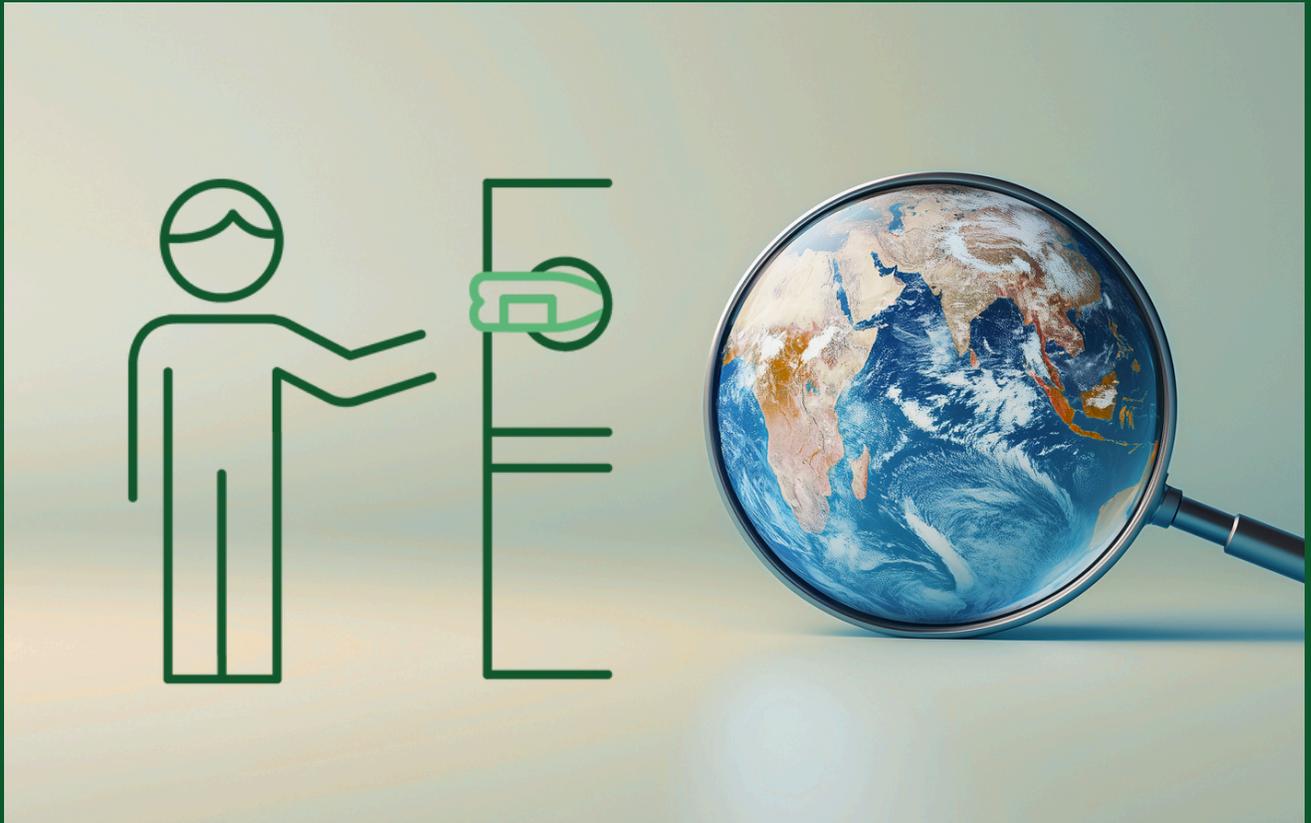


Fact Sheet

Global snapshot: Deposit return system performance around the world

December 2025



Introduction

The global adoption of deposit return systems (DRS) continues to accelerate. Between 2020 and 2024, 10 new DRS programmes were implemented, more than in any other five-year period in history. As of December 2025, 60 countries, states, and territories have active deposit systems, together covering over 396 million people worldwide. DRS coverage is heavily concentrated in Europe and North America, which together account for nearly 90% of the global population living in jurisdictions with a DRS.

