

Circular economy country profile – France



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Introduction

The European Commission requested the EEA to produce EU country profiles that offer an updated view of the following elements:

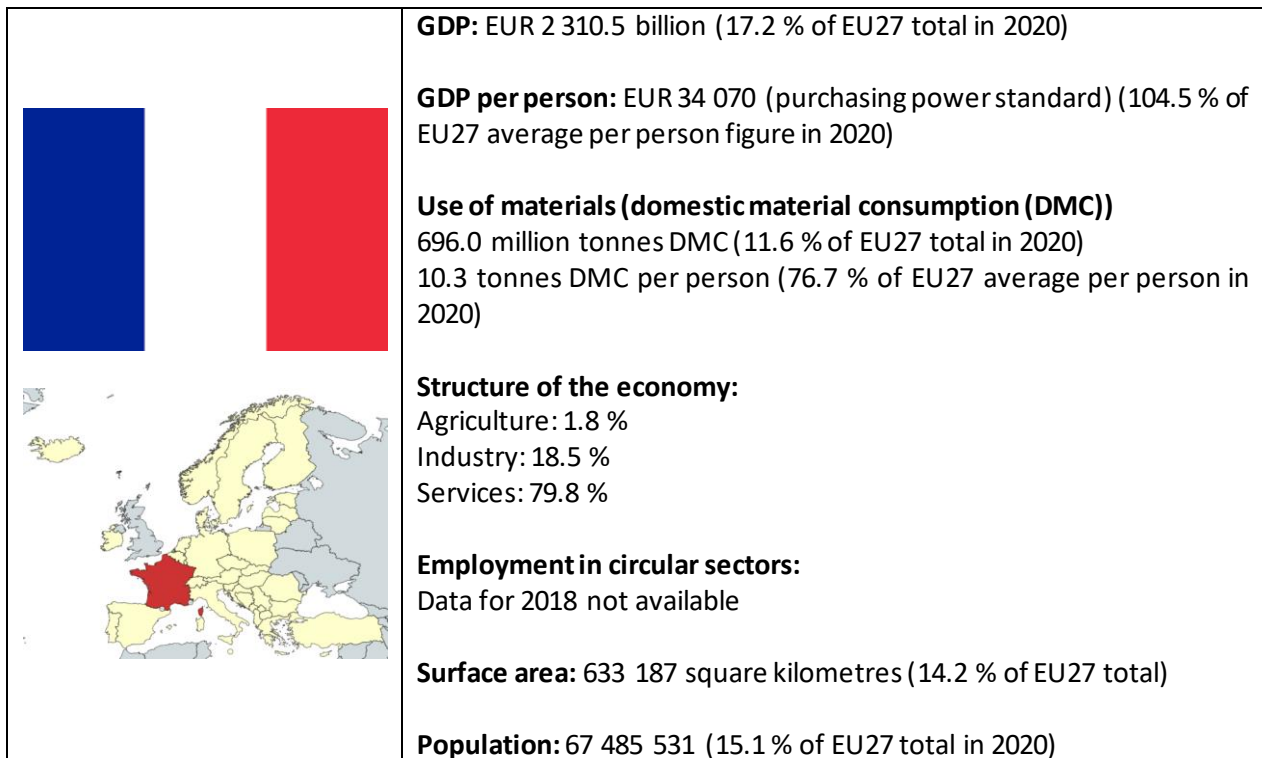
- circular economy policies being implemented at a national level with a particular focus on elements that go beyond EU mandatory elements; and
- best practice with a focus on policy innovation.

While implementing the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP 2020), Member States are encouraged to advance circularity at a national level by adopting policies and initiatives that go beyond EU regulations, while preserving the Single Market.

This circular economy country profile is based on information reported by the Eionet network and, in particular, the Eionet Group on Circular Economy and Resource Use in the second quarter of 2022. The information was reviewed and edited by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use (ETC CE). A selection of Eurostat data was made to further complement this country profile.

The information is current as of 8 September 2022 (final review), when members of Eionet verified the content of this profile.

