integrated into a computerized and comprehensive Waste Information System (WIS).

According to the National Waste Management Plan, the average waste collection rate in 2010 was below 60 percent. The waste, which is not collected, is often thrown into landfills in canals, ravines, or on the sides of roads and in the spaces between buildings, from this it is removed to other places through water flows or wind and ends up in water beds. Despite improvements in collection coverage in recent years, collection services still do not cover all settlement areas, especially in rural areas. For the preparation of the waste forecast,

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average waste collection rates for different residential areas have been assumed. Overall, the current waste collection rate is estimated at 76 percent in 2020.

While the city centers are generally quite clean, along the streets and in the suburbs you can often see scattered waste, as well as piles of waste, especially construction waste. The reasons for the unsatisfactory situation, especially outside the main centres, are many, including:

- Bad conditions and insufficient number of vehicles for waste collection;
- Bad conditions of waste containers and waste collection points;
- Poor road conditions except for downtown areas;
- Infrequent collection, leading to overfilling of containers;
- Difficult cleaning due to construction waste scattered along the roads and in empty spaces; and
- Lack of support from the population (pollution and waste disposal).

Municipalities refer to lack of funds as the main reason for poor waste collection. Also, payments to private contractors are often delayed due to lack of funds, which negatively affects the motivation of contracted companies to perform their work. As a general rule, waste collection services are provided either by the municipality or by a private enterprise, usually selected by tender. About a third of waste collection is contracted out to private companies operating under contracts that typically have a duration of three to five years.

In 13% of municipalities waste is partially collected by private service providers and about 43% of municipalities provide waste collection services through their own staff.



Figure 2. Municipalities situation on SWM services provided by Privat sector

Collection equipment, especially waste collection containers and waste collection trucks, can be owned either by the municipality or by a private enterprise. In general, collection facilities are insufficient and in poor condition. Also, the frequency of waste collection is very variable and unstable.

The main system for waste collection in Albania consists of bring points with containers for residual waste collection, where household and commercial waste are collected together. The frequency of collection is once per day in urban areas and two to three times per week in rural areas, with greater frequency during summer and in touristic areas.

According to the NWMP, approximately 70 % of the population was served by waste collection services in 2019, mainly in urban areas. This was a slight increase from the previous year, when the coverage was approximately 65-67 %. In 2019, only 60 % of the waste generated was collected for treatment, corresponding to 70 % of the population covered by waste collection services. Where no waste collection service is provided, people are responsible for the removal and disposal of their own waste. This often results in the dumping of waste at roadsides or the burning of waste in the open. Municipalities are often

supported by several funding donors to improve the waste management service in rural areas, aiming to increase the collection coverage.

The collection infrastructure is generally regarded as being in a poor state. Typically, the company collecting waste is also responsible for operating the disposal site.

It is estimated that approximately 10-18.5 % of municipal waste is collected for recycling, mainly by informal waste pickers, who collect waste from dumpsites and bins and then sell it to the recycling industry. This activity is, however, not legal in Albania and there are no plans to formalize these collectors. The waste pickers are mainly from the Roma community and are mostly ill-equipped and untrained workers, who are exposed to hazardous materials, in general operate under unsafe conditions and lack formal agreements with scrap buyers. The reported collection rates of the informal sector are estimated to be quite high but these might decline a bit once better data on recycling rates become available.

At the sanitary landfills (Bushati, Maliqi, Bajkaj and Sharra) and the incinerator of Elbasan, staff are employed to pick out the recyclables from the waste streams. In other landfills and dumpsites, there are similar activities performed by the informal sector.

There is a pilot project on separate collection in three cities: Himara, Lezha and Peqin. The project is planned to be extended to other cities (Cërrik, Saranda, Belsh and Rroskovec). The pilot aims to separately collect paper and cardboard, aluminum and plastics, by providing dedicated bins and transport for the separated fractions. It also includes the set-up of dedicated centers for pre-treatment, such as sorting, compacting and storage, until the materials are further sold to private recyclers. Furthermore, a pilot project for separate collection and composting of bio-waste in Cërrik, Peqin, Rroskovec and Belsh includes providing dedicated bins and implementing door-to-door collection.

The pilot projects on separate collection are supported by donors. The aim of the pilots is that the municipalities will take over the system after the project has ended. Best practices are shared and staff from other municipalities are invited to attend training sessions to facilitate the introduction of separate collection systems into other municipalities. The experience from the pilot projects is, however, that the education and awareness on

separate collection is not good enough among the general public, resulting in containers for separate collection being used for residual waste.

With regard to separate collection, there is no clear economic incentive for the municipalities. The revenues from selling sorted waste cover only the expenses of the system for separate collection and pre-treatment. Furthermore, fines imposed by the government on municipalities not meeting the recycling target are not implemented. However, separate collection does create employment opportunities, as personnel are needed at the sorting centers for pre-treatment, such as baling of waste.

The NEA is currently implementing a nation-wide campaign to raise awareness of the general public and to educate local institutions with regard to waste management services. The campaign aims to reduce the generation of plastic waste, especially single-use plastic items, and to facilitate recycling through raising public awareness on sorting and separate collection. The campaign has already been realized in 61 municipalities. Furthermore, municipalities annually organize 'Let's do It' public awareness campaigns promoting responsible environmental behavior and waste reduction, reuse and recycling. The private donor organization GIZ is planning to cooperate with the Albanian School of Public Administration, aiming to include waste separation and recycling education in the curriculum of the School, which can then offer training on best practices in waste management and recycling to municipalities.

In addition to the target of increasing awareness, there are also national targets to increase separate collection, as set out in the NWMP. The national targets are expected to be covered, at least partly, by the introduction of an EPR scheme on packaging, imposing the responsibility for the arrangement and financing of separate collection and management for packaging waste on the producers.

Donor projects support municipalities to construct and operate resource centers aiming not only to collect recyclable waste but also to prepare the recyclables for selling to recycling companies. Some of the expenses are covered by the donors, but the main support is in advising and implementation.

The MoTE has started a dialogue forum for stakeholders in the waste management sector with regular meetings covering specific waste-related topics. Participating stakeholders include the NEA, municipalities, other ministries, private sector company representatives, topic experts and civil society organizations.

3.2 Recycling

Approximately one third of the waste produced in Albania is potentially recyclable. The largest percentages of recyclable waste are plastic waste and paper and cardboard.

