

Ireland's Municipal Waste Characterisation Study – 2022

Waste Advisory Group Meeting

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Waste Statistics Team, 19 October 2023

What is Municipal Waste?



- ▶ Municipal Waste is the waste we all produce everyday in our home, offices, businesses and schools.



- ▶ Ireland generates 3.2 million tonnes of municipal waste each year.

- ▶ ~20% of all waste generated
- ▶ ~ 41% of municipal waste is recycled
 - ▶ On track to miss recycling target of 55% by 2025.

60% in bins



Introduction to MWC



- ▶ The 2022 national municipal waste characterisation (MWC) study looked at the composition of municipal waste collected at kerbside.
 - ▶ i.e. What is in our household and commercial bins?
- ▶ Why do we need to know what is in our bins?
 - ▶ Enable waste statistics reporting
 - ▶ Inform circular economy & waste policy
 - ▶ Plan waste management & waste infrastructure
 - ▶ Support regulatory & enforcement activities



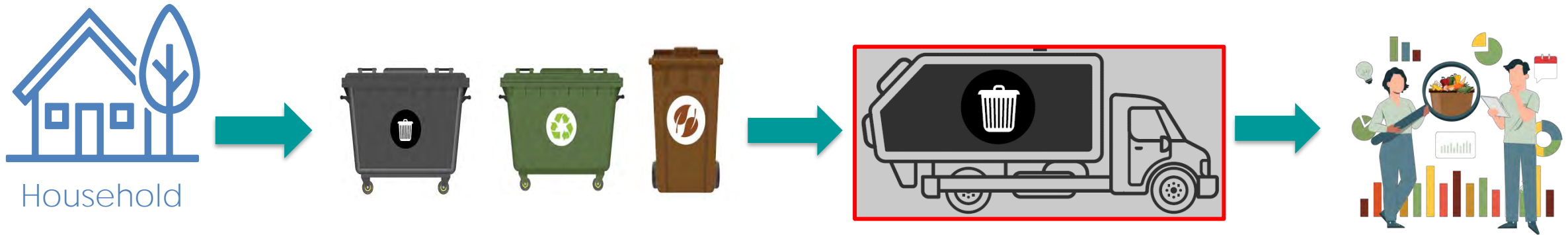
2022 MWC – Methodology



- ▶ Engaged two companies to characterise the household & commercial mixed municipal waste streams collected at kerbside:
 - ▶ General waste bin
 - ▶ Recycling bin
 - ▶ Organic waste bin
- ▶ Waste is sorted into 81 different material categories.



2022 Household MWC – Methodology



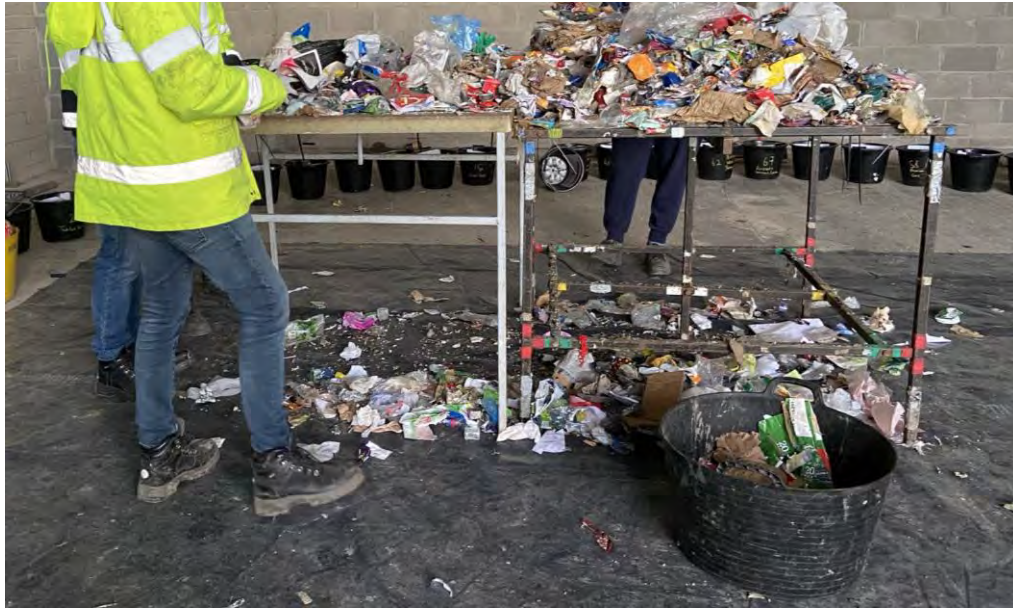
- ▶ Household waste samples collected at waste collection centres.
- ▶ i.e. collected samples of mixed waste from the bin lorry rather than directly at kerbside.