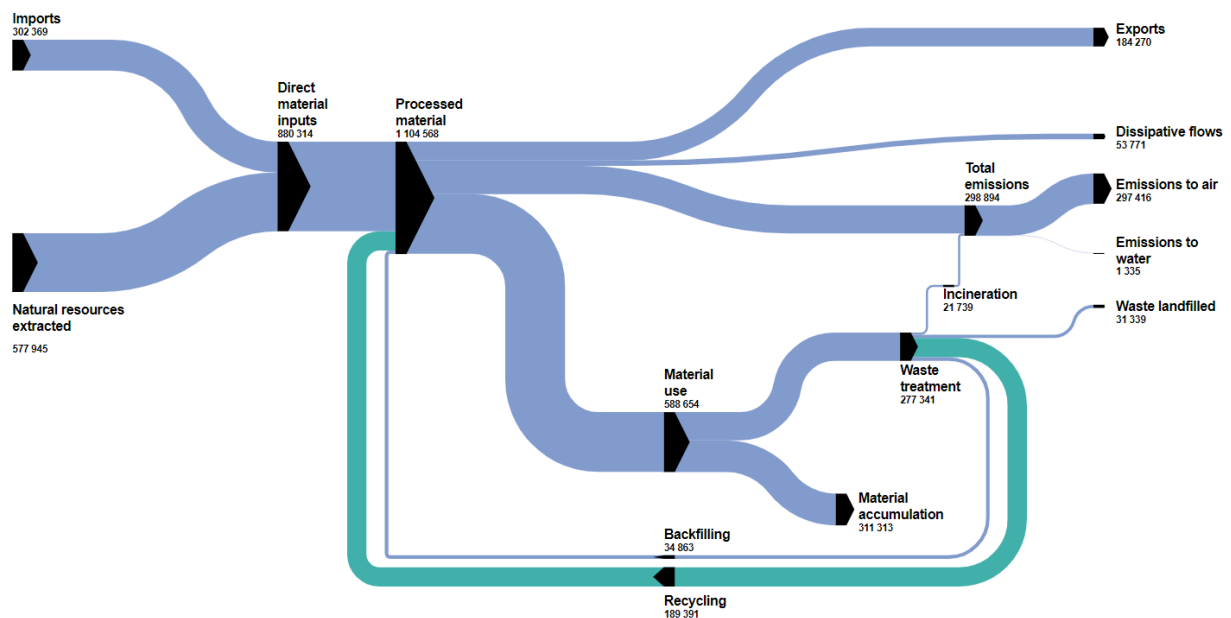
France – facts and figures



Note: all definitions and metadata used in this profile are taken, as shown, from Eurostat

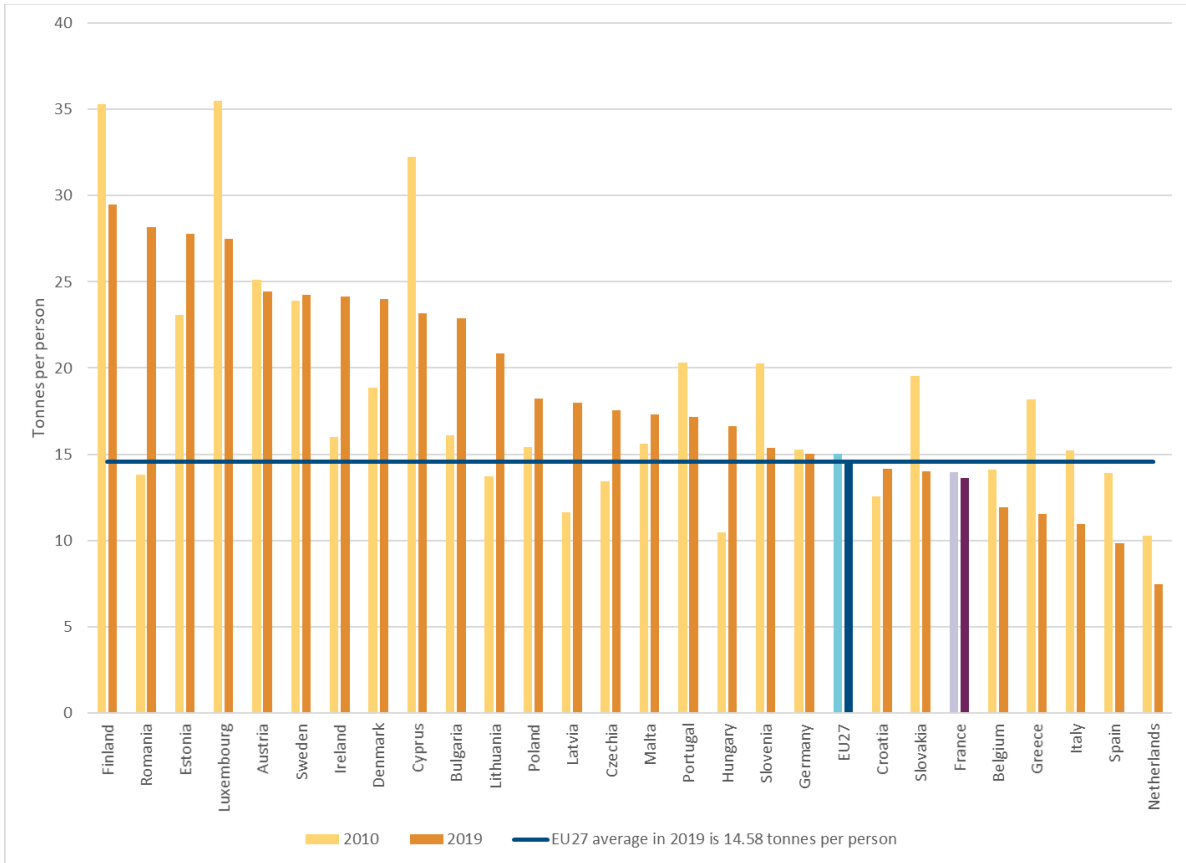
Source: Eurostat datasets, EU27 2020 (accessed 20 June 2022)

