

Waste prevention country profile

Austria

February 2025



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European Environment Agency



Country profile:

General information

Name of the country/ region	Austria
Geographical coverage of the waste prevention programme (national/ regional)	National
Type of programme (stand alone or integrated into waste management plan or into the circular economy strategy)	Published as part of the federal waste management plan
Title of programme and link to programme	Waste prevention programme 2023 (Abfallvermeidungsprogramm 2023) https://www.bmk.gv.at/dam/jcr:67c5234f-e542-4a48-8489-e23282a3de00/Bundes-Abfallwirtschaftsplan_Teil-3.pdf
Duration of programme	2023-2028
Language	German, English
Contact person in the country/region	Mag. Warscher Sarah (sarah.warscher@bmk.gv.at) Tel. (+431) 71100-613538
Development process of the programme/ revision	The revision of the Austrian waste prevention programme is based on an extensive evaluation of the 2017 programme (see below) as well as on an analysis of good practice examples for successful waste prevention in other EU Member States. Furthermore, a stakeholder participation process and public participation took place for the development of the new programme.
Foreseen budget for implementation of the programme	The programme does not include a specific budget for implementation of the programme or specific measures, as many players are involved in implementing the measures.

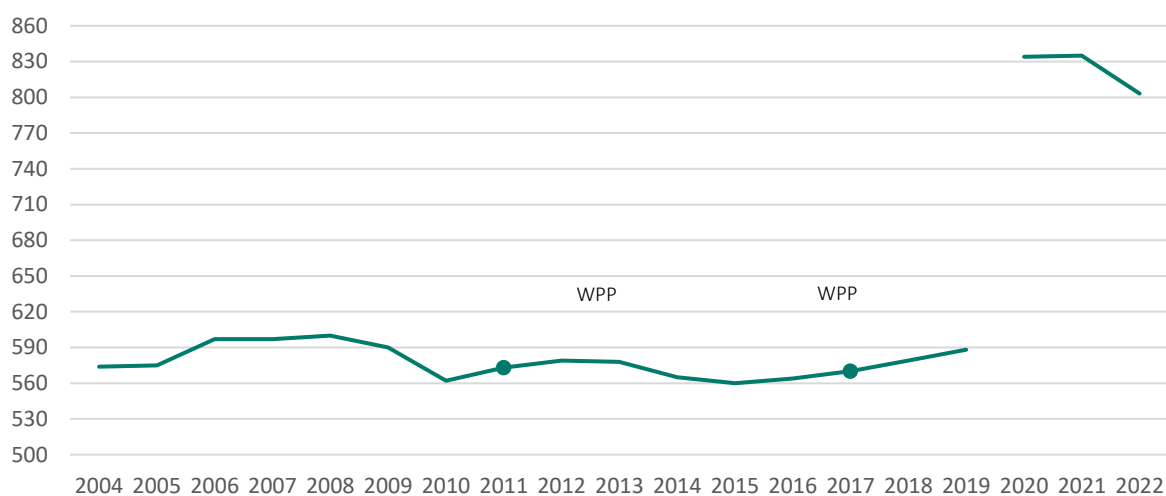
WASTE GENERATION

The following figures illustrate the progress towards waste prevention and decoupling of waste generation from economic growth in Austria:

Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)

Municipal waste generation in Austria remained relatively stable until 2019, but significantly increased from 2020 onwards (**Figure 1**), which was due to changes in the reporting methodology, when the coverage of the reported municipal waste was extended to include waste that is similar to household waste from other sources such as services or commercial and industrial operations, resulting in a break in series. In 2022, the country generated 803 kg/cap of municipal waste, which is significantly above the estimated EU27 average of 513 kg/cap.¹

Figure 1 Municipal waste generation in Austria (kg per capita), 2004-2022



Source: Eurostat [ENV_WASMUN].

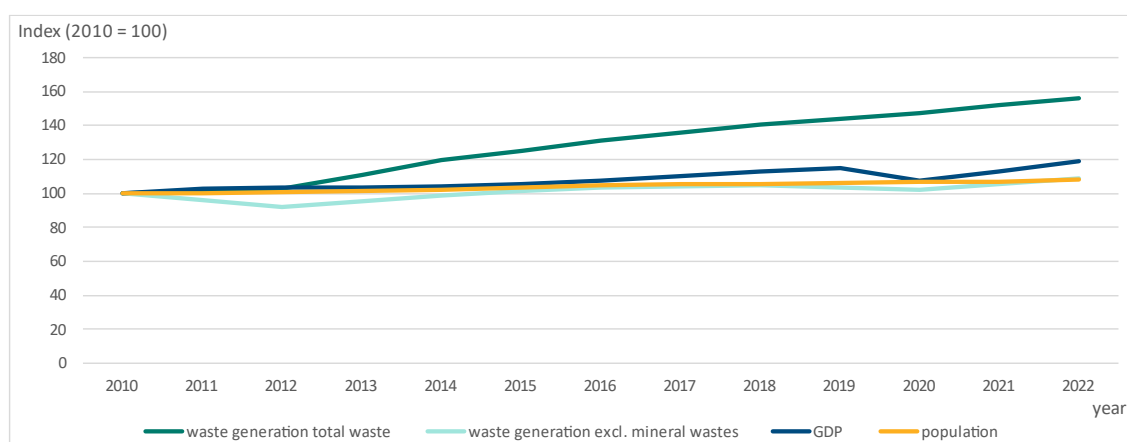
Note: There is a break in series in 2020. As of reference year 2020, new reporting rules apply for calculating recycled municipal waste pursuant to the targets laid down in Article 11.2(c-e) of Directive 2008/98/EC. The reporting rules have been applied since reference year 2020 in Austria.