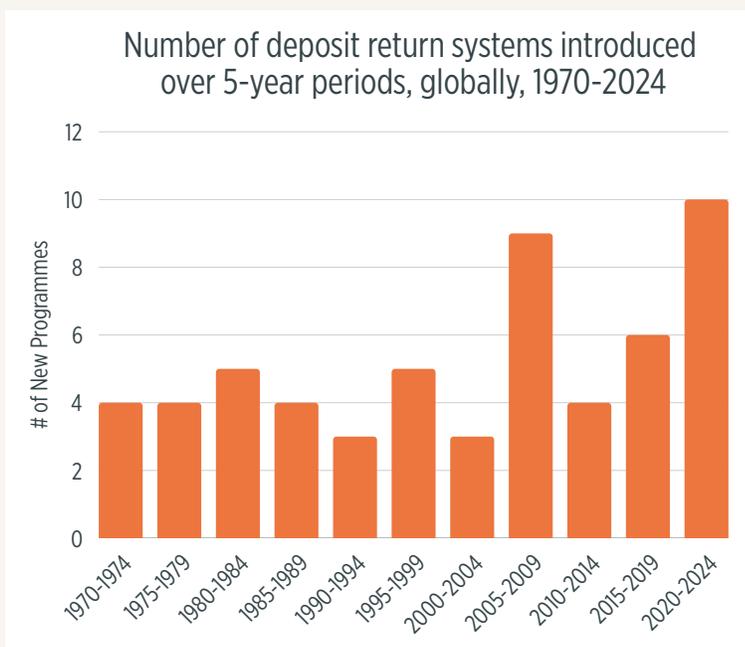
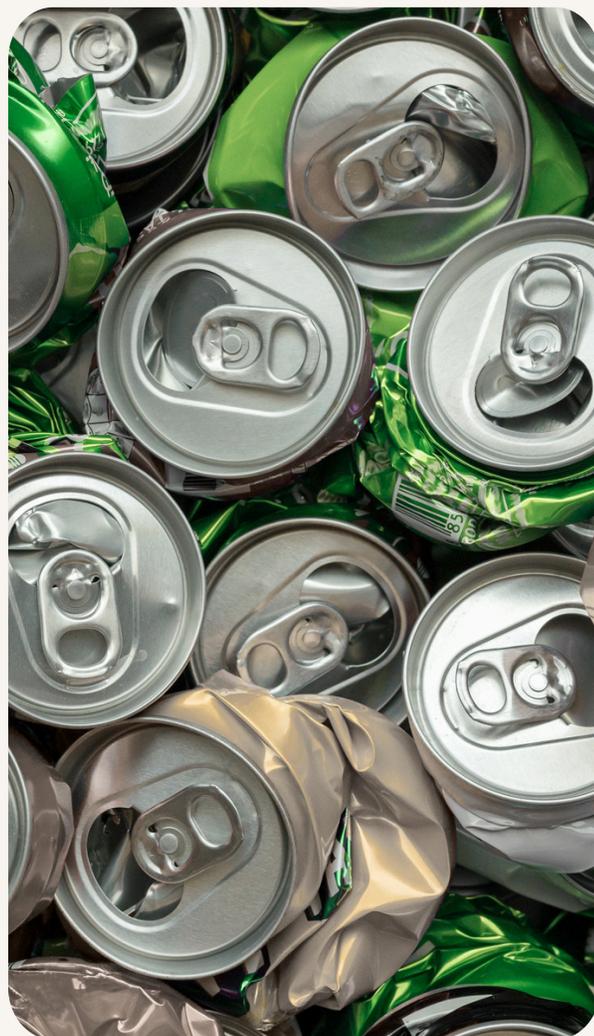


