The composition of household waste at the kerbside in 2021-23

Adrian Bond
Recycling Manager, Zero Waste Scotland

zerowastescotland.org.uk
@zerowastescot

Programme aims and objectives

Objective: To Produce an updated national waste composition estimate for Scotland.

Approach:

- Partner working – worked with 15 LAs
- Standard guidance for WCA methodology
- Scotland Excel WCA Framework to commission studies
- Data sharing agreements

Sequencing of 2021-23 WCA studies

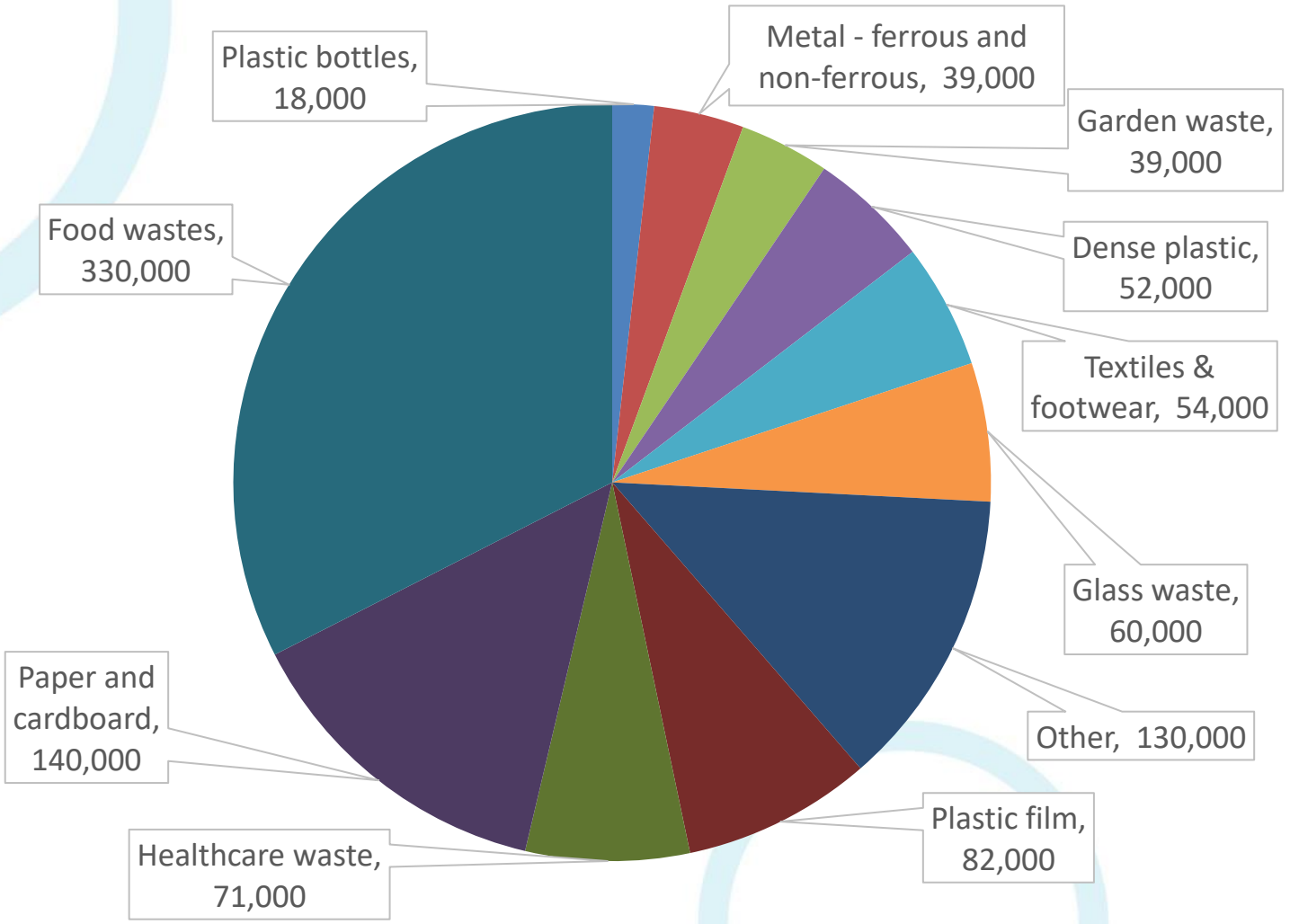
What can we answer?