¹ The EU average might be influenced by the situation that not all Member States already fully apply the definition of municipal waste as defined in the Waste Framework Directive as amended in 2018.

Total waste

Austria's total waste generation shows a significant increase from 2012 onwards (Figure 2). This trend is primarily driven by the largest waste categories, namely soils and mineral waste from construction and demolition. Excluding the major mineral waste categories results in stabilisation of the overall waste generation. This is mainly due to opposite trends in the largest waste categories, namely mixed waste on the one hand and recyclable wastes on the other hand. More specifically, recyclable wastes increased while the generation of mixed waste decreased, indicating improvements in waste management. Austria's GDP showed a steady growth over the considered time period, but dropped in 2020, most likely due to the Covid-19 outbreak. A longer time series is required to confirm an actual decoupling from GDP.

Figure 2 Generation of waste (total and excluding major mineral wastes), population and economic development, 2010-2022



Source: Eurostat [ENV_WASGEN, NAMA_10_PC, DEMO_GIND]

Note: Waste generation data for odd years are interpolated.

WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

Objectives and priorities

1. Waste prevention objectives of the Programme - quantitative objectives (waste reduction) - qualitative objectives (reduction of hazardous substances/ environmental impacts)	The Austrian WPP 2023 is split into seven fields of action, each with their own set of objectives, indicators and measures. The fields of action are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construction• Plastic and packaging• Food• Textiles• Reuse and repair• Households (including littering)• Businesses and organizations
2. Sectors covered	See above on fields of action
3. Priority waste types	See above on fields of action
4. Target groups	The programme aims at encouraging all stakeholders to participate in the implementation of waste prevention at a local, regional and provincial level, hence aims at consumers (e.g. households), enterprises (e.g. reuse enterprises, collection centres, waste advisors, public authorities), ministries, etc.

Targets, indicators and monitoring

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|----|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Indicators used to monitor progress | General waste prevention indicators are proposed in the WPP 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Domestic Resource Productivity [€/t, Index]• Waste intensity (total waste generation in relation to gross value added, minus the construction sector) [kg/€1000]• Total municipal waste generation from households and similar institutions in relation to consumption expenditure [kg/€1000] |
|----|-------------------------------------|---|

Indicators are also proposed for each field of action as follows:

- Construction
 - Total waste generated in the construction sector in relation to gross value added in the construction sector [kg/1000 €],
 - Amount of reused construction materials and products [t/a],
 - Recycling rate of construction and demolition waste (excl. excavated material) [%].
 - Plastic and packaging
 - Packaging placed on the market per packaging material [t/a],[kg/a],
 - Recycling rate per packaging material [%],
 - Reuseable rate - packaging [%],
 - Reusable rate - beverage containers (related to filling volume) [%],
 - Amount of beverage cups and food packaging subject to the Single Use Plastics Directive placed on the market [t/a].
 - Food
 - Amount of food waste generated [kg/person/a],
 - Amount of food waste generated from agriculture [t/a],
 - Amount of food waste generated from processing and manufacture [t/a; alternatively in kg/operation/a],
 - Amount of (avoidable) food waste from retail [t/a],
 - Amount of passed on food waste from food retail [t/a],
 - Amount of (avoidable) food waste from restaurants and food services[t/a],
 - Amount of (avoidable) food waste from private households [t/a, kg/person/a; alternatively in kg/household/a],
 - Amount of avoidable food waste from consumption² [t/a, kg/person/a].
 - Textiles
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² Includes retail, out-of-home consumption and households

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- Amount of separately collected used textiles [kg/person/a];
 - Amount of reused products – product category: textiles [t/a, kg/person]
 - Reuse and repair
 - Amount of reused products – per product category: construction materials and products, textiles, WEEE, furniture, others [t/a];
 - Amount of municipal waste sent to preparation for reuse [t/a; alternatively in % of the total amount of municipal waste].
 - Households (including littering)
 - Awareness of waste prevention among the population [Internet search queries],
 - Municipal waste from households and similar establishments [kg/person/a],
 - Number of littering clean-up campaigns / number of people participating in littering clean-up campaigns [#],
 - Amount of litter collected during clean-up campaigns [t/a, kg/person/a].
 - Businesses and organizations
 - Total waste generated in the manufacturing industry in relation to the gross value added from "manufacturing sector" [kg/1000 €],
 - Number of companies that have introduced environmental management systems [#],
 - Number of companies/products with eco-labels [#].

2. Quantitative targets

The Austrian waste prevention programme sets quantitative targets in the field of food waste (cp. chapter 8.5) and regarding single-use-plastics (cp. chapter 7, bullet point 18.) Furthermore, it refers to waste prevention targets set in other documents, such as:

- SDG 12 Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. The WPP states that target achievement in Austria is monitored using an Austria-specific indicator set developed by Statistics Austria on the basis of the set of UN indicators.

External targets are also referenced in the fields of action, including those as follows:

- Construction
 - The Waste Framework Directive sets recycling and recovery targets for non-hazardous construction and demolition waste of 70% annually from 2020
 - Plastic and packaging
 - The revised Packaging Directive stipulated the promotion of reusable packaging and sets targets for the recycling of packaging waste. Furthermore, Member States are obliged to
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reduce the consumption of light plastic carrier bags to a maximum of 90 pieces per capita and year by the end of 2019 and to 40 pieces per capita and year by the end of 2025 or to implement the ban on the free distribution of the carrier bags. Light plastic carrier bags have been banned in Austria since 1 January 2020.