2022 Commercial MWC – Methodology



- ▶ Commercial waste samples collected directly from kerbside bins at commercial premises.
Waste collected at 'sector level' as waste generated by different sectors is different
(e.g. offices/restaurants/shops/hospitals)

Onsite sampling



Each waste sample put onto a sorting table,
hand sorted into 81 material categories (buckets),
bucket contents weighed & weight recorded.

2022 MWC - Results



So what is in our bins?



Household MWC Results



What is in the
Household
General
Waste Bin?



Household MWC Results



What is in the
Household
Recycling
Waste Bin?



Household MWC Results



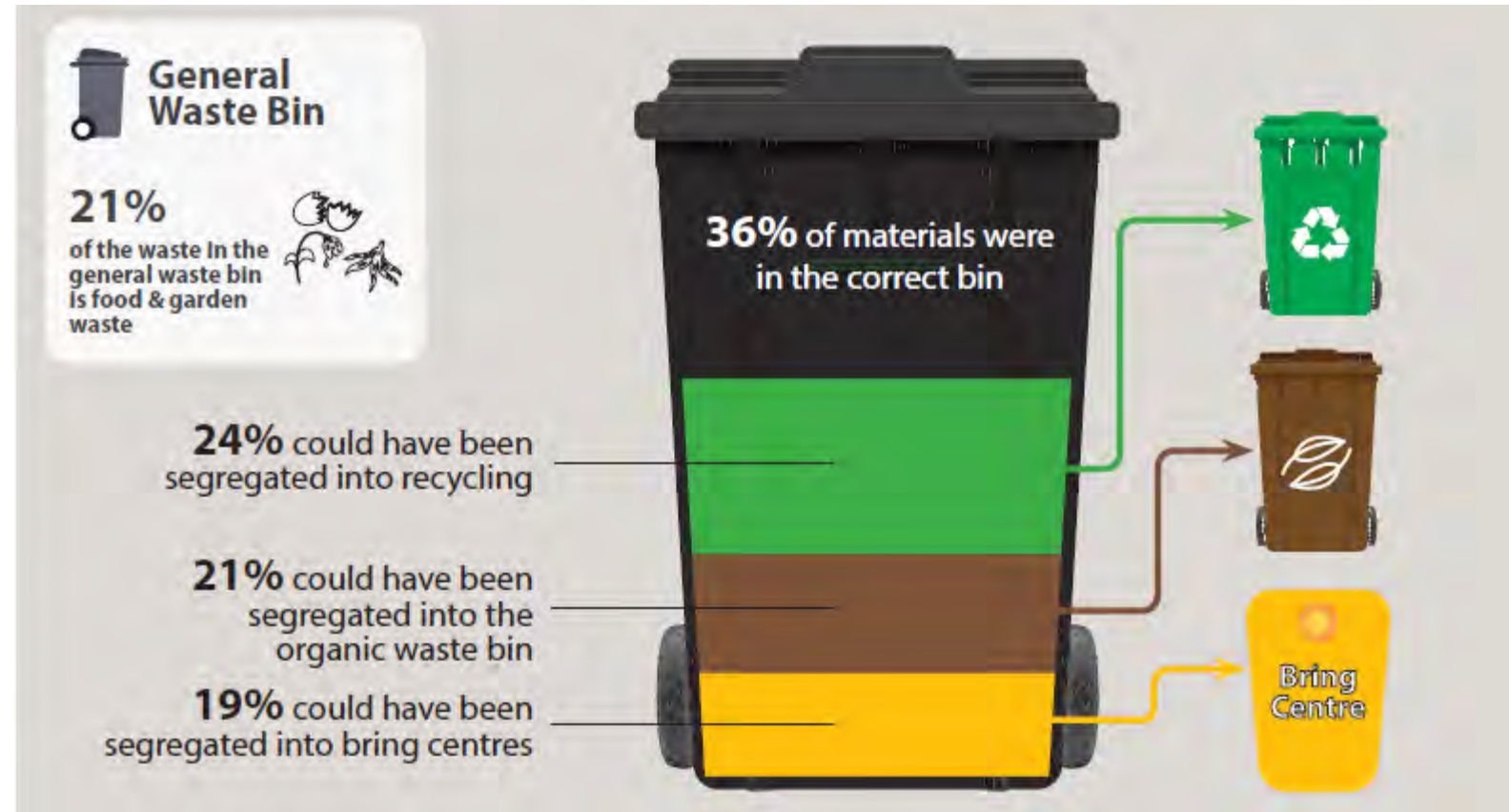
What is in the
Household
Organic
Waste Bin?