Figure 1 Material flow diagram for France in 2020, '000 tonnes



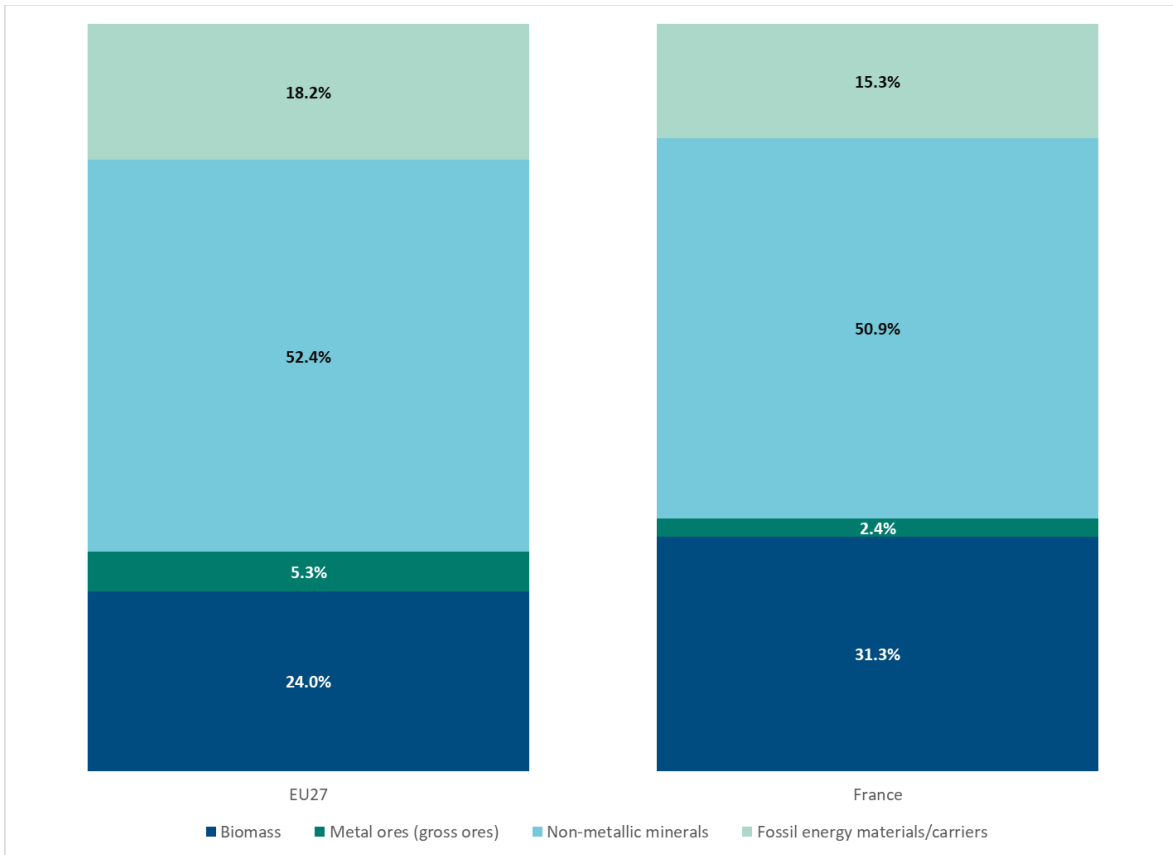
Source: Eurostat (2022) [env_ac_mfa], [en_ac_sd], [env_wassd] (accessed 20 June 2022)