- Food
 - The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 12.3) aims to halve the per capita amount of food waste at retail and consumer level by 2030 and reducing food losses along the production and supply chain.
 - The European Commission's circular economy package of 2015 calls for an EU-wide reduction in food waste from 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030.
- Textiles
 - N/A
- Reuse and repair
 - N/A
- Households (including littering)
 - N/A
- Businesses and organizations
 - N/A

3.	Monitoring mechanism of the programme	The Austrian waste prevention programme will be evaluated at least every 6 years and data collection for monitoring is done regularly (cp. chapter 4)
4.	Evaluation of the programme	WPP 2017 was evaluated and the results are given in WPP 2023.

Prevention measures

Implemented prevention measures according to Article 9	Some of the measures of the WPP 2017 are further continued. In addition, some of the measures of the WPP 2023 are already implemented.
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The waste prevention programme includes the following measures that are proposed to avoid waste generation (Chapter 1.5):

Table 1: Specific waste prevention measures structured according to Art 9 WFD

Promote and support sustainable consumption models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on and development of resource-saving/waste-preventing technologies and techniques as well as the implementation of pilot projects (e.g. flexible building design, modular construction, avoidance of pollutants and contaminants, separability of components and building materials, recovery and marketing of whole components from building demolition) (B1) • Develop a standard for sustainable, recycling-friendly construction (e.g. in an OIB guideline of the Austrian Institute for Building Technology) (B2) • Integration of relevant topics (including reuse- and recovery-oriented deconstruction) in education and training, especially at technical colleges, higher education institutions and universities, but also in apprenticeships/vocational schools, and creation of teaching and learning aids as well as the exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of education (B3) • Promotion of "resource-conserving construction" and "recovery-oriented deconstruction" in building construction planning (focus on high flexibility on the change of use (e.g. through appropriate floor plan design, room heights) and on construction methods with easy separability/dismantlability, especially for reuse) (B4) • Encourage the extension of the service life of public buildings and the mandatory application of building and civil engineering criteria of the national action plan for sustainable public procurement (naBe) in public procurements (B5) • Increased use of natural, renewable and biodegradable raw materials for all load-bearing and non-load-bearing products and constructions, especially insulation materials, and restriction of building materials that contain
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	<p>non-separable plastics, e.g. thermal insulation mortar, plaster screeds (B6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a network of stakeholders to strengthen the implementation of reuse of building components (e.g. through platforms, events) (B7) • Examination of the possibilities to take resource-conserving measures into account in housing subsidies (e.g. subsidies for the implementation of sustainable construction in housing funds) (B8) • Mandatory specification of a quota regarding reuse and recycling in construction projects and examination of a mandatory quota (B9) • Research and development of new solutions for weight reduction, reuse and recycling of plastics, especially in the packaging sector (K1) • Introduction of a deposit for single-use plastic or metal beverage containers (K2) • Develop measures to further reduce the consumption of single-use plastic products by 20% (consumption reduction, beverage cups, food packaging, plastic films used in postal services (catalogues, magazines)) and assess the development of single-use beverage cup and packaging consumption (K3) • Continuation of the stakeholder dialogue on packaging (K4) • Supporting EU activities, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the global agreement against plastic pollution ○ Limit packaging volume and weight to the minimum necessary to protect products (K5) • Educational measures on the issue of short-lived plastic products as well as on the positive image of reusable alternatives or products with a high recycled content, inter alia, through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (Professional) support for environmental/waste advisory services on single-use plastic beverage cups/dishes and their alternatives; ○ Provision of teaching and information materials (especially on to-go and take-away consumption); ○ Promotion of the European Waste Prevention Week ○ Promotion of durable plastic and packaging products and products with a high recycled content in public procurement (K6) • Change product design with regard to pollution-free, material reduction, material selection, use
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extension and recyclability of plastic products (K7)

- Promote durable products and products with a high recycled content in public procurement (K8)
- Support the ban on the use of microplastics in products at EU level (as a product/product component) and research concerning the avoidance/reduction of microplastics in the environment (e.g. through washing processes, sports fields, tyre wear) (see Action Plan Microplastics 2022-2025) (K9)
- Use of biodegradable materials, verifiably from predominantly renewable raw materials for products used in agriculture/forestry to remain in nature (K10)
- Measures to promote reusable packaging (K11):
 - Support projects to establish new reusable solutions, especially plastic-free options, also to reduce littering;
 - Examine the possibility of expanding the mandatory use of reusable beverage cups and tableware at large events, e.g. at the national level;
 - Encourage the use of reusable tableware and the offer of washing facilities (e.g. for reusable tableware for take-away, reusable cups);
 - Examine a mandatory offer of reusable take-away products (e.g. coffee-to-go);
 - Cost-effective offer of reusable alternatives regarding disposable beverage cups and take-away disposable packaging at the point-of-sale;
 - Examine the use of reusable packaging for meals in communal catering facilities;
 - Promotion of standardised reusable (standard) containers, such as 0.33 l beer bottles, and strengthening of reusable systems in the distribution of goods (e.g. in online trade)
- Increased transparency on harmful substances in articles and products with the aid of the SCIP database of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) for the purpose of informing the recycling industry and consumers (K12).
- Promotion of non-packaging systems and filling systems (K13):
 - for individual product groups (e.g. detergents) in the retail sector,

including training of sales staff to actively promote reusable solutions or to fill containers that consumers have brought with them;

