Investments to Tackle Plastic Pollution

UNITED KINGDOM

This country fact sheet presents the plastic material flow, policy, and investment landscapes, offering quick and easy access to a one-stop resource on tackling plastic pollution.



PLASTIC MATERIAL FLOW

This section provides an overview of the plastic material flow within the country, offering a snapshot of the plastic waste landscape.



PLASTIC PRODUCED

1.7 mn

tonnes per year

(British Plastics Federation, 2020)



PLASTIC CONSUMED

3.3 mn

tonnes per year

(British Plastics Federation, 2020)



PLASTIC WASTE GENERATED

N/A

tonnes per year



PLASTIC RECYCLED

37.0%

(Plastics Europe, 2020



MISMANAGED PLASTIC

 $0.03\,\mathrm{mn}$

tonnes per year

(Meijer et al., 2019 – processed by Our World in Data)



PLASTIC WASTE IMPORTS

119.4

kilotonnes per year

(Trade Map, 2022)



PLASTIC WASTE EXPORTS

471.6

kilotonnes per year

(Trade Map. 2022)

POLICIES

This section highlights selected policies impacting plastic pollution in the country. Details on the status of development of the policy where relevant are also provided.

UPSTREAM

Tax on Single-Use Virgin Plastics

Plastic Packaging Tax imposed on all plastic products using virgin material unless there is evidence that at least 30% recycled material has been used; levy on single-use carrier bags (HM Revenue & Customs, 2023; Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2024)

Ban on Single-Use Plastics

The ban, introduced from October 2023, includes certain types of plastics

(Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2023)

MIDSTREAM

Deposit Return System Legislation

Deposit return schemes for drinks containers are introduced in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (RECOUP. 2022)

DOWNSTREAM

Waste Segregation

(British Government, 2020)

Extended Producer Responsibility

Producer responsibility system for packaging is being reformed to move the full cost of dealing with packaging waste to the packaging producers (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2023)

Plastic Waste Trade Restrictions

Restrictions placed on the type of plastic waste that can be shipped for recovery (Environment Agency, 2021)

Recycled Content Mandates

Plastic packaging which do not contain at least 30% recycled content will be imposed a tax of £200 per tonne

(RECOUP & British Plastics Federation, 2022)

Mandatory Recycling Targets

65% recycling target for municipal waste by 2035 (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2021)

■ Disposal Bans/ Landfill Taxes

Landfill tax of 102.10 pounds per tonne applicable to all waste from 2023

(HM Revenue & Customs, 2023)









INVESTMENTS



This section provides a summary of public and private investments in waste management, plastic waste management, and plastics circularity. Further breakdown of private investments in plastics circularity solutions by archetypes and investment categories is also provided.

Investments in Waste and Plastic Waste Management (2018 - 2021)



Private Investments in Plastics Circularity (2018 - 6M 2023)