Figure 2 Material footprint (raw material consumption), EU27, 2010 and 2019, tonnes per person



Source: Eurostat (2020) [env_ac_rme] (accessed 4 July 2020)

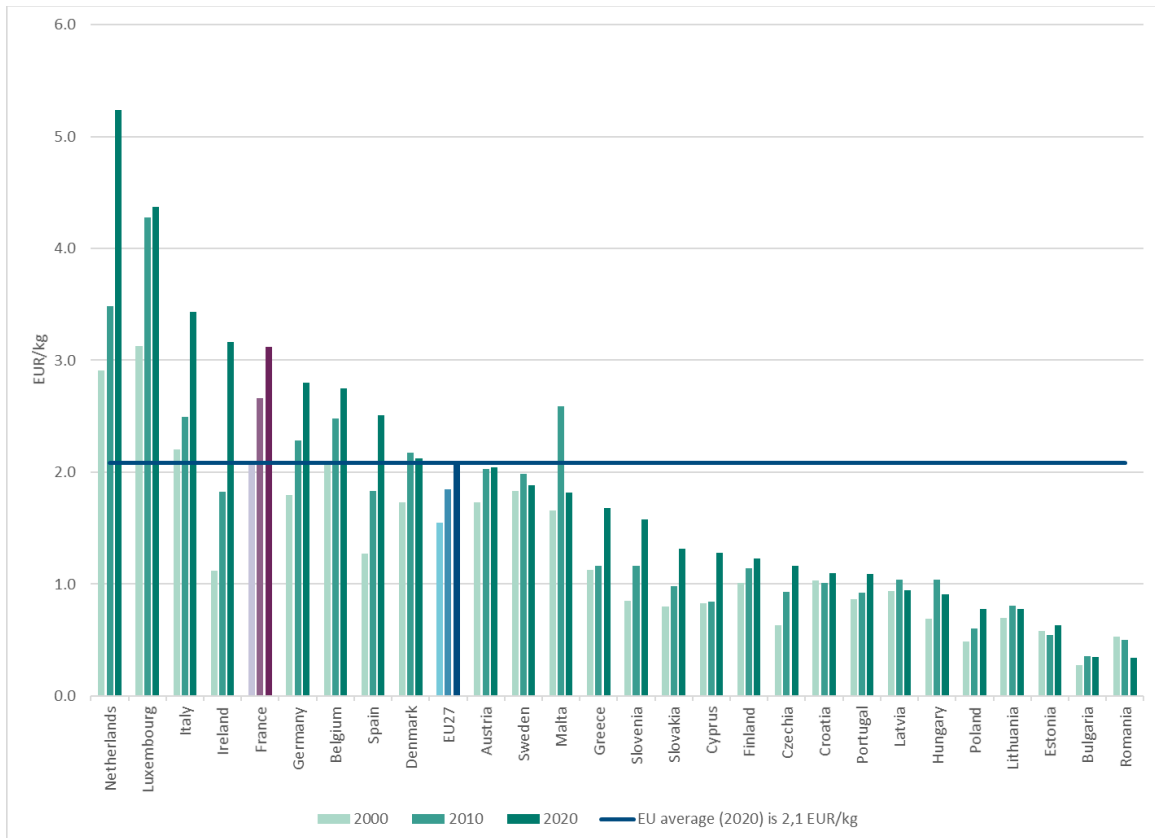
Figure 3 Domestic material consumption by selected material category, EU27 and France, 2020, per cent