- Preparation of a guideline for the gastronomy and retail sectors;
- Increased implementation of publicly accessible drinking water fountains.
- Optimisation of packaging design for better drainability of residues (K14)
- Continuation of the work in the national coordination body and the associated working groups on food waste prevention (L1)
- Continuation and expansion of voluntary agreements, such as the cooperation "Agreement 2017-2030 on the prevention of food waste in food businesses" (L2)
- Continuation of providing a networking platform for stakeholders, e.g. through the Stakeholder Dialogue on Food Waste Prevention (L3)
- Research on the potential of preventable food waste and food losses and on the realisation of these preventable potentials and continuation of existing funding lines (L4)
- Educational measures to prevent food waste, especially focused on consumption behaviour that is low in waste for relevant personnel or in sector-specific training courses and for educators (L5)
- Use of opportunities in public procurement or in public institutions (e.g. hospitals) (L6)
- Strengthening alternative, regional sales opportunities for food (L7)
- Promotion of further processing and distribution of food (L8)
- Promoting of demand-oriented planning at all stages of the value chain (from production to consumption) as well as adjusting the concept of return goods (L9)
- Extending and/or supporting already established strategies to other areas, especially wholesale and processing such as (L10):
 - Transfer of products;
 - Staff training
- Encourage the transfer/donation of edible food to social institutions (L11)
- Research and development of "more sustainable" (renewable, recyclable) fibres and of more sustainable consumption (T1).
- Stakeholder dialogue on textiles: establishment of a stakeholder initiative to exchange information and experience and to promote circular economy and sustainable production (T2)

- Examination of the potential shape of extended producer responsibility, in particular to prevent the destruction of new goods (T3)
- Consider repair, reuse and recycling design in fashion design curricula and support textile (educational) programs to encourage collaboration between universities, schools and companies (T4)
- Promotion of sustainable product design and the use of sustainable fibres and secondary raw materials, with a focus on durability, separability and recyclability of materials and establishment of green chemistry in production (T5)
- Adaptation of criteria for public procurement with focus on sustainable standards for textiles (T6)
- Measures for the dissemination and application of the eco-label for textiles, shoes, rental textiles (T7)
- Educational measures to raise awareness of sustainable shopping and consumer behavior (T8):
 - To promote slow fashion;
 - Regarding textile quality labels;
 - To reuse textiles and minimize the release of microplastics (through the use of textiles);
 - Expansion of the educational opportunities at adult education centers, in repair cafes, sewing cafes or similar institutions to enable them to sew or repair clothing, shoes and accessories themselves
- Promote the concept of "sharing instead of buying" or other alternative business models, especially through pilot projects (T9).
- Giving usable, unsold product stocks or returned goods to social institutions or other organisations (T10)
- Promotion of flea markets, swap meets and second-hand marketing concepts as well as social department stores, especially in rural regions (T11)
- Further development of the collection and logistics system that is optimised for reuse (T12)
- Expansion of the "clothing and accessories" service in the repair guide (T13)
- Research and development to extend the lifespan and service life (e.g. through functional upgrading of products, innovative business models, second-life use, such as of traction batteries), incl. strategies against obsolescence; baseline study on reuse in the furniture segment (R1)

- Continuation of the reuse & repair platform for the exchange of experience, information and networking (R2)
- Support for repairs through a repair bonus (R3)
- Measures to increase reuse and repairs in public procurement, in particular through reuse-friendly procurement guidelines and guidelines for action and/or reuse of material goods within the public sector and/or transfer to reuse companies (R4)
- Support activities at EU level, e.g. to introduce a reparability index for selected product groups and examine extended producer responsibility to promote reuse (R5)
- Promoting professionalisation in the field of reuse product marketing (R6)
- Provision of basic building blocks for standard terms and conditions for the transfer of reuse equipment (R7)
- Educational activities on reuse, repair and longevity of products as well as the publication of best practice examples and development of educational offers on repair and reuse (R8)
- Taking repair and reuse design into consideration in design curricula, e.g. in the furniture sector (R9)
- The digitalisation of product information systems relevant for reuse and repair (e.g. for clothing, furniture, electrical appliances or building components) (R10)
- Promotion of the concept "use instead of buy", e.g. by expanding the category "rental" under reparaturfuehrer.at and further services, information on www.bewusstkaufen.at ("long use" section to be further expanded) (R11)
- Encourage the transfer/donation of usable, unsold product stocks or returned goods from online/retail e.g. to social organisations (R12)
- Promotion of repair possibilities (e.g. via repair networks, repair guides, repair cafes) (R13)
- Continuation of the expansion of reuse networks in the federal provinces and promoting the establishment of networks with other actors from the private and public sector (in particular through the further development of instruments of labour market policy and innovative financing instruments for social-economy reuse & repair businesses to promote long-term stable partnership projects) (R14)
- Promotion of waste prevention initiatives, such as lending shops/libraries, exchange initiatives etc. and related initiatives in companies, institutions and schools (R15)
- Expansion of the reuse collection of usable goods in the municipalities (R16)