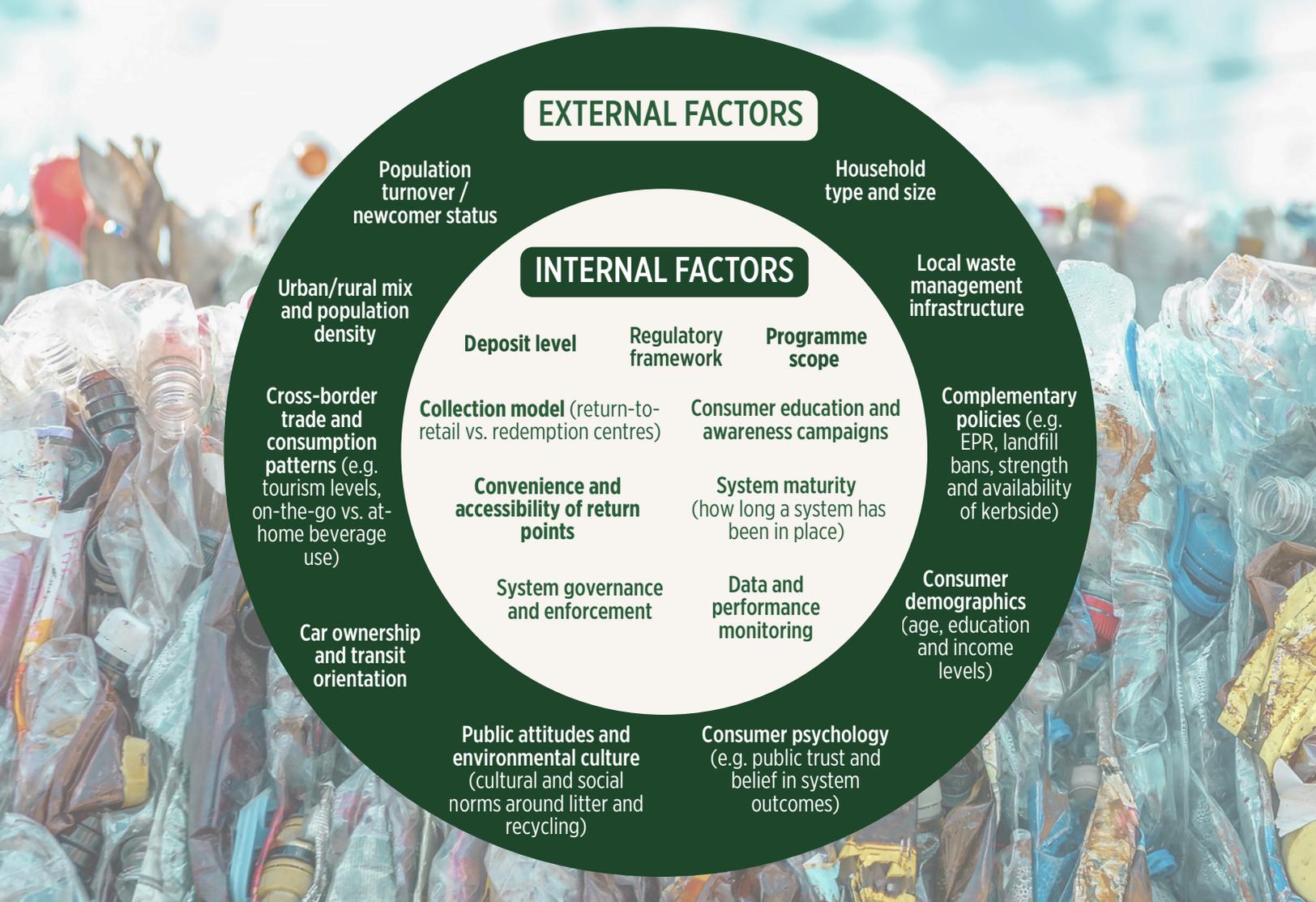
Figure 1 Number of DRS introduced over 5-year periods, globally, 1970-2024

As deposit systems expand across the globe, the focus is increasingly on understanding *why* some perform better than others. Evidence shows that high collection rates are most consistently achieved where system design includes a meaningful deposit value, broad scope, and convenient, accessible return options. Yet these design elements interact with a range of external factors, such as geography, cultural and social norms, and the local waste management infrastructure, that also influence outcomes. Regional comparisons therefore provide valuable insight into both the effectiveness of key design levers and the contextual realities that shape how well those levers work. **The pages that follow explore these patterns in more detail, comparing collection rates across Europe, Canada, the United States (US), and Australia.**



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Performance by region

Europe

Across Europe, 18 countries have implemented deposit return systems, making it the region with the broadest DRS coverage worldwide. Unlike in North America or Australia, where systems are implemented at the state or provincial level, European programmes are national in scope, ensuring consistent design and standards across entire markets.