As already mentioned in chapter 3, the National Waste Management Strategy as well as the National Waste Management Plan provide a basic basis for the anticipated implementation of recycling activities.

Also, the Law on Integrated Waste Management approved in accordance with the Waste Directive and finally with the Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM no. 177, dated 06.03.2012) "On packaging and their waste" set the objectives and rules of recycling and recovery of packaging waste.

Although Albanian regulations oblige municipalities to start separate collection into three different fractions (dry recyclables, organic waste for composting and final waste) at least since 2015, so far there is very limited involvement of Albanian municipalities in regarding recycling and composting. In terms of resource sharing by households or businesses, very few official initiatives have been presented. In fact, so far municipalities have not fulfilled their duties for various reasons including insufficient financial capacity and resources, insufficient income, lack of experience and inability to create differentiated collection schemes or to implement legal requirements. In addition, local authorities have a shortage of environmental experts specialized in waste issues.

Both the formal and informal sectors are involved in the recycling activities that take place. The following figure presents the structure of the recycling sector in Albania. Most of the people who collect recyclable materials belong to the informal sector, while most of the traders and agents are part of the formal sector.

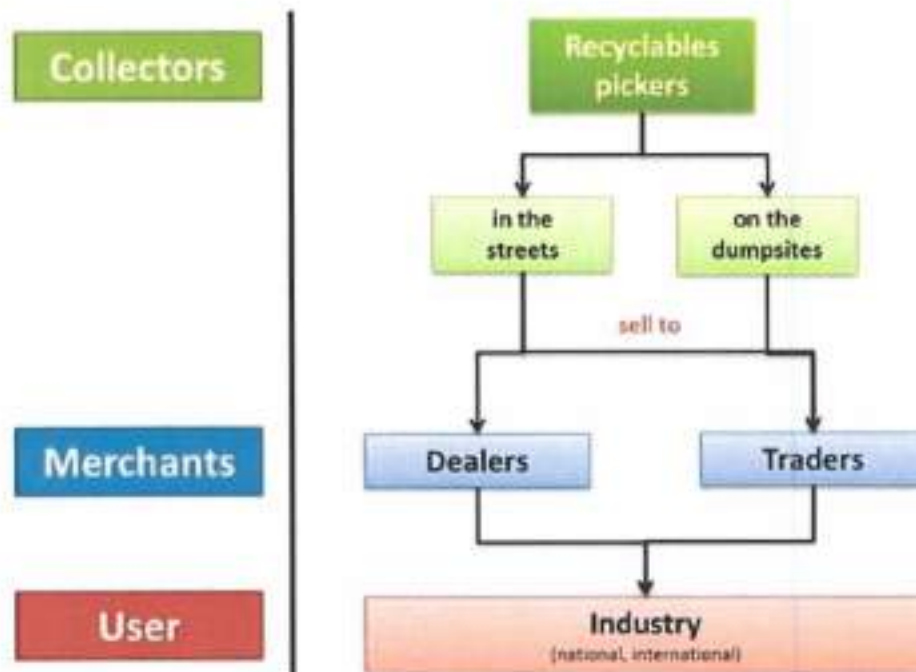


Figure 3. The structure of the recycling sector

Recyclable materials are collected mainly from street containers, but also from waste deposited in landfills. It is estimated that around 12,000 people who collect recyclable materials are active in Albania. The system is mostly informally organized, mainly dominated by Romani communities.

In some cities (eg Tirana, Korçë or Vlorë) people who collect recyclable materials working on the streets are organized and well equipped for the collection of recyclable materials. They use bicycles that can carry loads (motorized or not) and go from one container to another to separate and collect recyclables.

Other street pickers work with less equipment. They transport the recyclable materials collected in carts or simply in bags, boxes or buckets.

3.3 Traders and Users of Recyclable Materials

Traders of recyclable materials are private businesses, initiative groups or NGOs. They buy the collected recyclables from the collectors of the recyclables or get them directly from the

waste producers. They store, separate and prepare these recyclable materials for further transport and sale to the users of the recyclable materials, i.e. the manufacturing industry.

In total, there are about 60 private enterprises that deal with recycling, but not all of them have an environmental permit from MoTE. The companies handle the following types of waste:

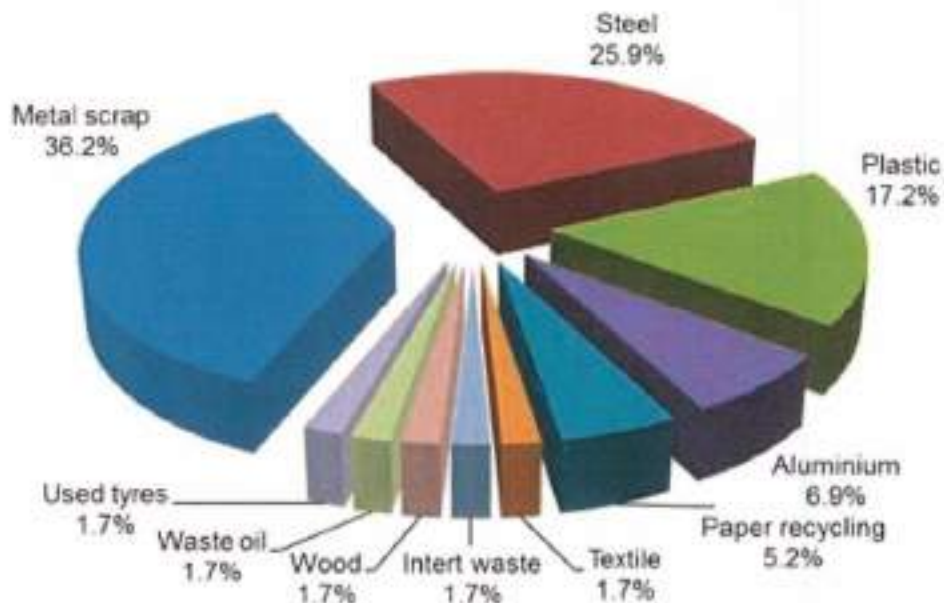


Figure 4. Types of waste handled by recycling companies

The Albanian recycling industry is present and organized under the Albanian Recyclers Association (ARA). The association's mission is to develop the recycling industry and protect the environment by representing, promoting and protecting the interests of its members. ARA was formed on March 8, 2007 and currently consists of various sectors of the recycling industry such as metals, paper, plastics, and textiles and so on.

