

# Press Release No. 35/2010

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## Import of waste requiring authorisation continues at high rate

### Federal Environment Agency publishes statistics for 2009

**The import of wastes requiring authorisation remained high in 2009, in a pattern similar to previous years. Total volume was 7.6 million tonnes (mn t) and increased mainly due to a large construction site on the German-Austrian border (Figure 1). Exports, in contrast, declined by about 20 percent and amounted to only 1.2 mn t. The share of hazardous waste also decreased, as exports amounted to a mere 160,000 t (30 percent decrease), and exports stood at three mn t (seven percent below 2008). There are no known illegal transports of any significance recorded in 2009.**

A waste volume of 1.6 mn t at the large construction site-- a 6,700-metre stretch of motorway tunnel near Bregenz, Austria- was incurred and recycled for use in Germany in the recultivation of what were once gravel pits. Transport distance was some 20 kms.

The imports of hazardous waste are broken down as follows: contaminated soil (400,000 t), asbestos contaminated waste (300,000 t), used wood containing hazardous substances (270,000 t), and residue from waste incineration installations (280,000 t). The majority of exports comprised of residual fractions from waste sorting (410,000 t).

The volume of non-problematic waste (and therefore not subject to authorisation), in particular scrap metal, used glass and paper, plastic and textiles, has declined according to unverified data from the Federal Statistical Office. Compared to the previous year, import figures for 2009 are about 11 mn t, or 20 percent, and exports about 18 mn t, or roughly seven percent lower, respectively.

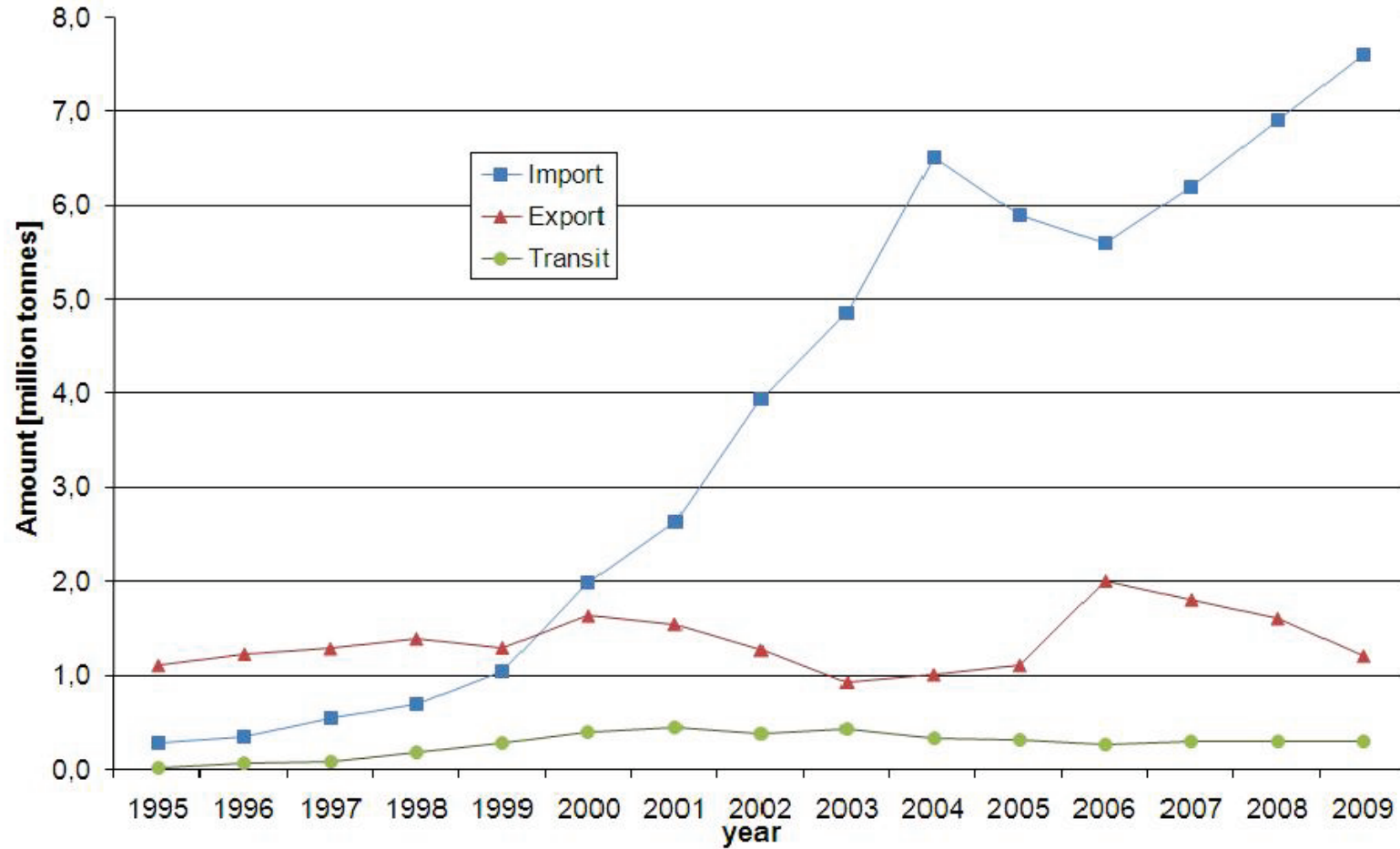
Transboundary shipment of waste is regulated by law through the Basel Convention.