- Promotion of the concept (reuse and repair) for second-hand shops - also taking into account online shops (R17)
- Continuation of stakeholder platforms on waste prevention in order enable networking and exchange of information (H1)
- Support waste advisory services in their efforts to provide information on sustainable purchasing and usage behaviour (e.g. on rechargeable batteries) (H2)
- Educational measures on waste prevention options, etc. (H3):
 - via the platform www.bewusstkaufen.at;
 - Continuous updating of the guidelines of the Austrian Eco-label and corresponding promotion;
 - promotion of the European Waste Prevention Week;
 - on the environmental impact of litter(ing) (e.g. packaging, cigarette stubs, dog faeces bags);
 - Integration of the topic of waste prevention/littering in the training and further vocational training of educators;
 - Provision of teaching materials
- Increased promotion of the possibilities to avoid the delivery of unaddressed mail as well as examining the switch from the principle of an "advertising waiver sticker" to an "advertising opt-in" sticker for postal items (H4)
- Expansion of the federal states' online tools for organising, recording, managing and evaluating the annual litter clean-up campaigns and consideration of the creation of a nationwide information platform on the topic of "littering" (H5)
- Improving the data basis with regard to the nationwide collection quantity of littered waste and its composition (H6)
- Expansion of sanctioning measures against littering and increased control of public space (H7)
- Promote the nationwide placement of dedicated litter bin/ashtray combinations or waste containers to improve the collection of litter at critical points, and promote the use of pocket ashtrays (H8)
- Examine the introduction of "public space patronage" (H9)
- Encourage cooperation between municipalities, road authorities and operators of fast-food restaurants, petrol stations and shopping centres

with regard to anti-litter measures, e.g. through pilot projects (H10)

- Involve communication experts and increase the use of social media on the topic of littering (H11)
- Development of a guideline for a nationwide analysis of littered waste (H12)
- Promotion and continuation of the annual litter clean-up campaigns, e.g. through increased involvement of organisations with a role model character, introduction of "school action days"; also to raise awareness of the effects of disposable plastic articles (H13)
- Research funding and continuation of operational waste prevention funding through regional funding, environmental funding and funding opportunities for collection and recycling systems (O1)
- Substitution of hazardous substances in production or in products through the promotion of green chemistry (O2)
- Provision of sector-specific model concepts with examples of waste prevention (O3)
- Provide best practice factsheets on waste prevention techniques/technologies (O4)
- Support longer minimum warranty periods for electronic equipment (O5)
- Support the development of regional/local waste prevention concepts, e.g. by providing a guideline (O6)
- Continued support for environmental management systems such as EMAS, ISO 14001, Responsible Care or EFB+ as a tool for waste prevention (O7)
- Increased monitoring of the inclusion of concrete waste prevention measures in the AWK (waste management concept) by the authority (O8)
- Development of binding prevention instruments to prevent the disposal of new goods, e.g. for online trade (O9)
- Promotion of the eco-label (incl. expansion/updating of guidelines), e.g. in accommodation, gastronomy, at events, in the mobility and education sector, especially to reduce the consumption of disposable plastic products (O10)
- Waste prevention at events (O11):
 - Implementation of national and federal state events in accordance with the Green Events criteria, in particular with regard to the use of reusable beverage cups and reusable tableware;

- Encouraging the organisation of events by businesses and associations as "Green Events" or in accordance with province-specific event quality labels and approving events in public spaces combined with a reusable requirement (e.g. beverage cups, crockery, cutlery);
- Introduction of the obligation for the organiser that the post-event cleaning of the event site and the surrounding area is his responsibility;
- Refrain from using promotional gifts and material at events (e.g. flyers, promotional leaflets, giveaways, etc.)
- Training measures for decision-makers in companies/businesses/organisations on resource-efficient material management and waste prevention (O12)
- Identification and realisation of waste prevention and reuse potentials as a compulsory training unit in the education of company waste officers (O13)
- Provision of documents on waste prevention for technical schools and educational institutions (O14)
- Continuation of training for educators on the AWK tool for schools and development of a guideline for waste prevention and separation in schools (O15)
- Call for entries for an award for innovative ideas on waste prevention (O16)

Action programme "Food is precious!"

- Studies on the potential of food waste and food losses in agriculture (e.g. harvest and post-harvest losses, B-goods, intervention cereals) and on their reduction.
- Strengthening alternative, regional sales opportunities for agricultural products (e.g. direct marketing, processing by farmers and/or processing within the framework of inter-farm cooperation; especially for B-goods).
- Promotion of aftercrop harvest on agricultural land, e.g. through technological innovations.
- Promoting the transfer of harvest surpluses to households, social and charitable institutions.
- Training programmes for employees in agricultural enterprises and the integration of the topic in sector-specific training, especially in agricultural schools.
- Support research activities and pilot projects on food waste-reducing production methods

and the role of quality labels in primary production.

- Promotion of demand-oriented production and processing and recirculation of raw materials, products and surpluses in the production cycle (e.g. flawed goods that would otherwise end up as waste), in particular through inter-company cooperation.
- Supporting EU activities, e.g. in the area of the regulation on the best-before date.
- Examining the possibilities of passing on surplus, edible goods from food processing (e.g. in the case of defective packaging).
- Provide broad information on the legal framework for donating/passing on food (e.g. leaflets) for the processing and production sector
- Expansion of the voluntary agreement on the prevention of food waste to include food production and processing companies.
- Conducting pilot projects and publishing best practice examples, call for entries for the VIKTUALIA Award for the processing and production sector.
- Studies on the cause analysis as well as on the development of alternatives for food waste from the processing and production sector
- Examination of economic instruments for the sale and promotion of passing on/donation (incl. tax aspects) for the processing and production sector
- Support for logistics in the transfer of food products
- Training programmes for employees and integration of the topic in sector-specific training courses in the processing and production sector.
- Research on the cause analysis (of food waste) as well as the development of alternatives in the retail sector
- Implementation of the support programme - Impact - to prevent food waste.
- Reviewing and, if necessary, amending the legal and fiscal framework to ensure that food enterprises pass on food that is fit for human consumption in a legally secure manner.
- Continuing the voluntary agreement on the prevention of food waste by food enterprises and intensifying the implementation of alternative measures.
- Establishing of responsibilities and communication in enterprises
- Adjustment of the concept of returned goods (unsold commission goods returned to the supplier, especially bread & pastries)