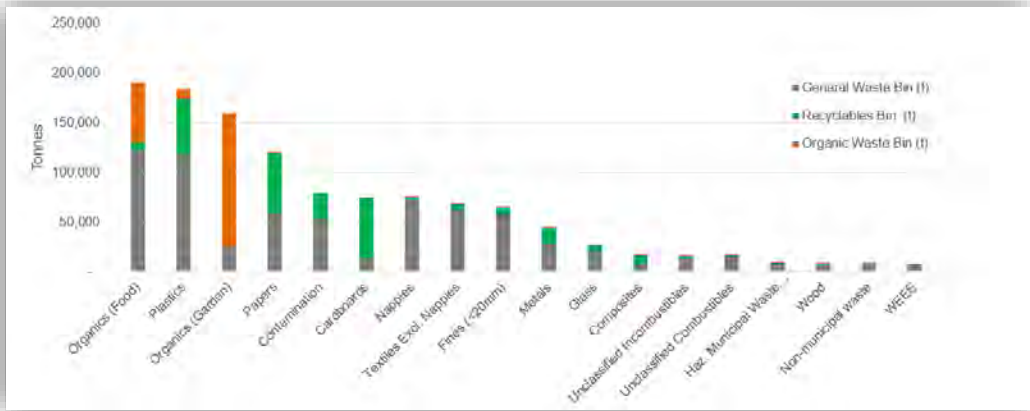
Household MWC Results



General Waste Segregation Assessment



National Household Waste Profile

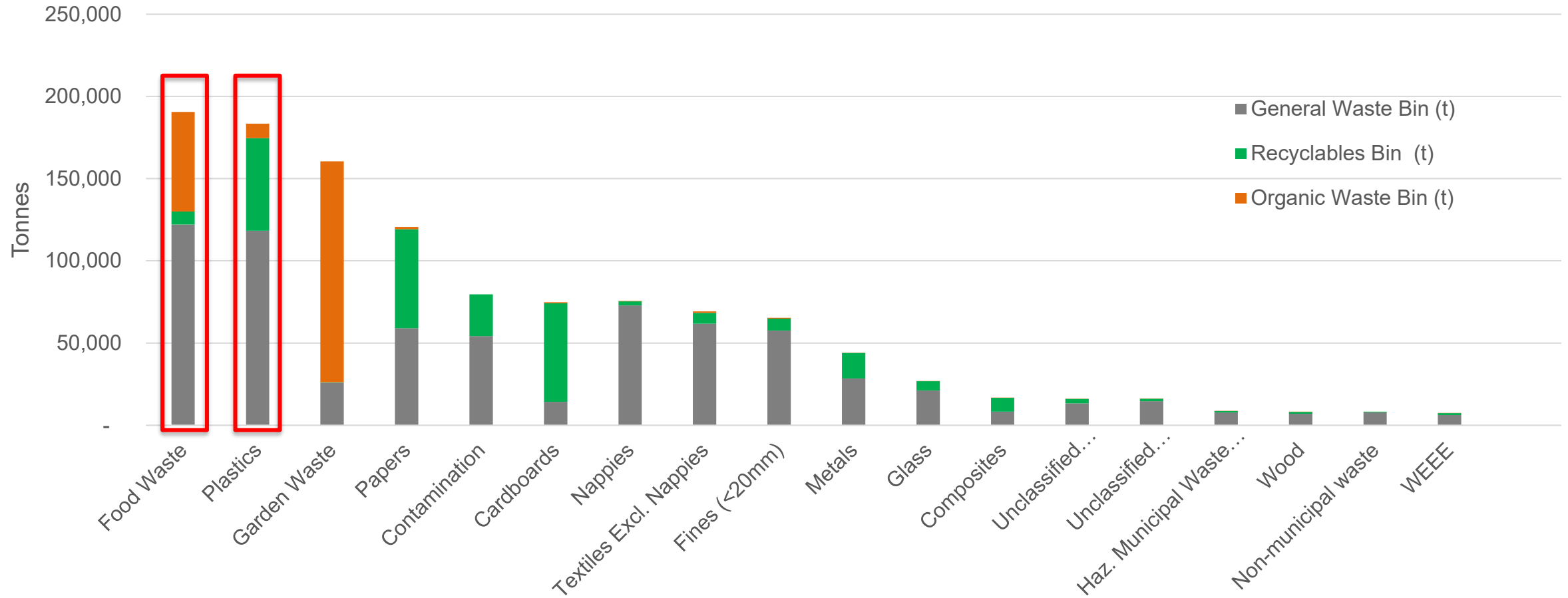


Waste Composition

Annual Household Waste Tonnages

National Household Waste Profile

National Household Waste Profile



2022 MWC - Results



So what is in our commercial bins?



Commercial MWC Results



What is in the
General
Waste Bin?



