



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicināšana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

Nr. LIFE20 IPE/LV/000014 – LIFE Waste To Resources IP

Research results

Consumer Behaviour towards electrical equipment usage

July, 2022



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- On average, people in Latvia buy new electrical equipment **once every four years**:
 - more than once a year they buy mostly small household appliances;
 - once a year - small household appliances, beauty and health appliances;
 - every 1-3 years - mobile phones, small household appliances, beauty and health appliances;
 - every 4-6 years - computers, mobile phones, large household appliances and TVs;
 - every 7-9 years - TVs and large appliances;
 - every 10 years or less - TV, video, audio, games consoles and large household appliances;
 - a relatively higher share never buys photos, video cameras, video and audio equipment, games consoles.

- Overall, **the vast majority (88%) have bought at least one electric appliance in the last year**. Slightly more than half of the respondents indicated that they had purchased small household appliances during the last 12 months, while 4 out of 10 had purchased a mobile phone, which are later followed by beauty and health appliances, large household appliances, power tools for repairs and computer equipment.
- Seniors (60-74 years old), those living in rural areas, those not working, pensioners, 1-person households, those with a personal income of up to €350 per month, as well as those with a generally poor family financial situation were more likely than others not to buy any electric appliances.
- **On average, respondents paid a total of €895.80 for electrical goods purchased within the last 12 months**. On average, more money was spent by managers, households of 4 or more people, and those with a net monthly personal income above €950.
- **On average, the highest amount of money was paid for computer equipment (€662.90) and TV sets (€654.20)**, followed by large household appliances (€558.20) and mobile phones (€514.90). The lowest prices were paid for beauty and health appliances (€107.10) and small household appliances (€131.80).



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- The most popular **place to buy** electrical equipment is **personally, in specialist electrical shops, with two thirds of respondents saying this**, suggesting that it is still important for consumers to see and feel the equipment they buy by themselves. Meanwhile, half also indicated that they had purchased their equipment from Latvian online shops, and another third - from telecommunication service providers.
- **Only 8% of respondents** indicated that they had bought **appliances on second-hand portals** during the last year. These people mostly buy video, audio and games consoles, large household appliances and electrical goods for beauty and health. The **most popular places to buy used electrical goods are websites ss.lv and Facebook Marketplace**.
- The **most important aspects of purchasing new electrical equipment for respondents in general are quality, durability/durability, value for money, price and functionality of the product**. 9 out of 10 respondents ranked these criteria as the most important. Comparatively less important aspects when buying new appliances are the recommendation of the seller, recommendations from friends/relatives and environmentally friendly appliances (no use of environmentally harmful materials).
- For the **vast majority (87%), the main reason for buying new electrical equipment is the breakage of existing equipment**. While just under half (47%) said they were buying new equipment because their existing equipment was outdated. This answer was significantly more likely to be given by the younger audience (18-29 years old), those with a net personal income above EUR 950, those with a good family financial situation, as well as those who have purchased in the last year appliances such as electronics for beauty and health, video, audio and games consoles, computers and mobile phones.
- A crucial and complex part of the purchasing process is the decision to buy a specific appliance. In the case of electrical engineering, the decision-making process can take several months, so the process of gathering and processing information is also important. The survey shows that **almost two thirds of respondents compare similar brands and specifications when they need to buy new electrical equipment**, and more than half check online reviews from other users. Just over a third check the manufacturer's website, while 3 out of 10 consult family, friends and colleagues, and the same proportion consult shop assistants.



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- **On the positive side, two thirds of respondents try to fix/repair electrical appliances when they suddenly break down.** The most common way to repair appliances is through the seller's warranty (59%). Meanwhile, **14% take the appliances to designated places - sorting yards or special drop-off points, 5% hand them over to the managed company for removal from the home, and 4% throw them out by placing them in a household waste container.**
- In general, the profile of those who tend to throw their appliances in the garbage is not significantly different from the average survey participant. This behaviour is less common among households of 4 people and households with children than in the sample as a whole. Meanwhile, they take their equipment to designated places more often than other Latvians and drivers.
- **55% of all have used electrical repair services.** Those who had not used repair services cited the main reasons as being that the appliances were outdated anyway and they wanted to buy new ones (42%), that repairs were too expensive (37%) and that there was no need to repair electrical appliances (33%).
- 4 out of 10 of those who used repair services had repaired a computer or mobile phone, another third a large appliance and just under a third a small appliance. When assessing the quality of the repairs carried out, 11% rated the quality of repairs as excellent, 45% as good and 37% as rather good. 2% said that the overall quality of repairs was very poor or poor.
- The most frequent respondents (about 3 in 10) would be willing to **wait 2-3 working days or 4-5 working days** for their electrical equipment to be repaired. The **average maximum time allowed for electrical repairs is 3.3 working days.** The younger audience (18-29 years old), those with a total household income above EUR 2000, are on average willing to wait longer. Interestingly, there are no significant differences in the ratings given depending on whether the respondents have had an electrical repair in the last year or not - the time allowed for repairs is similar.