As already mentioned, the separation of municipal waste at the source is not common in Albania. Therefore, recycling companies imported specific fractions of waste from other countries (i.e. Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Italy, Serbia, Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina) in order to offset the volumes of waste recyclable materials, for processing.

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Meanwhile, since October 2013, the import of waste is prohibited by law. In September 2016, an amendment to the 2011 law on integrated waste management was approved, with the aim of further aligning the Albanian legal framework with the acquis, including the import of waste, albeit only for recycling purposes. The amendment was rejected by Presidential Decree and has not been implemented until now, waiting to be returned to parliament for re-introduction.

3.4 Treatment Infrastructure and Disposal

In general, it can be said that the improper disposal of waste is the most serious challenge of current Solid Waste Management in Albania. In recent years, various projects have been implemented, focused on the improvement of local deposits, e.g. the implementation of sanitary landfills according to the standards of the EU directive for landfills. Due to economies of scale, these projects are mainly planned for several municipalities or as regional plants. Moreover, various initiatives for the incineration of municipal waste, promoted by the Ministry of Environment, have started.

Many of the landfills in Albania that have been approved for operation by the MoTE do not meet the environmental standards for landfills as defined within EU legislation. It is known that 190 illegal landfills/dumpsites are currently in use as opposed to four sanitary landfills (Bushati, Maliqi, Bajkaj and Sharra). The total capacity of the sanitary landfills is 434 362 tons per year. In 2018, an estimated 610 762 tons of waste were disposed of in illegal landfills, while 401 755 tons of waste were disposed of in legal landfills.

Most dumpsites do not have environmental permits, and these sites have been established without the necessary infrastructure to contain landfill leachate and collect landfill gas. All types of wastes are disposed of without prior separation and without a system to manage hazardous wastes, and records of deposits are not kept. Often, the waste at the dumpsite is burned, despite a ban on doing so, creating additional risks to citizens and the environment.

It is estimated that approximately 10-18.5 % of municipal waste is collected for recycling, mainly by the informal sector. Since a few years ago, it has not been allowed to import waste

for recycling into Albania, so the feedstock for recycling has significantly been reduced and the sector is struggling economically. There is now a large potential for recycling, which is not currently being used, and a need to increase separate collection to support the domestic recycling industry. Although private companies deal with a broad range of waste fractions, a significant number deal with scrap metal. Not all of them have an environmental permit from the MoTE.

With regard to the treatment of separated waste streams, collected by informal waste pickers from dumpsites and bins, the waste is sold to the recycling industry. The following processes then take place:

- Glass bottles are collected, sterilized and reused by beverage companies.
- Paper and cardboard are sorted in small quantities only at paper recycling plants in Tirana, Fier and Durrës.
- Aluminum cans are usually exported to neighboring countries (e.g. Montenegro) and a very small proportion of them are directed to a small private Albanian smelter.
- Steel scrap is sent to the Elbasan metallurgical plant.

The Albanian government is building two incinerators with high processing capacities through concessional public-private partnerships (ETC/MMGE, 2019):

- The Fier incinerator will have a processing capacity of around 180-200 tonnes per day.
- The Tirana incinerator will have a processing capacity of around 550-800 tonnes per day.

Construction and operation costs will be covered by the state budget for the first 5 years, while a private company is responsible for operation. Afterwards, the incinerators will be owned and operated by the respective municipalities.

The already operational Elbasan incinerator has a processing capacity of around 120-140 tons per day. In total, these three incinerators would have an annual capacity of at least 310

000 tons annually, which corresponds to 30-40 % of the current annually generated MSW. All three incinerators will be located in the central parts of Albania.

In order to reach the set targets for separate collection and reduction in landfilling, supporting infrastructure must be available for residual waste treatment. To reach the 2025 targets of 20 % separate collection and a maximum of 50 % landfilling, the remaining residual waste to be treated should be 30 %, calculated based on current waste generation data. In 2030, the separate collection target is 30 % and the landfilling target is a maximum of 30 %, resulting in residual waste treatment of 40 %. In 2035 the targets of 40 % separate collection and only 10 % landfilling require a residual waste treatment capacity of 50 % of the waste generated, unless more waste is prevented or recycled. However, current waste generation data are believed to be somewhat inflated, which is why a smaller residual waste capacity can be assumed to be sufficient.

The landfill targets for 2025 are feasible only if separate collection is introduced and the incinerator in Tirana operates at full capacity. To reach the 2030 landfill target, all three incinerators must be in operation and divert the generated residual waste from landfills to incineration, assuming that the MSW generation level stays at the level of 2019. If MSW generation is to return to the level before 2019, increased residual treatment capacity is needed to reach the 2030 targets. For the 2035 targets, there may be a need for additional infrastructure, but this depends on other developments in municipal waste management, such as the increased separate collection of packaging and bio-waste and also the actual development of waste generation.

The NWMP (2020-2035) plans the development of waste management zones, which are the base units for integrated waste management planning. The zones cover a territory of one or more municipalities that offer an uninterrupted road network, facilitating the transport of waste to the pre-treatment, recovery and final disposal destinations. The zones are to include at least one center for the recovery of the recyclable and compostable materials, an incinerator with energy recovery or a sanitary landfill. The NWMP includes plans for the replacement of all landfills/dumpsites by 11 regional controlled landfill sites; one new sanitary landfill is already in the planning stage in Vlorë and will have a capacity of 1 045

tons per day. Prior to the completion of the regional sanitary landfills, 10 illegal landfills are in the process of being approved for remediation to be used while the sanitary landfills are under construction.

In addition, collection facilities, transfer and/or pre-treatment stations are to be located within a distance that ensures efficient service. All waste management zones operators will conduct a feasibility study on waste management, which will anticipate the need for waste transfer stations whenever the distance to the regional treatment facility (3) exceeds a driving time of 2 hours. The objective of the waste transfer stations is to decrease the costs of transport to the regional treatment facility. When the new regional treatment facilities replace the decentralized system of 190 illegal landfills, the distance to the landfills will significantly increase for the majority of waste, also causing a jump in waste management costs. The transfer stations will collect waste for transport, enabling optimization of the transfer costs.

