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Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics

Quarterly provisional estimates for October to December 2025

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Depairtment o'
Fairmin, Environment an' Kintra Matthers

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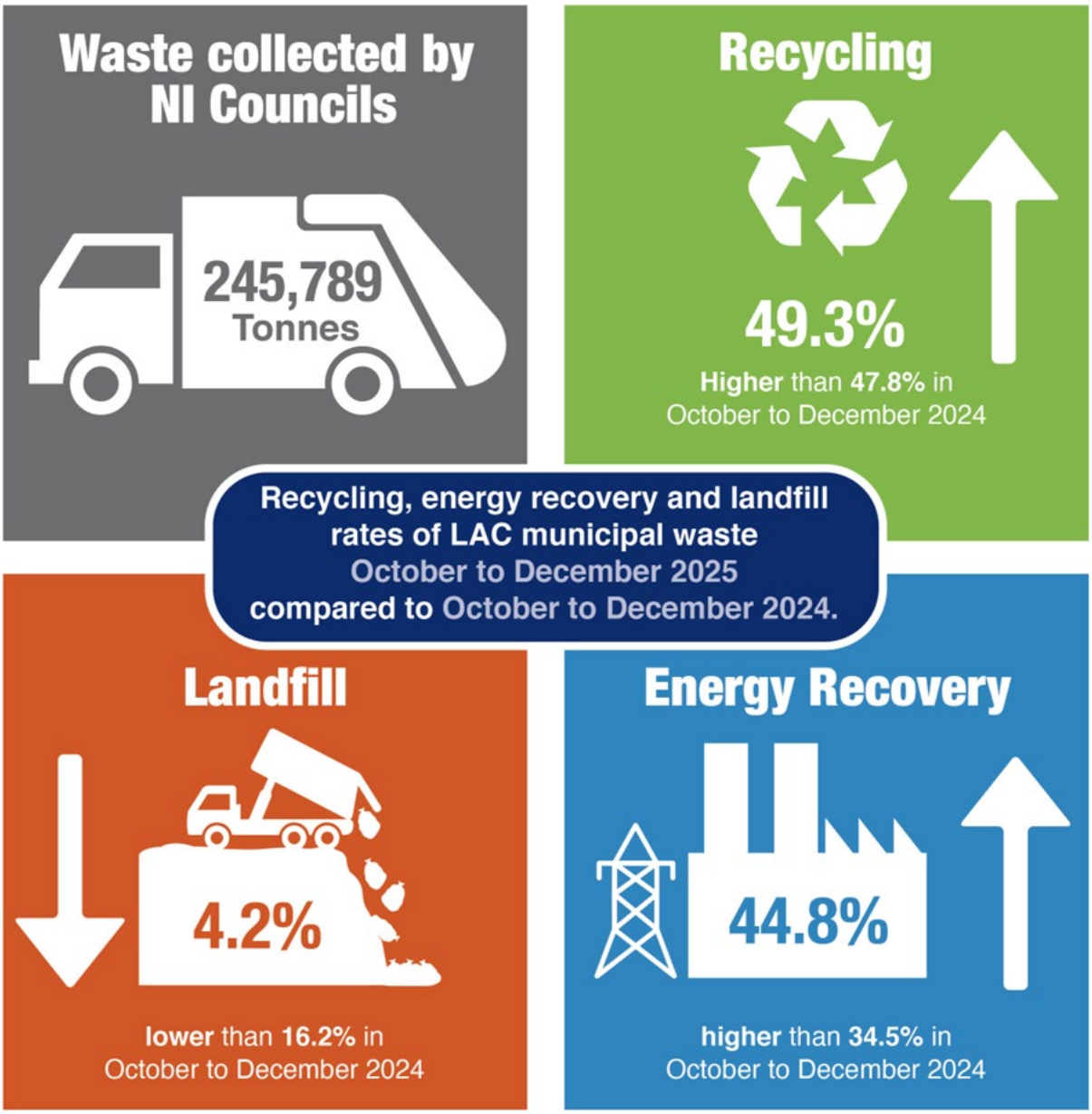
Northern Ireland waste management statistics – October to December 2025



Key Points

- Northern Ireland's councils collected 245,789 tonnes of waste during October to December 2025. This was higher than the 234,230 tonnes collected during October to December 2024.

- During October to December 2025, 49.3 per cent of waste collected by councils was sent for recycling which was an increase from the 47.8 per cent recycling rate recorded in the same quarter in 2024.

- The landfill rate for waste collected by councils was 4.2 per cent in October to December 2025 which was a fall from the rate recorded during October to December 2024 (16.2 per cent). In the longer term, landfill rates decreased from 75.4 per cent recorded in October to December 2006.

- During October to December 2025, 44.8 per cent of waste arisings were sent for energy recovery which was higher than the 34.5 per cent reported in October to December 2024. In the longer term, energy recovery rates have increased from 0.5 per cent recorded during October to December 2009.

- Household waste accounted for 87.0 per cent of all Local Authority collected (LAC) waste during this period.

- The recycling rate for household waste only was 49.8 per cent during October to December 2025, which was an increase from the 48.4 per cent recorded during October to December 2024. The landfill rate for household waste was 4.1 per cent which was lower than the rate recorded in October to December 2024 (16.0 per cent).

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Issued by:
Statistics and Analytical Services Branch
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA),
Clare House
Airport Road West, Sydenham Intake,
Belfast BT3 9ED

Contact: Conor McCormack
Telephone: 028 9016 3343
Email: env.stats@daera-ni.gov.uk

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Reader Information

This document may be made available in alternative formats, please contact us to discuss your requirements. Definitions of key terms used in this publication are available in Appendix 2 – Glossary of the latest Annual Report.

Purpose

This is a quarterly publication which reports provisional statistics on the key measurements of local authority collected municipal waste for councils and waste management groups in Northern Ireland.

The data contained are used by local authorities, waste management groups, Devolved Administrations and UK Government to measure progress towards achieving targets from various waste strategies including:

- Previous and proposed[1] Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategies
- The Waste Framework Directive as revised by the Circular Economy package

Waste results are also used to inform waste indicators in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 as well as the Annual progress report (APR) of the NI Environmental Improvement Plan.

Data on household recycling was a population indicator for the previous Programme for Government (PfG) and has been included as an indicator in the current PfG 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'.

The data are also used by media, the general public and special interest groups to inform policy and lifestyle choices related to the treatment of waste.

Further details are available in Appendix 1 – Main Uses of Data of the Annual Report.