Commercial MWC Results



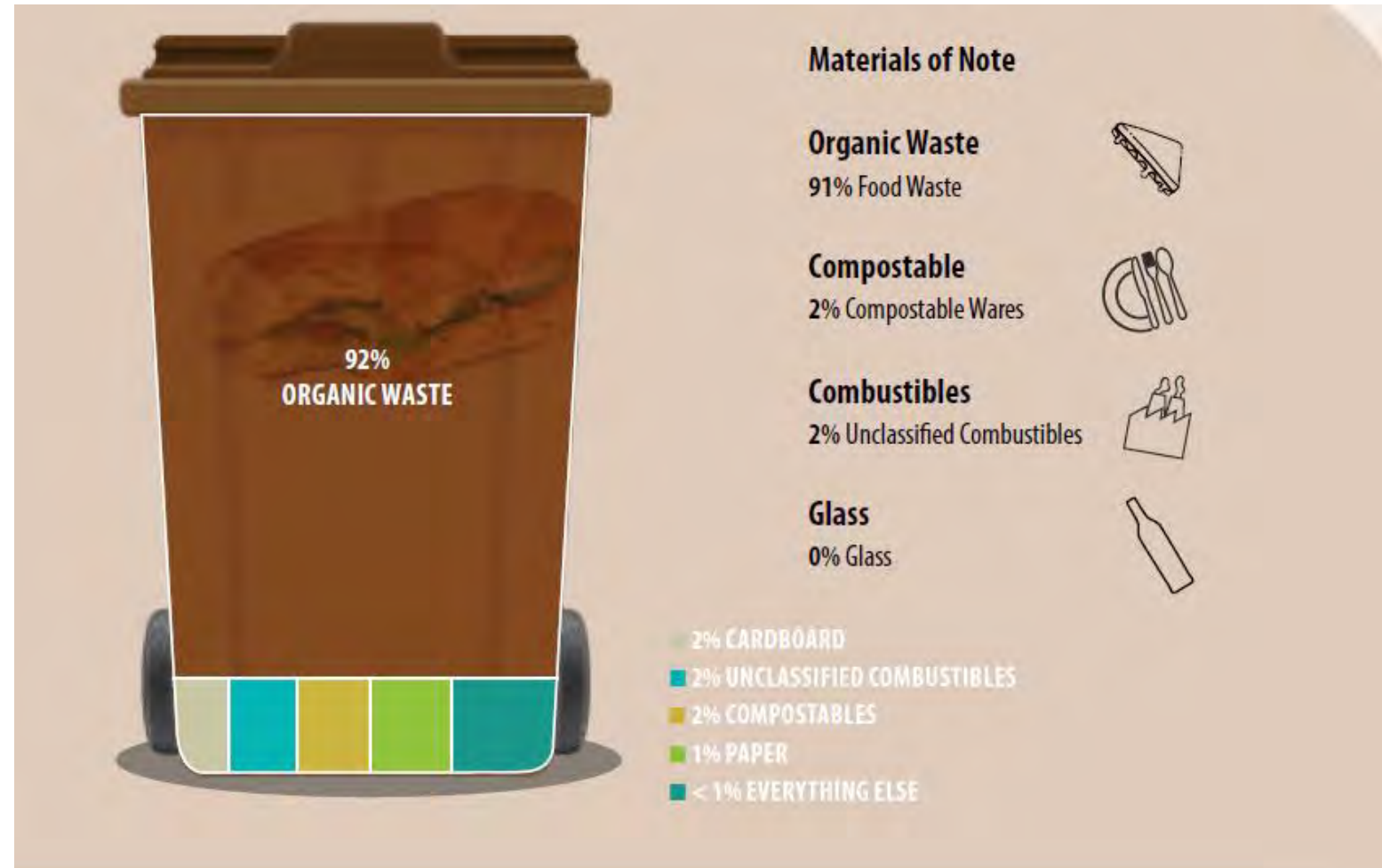
What is in the
Commercial
Recycling
Bin?