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- When asked about the reasons why people tend to throw away or leave their used or broken electrical appliances in or near household waste containers instead of recycling them, the **most common reasons were that the drop-off points are too far away/not accessible (65%) and lack of information about the possibilities to drop off electrical appliances (62%)**. On average, a third also cited the main reasons as the waste manager not offering an electronics removal service (39%), lack of motivation and willingness to hand over electronics (37%) and the process being too complicated and time-consuming (31%). A fifth of respondents reported a lack of information on the environmental risks of electrical goods, with younger people (18-39 years old) more likely to report this. Meanwhile, those living in Riga were more likely than the sample as a whole to report a lack of awareness.
- In general, people in Latvia are relatively more likely (almost two thirds) **to give away** appliances that they no longer need (they have outlived their useful life, but are still working and usable) **to someone** (friends, relatives), followed by disposal/reserving (57%) and giving them to special points or a recycler (42%) or selling them (34%).
- According to the survey, **23% of electrical appliances in households** end up in household waste. Looking more closely at the types of electrical goods, almost a fifth of beauty and health electrical goods go to waste. Less than 6% of other types of appliances are thrown away.
- About **a fifth of large household appliances, beauty and health electronics and TVs are recycled at a special point or by a recycling company**. On average, 15% hand over computers, small household appliances, video and audio equipment, games consoles and power tools.



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- In general, people in Latvia are quite open to buying second-hand equipment, with 6 out of 10 indicating that they would definitely consider or would rather consider buying some second-hand equipment. Around a fifth would consider buying a second-hand mobile phone and the same proportion would consider buying small household appliances. A quarter - photo, video camera. On average, a third buy TV sets, video and audio equipment, games consoles, large household appliances, computer equipment and power tools for repairs. In general, the younger audience (18-29 years old) is more open to buying second-hand equipment.
- **The main reason why people in Latvia would consider buying second-hand machinery is related to price, with 61% indicating that they would consider a better deal - a good price for working machinery.** Around a third said they could not afford to buy new electrical appliances. A fifth cited environmental protection as a reason - to save resources and extend the life cycle of goods.
- When asked about barriers to buying second-hand, **6 out of 10 respondents said that they did not have confidence that the second-hand appliances would work, which is the main reason for not choosing to buy second-hand.** 39% said they would like to buy new appliances and 37% said there is no warranty available for used appliances. 3% of respondents said they never buy any second-hand goods at all.
- **More than half of the respondents indicated that they would choose to buy second-hand electrical equipment if there were official electrical equipment repair and sales centres in Latvia,** 27% said they would not and another 16% could not give an answer. 30-39 year olds were more likely to give a positive answer than the general sample. those living in Latgale, Latvians, those with a total household income of more than 2000 EUR, those who have already bought second-hand appliances on my portals, and those who try to fix/repair appliances when they break down.



Eiropas Savienības LIFE programmas integrētais projekts "Atkritumi kā resursi Latvijā – Reģionālās ilgtspējas un aprites veicinašana, ieviešot atkritumu kā resursu izmantošanas koncepciju"

- **40% of respondents associate sorting and recycling of waste electrical equipment with Latvijas Zaļais punkts**, 24% with Eco Baltia vide, 22% with Clean R. 16% mentioned Tolmets, 12% ZAAO, 11% Green Belt and 8% BAO.
- For a quarter, none of the environmental organisations generated associations. The number of ignorant people is relatively higher among these subgroups than in the sample as a whole: Latgalians, foreigners, those with general secondary education, skilled workers, those with poor family finances.

The survey data points to the need to educate the Latvian population about the life cycle of electrical equipment, its impact on the environment and disposal options. A feature of the technological age is the high consumption and replacement of various types of machinery, which is not always linked to the practical need to replace broken machinery.

Practically everyone surveyed has bought at least one electric appliance in the last year, and on average they have paid almost €900 for these appliances in total. At the same time, although only 8% have bought second-hand appliances in the last year when they broke down, overall consideration of second-hand appliances is moderately high among the population - 6 out of 10 would consider buying some type of second-hand appliance.

However, given that 23% of the population admits that electrical appliances that are worn out but still usable end up in household waste, there is a need to reduce the proportion of appliances going to waste and to increase their diversion to special points or to recycling. In particular, to raise the profile of the transfer of health and beauty equipment rather than its disposal.

There is a need to increase public interest in selling/purchasing second-hand appliances (not just giving them away to relatives/friends), with the intention already moving towards action. There is also a need to raise public awareness of the sorting and drop-off points for electrical