Next Updates

- Provisional statistics for January to March 2026 are scheduled for publication in July 2026.
- Finalised data for 2025/26 are scheduled to be published in November 2026 and will supersede previously published data from the four quarterly returns for that financial year.
- The scheduled dates for all upcoming publications are available from the GOV.UK statistics release calendar: www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics

1 www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations/rethinking-our-resources-northern-ireland-resources-and-waste-management-strategy

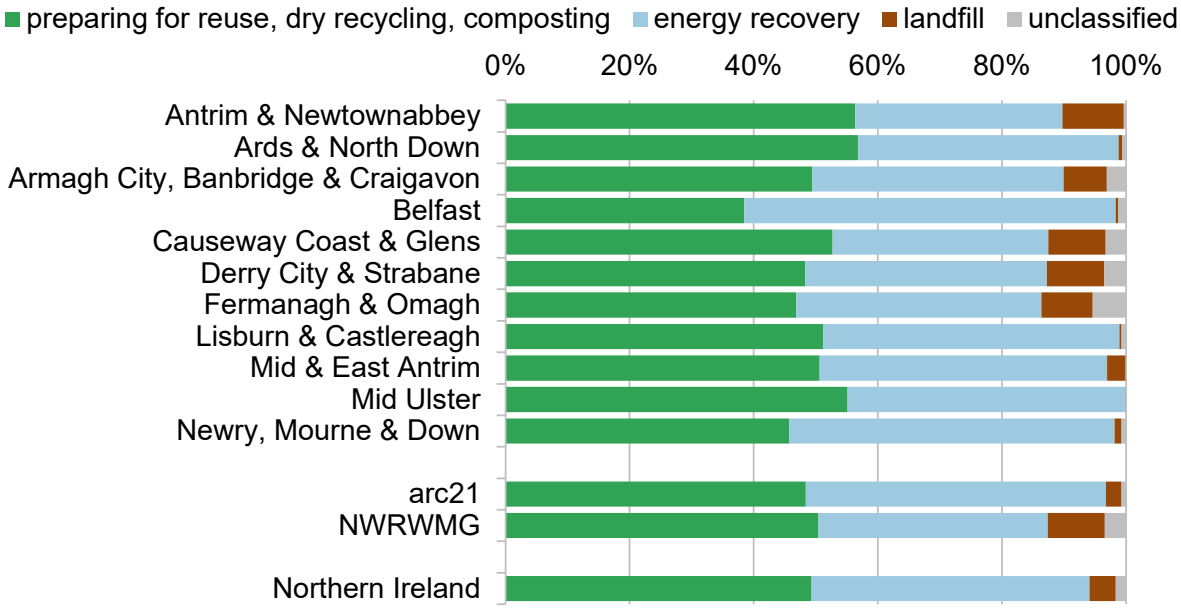
Overview

This report presents information on the quantities of Local Authority Collected (LAC) municipal waste managed in Northern Ireland between October and December 2025. The report is split into four sections, each of which cover local authority collected municipal waste and, where appropriate, household waste:

- **waste arisings (pages 2-3)**,
- **recycling (pages 4-5),**
- **energy recovery (pages 6-7),**
- **landfill (pages 8-10).**

Figure 1: Waste preparing for reuse, dry recycling, composting, energy recovery and landfill rates by council and waste management group

Northern Ireland, October to December 2025



At the Northern Ireland level, 49.3 per cent of waste collected by councils was sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting between October and December 2025. Energy recovery accounted for 44.8 per cent and 4.2 per cent was landfilled. The remaining 1.6 per cent unaccounted for is likely to involve moisture and/or gaseous losses from the amount of waste collected. Each of the rates are discussed in detail in the appropriate section of the report.

The rate of waste sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting has increased compared to the rate reported in October to December 2024 (47.8 per cent). The landfill rate decreased by 12.0 percentage points whilst the energy recovery rate increased by 10.3 percentage points from October to December 2024. Household waste accounted for 87.0 per cent of total waste collected by councils. Household waste includes materials collected directly from households via kerbside collections, material taken to bring sites and civic amenity sites as well as several other smaller sources.

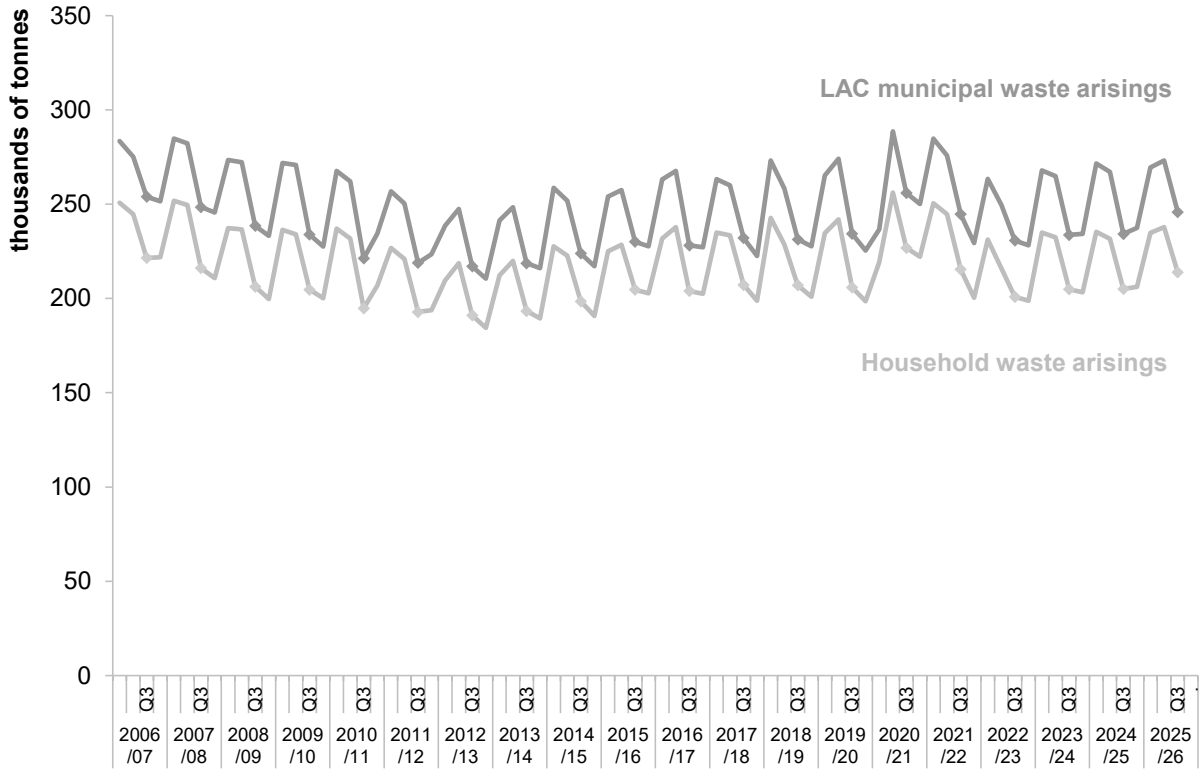
Waste arisings

Northern Ireland's councils collected 245,789 tonnes of waste between October and December 2025. This was higher than the 234,230 tonnes collected during October to December 2024. Factors affecting LAC municipal waste arisings, the majority of which is household waste, include individual household behaviours, the advice and collection services provided by councils, the state of the economy and weather conditions during the specific quarter.