Decentralized composting and home composting will be encouraged in rural areas. Separate bio-waste collection in urban areas will be incorporated into the system once facilities are in place for the management of these waste streams. A new composting plant is scheduled to start operation in the Cërrik municipality in autumn 2021, with a capacity of 1 000 tons annually. The plan is to produce compost for use in landscaping.

As regional waste treatment facilities will cover the treatment of all waste generated, and three incineration plants are planned to cover for the treatment of up to 30 % of all generated residual waste, this will create logistical problems and high waste management costs. The increasing waste management costs will be allocated to the municipalities. Municipalities already struggle with covering the current costs of waste management. It is therefore important to make sure that waste fees reflect the increasing costs and that enforcing the payment of the service tariffs is improved. Furthermore, the allocation of national funds for the implementation of regional waste management centers and logistical systems would greatly benefit the enforcement of the new system.

4 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities for solid waste management in Albania are divided between the national, regional and local levels. Various international reports emphasize the fact that the institutional capacity to manage waste remains weak at all levels in Albania.

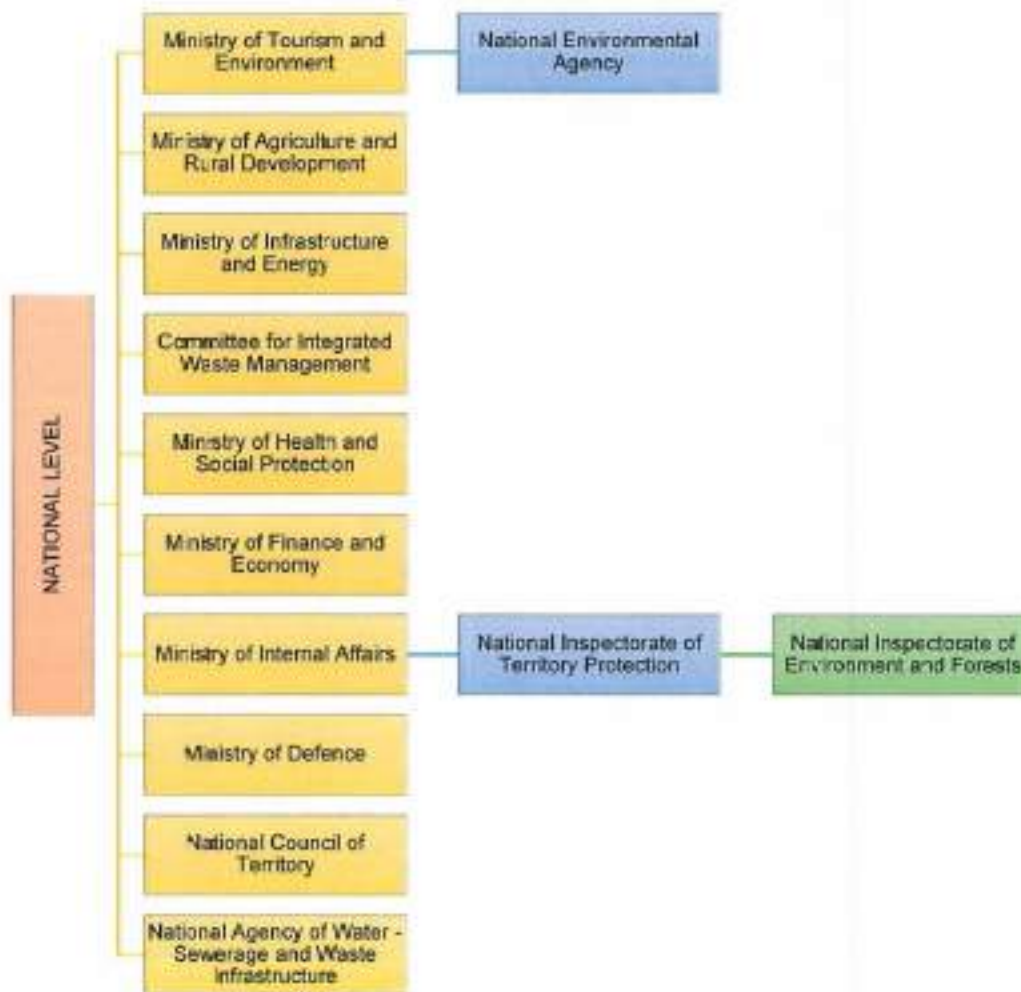


Figure 5. Scheme of responsible institution for the Waste Management at the national level

At the regional and local level, the institutions responsible for waste management are the Regional Councils, Municipalities and regional and local institutions under Ministries or

National Agencies presented in the figure above. Among these institutions we can mention: Regional Environmental Agencies; Regional Hospitals and Sanitary Inspectorates; etc.

4.1 Institutional roles and responsibilities at national level

Law no. 10463 "On integrated waste management" is the basic legislation that defines the institutional responsibilities for central government organizations in the field of waste management, including the Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MoTE) and its subordinate agencies, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MoIE), currently responsible for the preparation of the Investment Plan in Integrated Solid Waste Management.

Specific tasks are assigned to these ministries through specific decisions of the Council of Ministers (September 2017). The legal framework is supplemented by Law 139/2015 "On Local Self-Government", which defines the roles and responsibilities of municipalities in the management of municipal waste.

The institutional framework at the central level for waste management includes two main ministries, respectively MoTE and MoIE, as well as their subordinate agencies with distributed and overlapping tasks between them.

4.1.1 Ministry of Tourism and Environment

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MoTE) takes the lead in the overall regulatory and policy framework for all types of waste and oversees the management of hazardous waste (see below). MoTE is the main institution responsible for the design and implementation of the national strategy and action plan for waste management in the country. Together with other subordinate institutions, including the National Environment Agency (NAE) and the State Inspectorate of Environment and Forests, the ministry has the overall responsibility for establishing and monitoring the waste management system.

MoTE has tasked the Waste Management Sector with dealing with issues related to waste. It functions as part of the Environmental Projects Conception and Feasibility Directorate. MoTE relies on the implementation and enforcement of environmental policies by the

National Environment Agency (NAE), the State Inspectorate of Environment and Forestry (SIEF) and the Regional Environmental Agencies (RAEs), with branches throughout the country, which also interact with local authorities.