- How much waste is collected at the kerbside in total?
- What is thrown away in the residual waste bin?
- What has changed in what we throw away in the residual waste bin since 2013-15?
- How many items that could be recycled at the kerbside, are actually recycled?
- How common is it for the wrong items to end up in recycling collections?

What was beyond the scope of the study?

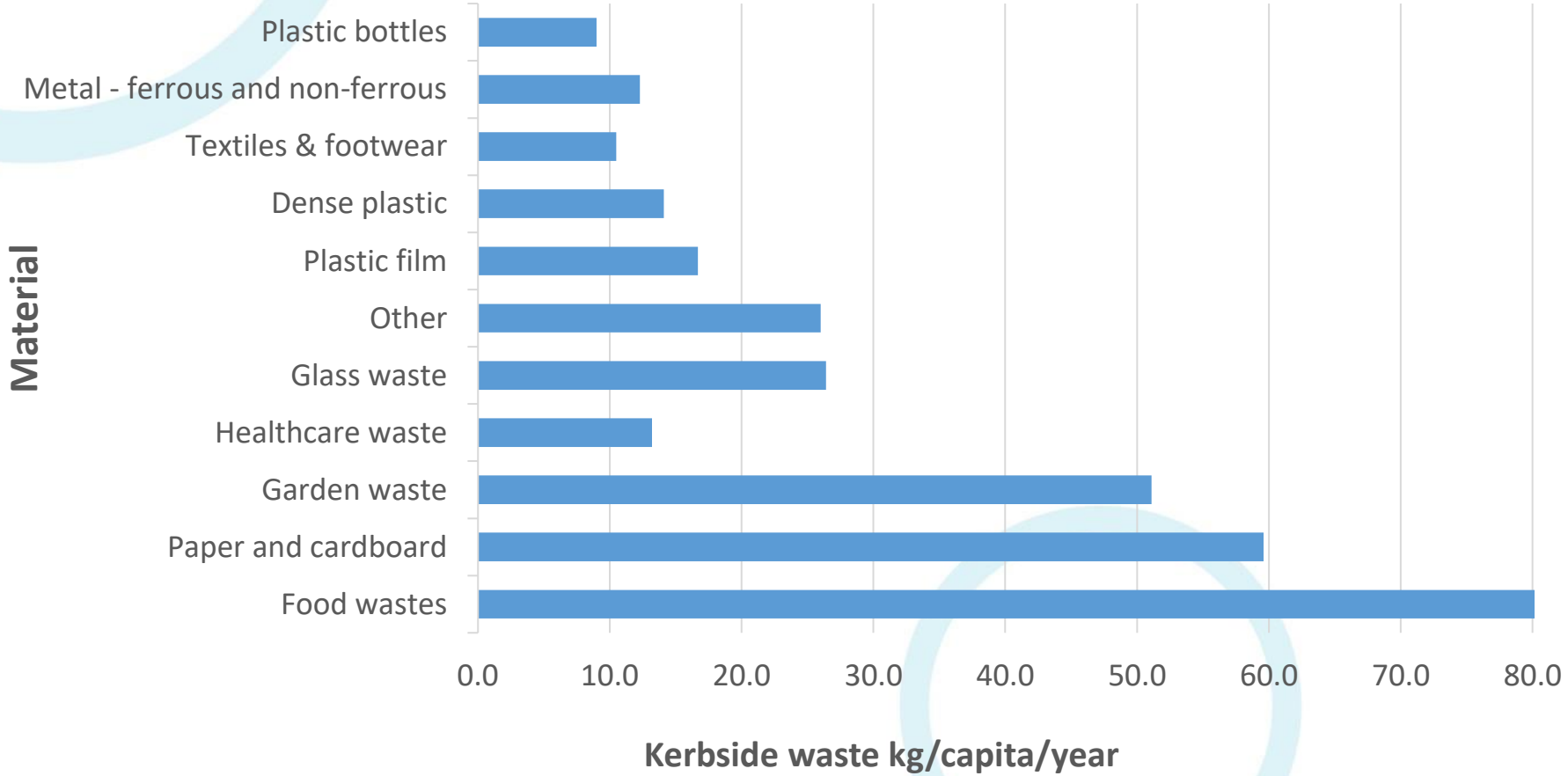
- The composition of household waste at HWRCs and other collection services
- “Whole” local authority recycling capture and performance
- The effects of socio-demographics on residual composition and recycling contamination
- Seasonal impacts on waste composition