- Promotion of the production of demand-oriented packaging sizes and minimisation of the offer of XXL and multi-packs in the fresh produce sector.
- Alternative marketing methods using digital options
- Regular training of staff in the handling, storage and distribution of foodstuffs.
- Introduction of limited products towards the end of opening hours and accompanying awareness-raising.
- Expansion of food transfer/donations, e.g. to social institutions, and assessment of possible fiscal approaches to increase transfer/donations in the retail sector
- Updating the guidelines on food distribution for the retail sector
- Support for the expansion of storage and refrigeration infrastructure at social institutions
- Integration of the topic food waste prevention in sector-specific training and further training courses in the retail sector
- Call for entries for the VIKTUALIA Award from the retail sector
- Research on the root causes of food waste as well as the development of alternatives from the out-of-home consumption and/or the hospitality sector
- Pilot projects and publishing best practices from the out-of-home consumption and/or the hospitality sector
- Promote the passing on/donation of processed food (e.g. from buffets and catering) from the out-of-home consumption and/or the hospitality sector
- Expansion of the passing on/donations of food to social institutions from the out-of-home consumption and/or the hospitality sector
- Revise the food pass-on/donation guidelines for the hospitality sector
- Increasing the offer of variable portion sizes and choices, e.g. side dishes, in out-of-home catering.
- Use of digital tools for more demand-oriented management
- Call for entries for the VIKTUALIA Award concerning the out-of-home consumption and/or the hospitality sector
- Role model effect of public institutions - canteen kitchens
- Promotion of kitchen concepts that avoid food waste, e.g. "nose to tail" or "root to leaf".
- Training of staff in the handling and storage of food.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and increase the offer of take-away boxes • Promote the Austrian Eco-label in the area of communal catering, gastronomy and hospitality. • In the context of public procurement or green event or eco-label certifications, take increased consideration of the prevention of food waste. • In the context of public procurement, promote the purchase of B-goods (especially in the case of goods for processing). • Integration of the topic in guidelines for the operational organisation of public institutions (e.g. canteens, hospitals). • Promotion of the action week "nothing left for waste" for other participating actors. • Teaching and training of the appreciative handling of food in apprenticeship training • Development of training offers such as coaching and peer-to-peer workshops for kitchen businesses within the framework of the United Against Waste initiative. • Educational measures for consumers (purchase planning, storage, differentiation between best-before and use-by date, take-away of leftovers when visiting restaurants, multilingual information etc.) • Encourage the passing on of harvest surpluses from private gardens. • Conduct cooking workshops with a focus on the possibilities of preventing food waste for consumers • Integration of the topic in education and training as well as in school and youth projects. • Call for entries for the VIKTUALIA Award concerning households • Activities to prevent food waste in public institutions in the sense of setting an example (e.g. in kindergartens, schools, at events) • Support of the waste advisory service in its information activities on sustainable consumption.
<p>Encourage the design, manufacturing and use of products that are resource-efficient, durable (including in terms of life span and absence of planned obsolescence), reparable, re-usable and upgradable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures are listed below only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, K1, K5, K7, K8, K9, K11, K14, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T12, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, ,R16, R17, O1, O5, O9
<p>Target products containing critical raw materials to prevent that those materials become waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures are listed below only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: R1, R2, R3, R4,

	R5, R6, R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16, O1, O5
Encourage the re-use of products and the setting up of systems promoting repair and re-use activities , including in particular for electrical and electronic equipment, textiles and furniture, as well as packaging and construction materials and products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed below only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B7, B8, B9, K1, K3, K11, K13, T4, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16, R17, H2, H3, H10, O5
Encourage, as appropriate and without prejudice to intellectual property rights, the availability of spare parts, instruction manuals, technical information , or other instruments, equipment or software enabling the repair and re-use of products without compromising their quality and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed below only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B7, R2, R5, R6, R10, O5
Reduce waste generation in processes related to industrial production, extraction of minerals, manufacturing, construction and demolition, taking into account best available techniques .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed below only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, K1, K7, T1, T5, T7, R1, O1, O2, O3, O4, O8
Reduce the generation of food waste in primary production, in processing and manufacturing, in retail and other distribution of food, in restaurants and food services as well as in households as a contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to reduce by 50 % per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and to reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, L8, L9, L10, L11 Action programme "Food is precious!"
Encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and the reprocessing into non-food products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: L1, L2, L3, L7, L8, L10, L11 Action programme "Food is precious!"
Promote the reduction of the content of hazardous substances in materials and products, without prejudice to harmonised legal requirements concerning those materials and products laid down at Union level, and ensure that any supplier of an article as defined in point 33 of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council provides the information pursuant to article 33(1) of that regulation to the European Chemicals Agency as from 5 January 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7, K8, K9, K10, K11, K12, K13, K14, L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, L8, L9, L10, L11, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16, R17, H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13, O1, O2, O3, O4, O5, O6, O7, O8, O9, O10, O11, O12, O13, O14, O15, O16