Despite the wide range of responsibilities and authority given to these institutions according to the legislation in force, the general opinion is that they operate with a limited number of personnel, lack basic equipment and proper facilities, and have little capacity. As such, their role is simply limited to the collection of information that is often inaccurate and contradictory compared to information from other institutions and the preparation of the annual Report on Environmental Protection.

MoTE also supports the meetings of the National Committee of Integrated Waste Management, established by DCM 967, dated 25.10.2013 to coordinate policies, efforts and resources at the national level, to propose legislative and administrative measures for waste management and to drawing up an annual report on the situation of waste management in the country. The committee is supported by the National Waste Advisory Group (technical expert group).

4.1.2 Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

The role of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MoIE) in the waste sector is based on Law no. 10463 and in VKM 504, which defines the revised responsibilities at the central government level. The decision also transferred, along with the responsibilities for territory planning and siting of landfills and other facilities for waste treatment, the National Agency for Territorial Planning, from the previous Ministry of Urban Development. MOIE is the only central government institution that has a budget program for Urban Waste Management in its mid-term budget.

The MoIE covers infrastructure investments and the design of standards and best techniques for the management of municipal waste and waste from construction and demolition, as well as the project cycle related to the construction (planning, design and implementation) of regional landfills.

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The Ministry also coordinates and monitors the activity of waste landfills, the use of regional landfills and incineration plants, determines the technical criteria for the study and makes appropriate preparations for the closure of urban landfills.

This ministry has been responsible for collecting data on municipal waste and construction and demolition waste, being for many years the main and only source of information about the amount of waste generated in the country.

MoE, in cooperation with MoTE, has the authority to monitor activities related to the disposal and treatment of municipal waste and waste from construction and demolition, through the design, construction and implementation of landfills and incinerators. Decisions related to the procedures for the study and construction of incinerators in Elbasan, Fier and Tirana are taken and directed by MoTE. The Sector of Development Programs for Solid Waste Treatment in MoE, consisting of a staff of 6 people, bears the responsibilities for waste management.

4.1.3 National Environment Agency

The National Environment Agency (NEA), which operates on the basis of VKM no. 568, dated 17.07.2019 "On the creation, organization and operation of the National Environment Agency", extends its activity throughout the country and is organized on two levels:

- a. Central level through the general directorate
- b. Regional level, through four regional environmental agencies.

The inspection structures exercise their activity related to the environment and water sector in the following points:

- Preparation of periodic reports on environmental assessment;
- Preparation and follow-up of the National Environmental Monitoring Program;
- Ensuring state control of environmental protection;
- Carrying out controls according to a thematic program based on risk;
- Ensuring and controlling the implementation of legal and bylaw acts;

- Examination of complaints about administrative measures and fines imposed on subjects;
- Cooperation with other inspectorates;
- Exercising any other function specified in special laws related to environmental protection, environmental permits and inspection.

4.1.4 Committee for Integrated Waste Management

In order to achieve the objectives in the field of waste, the Committee for Integrated Waste Management (CIWM) was created and operates, approved by DCM no. 967, dated 25.20.2013, "On the way of organization and operation of CIWM". The committee must meet no less than once every three months to review and approve documents and acts related to waste management. The committee also meets in cases of reviewing improvement plans for existing locations, which decides on the measures to be taken and the necessary transition period for their implementation.

4.1.5 Other Ministries and Agencies engaged in waste management

Law no. 10463/2011 "On integrated waste management", as amended, charges other ministries such as the ministry responsible for finance, the ministry responsible for agriculture and the ministry responsible for health to draft specific by-laws according to their responsibilities in the field of waste.

Other ministries engaged in waste management include the following:

- Ministry of Health: for hospital waste management;
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development: for agricultural waste management;
- Ministry of Energy and Industry: for waste management, mining waste;
- Ministry of Defense: for the management of military waste.
- Ministry of Finance and Economy: for financial matters, and regarding the involvement of the private sector and the recycling industry.

Other agencies and institutions that have their specific roles and responsibilities in the waste management process are:

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- **National Agency of Water - Sewerage and Waste Infrastructure** is a state body that exercises its functions based on decision no. 43¹, dated 11.07.2018 "On the creation, organization and operation of the National Agency of Water - Sewerage and Waste Infrastructure".
- **National Inspectorate of Environment and Forests** is responsible for guaranteeing the protection of the environment at the national level and for the control and implementation of environmental legislation. It imposes penalties for administrative violations or may suspend activities that are not in accordance with environmental legislation; regularly informs local authorities about the state of the environment, legal acts and approved projects; controls the register of pollutants, technical regulations and technologies.
- **The National Council of the Territory** approves the site permit and the construction permit for facilities (including landfills) with an area larger than 0.5 ha that are built outside the administrative boundaries of the city/village/residential areas.
- **The National Sanitary Inspectorate** has the duty to control and undertake actions to ensure the necessary hygienic-sanitary conditions for the various activities. He has the duty to impose fines for problems related to the non-cleaning of urban areas or when collection and disposal are inappropriate and become dangerous for the population.

4.2 Institutional roles and responsibilities at local level

The role of municipalities in relation to waste management is defined by Law 136/2015 "On local self-government". Strengthening the role of municipalities is a necessity, which derives from the harmonization of the Law on Integrated Waste Management with the provisions of the Law "On Local Self-Government".

Municipalities are responsible for the management of municipal waste which is collected by/or on behalf of the municipalities and includes:

- Household and similar waste, including:
 - Bulky waste, e.g. old furniture,

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- Garden waste, leaves, tree cuttings from pruning, waste from street cleaning and public markets;
- Waste from commercial activities and small businesses, offices and institutions
- Waste from other municipal services such as parks, flower gardens, etc.

Municipalities are primarily responsible for operating the cleaning service, collecting and transporting waste to collection points (transfer stations). Municipalities can establish and operate centers of local interest for the differentiated collection of waste including bulky waste, recyclable waste and biodegradable waste.

Resource allocation is the responsibility of the LGU. Recycling systems for packaging and other specific waste should be set up by product manufacturers and/or the recycling industry under Extended Producer Responsibility schemes.

Law no. 139/2015 "On local self-government" regulates the organization and operation of local government units and relevant bodies in the Republic of Albania, as well as defines their functions, powers, rights and duties.

