

## Circular economy country profile 2024 – Malta



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## Introduction

The European Commission requested the EEA to produce EU country profiles that offer an updated view of the following elements:

- what circular economy policies are being implemented at a national level with a particular focus on elements that go beyond EU mandatory elements, and
- what are best practices with a focus on policy innovation.

With the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP 2020) "the Commission [...] encourages Member States to adopt or update their national circular economy strategies, plans and measures in the light of its ambition".

These country profiles originate in the work leading to the EEA More from less report (2016)<sup>1</sup>, that presented an overview of approaches to material resource efficiency and to circular economy in thirty-two European countries. The More from Less report was followed by the 2019 EEA Report 'Resource efficiency and the circular economy in Europe 2019 – even more from less: An overview of the policies, approaches and targets of 32 European countries'<sup>2</sup>.

It presented an updated and extended assessment of approaches and identified trends, similarities and new directions taken by countries in the connected policy areas of resource efficiency and the circular economy.

These reports, comprising a compilation of extensive survey responses from countries, were accompanied by 32 country profiles.

In the second quarter of 2022 a new survey with questions and guidelines was launched. Based on information reported by the Eionet network, in particular, the Eionet Group on Circular Economy and Resource Use, and after review and editing by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use (ETC CE), the 30 2022 CE country profiles<sup>3</sup> were published alongside the EEA report 'Circular Economy policy innovation and good practice in Member States'<sup>4</sup> (2022).

These 2024 CE country profiles are an update of the 2022 ones and based on the responses of 29 countries to the survey questions and guidelines that were launched in March 2024. The information in the countries' responses was again reviewed and edited by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use. A selection of Eurostat data was made to further complement these country profiles.

The main objectives of these assessments and its updates are to: • stimulate exchange of information and share good practice examples among country experts; • support policymakers in Eionet countries, the European institutions and international organisations by providing an updated catalogue of circular economy actions being undertaken in European countries.

This circular economy country profile is based on information reported by the Eionet network and, in particular, the Eionet Group members on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy in the second quarter of 2024. Proposals for the further development or amendment of policies represent the view of the reporting country For Malta, all input was provided by the Circular Economy Malta (CE Malta), the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) of Malta and the National Statistics Office of Malta. The information was reviewed and edited by the European Topic Centre on Circular economy and resource use. A selection of Eurostat data was made to further complement this country profile.

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<sup>1</sup> [More from less — material resource efficiency in Europe — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/more-from-less)