Note: totals may not sum to 100 % due to rounding

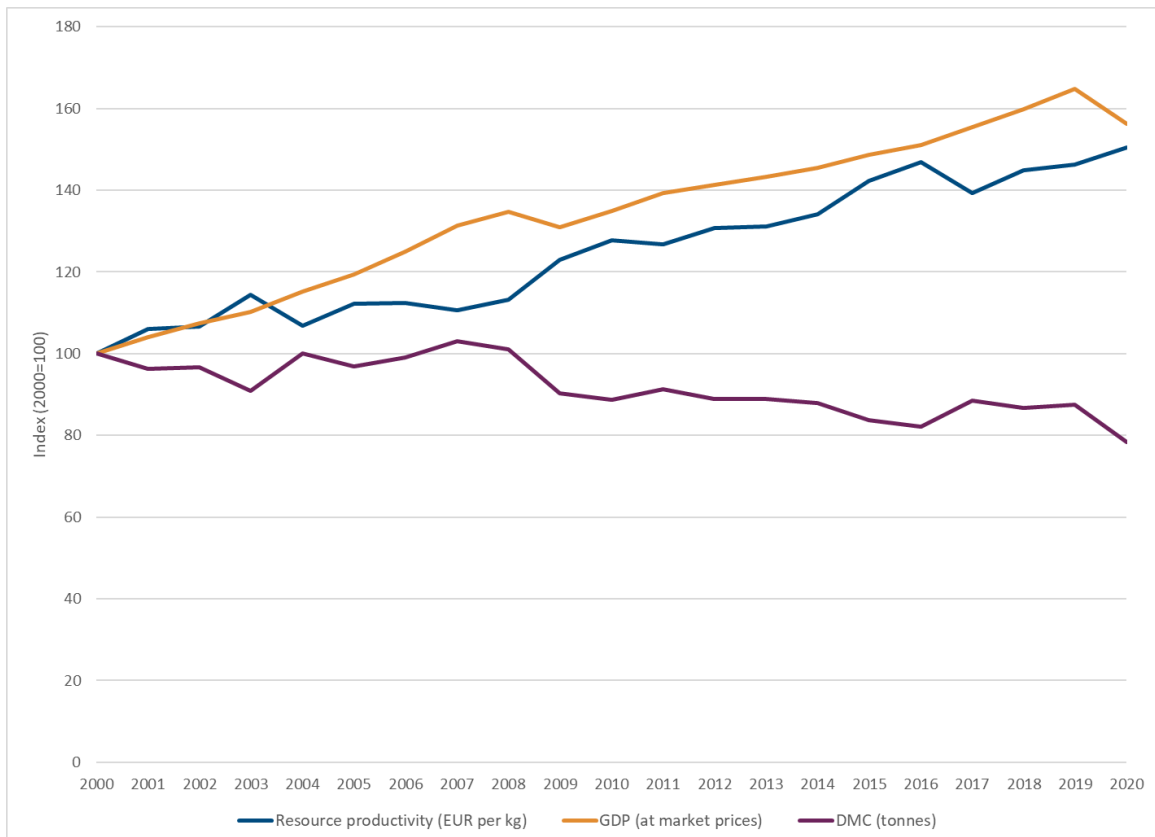
Source: Eurostat (2022) [env_ac_mfa] (accessed 20 June 2022)

Figure 4 Resource productivity (gross domestic product/domestic material consumption), EU27, 2000, 2010 and 2020, EUR per kilogram