Commercial MWC Results



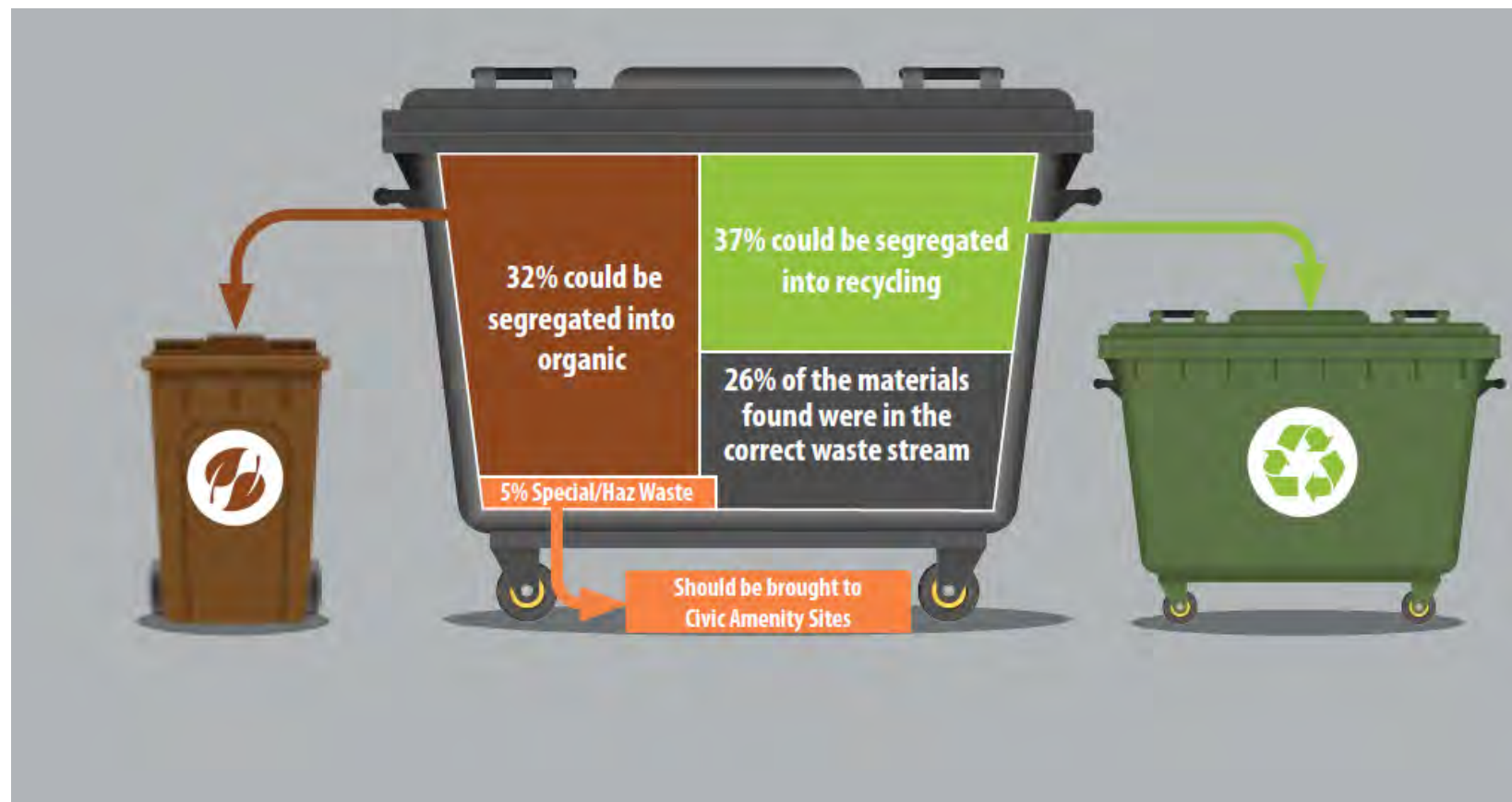
What is in the