Composition of kerbside residual waste in 2021-23

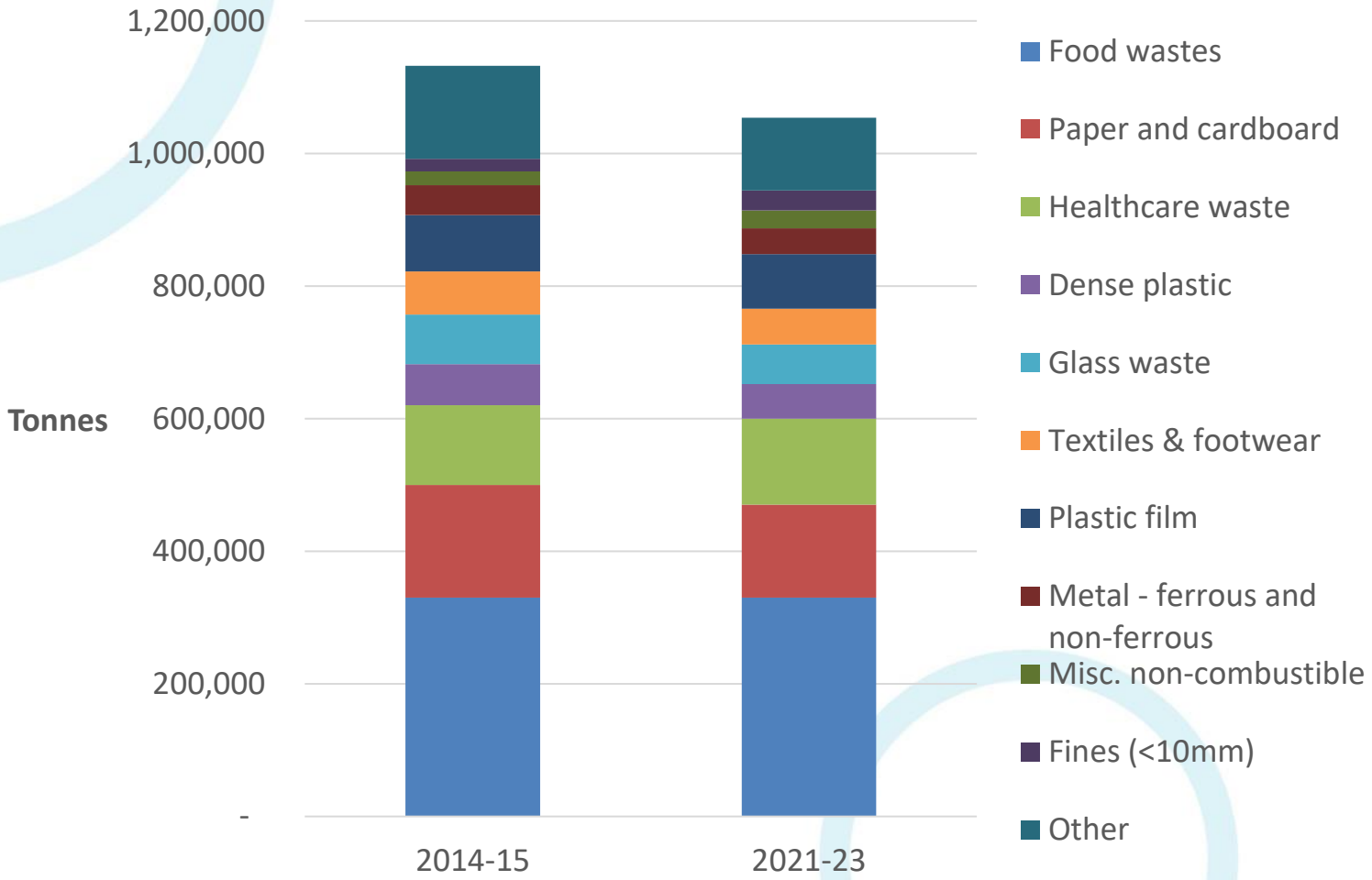


Composition of kerbside residual waste (tonnes)