Figure 2 presents collection rates across European DRS countries. For this analysis, countries with less than two reported years of data, including Austria, Hungary, the Republic of Ireland, Romania, and Poland are excluded, as these systems are still in early implementation phases and collection rates are not yet representative of steady-state performance. Among the remaining countries, the median collection rate stands at 90%, with more than half (seven countries) achieving rates of 90% or higher.

The highest collection rates are reported in Finland (99%), Germany (98%), Denmark (93%), and Norway (92%), while the lowest among established programmes is the Netherlands (68%).

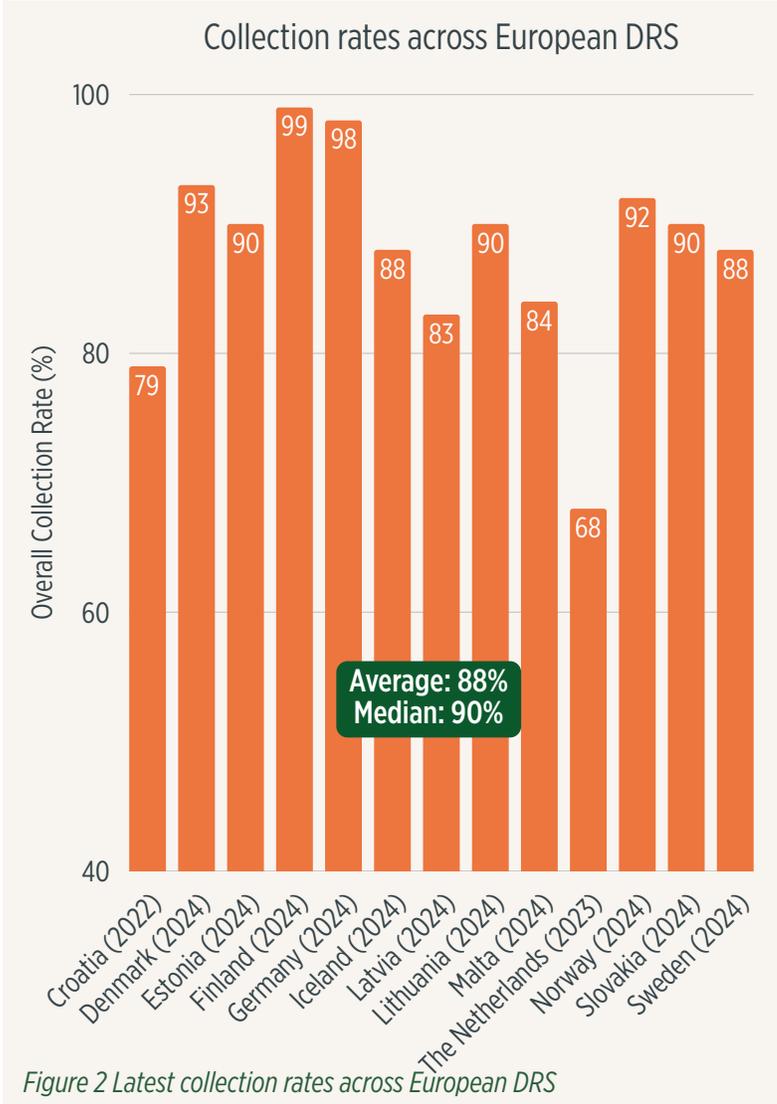


Figure 2 Latest collection rates across European DRS

Even the newest systems are showing rapid progress. In the Republic of Ireland, where the DRS launched in February 2024, the beverage container collection rate has already risen from 49% to 81%, with two-thirds of containers returned through the DRS and the remainder via kerbside recycling.