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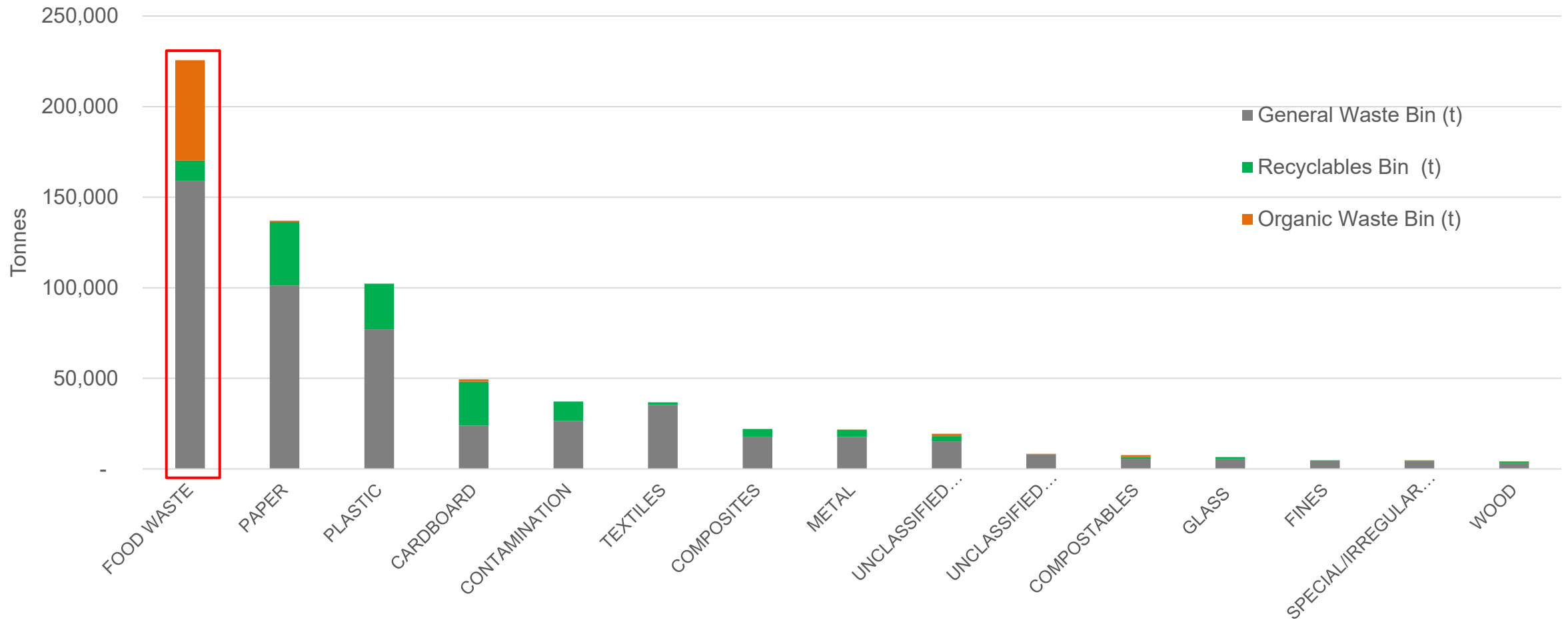
Commercial MWC Results