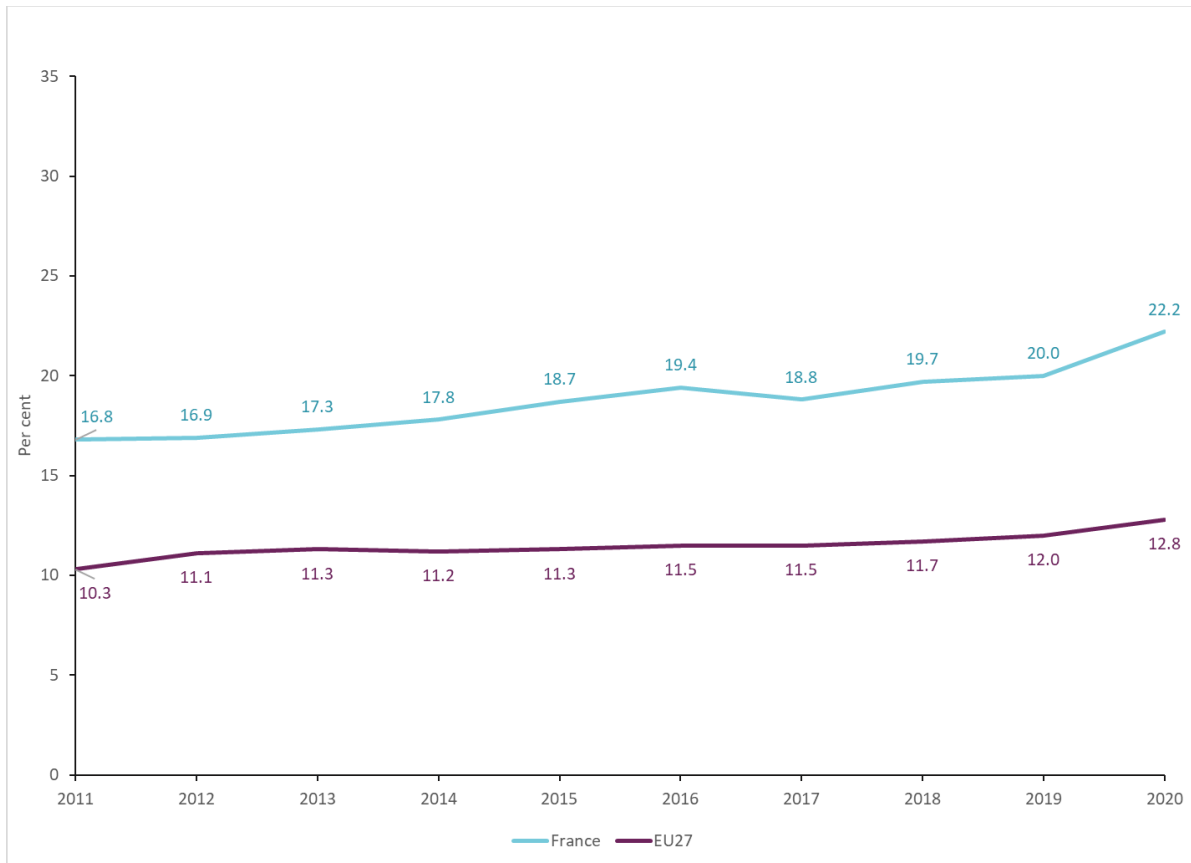
Source: Eurostat (2022) [env_ac_rp] (accessed 20 June 2022)

Figure 5 Gross domestic product, domestic material consumption and resource productivity trends, France, 2000–2020, index (2000=100)



Source: Eurostat [env_ac_mfa], [env_ac_rp] & [nama_10_gdp] (accessed 4 July 2022)

Figure 6 Circular material use rate in France, 2011–2020, per cent



Source: Eurostat (2022) [env_ac_cur] (accessed 20 June 2022)

Existing policy framework

Dedicated strategy, roadmap or action plan for circular economy

France adopted a **Roadmap for the Circular Economy** in 2018 ⁽¹⁾ (*Feuille de route pour l'économie circulaire*). It includes 50 measures organised into four main overarching priorities:

- better consumption;
- better production;
- better management of waste; and
- mobilise all stakeholders.

Its key objectives are the following:

- to reduce natural resource use related to French consumption: 30 % reduction in resource consumption relative to GDP between 2010 and 2030;
- a 50 % reduction in the amount of non-hazardous waste landfilled by 2025, compared to 2010;
- aim towards 100 % of plastics recycled by 2025;
- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions: avoid the emission of 8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide each year thanks to plastic recycling;
- To create up to 300 000 additional jobs, including in new professions.

In 2020, the **law against waste and for the CE** ⁽²⁾ was adopted for implementing these measures as well as a few additional ones (*Loi no 2020-105 du 10 février 2020 relative à la lutte contre le gaspillage et à l'économie circulaire*).

The following measures have already been adopted and entered into force:

- setting up four new extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes for construction products, do-it-yourself (DIY) products; sports products; and toys;
- review of the agreements of the existing EPR schemes to improve and strengthen the schemes' operations and objectives;
- a reparability index of electric and electronic products;
- a ban on the destruction of unsold new products – electrical and electronic products; clothes, shoes and other textiles; furniture; ink cartridges; hygiene and childcare products; equipment for the conservation and cooking of food; leisure and education products; books and school supplies;
- mandatory objectives for circular public procurement on certain products;
- a ban of plastic packaging of some fresh fruit and vegetables;
- a ban of labels stuck directly on some fresh fruit and vegetables;
- a ban on the use of single-use plastic products by public authorities;
- an obligation on cable and mobile internet providers to provide consumers with information on the carbon footprint of their data consumption;
- a programme aiming towards an obligation on manufacturers to inform consumers about the environmental characteristics of products;
- an obligation on the home appliances sector to offer second-hand spare parts to maintenance and repair services;
- the establishment of minimum availability periods for spare parts for certain products.