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action programme "Food is precious!"
<p>Reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for re-use or recycling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: B1, B2, B4, B5, K7, K8, K10, K11, K13, T3, T4, T5, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, O1, O2, O3, O4
<p>Identify products that are the main sources of littering, notably in natural and marine environments, and take appropriate measures to prevent and reduce litter from such products, where Member States decide to implement this obligation through market restrictions, they shall ensure that such restrictions are proportionate and non-discriminatory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: K2, K3, K9, K10, K11, K13, H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13, O10, O11
<p>Aim to halt the generation of marine litter as a contribution towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, K9, K10, K11, K13, H3, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H13, O10, O11
<p>Develop and support information campaigns to raise awareness about waste prevention and littering.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures are listed only with the corresponding number. For a detailed description, please see above: K6, L5, L10, T8, R8, R11, R15, H1, H2, H3, H4, 1-111, H13, O12, O14, O15, O16

FOOD WASTE PREVENTION

Food waste generation

In Austria, an estimated 640,000 tons of avoidable food waste (excluding food waste from agriculture and treatment and processing) is generated every year, with the largest share occurring in households, followed by restaurants and food services. This corresponds to around 71 kg/person/year. Considerable quantities of opened and originally packaged food (= avoidable food waste) are disposed of in households. Common reasons are a lack of planning of purchases and meals (unplanned luxury purchases), incorrect storage of food, lack of knowledge about how to extend the shelf life (e.g. preservation). The best-before date is often wrongly associated with the fact that a food is inedible after this period. But also XXL packs and the increase in the range of out-of-home consumption (especially the to-go range and delivery services) are often a reason for increased discarded quantities.

Measures to prevent food waste

Numerous activities to combat food waste have been launched at national level in recent years. With the initiative "Food is precious!" of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, which has existed since 2013 in close cooperation with the economy, the federal states, the municipalities, municipal waste management associations, employees, consumers and social institutions. The aim is the sustainable avoidance and reduction of food waste throughout Austria. So far, around 100 organisations/businesses from various sectors have been won as cooperation partners, who for their part are consistently taking action against food waste. Besides the initiative "Food is precious!" numerous activities have been carried out to this date such as the voluntary agreement to avoid food waste in food companies³, the introduction of the "Tafelbox" or the "GenussBox" at events in the hospitality and catering sector, the establishment of an online platform for food sharing, the development and implementation of the platform "United Against Waste" or the guideline on donations of food waste to social institutions.

Full details on the Food is Precious programme can be found in WPP 2023.

REUSE OF PRODUCTS

Data

According to 2021 data reported to the EEA according to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/19 (EEA, 2024) Austria re-used:

- 28 447.37 tonnes of textiles;
- 18 148.15 tonnes of electrical and electronic devices;
- 58 165.84 tonnes of furniture.
- 26,70 tonnes of construction materials

It should be noted that this data has been reported for the first time. More information about the interpretation and limitations of the data set are available (EEA, 2024).

Measures to support reuse

Comprehensive measures are given above in Table 1

³ https://www.bmk.gv.at/themen/klima_umwelt/abfall/abfallvermeidung/lebensmittel/partner/pakt.html%0D

Best practice examples

Social media campaign #essensretterIn

The Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology's (BMK) campaign to raise awareness regarding food waste focuses on private consumption, where the largest amount of food waste occurs. The heart of the campaign consists of videos, e.g. on storage or utilising leftovers, in which food (bread roll, broccoli, apple, etc.) appear as talking characters. The content is available on social media under the hashtag #essensretterIn. The first part of the campaign on the topic of bread and pastries was implemented on Instagram and TikTok in May 2024, the second part on the topic of fruit and vegetables was implemented at end of September 2024. Furthermore, a quiz for followers via social media was implemented in November to highlight the European Week for Waste Prevention (16 to 24 November 2024), which was also dedicated to the topic of food waste. An advent calendar with tips and information was also published for the Christmas season. The third part on the topic of milk and dairy products is planned for the first quarter of 2025.

Further information:

- <https://www.bmk.gv.at/kostbare-lebensmittel>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/klimaschutzministerium/>
- TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@klimaschutzministerium>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BMKlimaschutz/>
- LinkedIn: <https://at.linkedin.com/company/klimaschutzministerium>

Mandatory reporting of food waste in retail

Since the 4th quarter of 2023, food retailers have been required to report how much food waste is disposed of and how much food is donated (cp. Waste Management Act 2002, § 11a). The reporting obligation applies to shops with more than 400 m² (this is the case for most food retail shops) and also to wholesalers. The reports must be submitted quarterly. Further information: https://www.bmk.gv.at/themen/klima_umwelt/abfall/abfallvermeidung/lebensmittel/weitergabe/eckpunkte.html

Tax exemption for food donations

In Austria, there is a tax exemption for food donations and non-alcoholic beverages since August 2024, which applies to donations to beneficiary organisations. Further information: <https://www.bmf.gv.at/themen/steuern/fuer-unternehmen/umsatzsteuer/informationen/Steuerliche-Behandlung-von-Lebensmittelspenden.html>

ReUse ReVital

ReUse ReVital is a well-established project in Upper Austria that combats the throwaway mentality and promotes the circular economy. Its motto is "repairing and reusing products instead of dumping them".