The composition of kerbside waste per person



Composition of kerbside residual waste in 2014-15 and 2021-23



Residual waste composition in 2014-15 and 2021-23

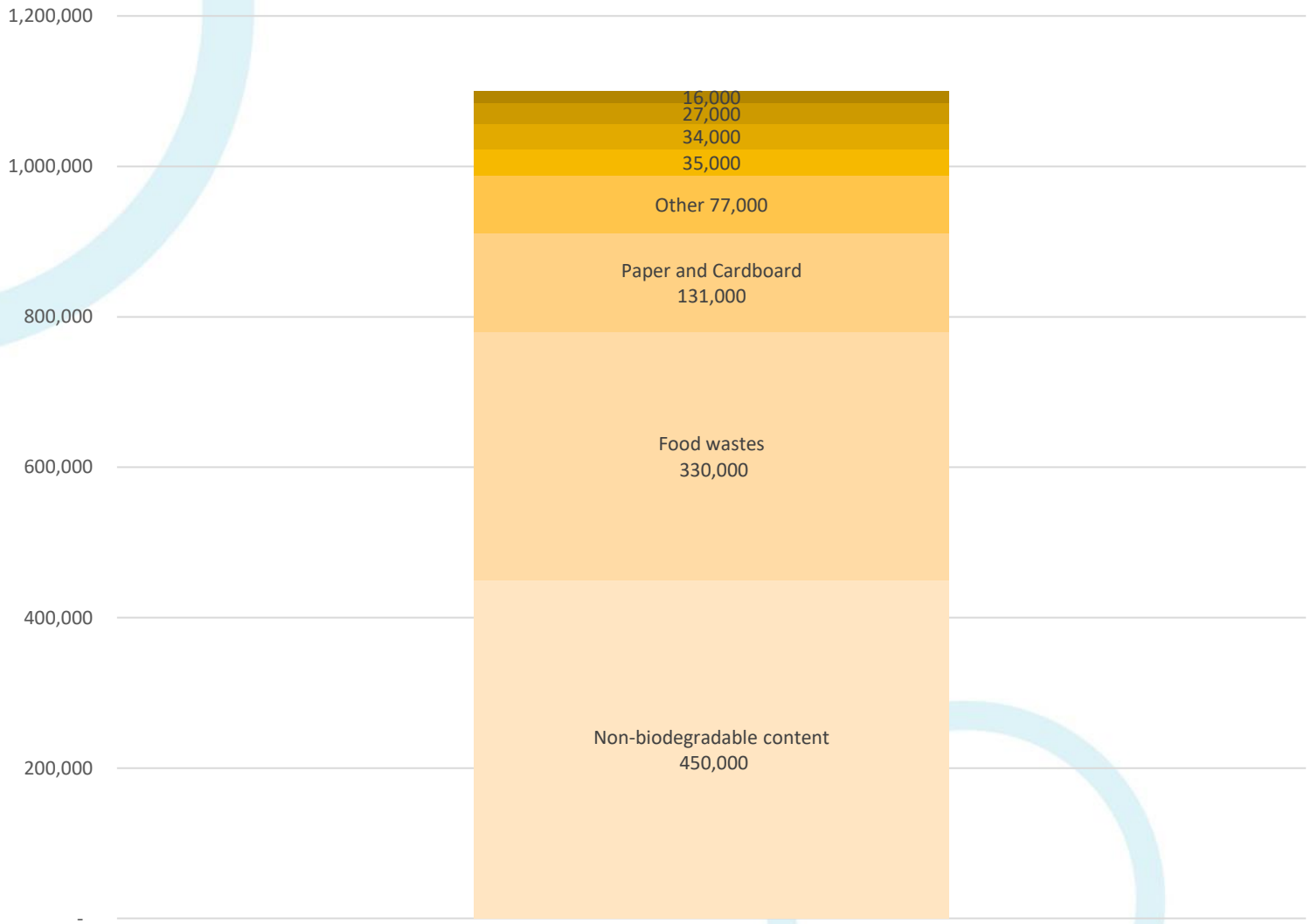
Largest decreases in kerbside residual waste since 2014-15