Romania’s DRS, introduced in late 2023, has also scaled up quickly. In the first eight months of 2025, approximately 3.6 billion beverage containers were returned for recycling, translating into a collection rate of 81%. In August alone, 605 million containers were collected, representing nearly 94% of the units sold.

These results reflect the strong alignment of European systems with best-practice design principles: meaningful deposit values, broad material scope, and convenient, well-distributed return infrastructure. European DRS countries consistently set some of the highest deposit values in the world and maintain some of the lowest population-to-collection-point ratios—making it easier and more rewarding for consumers to participate.

North America

In North America, deposit systems are implemented at the state or provincial level, rather than nationally as in Europe. Overall, collection rates tend to be lower than in European programmes, reflecting differences in deposit values, collection infrastructure, and convenience for consumers. Most systems in the region utilise stand-alone depots (redemption centres) for container returns, not return-to-retail (R2R), and deposits are typically lower. Figures 3 and 4 present beverage container collection rates across the US and Canada.

It’s worth noting that in several Canadian provinces, reported DRS collection rates include a proportion of beverage containers recovered through materials recovery facilities (MRFs) (similar to Australia). For most provinces, it is not possible to present the breakdown by collection stream as this information is not reported, tracked, or disclosed. In the few cases where the breakdown is available, we present those provinces’ collection rate as a stacked bar chart, with the green portion representing the DRS collection rate and the orange portion representing the MRF collection rate.

In the US, the median collection rate across the 10 states with DRS is 69%, with wide variation between programmes. In 2024, Massachusetts reported the lowest rate at 35%, while Oregon led at 87%. It's also worth noting that many US bottle bill states have experienced declining performance over the past decade: Hawaii's rate fell from 67% in FY2015 to 55% in FY2024, Massachusetts from 66% in 2014 to 35% in 2024, and Michigan from 93% in 2015 to 70% in 2024.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Yukon and the Northwest Territories had the lowest collection rates, collecting just 66% and 67% of eligible containers, respectively. It's worth noting that several provinces, including Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick are expected to see their collection rates rise in the coming years as they implement a number of improvements to their programmes, including deposit increases, scope expansions, and enhancements to their collection network.