The total quantity of local authority collected (LAC) municipal waste arisings is a key performance indicator, KPI (j). This indicator is used to monitor performance under the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

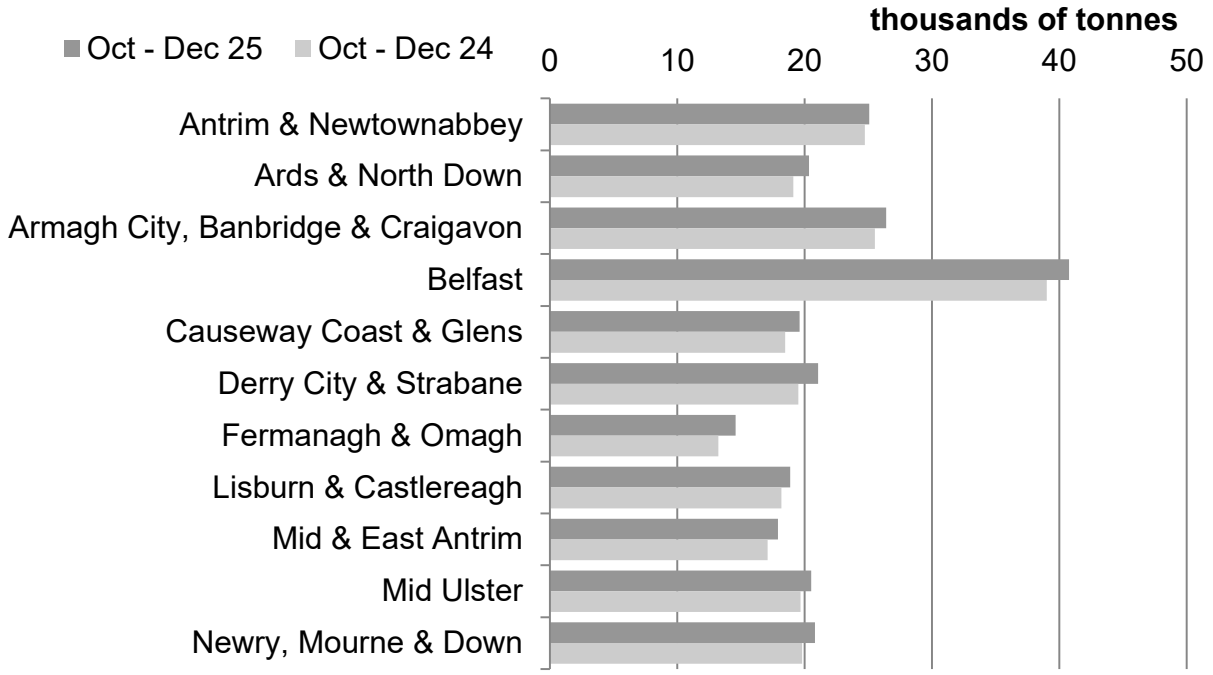
Since 2006/07 household waste has usually accounted for 86-90 per cent of total waste collected by councils each quarter, apart from April to June 2020 when Covid-19 restrictions resulted in a larger than normal proportion of household waste being collected. During October to December 2025 household waste accounted for 87.0 per cent. The remaining 13 per cent was non-household waste such as rubble / soil and commercial / industrial waste.

Figure 2: Waste arisings
Northern Ireland, quarterly from 2006/07 to 2025/26 KPI (j)



The longer-term trend for October to December saw a gradual reduction in LAC municipal waste arisings of 14.6 per cent across six years, from 253,956 tonnes between October to December 2006 to a low of 216,987 tonnes between the same three months of 2012. From October to December 2012 until a peak for the October to December quarter of 255,973 tonnes in 2020, arisings showed a generally increasing trend. From the October to December peak, arisings fell to 230,709 tonnes in October to December 2022 with 245,789 tonnes collected in the latest quarter.

Figure 3: Waste arisings by council
Northern Ireland, October to December 2024 and October to December 2025, KPI (j)



The proportion of waste collected by each council broadly reflects the population within the councils. Belfast collected the most waste at 40,749 tonnes, whilst Fermanagh & Omagh collected the least at 14,562 tonnes.

All eleven councils reported an increase in total arisings in October to December 2025 compared to the same period in 2024.

Fermanagh & Omagh reported the largest increase from October to December 2024 and October to December 2025 of 10.2 per cent followed by Derry City & Strabane, Ards & North Down and Causeway Coast & Glens with increases of 7.9, 6.4 and 6.1 per cent respectively.

The total quantity of waste collected at kerbside was 0.8 per cent higher than the amount collected in October to December 2024 while the quantity of waste collected at civic amenity sites increased by 14.0 per cent.