In particular, the "collection, transportation, disposal and treatment of municipal waste" is defined as a "proper" function of the municipalities. According to this definition, municipalities have the right and responsibility for:

- Organization for the provision of the service of collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of municipal waste;
- Construction, ownership and operation of treatment facilities;
- Establishing service fees to cover the costs of providing the service and collecting revenue.

The organization and distribution of the waste management service in the municipality itself and/or in cooperation with one or more other municipalities, using all legal and administrative instruments.

4.3 Local Regulations on Waste Management

In addition to the legal framework of waste management, the Municipality of Korçe must prepare and approve its own local regulation, where it clearly defines the role and responsibilities of waste producers and operators, to ensure their successful management within its administrative territory.

The document must define the rules and procedures for local waste administration and city cleaning, specifying the rules, techniques and methods of their administration at each stage of this administration, the procedures for handling citizen complaints as well as the range of sanctions for non-compliance with the rules. The regulation must be in accordance with most of the EU Waste Directives and the Albanian legislation in force for waste management. The purpose of the regulation will be to keep clean and ensure a healthy environment for residents.

By detailing the rights and duties of all parties that participate in the process of managing urban solid waste, the regulation will facilitate the implementation of the requirements of the legislation in this field and enable an effective and continuous control in their implementation.

More specifically, the local regulation should include:

- a) Local labor and quality standards, methodologies and technologies, safety and health procedures for cleaning and waste management services;
- b) Rules and obligations of waste producers, such as:
 - o Do not damage the containers, do not change their destination, do not damage and change the destination of certain waste collection points;
 - o Do not deposit waste, do not burn waste in the boiler, do not throw waste into waterways and sewers, do not throw waste into public territories;
 - o To avoid and prevent the abusive disposal of voluminous and dangerous waste, not to deposit dead animals and poisonous materials;
 - o Avoid parking vehicles in front of or near designated waste collection points;

- To clean the space around shops and ambulatory points of sale to maintain hygiene and disinfect containers and garbage bins;
 - To pay local taxes and fees for waste;
 - Other public health issues.
- c) Rights and obligations of waste administrators (waste operators, waste industry) such as:
- Administrative procedures for granting and revoking licenses;
 - Payment of fees and taxes imposed by the local authority;
 - Use of suitable machines and containers;
 - Use of licensed storage sites;
 - Registration of consumers who benefit from cleaning services;
 - Keeping records of waste;
 - Prevention of public health problems;
 - Other public health issues, such as health, safety and emergency procedures.

The aim of the regulation should include all central and local organizations with headquarters in the territory of the municipality, all individuals, all socio-economic operators that exercise their activity in this territory, as well as all public and private operators, local and foreigners engaged in urban waste management activities (collection, storage, transportation, separation, recycling, treatment and disposal). The regulation should also include a section on public relations, prohibited activities, sanctions and punitive measures.

One of the most important target rules that must be defined in the regulation is the differentiated collection and treatment of waste at all stages of their management, as well as the prohibition of their mixing with hazardous waste.

5 NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND TARGETS

The targets of the EU waste legislation (before the revisions adopted in 2018) were transposed into the previous National Waste Management Plan (NWMP), but were never implemented. The previous NWMP (2011-2019) had quite ambitious targets for separate collection and recycling and yet no change happened during that time. The targets for municipal solid waste (MSW) were the following:

- to increase recycling to 25 % of the waste generated by 2015 and 55 % by 2020;
- to reduce landfilling of biodegradable waste to 50 % of the 2014 amount generated by 2021 and 35 % by 2026;
- to establish separate collection for paper/cardboard, metal, plastic and glass for municipalities by 2016.

The main challenges in implementing the legal framework for municipal waste are related to public awareness and the lack of collection and treatment infrastructure (bins, vehicles, equipment). On account of the lack of reliable data, it is currently not possible to measure performance against targets.

The new NWMP (Decision of Council Members No 418, dated 27 May 2020) 'On the approval of the strategic policy document and national action plan on integrated waste management, 2020-2035' sets more realistic targets, which are not based on current legislation or on the targets of the revised Waste Framework Directive. The new NWMP aims to move from a linear to a circular economy in which resources are used in a more sustainable way, with a key focus on:

- identifying and defining the methodology and technology for future waste treatment investments in an integrated waste management system, including equipment for waste collection, composting, recycling, incineration for energy recovery and disposal on the basis of waste management areas;
- determining costs and fees related to waste disposal at treatment plants and waste transfer stations;

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- a verifiable and transparent objective system of investment priorities related to waste management infrastructure that is built on the basis of needs and impact assessment.

The key objectives are waste prevention, separate collection of waste and large-scale recycling. The NWMP has strategic goals, specific objectives and measures. There are four specific goals, namely:

- improving waste management by meeting key principles and legal planning requirements;
- improvement and approximation of the waste management legal framework;
- sustainable funding for waste management;
- human resources, awareness raising and public participation in waste management.

Based on these strategic goals, the NWMP defines nine specific objectives and 31 measures distributed over a period of 15 years. All measures are set over three periods, with goals for 2025, 2030 and 2035, and define the institution responsible for implementing the measures. The targets in the new NWMP partly approximate the respective targets set out in the EU waste legislation. The key targets are as follows:

Targets for 2025

- Collection coverage: at least 80% of the population and 90% of waste generated.
- Separate collection: at least 20% of MSW.
- Landfilling rate: maximum of 50% of generated municipal waste.
- Biodegradable waste: reduction of landfilling of biodegradable waste to 75% of the biodegradable MSW generated in 2016.
- Construction and demolition waste: recycle 30%.
- Packaging: 10% recovery of total packaging materials and specific targets of 10% for each of paper and cardboard, metals, plastics, glass and wood.

Targets for 2030

- Collection coverage: 90% of the population and 95% of waste generated.

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- Separate collection: 30% of MSW.
- Landfilling rate: maximum of 30% of generated municipal waste.
- Biodegradable waste: reduction of landfilling of biodegradable waste to 55% of the biodegradable MSW generated in 2016.
- Construction and demolition waste: recycle 50%.
- Packaging: 40% recovery of packaging generated at households and similar sources and 30% recovery of total packaging with material-specific targets for paper and cardboard (30%), metals (30%), plastics (12%), glass (30%) and wood (10%).