The ReVital Network Upper Austria is a successful partnership of municipal waste management authorities with socio-economic ReUse businesses. Well-preserved, functional goods (electrical appliances, furniture, sports- and leisure equipment as well as household goods) are collected at waste collection centres. In 2018, also (CFCs-free) refrigerators were included. Textiles and shoes are now also included.

Additionally, there is the option to collect used goods with the ReVital Box. The processing is carried out either by the store partners themselves or - especially in the area of used electrical appliances - by qualified socio-economic processing facilities. All partners use the common product brand "ReVital ist genial". Products with the ReVital logo consist of a certain quality standard and the ReVital sales partners have to comply with the following quality criteria:

- complete and undamaged
- visually appealing
- functional (with test certificate for large WEEE units)

- safety-tested (for electrical appliances)
- hygienically harmless

The website (www.revitalistgenial.at) offers extensive information for users, among others a list of the ReUse stores as well as the collection points offered.

Reparaturbonus – Voucher for repair

The Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) promotes the repair of electrical and electronic devices that are usually used in private households with the repair bonus. Since April 2022, Austrian citizens can apply for a repair voucher that covers up to 50 percent of the repair costs and/or up to 30 Euros for obtaining a cost estimate (a maximum of 200 Euros in total). Also, the repair of non-electronic components of electrical and electronic equipment (e.g. a broken wheel of a vacuum cleaner) is included and since September 2024 bicycles and bicycle trailers are included as well. The repair voucher can be generated online at the website www.reparaturbonus.at and has to be redeemed digitally or in print-version at participating partner businesses. Since 2023, the value of the repair voucher is no longer deducted directly when the invoice is paid but is refunded directly afterwards to the citizen. Once a voucher has been redeemed, a new voucher can be applied for and used for the repair of another electrical or electronic appliance or a bicycle or a bicycle trailer. There is no restriction on the number of vouchers redeemed by person or household. The repair voucher has been well received by the public: to date, more than 700,000 repair vouchers have been redeemed and 70 million euros have been paid out. The most common categories of repaired appliances are 1. mobile phones and smart phones, 2. dishwashers, 3. washing machines and 4. espresso and coffee machines.⁴

Reparaturführer - Online platform www.reparaturfuehrer.at

The aim of the repair guide is to make it easier for consumers to find regional repair businesses and generally to favour repairs over new purchases. In 11 categories (e.g. clothing, leisure appliances, home furnishings or house & garden), users can search for suitable repair businesses in each federal province or throughout Austria. All individuals and companies offering repairs can register on the platform. Use of the platform is free of charge for all participants and is open to all citizens and organisations interested in obtaining or offering repair services and/or exchanging information and tips.

Tax reduction for repair services

Tax reduction for repair services⁵ (including repairs and alterations) for certain products (bicycles, shoes, leather goods, clothing or household linen) has been implemented since January 2021. An extension to electrical and electronic devices is currently not possible due to EU legal requirements.

BauKarussell – Social urban mining

The first provider of social urban mining is BauKarussell, where special attention is paid to recycling-oriented deconstruction with a social added value and the reuse of building components. The goal is a circular economy construction industry. BauKarussell employees assist clients in the planning and implementation of deconstruction projects. Recyclable building materials are separated according to type and are reused and recycled afterwards. Reusable components are listed in an online catalog (www.baukarussell.at/). Since 2017, the BauKarussell concept of social urban mining has been implemented in larger construction and deconstruction projects and has been further developed.

⁴ These figures were collected before bicycles and bicycle trailers were part of the repair bonus.

⁵ due to the amendments to the UStG 1994 with the COVID-19-StMG, Federal Law Gazette I No. 3/2021; reduced tax rate of 10%

WIDADO – online platform for ReUse

WIDADO is an association of 26 social-economic and charitable Re-use businesses from all over Austria which was established in 2022. The online platform (www.widado.com) facilitates that a wide and resource-saving range of goods from over 146 re-use stores is made available online for everyone. Additionally, digitization as key to make re-use sustainable is supported. Offered are used goods in the following categories: clothing & shoes, household & furniture, books & media, leisure & sports, technology & electronics, decoration.

Regional Waste Prevention Concepts

In order to promote waste prevention at regional level, a guideline for the development of regional waste prevention concepts (www.umweltbundesamt.at/regionale-abfallvermeidung) was developed as part of the implementation of WPP 2023. At the same time, pilot municipalities throughout Austria were supported. The aim is to promote the prevention of municipal waste at regional level and to support municipalities in developing and implementing waste prevention concepts on a voluntary basis. By the end of 2024, sixteen pilot municipalities have developed a waste prevention concept, which should serve as best practice and guidance for other municipalities. The measures implemented range from financial support for waste prevention measures (e.g. repair bonus at municipal level), campaigns against food waste, reusable packaging at events and measures against littering in public areas.

Links to circular economy

Waste prevention is an integral part of the comprehensive transformation towards a circular economy. It reduces the input of natural resources into the economy as well as the necessary efforts to collect and recycle waste.

Approaches for improving circularity are often highly interlinked with successful waste prevention. The following table shows which circular strategies are explicitly integrated into Austrias waste prevention programme.

Topic	Addressed in the programme	Comments
Eco-design	Yes	
Repair, refurbishment and remanufacture	Yes	
Recycling	Yes	
Economic incentives and finance	Yes	
Circular business models	Yes	
Eco-innovation	Yes	
Governance, skills and knowledge	Yes	