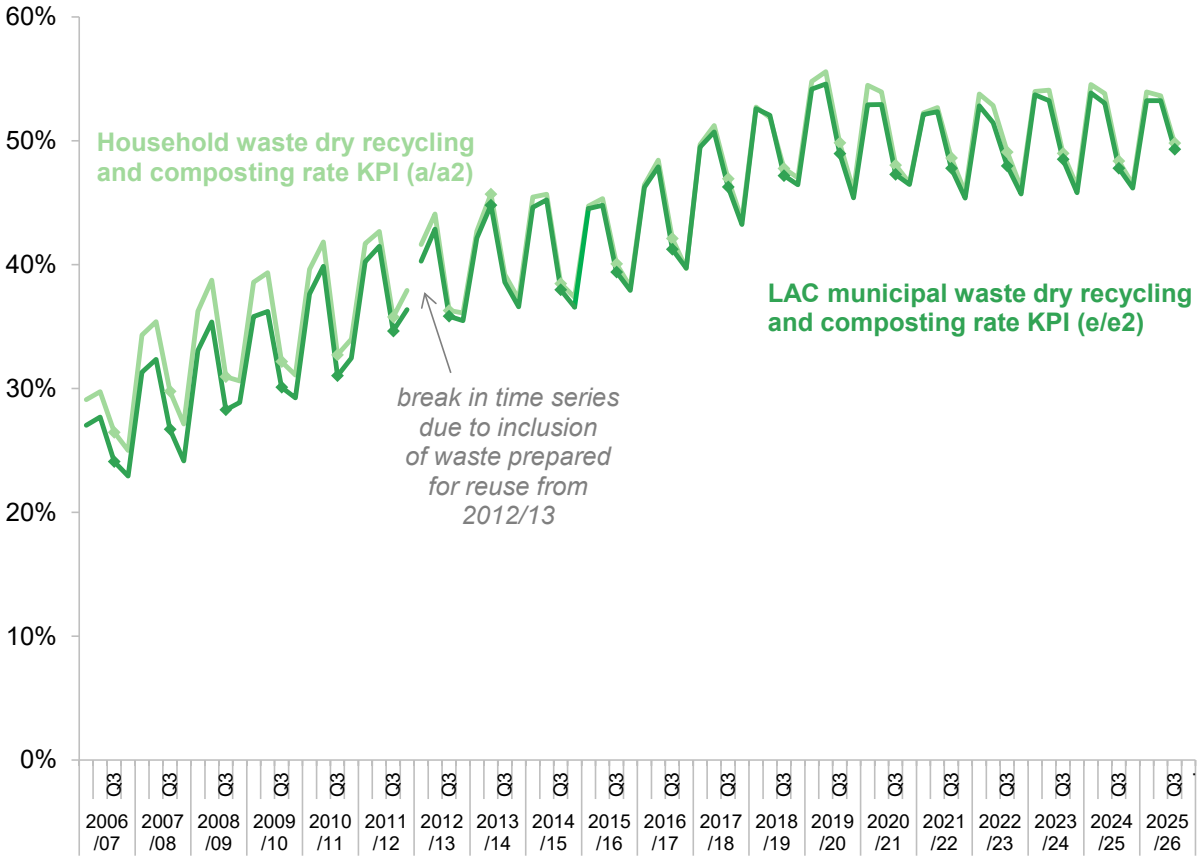
These statistics can be found in Table 1 and Table 2 of the accompanying data tables spreadsheet and in the time series dataset.

Recycling

This section of the report looks at local authority collected (LAC) municipal waste and household waste recycling rates, both of which include waste sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting.

There were 121,231 tonnes of LAC municipal waste sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting (referred to as 'recycling' for the rest of this section) during October to December 2025. The waste recycling rate was 49.3 per cent, an increase of 1.5 percentage points compared to October to December 2024.

Figure 4: Waste sent for preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting
Northern Ireland, quarterly from 2006/07 to 2025/26, KPIs (a), (a2), (e) and (e2)



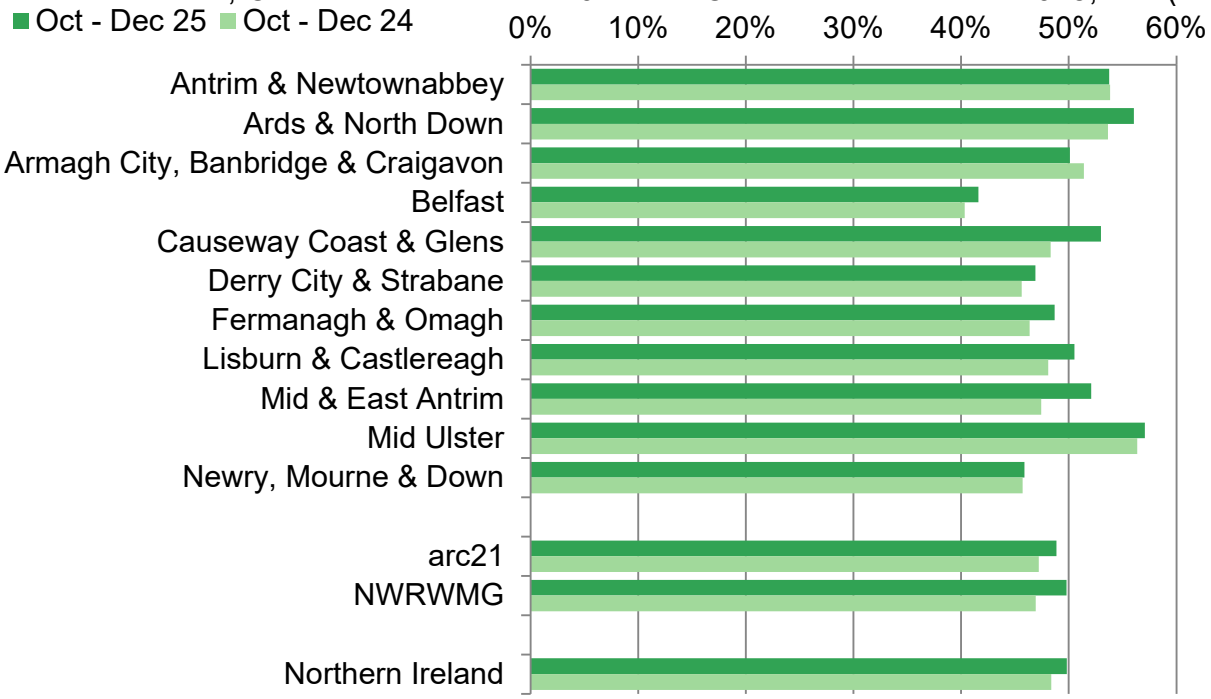
These statistics show seasonal variation which is driven by the quantities of garden waste sent for composting. Greater quantities of garden waste are collected and sent for composting during the spring and summer quarters, April to June and July to September.

The longer term trend for Local Authority Collected municipal waste recycling for the October to December quarter has been a general increase from 24.1 per cent in October to December 2006 to 49.0 per cent in October to December 2019. From October to December 2020 to October to December 2024 the local authority collected municipal waste recycling rate remained relatively similar. The latest Local Authority Collected municipal waste recycling rate (49.3 per cent) is the highest recorded for the October to December quarter. Waste sent for preparing for reuse (612 tonnes this quarter) has been included since 2012/13 and adds 0.3 percentage points to the overall LAC recycling rate in October to December 2025.

The recycling rate for household waste was 49.8 per cent during October to December 2025, an increase compared to October to December 2024 when 48.4 was recorded. The proportion of household waste sent for dry recycling made up 25.3 per cent, composting 24.2 per cent and preparing for reuse 0.3 per cent.

Figure 5: Household waste preparing for reuse, dry recycling and composting rate by council and waste management group

Northern Ireland, October to December 2024 and October to December 2025, KPI (a2)



Causeway Coast & Glens reported the largest increase in their household recycling rate compared to October to December 2024 at 4.7 percentage points followed by Mid & East Antrim with an increase of 4.6 percentage points. Six other councils recorded an increase in their household recycling rates in October to December 2025 compared to October to December 2024[2]. The household recycling rate decreased in one council with a decrease of 1.3 percentage points recorded in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon.