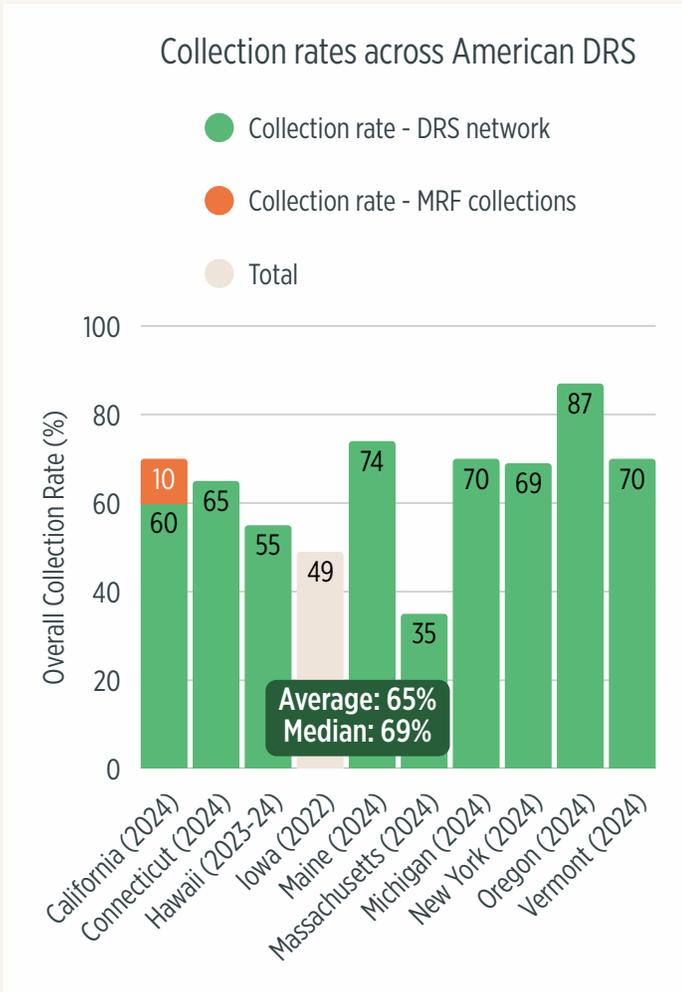


Figure 3 Latest collection rates across American DRS

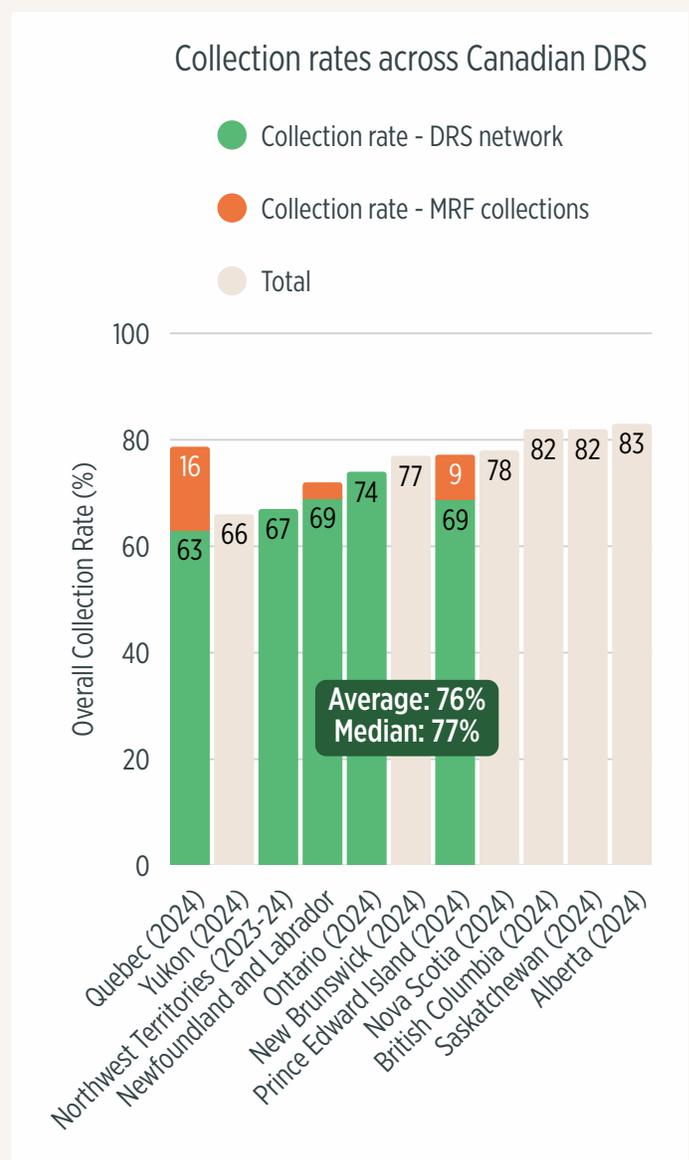


Figure 4 Latest collection rates across Canadian DRS

In Canada, all provinces and territories have a DRS in place except for Nunavut, and collection rates are generally higher than in the US. In 2024, the top-performing programmes were Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan, achieving rates of between 82% and 83% in 2024.

Oceania

As of May 2025, all Australian states and territories operate a DRS, making Australia the first continent to achieve full coverage. Most programmes are relatively new: aside from South Australia and the Northern Territory, all others launched within the past decade, including Victoria (late 2023) and Tasmania (May 2025), for which full-year performance data are not yet available.

Collection rates across Australia remain modest compared with Europe and Canada. Excluding South Australia and the Northern Territory, which report combined results that include both DRS and kerbside collections, the median collection rate across Australia's DRS programmes is 56%, with an average of 54%. Including these two jurisdictions raises the median to 68% and the average to 71%, still below European and Canadian performance levels. Lower results are partly linked to comparatively low deposit values and less convenient return networks. Several states plan to expand their programmes to include glass wine and spirits bottles in the coming years, a change expected to drive higher return rates.