Material	2014-15 (Tonnes)	2021-23 (Tonnes)	Change (Tonnes)	Change (%)
Plastic bottles	30,000	18,000	-12,000	-40%
Paper and cardboard	170,000	140,000	-30,000	-18%
Glass waste	75,000	60,000	-15,000	-20%

Largest increases in kerbside residual waste since 2014-15

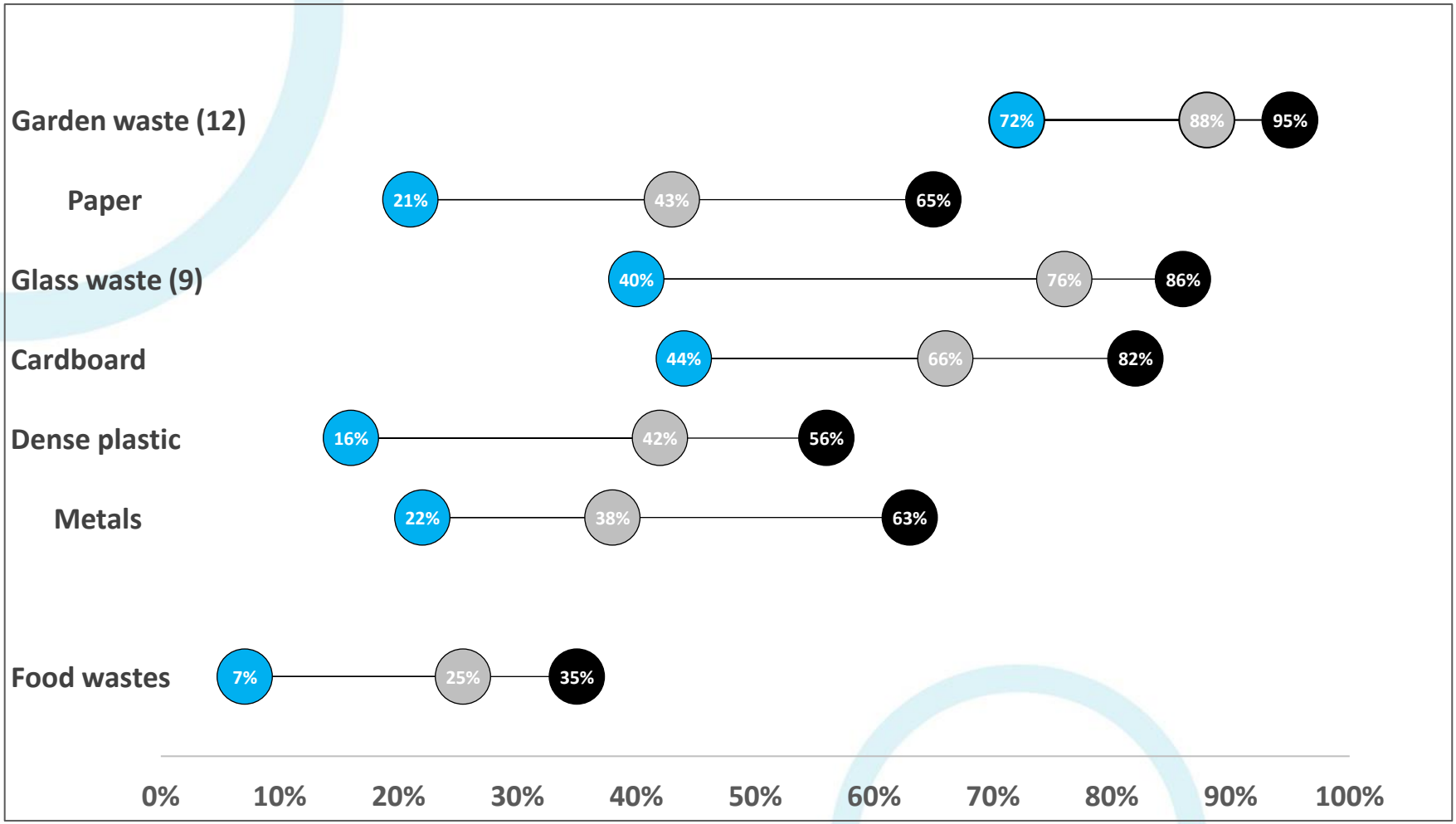
Material	2014-15 (Tonnes)	2021-23 (Tonnes)	Change (Tonnes)	Change (%)
Healthcare waste	120,000	130,000	10,000	8%
Other	21,000	27,000	6,000	29%
Unclassified	19,000	30,000	11,000	58%