The arc21 waste management group (Antrim & Newtownabbey; Ards & North Down; Belfast; Lisburn & Castlereagh; Mid & East Antrim; and Newry, Mourne & Down) recycling rate for household waste was 48.8 per cent while NWRWMG (Causeway Coast & Glens and Derry City & Strabane) had a recycling rate for household waste of 49.8 per cent during October to December 2025.

Waste sent for recycling is included in a number of key performance indicators, KPI (a), (a2), (e), and (e2). These indicators are used to monitor performance under the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. The household waste annual recycling rate is included as an indicator for the current Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'.

These statistics can be found in Tables 4 and 12 of the accompanying data tables spreadsheet and in the time series dataset.

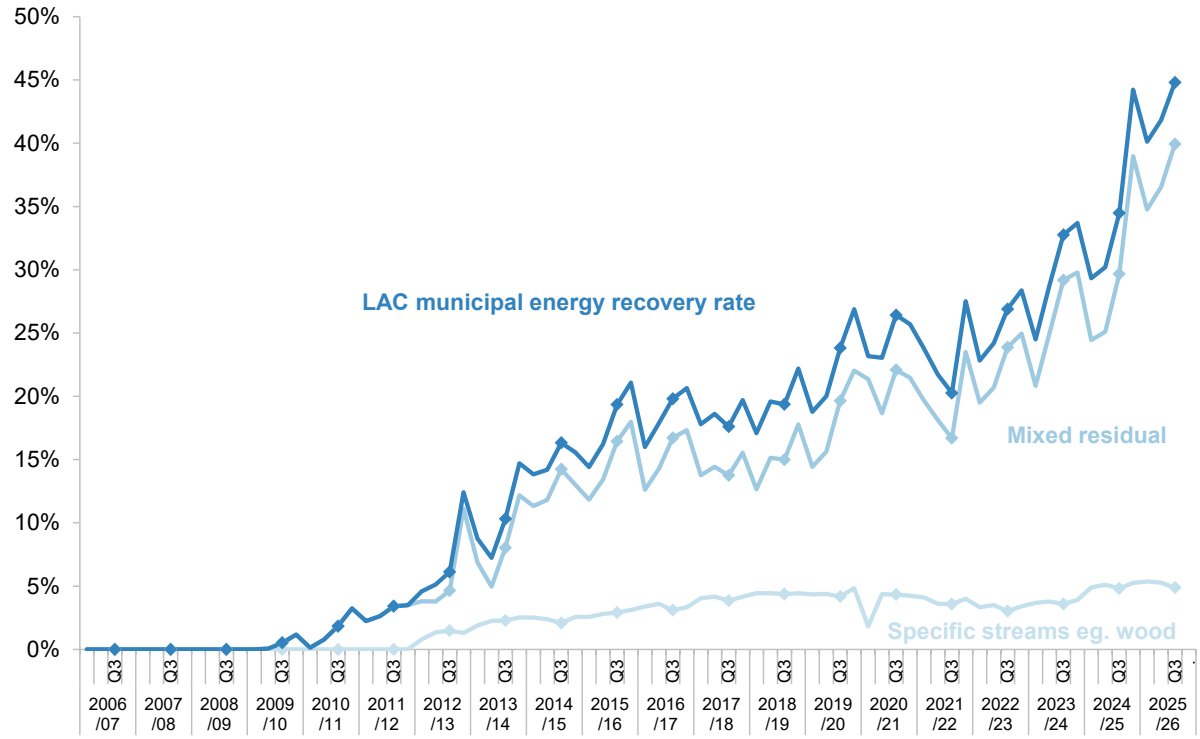
[2] Very small increases or decreases in figures (<0.5 per cent or <0.5 percentage points) are not highlighted in the commentary.

Energy recovery

This quarterly report includes statistics on energy recovery, which is the term used when value is gained from waste products by converting them into energy. All energy recovery statistics reported in this section are derived from material sent for energy recovery via incineration/gasification, although other technologies exist. Energy recovery via anaerobic digestion is not included in this section and is explained further in Appendix 1 – Limitations of Data of the latest Annual Report.

From October to December 2025, 110,143 tonnes of waste arisings were sent for energy recovery. This produced a waste energy recovery rate of 44.8 per cent, the highest quarterly energy recovery rate ever recorded for Northern Ireland. The majority of energy recovery comes from mixed residual waste, with a smaller proportion from specific streams, e.g. wood.

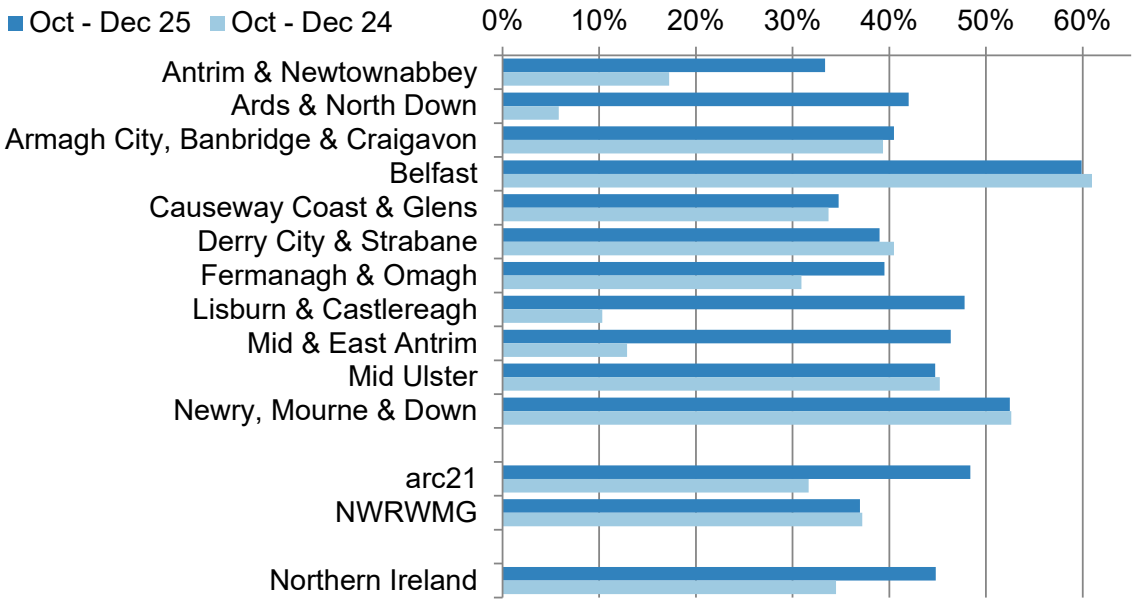
Figure 6: Waste sent for energy recovery via incineration
Northern Ireland, quarterly from 2006/07 to 2025/26



There was zero, or very small quantities, of waste sent for energy recovery before 2009/10. Strong growth began during 2009/10 with the energy recovery rate increasing from 0.5 per cent during October to December 2009 to 44.8 per cent for the same three months of 2025. Most of the growth since 2009/10 has been driven by mixed residual waste sent for energy recovery (from 0.5 per cent during October to December 2009 to 39.9 per cent in October to December 2025). The specific stream proportion was 4.9 per cent in October to December 2025.