Outside Australia, deposit systems also operate in the Federated States of Micronesia and several Pacific island nations, including Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu, though recent performance data for these smaller programmes are unavailable.

Middle East

In the Middle East, Israel remains the only country to have implemented a DRS. With a deposit of 0.3 ILS (€0.08, USD\$0.09), the system covers all PET, metal, and glass beverage containers, excluding milk and dairy. The latest available data indicate an overall collection rate of 73% for 2024.

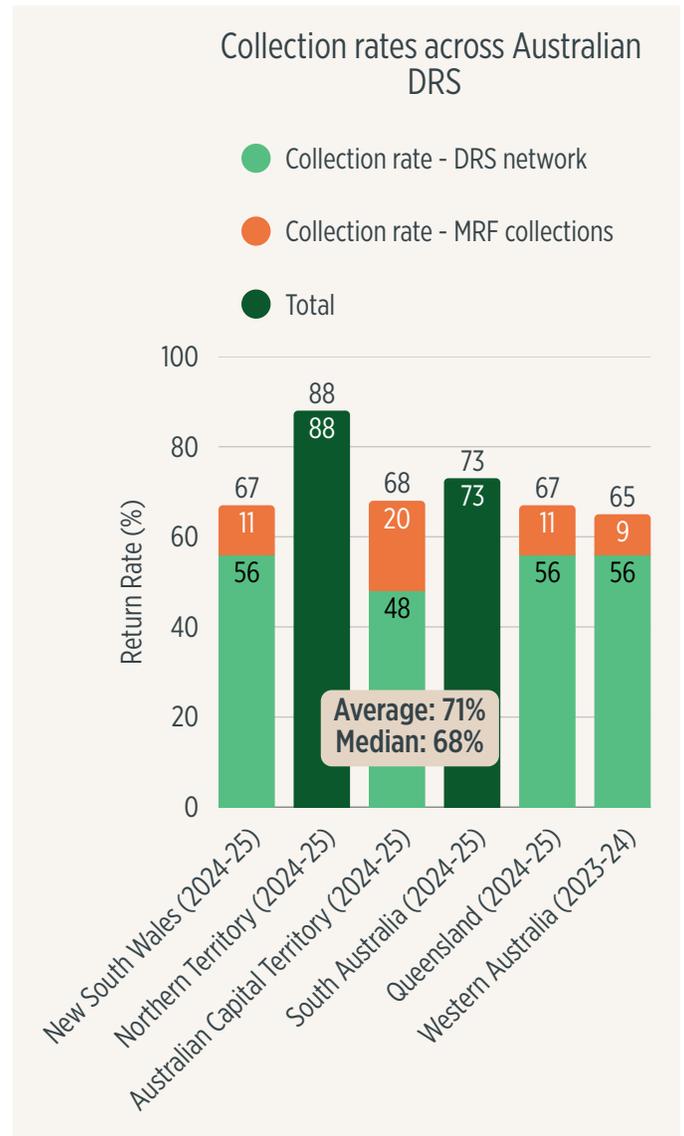


Figure 5 Latest collection rates across Australian DRS



Key takeaways

- **Strong collection rates across regions:** Deposit return systems consistently achieve high collection rates, with Europe leading at 90% (median), Canada at 77% (median), the US at 69% (median) and Australia at 68% (median). Even in jurisdictions with lower overall rates, DRS performance surpasses what kerbside recycling programmes typically achieve, especially when material losses are taken into account.
- **Collection channel matters:** European collection rates largely reflect direct returns through deposit networks, while Canada and Australia include significant volumes recovered via MRFs. US systems primarily report containers returned through DRS return points only. Containers returned via dedicated DRS networks are cleaner and better sorted, making them more suitable for closed-loop recycling. In contrast, MRF-sourced containers often have higher contamination and yield loss, reducing their value for food-grade recycling.
- **Transparency and reporting vary widely:** Some jurisdictions provide detailed breakdowns by collection channel, beverage type, or container material, while others report only overall rates or do not report publicly.