Targets for 2035

- Collection coverage: 95% of the population.
- Separate collection: 40% of MSW.
- Landfilling rate: maximum of 10% of generated municipal waste.
- Biodegradable waste: reduction of landfilling of biodegradable waste to 35% of the biodegradable MSW generated in 2016.
- Construction and demolition waste: recycle 70%.
- Packaging: 70% recovery of packaging generated at households and similar sources and 60% recovery of total packaging with material-specific targets for paper and cardboard (60%), metals (50%), plastics (22.5%), glass (60%) and wood (15%).
- Batteries: recycle between 50% and 70% for different materials.
- Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE): separate collection > 4kg per capita of WEEE from private or individual homes each year; recovery between 70% and 80%; recycle between 50% and 75%.

These targets, especially those for increasing recycling and reducing landfilling, are relatively ambitious. They are, however, lower but more realistic than the targets of the previous NWMP that were never reached.

The NWMP envisages the replacement of all current landfills/dumpsites by *1 regional, controlled landfill sites. The separate collection of packaging waste is planned to be the responsibility of the producers after the introduction of the extended producer responsibility

(EPR) law, which imposes the responsibility for waste packaging on producer responsibility organizations (PROs). PROs, together with the municipalities, will be responsible for arranging the separate collection of packaging waste.

The NWMP places the responsibility for the introduction of separate collection schemes with the PROs, but the introduction of the EPR legislation has been delayed and the responsibilities of PROs are not (yet) defined in law. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the collection system will be well established within a few years.

In order to reach the objectives of the new NWMP, a number of activities are ongoing:

- the preparation of local waste management plans for some municipalities;
- the improvement of the infrastructure in some municipalities (bins, vehicles);
- the fostering of public awareness on waste management at the local level in 54 municipalities, realized by private donor, in cooperation with NEA;
- the start of the rehabilitation and closure of some existing dumpsites;
- the start of feasibility studies for two waste zones: Fier and Elbasan.

According to the NWMP for 2020-2035, regional waste management plans will be prepared after the feasibility studies are completed. Financing for the feasibility studies and arranging the waste zones has already been budgeted for by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, and the construction of temporary landfills and new sanitary landfills has been partly budgeted for by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy.

Waste collection and treatment is by law the obligation of municipalities. The municipalities are responsible for organizing the collection, transport, treatment and disposal services of MSW, and also for building, owning and operating treatment centers and for levying and collecting service fees. Municipalities can choose to provide the service themselves or subcontract the service to private companies.

The municipalities are responsible for reaching the waste-related targets set by the government and in theory there is a fine if they do not reach set targets, which is set in the waste legislation. Because of the lack of funding, administrative capacity and public

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awareness, the municipalities have not been reaching their targets and fines have not been implemented in the case of non-compliance. The national government supports the municipalities by creating guidelines for reporting and also economically by allocating a general budget to the municipalities. In addition, donor organizations, support municipalities to improve waste management services.

The targets, especially those for increasing recycling and reducing landfilling, are relatively ambitious and require the development of key infrastructure for the treatment of residual MSW. Furthermore, strong supportive measures, for example the introduction of separate collection schemes, need to be implemented to reach the targets.

6 WASTE MANAGEMENT SITUATION ON KORCA REGION {CASE STUDY}

The municipality of Korçe plans expenses for waste management (collection, transfer, treatment of urban waste as well as cleaning of roads, sidewalks and public spaces) in the amount of 120 million ALL for 2022, or about 6% of its budget for this service.

Table 2. Korçe Municipality data on budget allocated for Waste Management

	Amount in ALL	Weight to total in %	Changes 2022 vs 21
Plan 2022	120,000,000	6.4%	6%

Table 3. Korçe Municipality data on Waste Management

The data	Fact 2021	Plan 2022	Plan 2023	Plan 2024
Population covered by service	122,577	122,577	122,577	122,577
Population covered by services in the city	87,789	87,789	87,789	87,789
Population covered by service in Administrative Units	34,788	34,788	34,788	34,788
Surface covered with service (km ²)	685	685	685	685
Total amount of managed waste (collect + transfer + handle)	19,135	19,135	19,135	19,135
Frequency of collection and transportation of urban waste per week (average City + AU)	5	5	5	5
Frequency in the city	7	7	7	7
Frequency in administrative units	3	3	3	3

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The municipality intends to improve the performance in this service during 2023 and in the next three years, reflecting in:

- Increasing the number of the population to which service is offered
- Improving the collection of fees to better cover the cost of the service
- Keeping public facilities clean
- Reducing the amount of urban waste that is deposited in the Maliqi sanitary landfill through increasing recycling and therefore reducing the cost of waste disposal and related payments.

6.1 Waste management in the pilot area

From June 2022, the Maliqi Landfill has started its full operation. A major investment, which finally solves the problem of urban waste collection and processing for Korça. All the waste of the Korca Municipality will be transferred and processed in the Maliqi Landfill. The function of the Landfill leads to the closure of more than 100 waste collection areas in the Korça region, significantly reducing environmental pollution. The surface of the Landfill is around 19 ha and its capacity will be approximately 1 million m³ of waste and will serve approximately 300,000 residents of the district, becoming the first model of joint waste management in the region. Also, two transfer stations have been built (Devoll and Kolonje) and the one in Pogradec is expected to be built.

Waste management in the Municipality of Korce should include the implementation of waste minimization schemes to progressively reduce waste destined for burning or landfilling. At the same time, it should be aimed at increasing public awareness about waste separation at the source.

The differentiated waste management scheme in the pilot area will be handled within the other waste management scheme and can be implemented:

- Through differentiation at the source of the waste and its collection in special containers in WCPs.

- Through the use of individual waste collection schemes with the so-called "door-to-door" schemes, which are characterized by a high capital and operating cost but have a number of advantages such as:
 - increasing the performance of the service by removing waste from public spaces, eliminating WCPs and consequently avoiding the overloading of these collection points;
 - providing a service as close as possible to consumers, making them more aware and more active in local waste collection services;
 - possibility of better service for waste areas where there is not enough space for WCP;
 - providing a personalized, efficient and effective service for large customers, where their daily generation exceeds the rates accepted for the common service; this also enables the facilitation and non-overfilling of common WCPs;
 - offering a personalized service for large customers respecting the principle of "pay for what you produce";
 - providing an effective and efficient service to remote areas (using weekly or less frequent services);
 - and most importantly providing a good opportunity for the application of successful waste separation schemes;

In the framework of investments for waste management in the Korca Region, the Regional Council of Korca (RCK) has implemented the WASTE RREACT Project, financed by the European Union for the INTERREG IPA CBC program Greece – ALBANIA 2014 -2020. The RCK has distributed the bins in Administrative units of Mollaj, Voskop, Drenove Bulgarec as the pilot process of recycling for the waste in the urban areas. The table below consist of waste collecting data for each respective administrative unit.