¹ <https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/FREC%20anglais.pdf>

² <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000041553759/> (in French)

Circular economy policy elements included in other policies

There are many links between France's climate protection objectives and legislation and its circular economy policies. As an example, the **Climate and Resilience law** ⁽³⁾ includes many references and even measures related to the CE (*Loi no 2021-1104 du 22 août 2021 portant lutte contre le dérèglement climatique et renforcement de la résilience face à ses effets*): sustainable public procurement, consumer-product environmental information, establishment of a regulatory framework for carbon compensation and carbon-neutral claims, promotion of bulk selling, advertising regulation, etc.

³ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000043956924> (in French)

Monitoring and targets

In France, the CE is considered through three main axes that form a virtuous circle:

- supply from economic stakeholders;
- consumer demand and behaviour;
- waste management.

These three areas of action can be broken down into seven different concepts, called the *seven pillars of the CE*.

The supply from economic stakeholders integrates four elements:

1. extraction/manufacturing and sustainable supply chains;
2. ecodesign;
3. industrial symbiosis;
4. functional economy.

Consumer demand and behaviour involves two factors:

5. responsible consumption;
6. extension of product lifespans

Waste management includes the question of:

7. Recycling.

In April 2021, France published a document, which is an update of a 2017 publication and brings together key indicators for monitoring the CE ⁽⁴⁾. This publication is available on the internet, in French and English.

Circular economy monitoring frameworks and their indicators beyond the ones from Eurostat

The choice of indicators to monitor the CE was made according to several criteria:

- a limited number of indicators (11 in the 2021 version);
- illustrating the seven pillars of the CE;
- measurable over time to assess a trend;
- allowing, if possible, a comparison at the European level.

The 11 indicators are:

1. domestic material consumption per person;
2. resource productivity;
3. material footprint;
4. licences of European ecolabels;
5. number of industrial symbiosis initiatives;
6. number of companies and local authorities supported by ADEME ⁽⁵⁾ for the development of product-service systems;
7. food waste;
8. household spending on product maintenance and repair (excluding vehicles);
9. landfill tonnage trend;
10. use of secondary raw materials;
11. jobs in repair and recycling.

The publication presents all indicators in the same format:

⁴ <https://www.statistiques.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/indicateurs-cles-pour-le-suivi-de-leconomie-circulaire-edition-2021> (in French)

⁵ ADEME – the French Agency for Ecological transition. <https://www.ademe.fr/en/frontpage/>

- reference to the specific pillar;
- objectives with reference to laws;
- the observed trend in a few words;
- more detailed analysis;
- international comparison.

At the end of the publication, there is a dashboard that summarises the main trends, with a colour code to indicate whether the objective is being approached quickly (dark green) or slowly (light green), or if matters are stagnating (orange). The last page is an infographic that uses the colour codes, gives evolution curves and the European comparisons.

Assessment of circular economy performance

Overall, the transition to a CE seems to be starting. Some improvements, however, appear fragile and need to be reinforced.

- Indicators related to material consumption are improving over the long term, but their level remains strongly dependent on the economic situation.
- More and more French people are buying ecodesigned products and France has the third highest number of European ecolabel licenses.
- Industrial symbiosis initiatives are progressing, as is the number of companies supported in the functional economy.
- Household spending on repairs is growing less rapidly than spending on new goods, although more frequent use of repairs seems to be emerging.
- The international context has a major impact, as shown by the influence of the closure of China's acceptance of wastes on the rate of waste going to landfill.
- The incorporation of recycled raw materials into production processes is generally increasing, but not all materials are benefiting.

Circular economy targets

The key objectives of the **Roadmap for the Circular Economy** ⁽⁶⁾ (2018) are the following:

- to reduce natural resource use related to French consumption: 30 % reduction in resource consumption in relation to GDP between 2010 and 2030;
- a 50 % reduction in the amount of non-hazardous waste landfilled by 2025, compared to 2010;
- aim towards 100% of plastics recycled by 2025
- to reduce greenhouse gas emissions: avoid the emission of 8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide each year thanks to plastic recycling;
- to create up to 300 000 additional jobs, including in new professions.

It is to be noted, nevertheless, that some of these objectives are of an aspirational and political nature.

⁶ <https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/FREC%20anglais.pdf>

Innovative approaches and good practice

Examples of public policy initiatives (national, regional or local)

- ➔ *Good practice example: producer responsibility/supplier responsibility; product-related policies, including on the R-strategies (repair, reuse, remanufacturing, etc.); change in consumption patterns and consumer behaviour, education (awareness-raising and training)*

Repairability index on electric and electronic products

Since 1 January 2021, a repairability index is compulsory in France for five categories of electronic and home appliance products. This tool, introduced by the law against waste and for the CE, aims to ensure that better information is available to the consumer about the repairability of purchases. Thanks to the display of a score from 1 to 10, this index informs consumers about the repairability of the products concerned. Initially, the following product categories were affected by the obligation: front-loading washing machines, smartphones, laptops, TV monitors and electric lawn mowers. From 4 November 2022, the index will be enlarged to include four new categories: vacuum cleaners, top-loading washing machines, dishwashers and pressure washers.

This information aims to raise awareness among consumers about their ability to extend the use time and lifespan of their products, notably by steering them towards products that are easier to repair and by encouraging them to resort to repair in case of failure. As such, this is also a tool for combatting obsolescence – whether planned or not – to avoid the premature disposal of products and preserve natural resources. Moreover, the law against waste and for the CE foresees that, by 2024, the index will be replaced by – or become – a durability index through the inclusion of additional criteria related to product reliability and robustness.

- ➔ *Good practice example: public procurement; product-related policies, including on the R-strategies (repair, reuse, remanufacturing, etc.)*

Circular public procurement

The law against waste and for the CE (AGEC) of 2020, requires that a percentage of goods acquired annually by the central and local authorities must come from reuse or incorporate recycled materials. There is a list of products, including laptops, paper, desk furniture and textiles. The measure was adopted on 9 March 2021, with objectives and thresholds tailored for the different product categories. An evaluation will be carried out in 2022.

- ➔ *Good practice example: education (awareness-raising and training); change in consumption patterns and consumer behaviour*

Consumer product environmental labelling

The climate and resilience law provides that mandatory quantitative environmental information is provided on consumer products. Two pilot phases have been organised in two key sectors: food and textiles. The first one concluded that the measure was feasible with some methodological adjustments while the second one is still on-going. Measures will be adopted in the near future on the basis of the results of the pilot phases, and in line with the EU framework (notably the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)).

- ➔ *Good practice example: spatial planning and urban policy, change in consumption patterns and consumer behaviour, and education (awareness-raising and training)*

Construction products

The law against waste and for the CE (AGEC) includes the following measures covering the construction sector.

- The creation of an EPR scheme for the building sector: traders of construction products and materials from the building sector (producers, retailers, etc.) will be required to be organised to

ensure the free recovery of waste sorted by craftsmen or private individuals in collection points. These traders will therefore collectively ensure a second life for their waste products which must no longer be found in the environment. This scheme became operational from 1 January 2022.

- Enlargement of mandatory pre-demolition waste audits, implemented since 2012, to improve the traceability of construction and demolition waste.
- Establishment of new professional waste collection centres.
New waste collection points for professionals will be set up to increase the existing network of 600 such points in France. A consultation will take place with the building sector's professional organisations, the local associations and the French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) to determine the number of new waste collection centres required to meet the needs of professionals and prevent waste from ending up in the environment.
- The free recovery of waste materials in waste collection centres – the centres will freely take back waste materials from professionals, provided that they are sorted (scrap metal, wood, rubble, etc.). There are other measures covering plastic products in other laws or regulations.

The way forward

Addressing barriers and challenges

No information available.

Ranking types of barrier

High barrier	Consumer behaviour and awareness
	Market barriers for recycled resources
	Companies' ability to grasp opportunities
	Institutional challenge to develop policy for a complex cross-sectoral issue
Low barrier	Good indicators and targets

Future policy plans

The **National Recovery Plan** of September 2020 ⁽⁷⁾ includes support for some circular economy activities including a modernisation of waste management and recycling infrastructures and investment in reuse and recycling, notably for plastic products.

⁷ <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/plan-de-relance/lancement-plan-relance-3-septembre-2020> (in French)

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