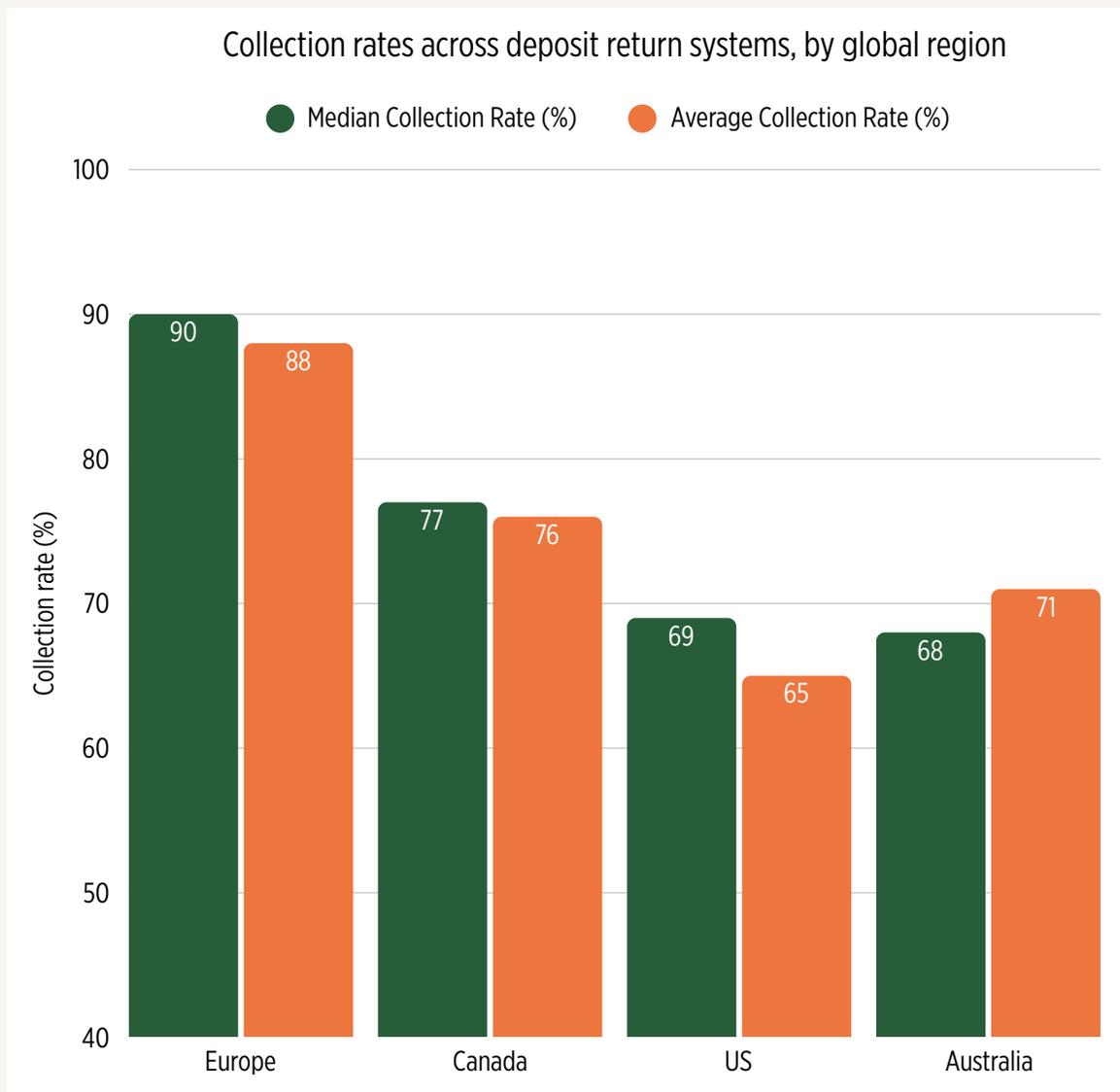


Figure 6 Collection rates across deposit return systems, by global region

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