Movements within EU countries are regulated by the EC Regulation on the shipments of waste, which also governs the monitoring of associated disposal installations as to their suitability and the documentation of the disposal procedure with accompanying forms.

Imports of wastes subject to authorisation have increased sharply since recording began, and compared to waste occurrence in Germany, transboundary shipment is at a relatively low level. Household waste and construction waste in 2007 both had a share of well below one percent. The export volume of hazardous wastes was between one and two percent, with about 15 percent for imports. Relatively high foreign trade figures exist for some wastes subject to authorisation, for example scrap metal and waste paper (see Figure 2). Detailed statistics and further information are available online at <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/abfallwirtschaft/abfallstatistik/basel.htm>.

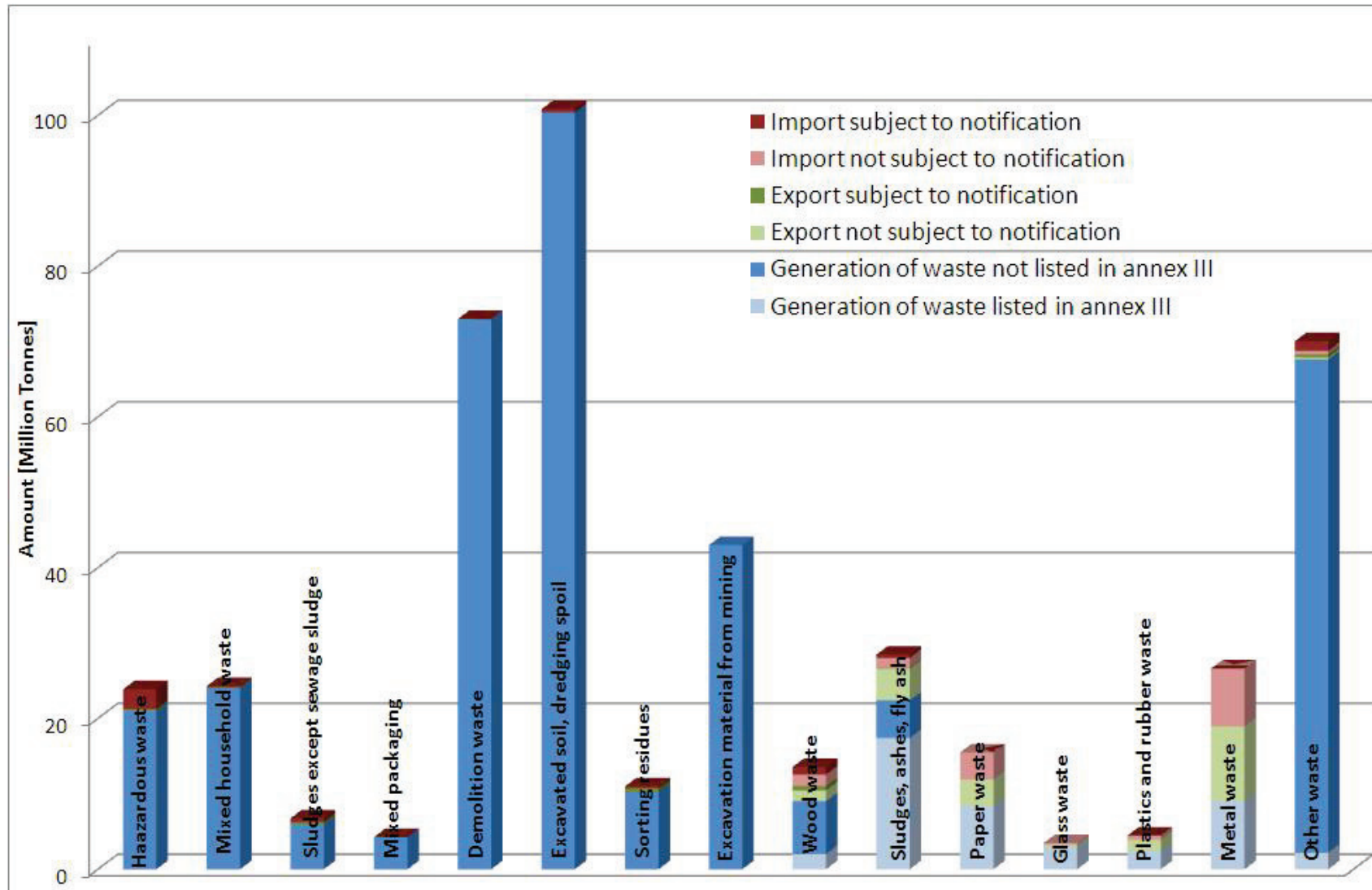
Dessau-Roßlau, 11 June 2010

Figure 1: Import, Export and Transit of waste requiring authorisation



The temporary slump in imports in 2005 and parallel jump in exports owes to the entry-into-force of the ban on storage of organic wastes on landfills in June 2005. Graph from UBA Press Release Nr. 35/2010 "Import of waste requiring authorisation continues at high rate"

Figure 2: Comparison of occurrence, import and export of wastes in Germany, 2007



Source: Fachserie 19 of Federal Statistical Office for Waste Occurrence; foreign trade statistics for import and export of wastes not subject to notification; UBA for all other data

Legend: *VVA* = EC Regulation on shipments of waste; Annex III lists wastes not subject to approval. Wastes listed in Annex IV and those named in *VVA* are subject to approval when shipped transboundary, whereas disposal in Germany of hazardous wastes only is subject to the identification procedure.  
Graph from UBA Press Release Nr. 35/2010 "Import of waste requiring authorisation continues at high rate"