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Figure 6. Storage of Press and Bins before the distribution

Administrative Unit	Letter	Plastic	Aluminum
Mollaj	60 TON	3 TON	1 TON
Voskop	50 TON	2 TON	1 TON
Drenove	70 TON	3 TON	2 TON
Bulgarec	170 TON	7 TON	3 TON
TOTAL	350 TON	15 TON	7 TON

Table 4. Monthly Data of Bins collection and pressing procedure before the distribution

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Figure 7. Demonstration of pressing waste collection of letter, preparing for recycling process

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7 COMMUNITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

If we want to have good waste management and the scheme to work and be implemented successfully in Korçe, it is very important that the public understands and supports this management in every aspect of it. Likewise, the success of the schemes that are proposed, the initiatives that will be undertaken, depend entirely on the degree of commitment from the users themselves, such as: families, businesses, etc.

Waste management: has technical problems that require good organization and the use of modern technologies, but also the communication of problems with its implementers, such as residents, businesses or public institutions. While legal and economic incentives can change the behavior of citizens, creating the right public awareness and desire to manage waste as best as possible is equally important.

Promoting public awareness of problems related to waste management, and encouraging individuals and communities to take more responsibility for the waste they themselves produce, is an important aspect of civic outreach. Therefore, the municipality and other local institutions should focus on:

- I. Informing the public about the new waste management service – enabling the public to engage constructively with a new scheme. The public must be informed about the places designated as WCS, emptying schedules of containers, the frequency of waste collection, the standard of the cleaning service. Information must be communicated clearly to enable them to coordinate with the rules of the service and show them the tools that will be used to collect their opinions and complaints. This process should also include information on regulation, penalties and sanctions, cost recovery strategy and fee level, environmental protection and sustainable development of the area.
- II. Increasing awareness of good practices in the integrated management of urban waste - starting from the identification of interest groups and the design together with them of programs for the implementation of waste separation, recycling, or

- composting schemes. Interest groups should include families, businesses, institutions, groups in need, youth and children as part of the focus groups that will benefit from the cleaning service. They will take an important role in promoting, conducting and implementing the public awareness campaign.
- III. Educating the younger generation through a detailed educational program inside and outside the school premises to increase their knowledge on the waste management service and to encourage waste minimization, reuse and recycling. Concrete cleaning practices or actions are a very good method of education by cooperating with the newly created ecological youth groups or with the pedagogical staff of the schools.
 - IV. Strengthening and increasing public and business involvement – increasing cooperation with various interest groups in securing public support: for waste management initiatives, service alternatives, costs, budget mobilization of the public and other interest groups in support of implementation theirs, the introduction of regular fee payment by assessing their demand, willingness and ability to pay. An issue that needs to be considered is ensuring private engagement in urban waste management, to create opportunities for the creation of public-private partnerships (PPPs).

7.1 Methods that can be used to inform the community

The municipality and other local institutions should diversify the means of communication as much as possible so that the citizens understand the challenges and progress of the municipality in providing a quality service and throughout the territory. The respective directorates in the municipality should promote, as the case may be, in cooperation with the legal entities involved, education and information campaigns aimed at citizens. The aim of the campaigns should be to provide general and specific information to the public about local waste collection, recycling, city cleanliness initiatives, increase citizen awareness of legal obligations, local rules and obligations and promote a friendly attitude towards the environment.

The most used methods of communicating information are brochures, articles in national and regional newspapers, notices, information boards and advertisements on local TV and radio, and leaflets distributed in schools. Communication materials should be used to help residents understand the challenges to community waste management as well as progress to address these challenges. Also the information boards and display in the city center can be used to provide awareness, informational messages and contacts for further information or complaints. A brochure with orientations on the use of containers and their location can be distributed free of charge by the municipality; orientations on the fractions that are collected, guidelines for the proper delivery of different materials according to fractions, obligations and duties for the proper delivery of waste, the needs and claims of citizens' cooperation, etc.

The door-to-door communication method is recommended as effective enough to invite citizens to become part of different initiatives, such as recycling and composting, to improve their attitude towards waste separation, to implement rules and respect schedules, but also to support the municipality in the implementation of selected schemes. Residents and businesses should be distributed information sheets on the types of waste that can be recycled, on the composting methodology, etc.

Use trucks and containers for information: On all trucks and if possible on waste containers, the slogan "Keep your city clean" or any other slogan must be written clearly and easily readable (in letters at least 10 cm large), the telephone number of the service provider as well as the toll-free telephone number assigned by the local authorities, according to a pre-approved format. These obligations must be defined in the cleaning contracts.

Periodically, a large-scale advertising can be carried out, through comprehensive materials, of the qualitative and quantitative results achieved during the previous years, in particular for the differentiated collection of waste, with the aim of the active participation of the public in this process.

7.2 Mechanisms for obtaining citizen opinion and response

Low civic awareness is one of the main factors that negatively affect the cleanliness of the city and more specifically the dirtiness of some WCPs, (the indiscriminate disposal of urban and bulky waste outside containers) as and the existence of informal points where waste is thrown indiscriminately. For this purpose, public awareness towards issues of waste and cleanliness of the city should be considered as a priority and primary objective alongside other objectives related to the infrastructure or the safe disposal of waste.

The municipality should, through public announcements, invite citizens to participate in the municipal council meetings when waste management issues are discussed. Institutionalizing such mechanism will increase residents' confidence that the municipality takes into account their thoughts, ideas and suggestions. This is accomplished by setting up an information office to enable the receipt of opinion through: Collection of citizens' complaints. Occasional surveys as a good means of monitoring the service and standards it offers. For each area of the community or area to be included in the survey, the sample that must be realized might be between 250 and 300 interviewees.

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**Recycling turns
things into other
things. Which is
like MAGIC.**



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