Biodegradable content in kerbside residual waste



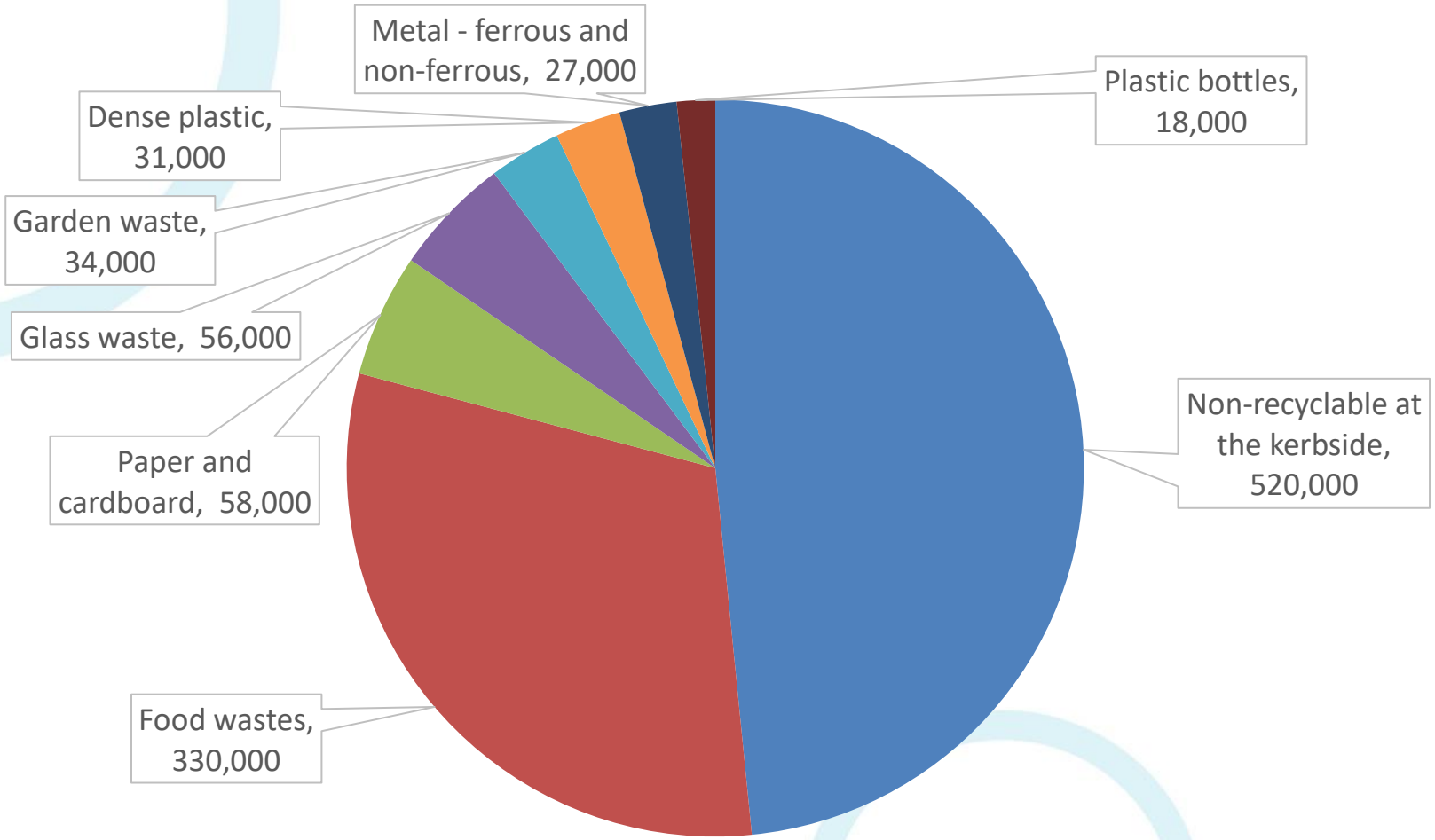
Composition of kerbside residual waste (tonnes), according to bio-degradable content