General Waste Segregation Assessment



National Commercial Waste Profile



Municipal Waste Changes since 2018



- ▶ What has changed since the last MWC in 2018?



- ▶ Two thirds of waste still in the wrong bin.
- ▶ Food waste & plastics still most common wastes in municipal bins.
- ▶ Papers down in household and commercial bins



Waste Characterisation - Conclusion



Household Bins

Where the waste is **ACTUALLY** going...

General Waste Bin



64% of waste in general waste bin should be put in recycling or organic waste bins or brought to bring centres.

Where the waste **SHOULD** be going...



Commercial Bins

Where the waste is **ACTUALLY** going...

General Waste



69% of items in General Waste should be in Recycling or Organic waste

Where the waste **SHOULD** be going...



Urgent action is needed to improve household and commercial waste segregation particularly **food wastes and plastics**.

Actions to improve segregation



- ▶ **Organic waste bins** to be provided to **all** households and commercial premises.
- ▶ **Enforcement of**
 - ▶ Organic waste bin roll out to ensure the same level of service for all customers
 - ▶ Segregation of food waste, initially in food services sector & then all sectors.



- ▶ **Targeted awareness campaigns** to motivate and support householders and the commercial sector to segregate food waste and plastics.



- ▶ Improved waste collection charging to **incentivise** and **reward** waste better segregation and waste reduction practises.