Mixed residual waste sent for energy recovery is combustible residual waste collected from the kerbside and from civic amenity sites which is processed into refuse derived fuel at material recovery facilities. The specific streams element of energy recovery is mostly wood but also includes furniture, carpets and mattresses, mostly collected from civic amenity sites.

Figure 7: Waste energy recovery rate by council and waste management group
Northern Ireland, October to December 2024 and October to December 2025



The highest waste energy recovery rate was recorded in Belfast at 59.9 per cent followed by Newry, Mourne & Down with 52.5 per cent. Seven councils recorded an increase in the waste energy recovery rate in October to December 2025 compared to the same quarter in 2024 with the largest increase of 37.5 percentage points recorded in Lisburn & Castlereagh followed by Ards & North Down with an increase of 36.2 percentage points and Mid & East Antrim reporting an increase of 33.5 percentage points. Antrim & Newtownabbey reported a 16.1 percentage points increase while Fermanagh & Omagh reported an increase of 8.6 percentage points. Three councils recorded a decrease in the waste energy recovery rate in October to December 2025 compared to the same quarter in 2024 with the largest decrease of 1.5 per cent in Derry City & Strabane.

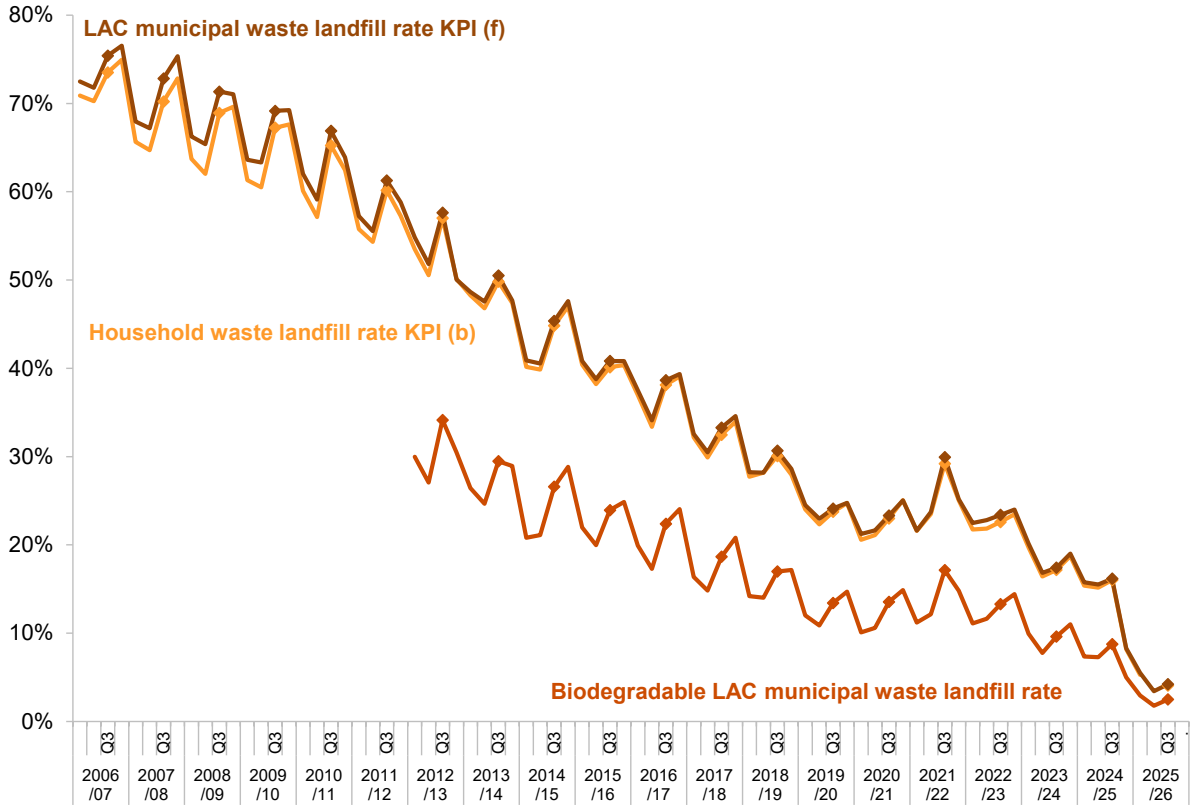
The arc21 waste energy recovery rate was 48.4 per cent while NWRWMG had a waste recovery rate of 36.9 per cent during October to December 2025. The energy recovery rate for arc21 increased by 16.7 percentage points in October to December 2025 compared to the same quarter in 2024.

These statistics can be found in Tables 3 and 4 of the accompanying data tables spreadsheet and in the time series dataset.

Landfill

The quantity of LAC municipal waste sent to landfill decreased by 72.6 per cent, from 37,890 tonnes during October to December 2024 to 10,366 tonnes during October to December 2025. The quarterly landfill rate for October to December 2025 is 4.2 per cent, lower than the 16.2 per cent recorded during the same quarter of 2024 and the lowest landfill rate recorded for Northern Ireland in the October to December quarter.

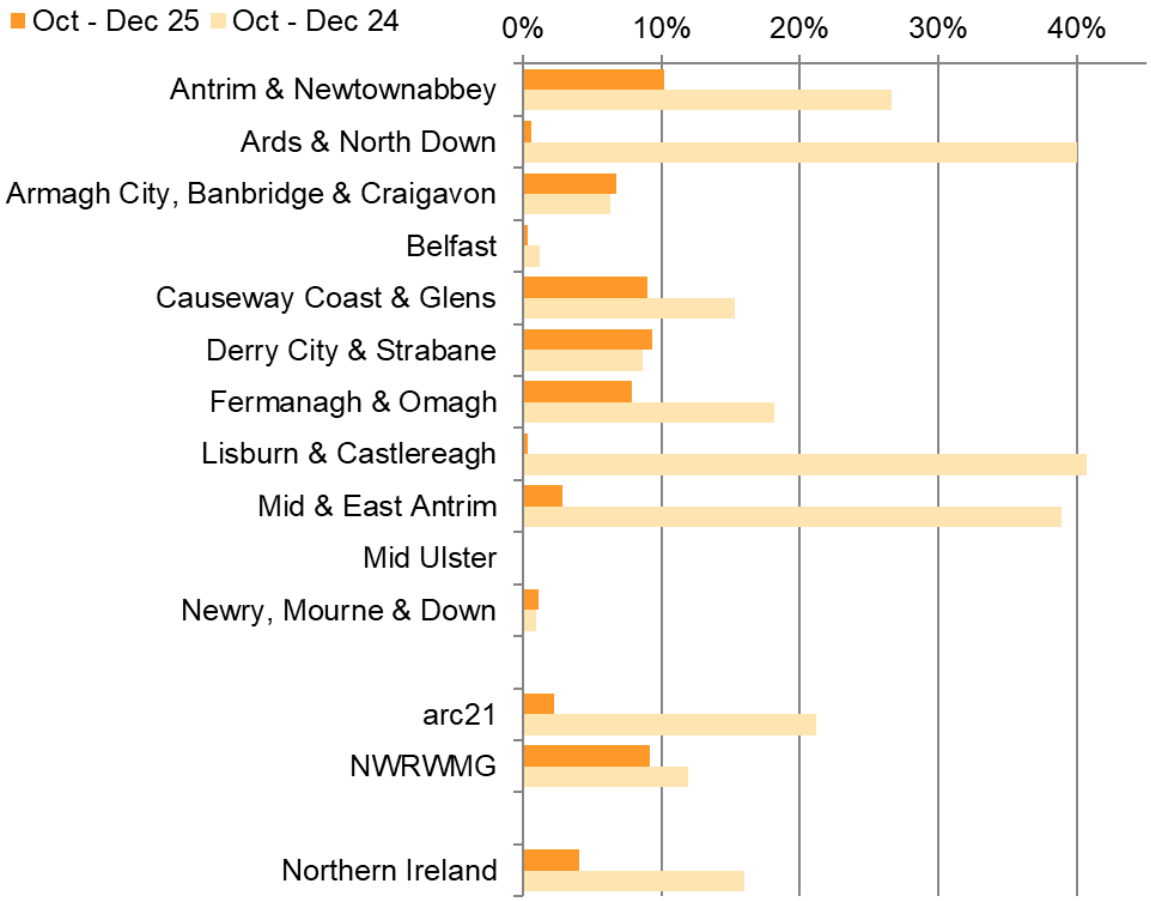
Figure 8: Waste sent to landfill
Northern Ireland, quarterly from 2006/07 to 2025/26, KPIs (b) and (f)



The longer term trend has seen the October to December LAC municipal waste landfill rate fall from 75.4 per cent in 2006 to 4.2 per cent in 2025. Note that the landfill rate exhibits seasonality and the April to June and July to September quarters tend to have lower rates than October to December and January to March. The seasonality stems from the higher level of compostable garden waste arising during spring and summer. The latest quarterly landfill rate for household waste only is 4.1 per cent.

Increasing energy recovery rates, a landfill tax and statutory requirements, e.g. that all councils in Northern Ireland provide households with a container for food to enable its separate collection, have all contributed to the long-term reduction in landfill rates.

Figure 9: Household waste landfilled by council and waste management group
Northern Ireland, October to December 2024 and October to December 2025, KPI (b)



The highest household waste landfill rates in October to December 2025 were recorded in Antrim & Newtownabbey, Derry City & Strabane and Causeway Coast & Glens at 10.2, 9.3 and 9.0 per cent respectively. Ards & North Down, Belfast, Lisburn & Castlereagh and Mid Ulster each recorded a landfill rate of less than one per cent in October to December 2025.

The household waste landfill rate decreased in seven district councils in October to December 2025 compared to the same three months in 2024, with the largest decrease recorded in Lisburn & Castlereagh at 40.4 percentage points followed by Ards & North Down, Mid & East Antrim and Antrim & Newtownabbey with 39.4, 36.0 and 16.4 percentage points reduction respectively. One district council recorded an increase in the waste landfill rate in October to December 2025 compared to the same quarter in 2024 with an increase of 0.6 percentage points recorded in Derry City & Strabane.

The arc21 household waste landfill rate was 2.3 per cent while NWRWMG had a household waste landfill rate of 9.2 per cent during October to December 2025. The household waste landfill rate for arc21 decreased by 18.8 percentage points in October to December 2025 compared to the same quarter in 2024.

The large reductions in landfill recorded can be linked to the increase in waste sent for energy recovery over the same period.

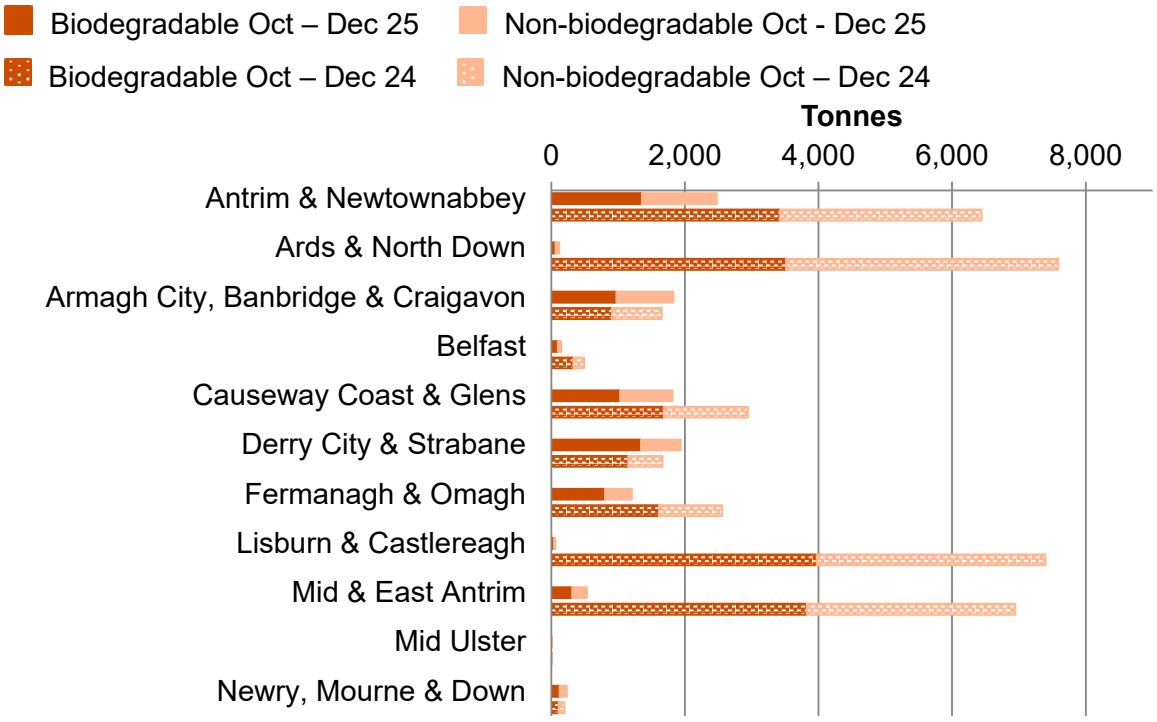
Biodegradable waste to landfill

The Landfill Allowance Scheme (NI) Regulations 2004 (as amended) placed a statutory responsibility on councils, in each scheme year, to landfill no more than the quantity of biodegradable waste for which they had allowances. The scheme concluded at the end of the 2019/20 financial year, however the continued monitoring of biodegradable waste is required for existing target commitments which specify that it must be reduced to 35 per cent of the total amount (by weight) of biodegradable municipal waste produced in 1995.

Northern Ireland's councils sent 6,133 tonnes of biodegradable waste to landfill during October to December 2025, which was 59.2 per cent of all LAC municipal waste sent to landfill. During the same quarter last year, 20,503 tonnes of biodegradable waste was sent to landfill which was 54.1 per cent of all LAC municipal waste sent to landfill.

Figure 10 displays the tonnages of LAC biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste sent to landfill by each council, comparing them with other councils and to the same quarter last year.

Figure 10: Biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste to landfill by council
Northern Ireland, October to December 2024 and October to December 2025



There is considerable variation between councils in the quantities of biodegradable waste sent to landfill, as well as the proportion of biodegradable waste in total landfill. The largest proportions of biodegradable waste in landfill were recorded in Derry City & Strabane, 69.3 per cent (1,341 tonnes) followed by Fermanagh & Omagh, 66.3 per cent (800 tonnes) and Belfast, 65.6 per cent (98 tonnes). Ards & North Down recorded the lowest proportion of biodegradable waste in landfill at 50.3 per cent (60 tonnes).

Accredited Official Statistics

Accredited Official Statistics are official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) and confirmed to comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. Producers of accredited official statistics[3] are legally required to ensure they maintain compliance with the Code.

These accredited official statistics were independently reviewed by OSR in September 2013 in the Assessment Report 263 Statistics on the Environment and Waste Management in Northern Ireland, with accreditation confirmed in January 2014. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice and should be labelled National Statistics (or 'accredited official statistics').

In October 2020, a compliance check was completed for the waste statistics produced by each of the UK regions and confirmed that the designation (or 'accredited official statistics' labelling) should continue. The trustworthiness, quality and value of the statistics, including the coherence of the data source, methods and quality assurance (QA) arrangements, and the presentation of the statistics were reviewed with a final outcome that the statistics can continue to be designated as National Statistics (or 'accredited official statistics').

Our Statistics Charter provides further details of how we apply the principles and practices of the Code in the production and publication of our official statistics.

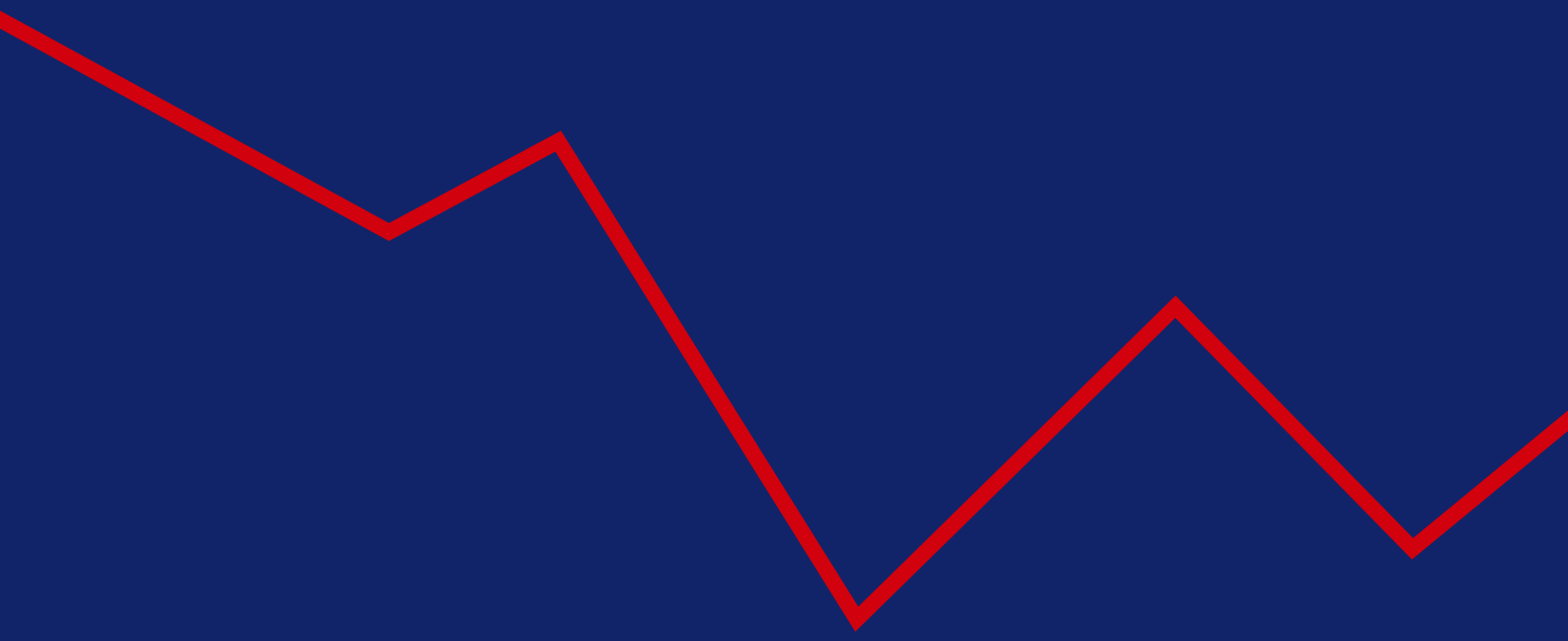
Our statistical practice is regulated by OSR. They set the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards.

Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

[3] Accredited Official Statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007

Policy, Economics and Statistics Division
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast
BT3 9ED



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