Correct recycling at the kerbside



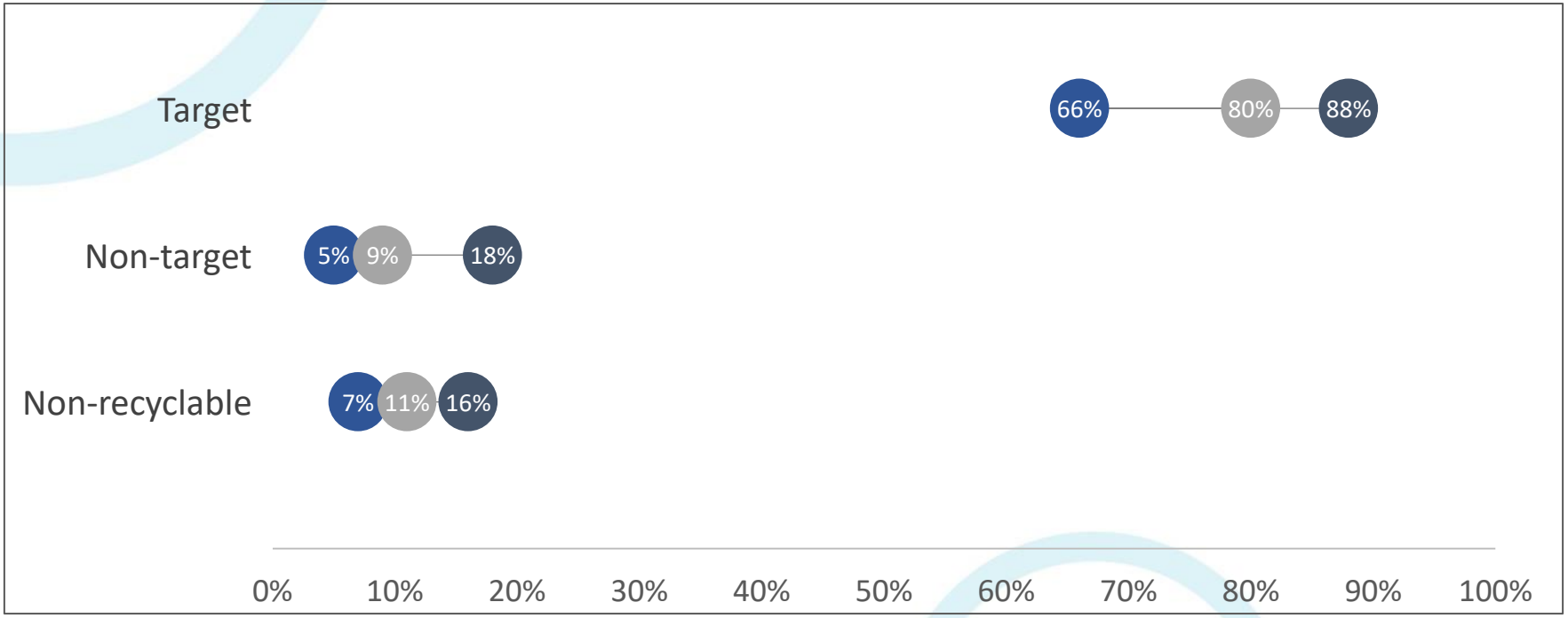
Proportions (%) of seven typically recycled waste types estimated as correctly recycled at the kerbside. The minimum (blue), average (grey) and maximum (black) are provided for each waste type. Number of local authorities that observations are based on is 15 (unless highlighted in brackets)

The potential for more recycling at the kerbside



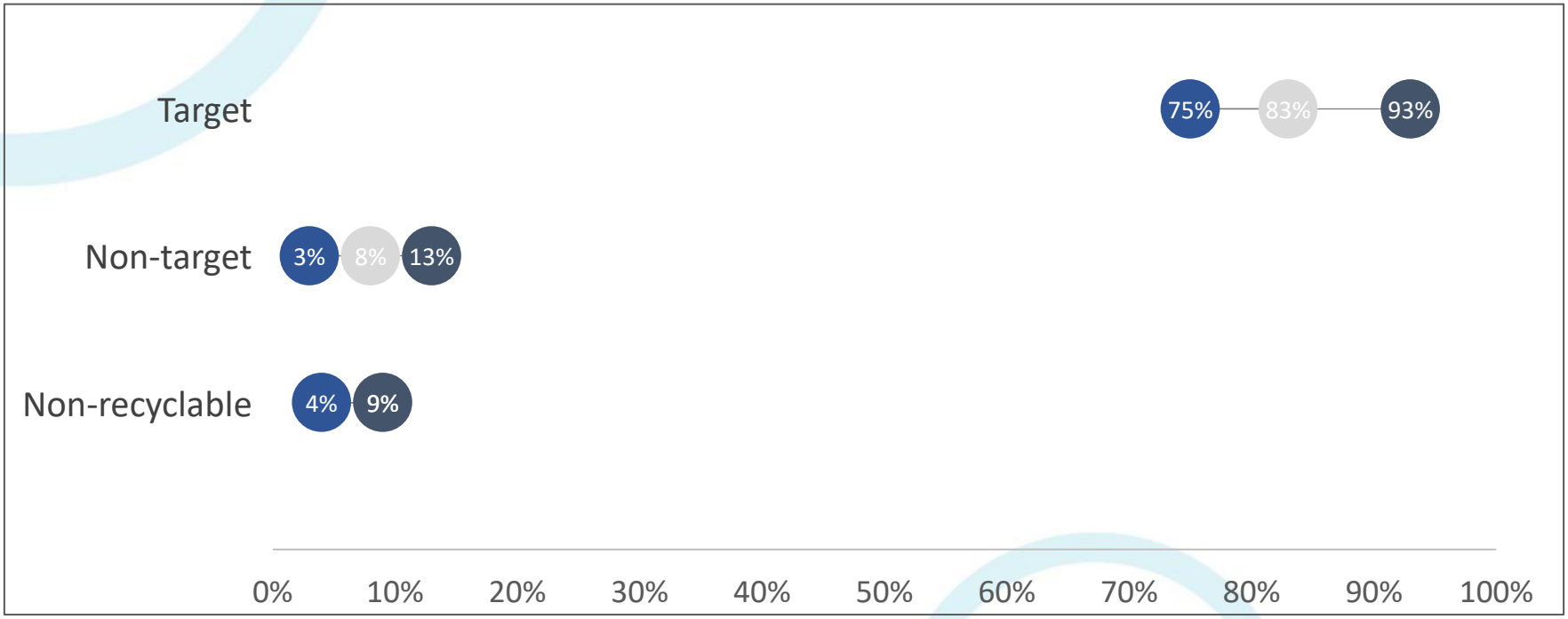
Materials commonly recycled at the kerbside that were found in the residual, plus non-recyclable materials combined (tonnes)

Correct recycling in co-mingled services (DMR)



The proportions (%) of target, non-target and non-recyclable waste types in six local authority dry mixed recycling services. The minimum (blue), average (grey) and maximum (black) are provided for each waste type

Correct recycling in less co-mingled services



The proportions (%) of target, non-target and non-recyclable waste types in five local authority less co-mingled services. The minimum (blue), average (grey) and maximum (black) are provided for each waste type

Other Updates

- Coming Soon –
  2nd consultation on SG Routemap to a Circular Economy

- Recycling Improvement Fund

Thank you.

Full Report available at
https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/household-waste-composition-analysis

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