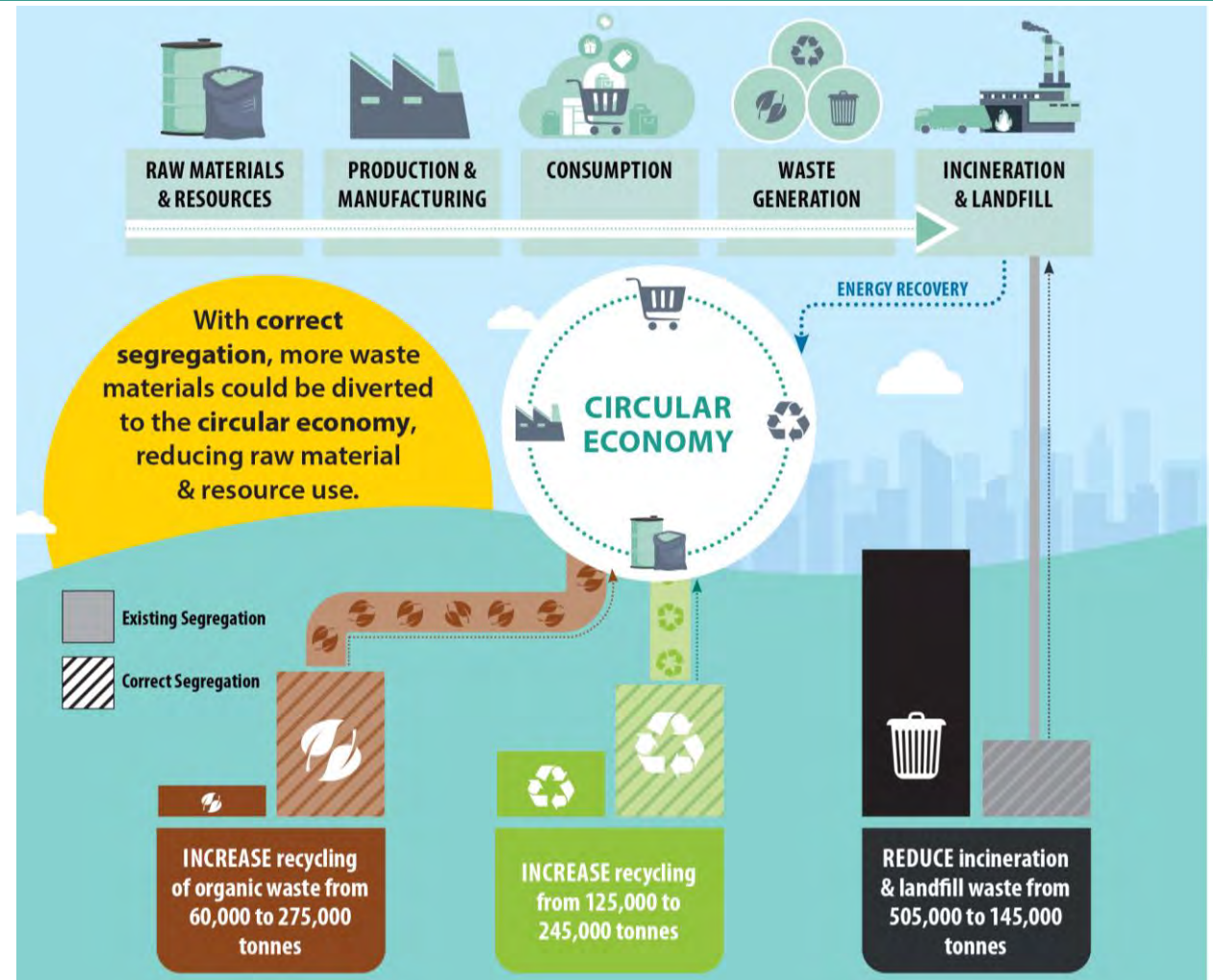


- ▶ **Improved** recycling infrastructure to support householders to use civic amenity sites, recycling centres and bring banks correctly.

The Future of Municipal Waste



- ▶ Currently in our linear economy the majority of municipal waste are disposed in our general waste bins and are mostly incinerated or landfilled.
- ▶ But the future could be different.....



Thank you

Latest Municipal Waste Characterisation published @
www.epa.ie/nationalwastestatistics



CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROGRAMME

The Driving Force for Ireland's Move to a Circular Economy



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland