

The Environmental Implementation Review



Poland

Environmental Implementation Review 2025

Poland has a rich nature and landscape and has significantly improved its environmental performance since its EU accession.

Recently, the authorities have put more focus on re-naturalising rivers, protecting forests and improving air quality. However, concrete steps to ensure compliance with EU law are yet to be taken.

Highlights



Poland has achieved a noticeable reduction of consumption of plastic carrier bags per capita – from 23 in 2019 to 6.6 in 2022, which is the second-best rate in the EU.

Main Challenges



Pollution

Despite substantial progress, Poland's air quality continues to be a concern in some parts of the country's territory. Exceedances above the limit values for NO₂ and PM₁₀ and the target values for ozone, arsenic and benzo(a)pyrene concentrations are still registered.

It also missed the final deadlines for complying with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive in 2015.



Circular economy

Poland is at risk of missing both the 55% preparing for re-use and recycling target for municipal waste, and the 65% packaging waste recycling target set out in the Waste Framework Directive.

Governance and investment



The current investment gap stands at an estimated €8 billion per year in Poland, representing around 1.22% of national GDP – higher than the EU-average (0.77%).

Poland needs to ensure access to justice beyond individual decisions. Polish law does not provide a mechanism for NGOs or individuals to challenge plans or programmes adopted as regulations (rozporządzenie), such as river basin management plans.

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