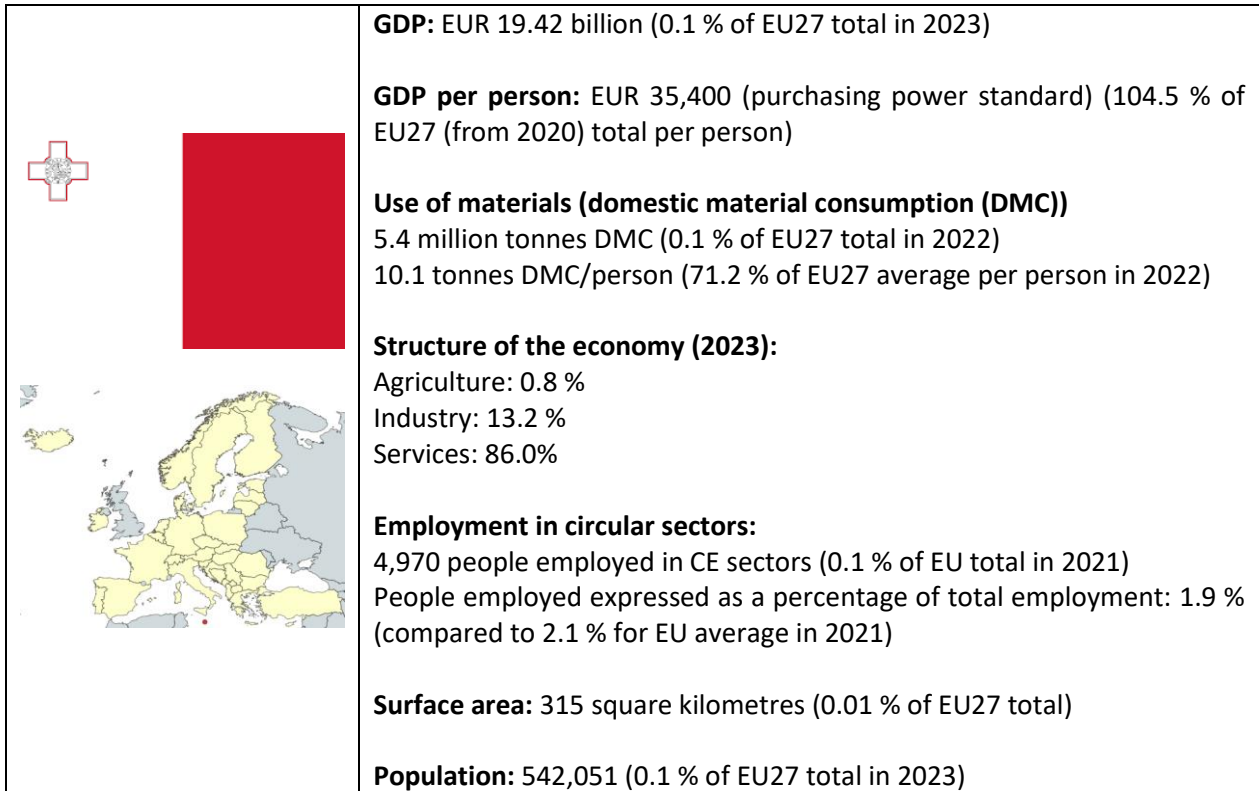
<sup>2</sup> [Resource efficiency and the circular economy in Europe 2019 — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/resource-efficiency-and-the-circular-economy-in-europe-2019)

<sup>3</sup> [Country profiles on Circular Economy in Europe — Eionet Portal \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/country-profiles-on-circular-economy-in-europe)

<sup>4</sup> [draft-report-for-dg-env\\_final.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.europa.eu/en/draft-report-for-dg-env_final.pdf)

The information is current as of September 2024, when members of Eionet verified the content of this profile.

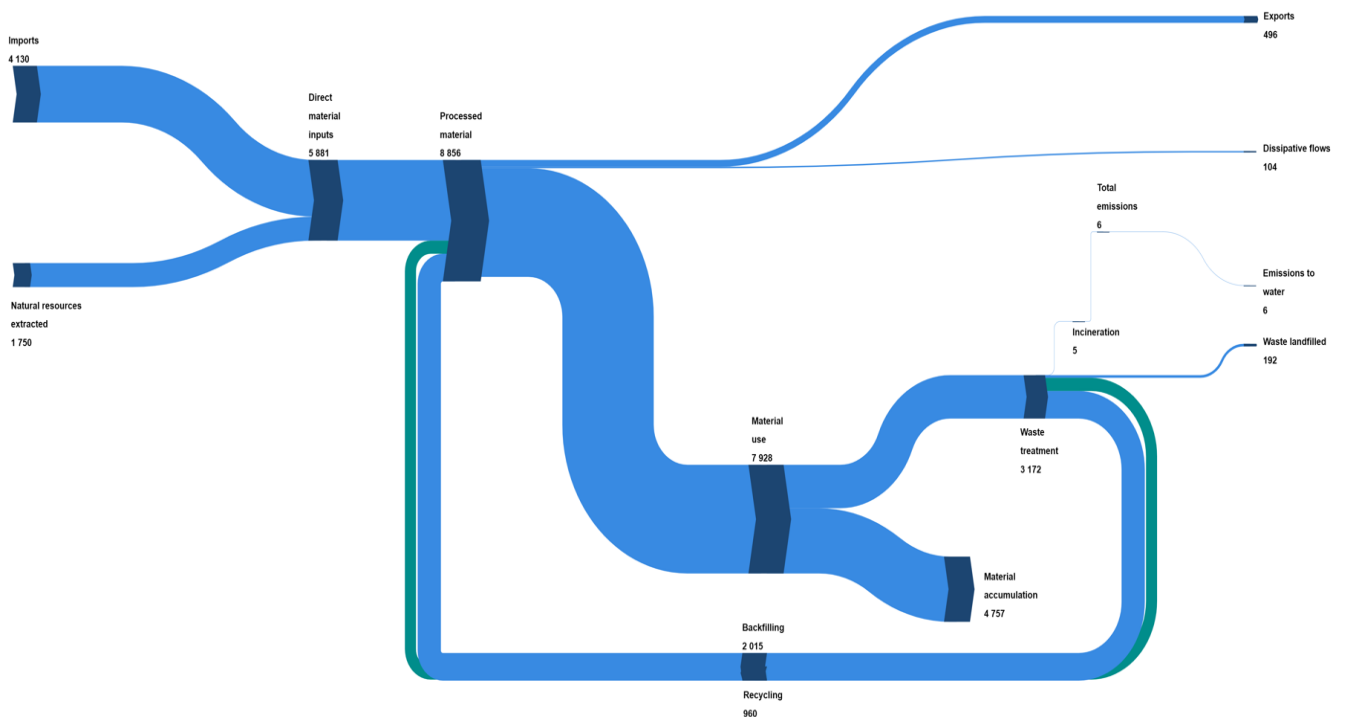
## Malta – facts and figures



Note: all definitions and metadata used in this profile are taken, as shown, from Eurostat

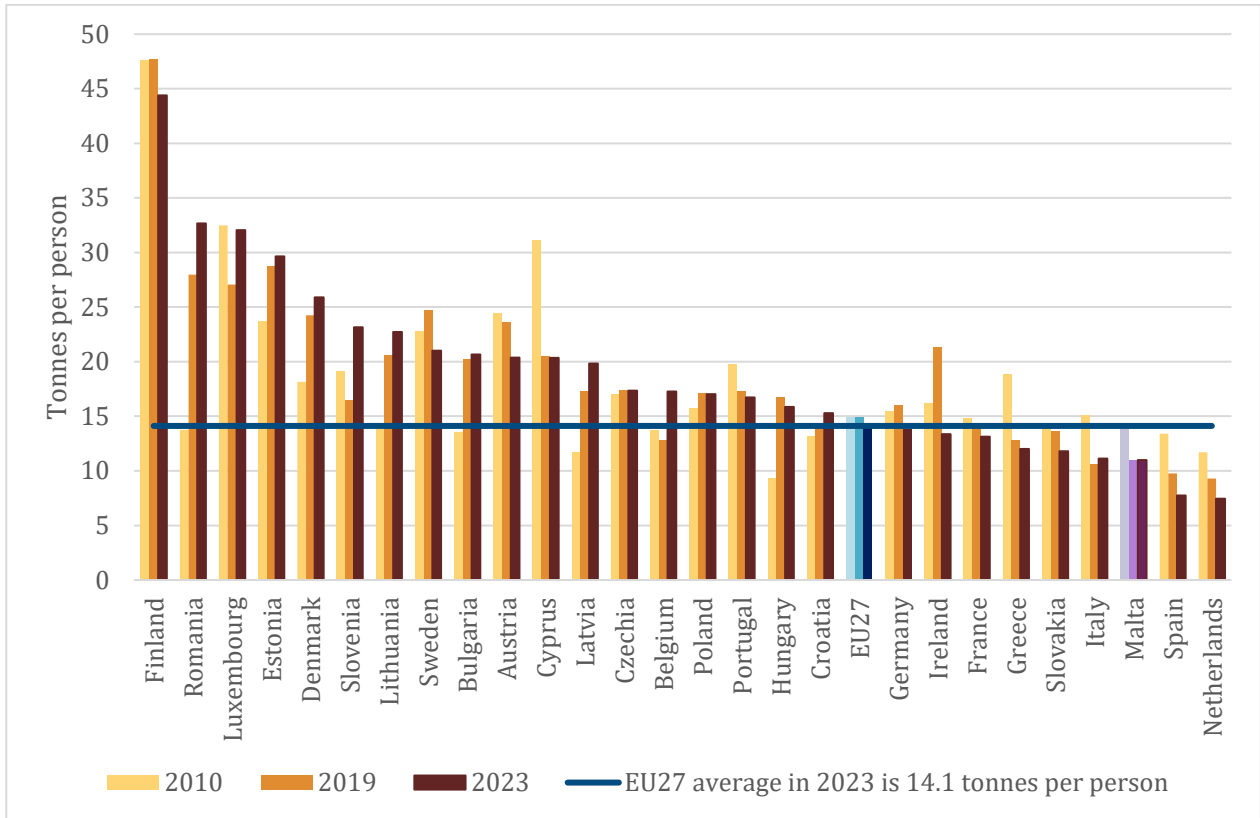
Source: Eurostat datasets, EU27 2021 EU27 2022 and EU27 2023 (accessed 21 August 2024)

Figure 1 Material flow diagram for Malta in 2022, thousand tonnes



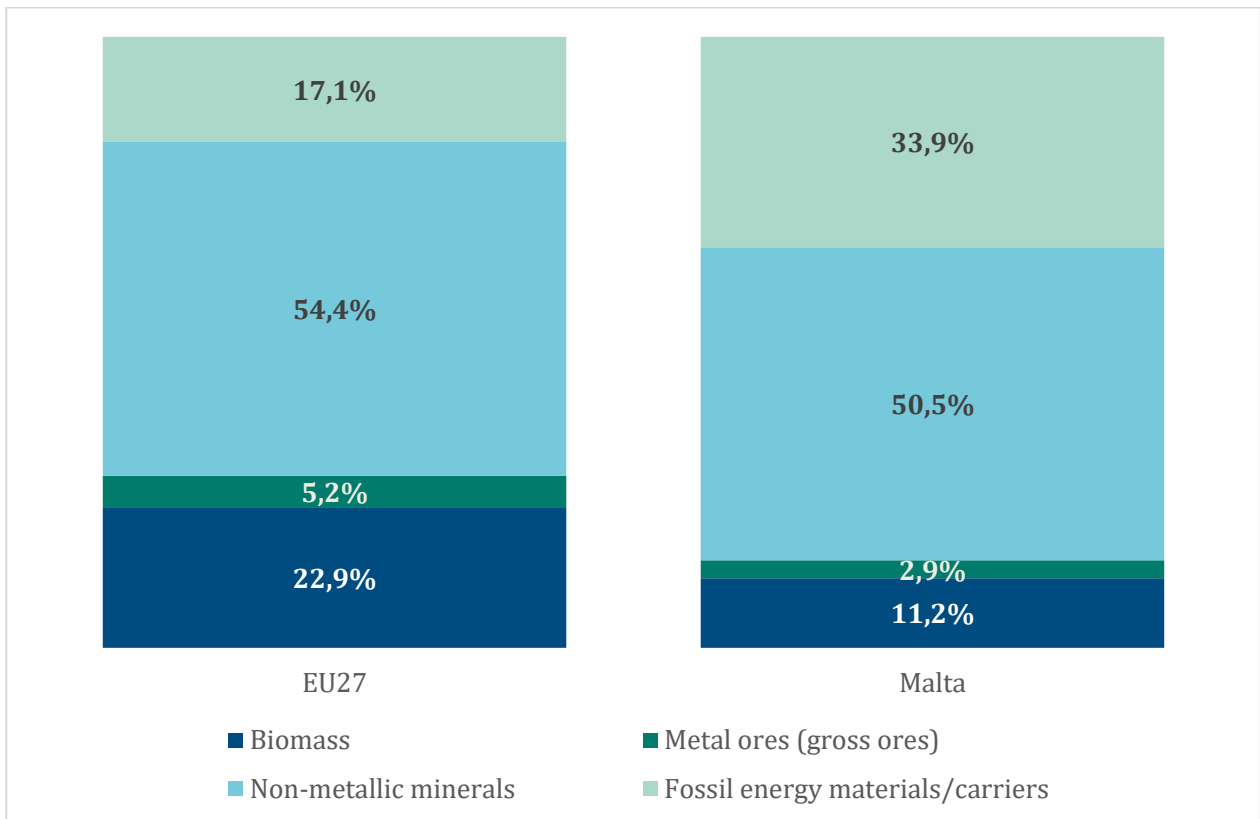
Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_mfa], [en\_ac\_sd], [env\_wassd] (accessed 21 August 2024)

**Figure 2 Material footprint (raw material consumption), 2010,2019 and 2023, tonnes per person**



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_rme] (accessed 21 August 2024)

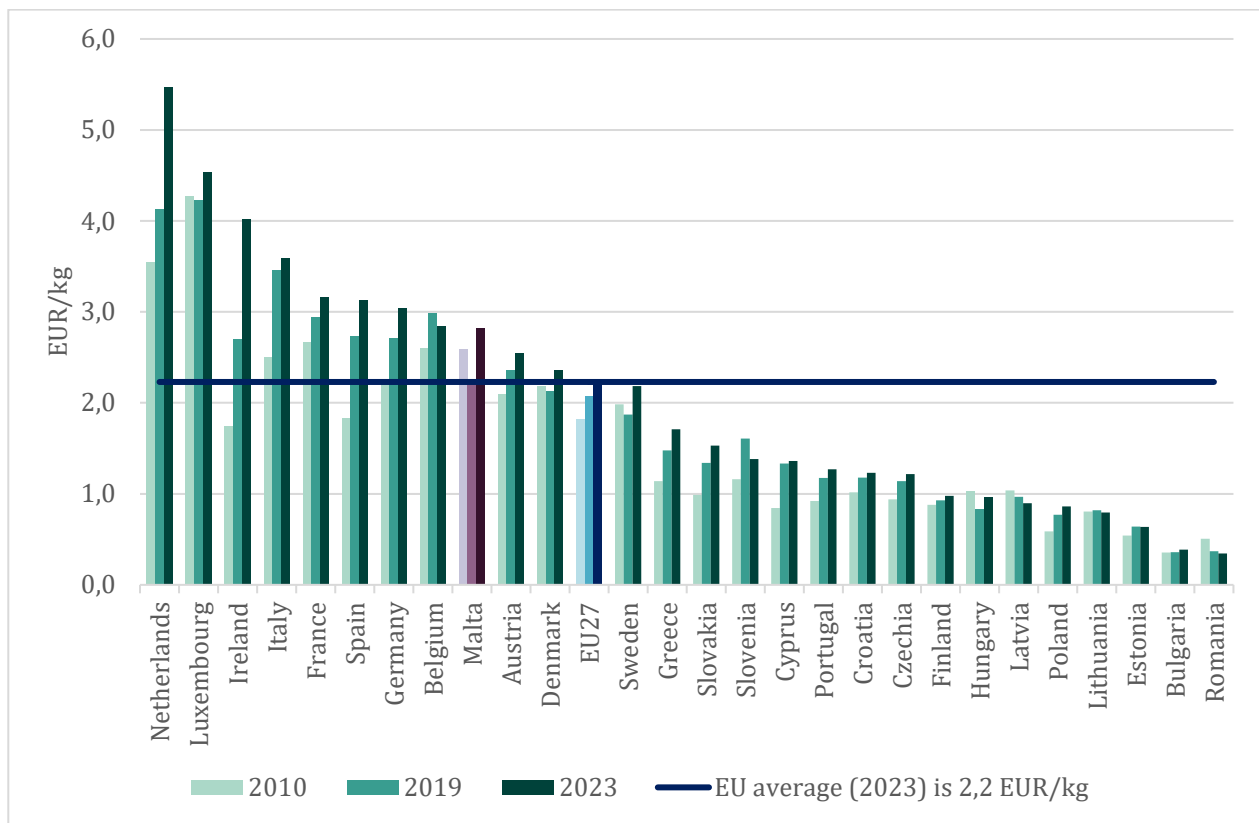
**Figure 3 Domestic material consumption by selected material category, EU and Malta, 2023, per cent**



Note: totals may not sum to 100 % due to rounding

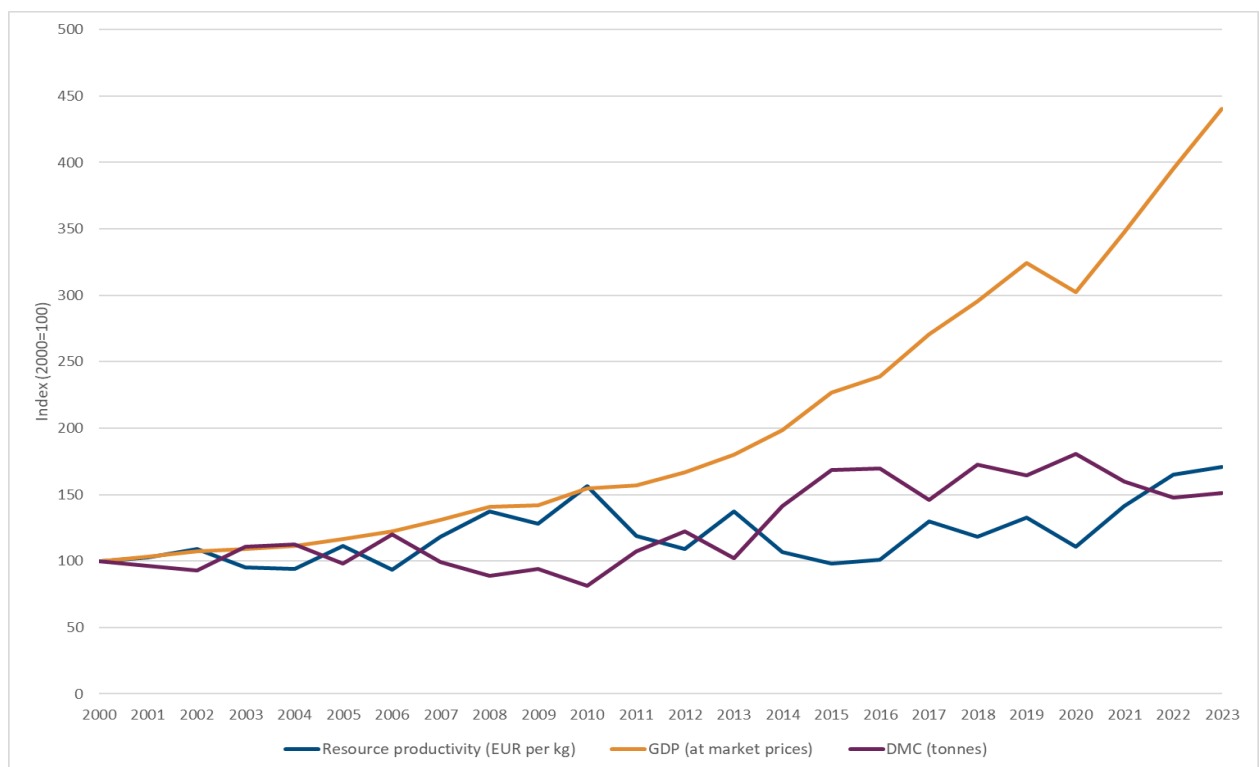
Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_mfa] (accessed 21 August 2024)

**Figure 4 Resource productivity (gross domestic product/domestic material consumption), EU27, 2010, 2019 and 2023, EUR per kilogramme**



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_rp] (accessed 21 August 2024)

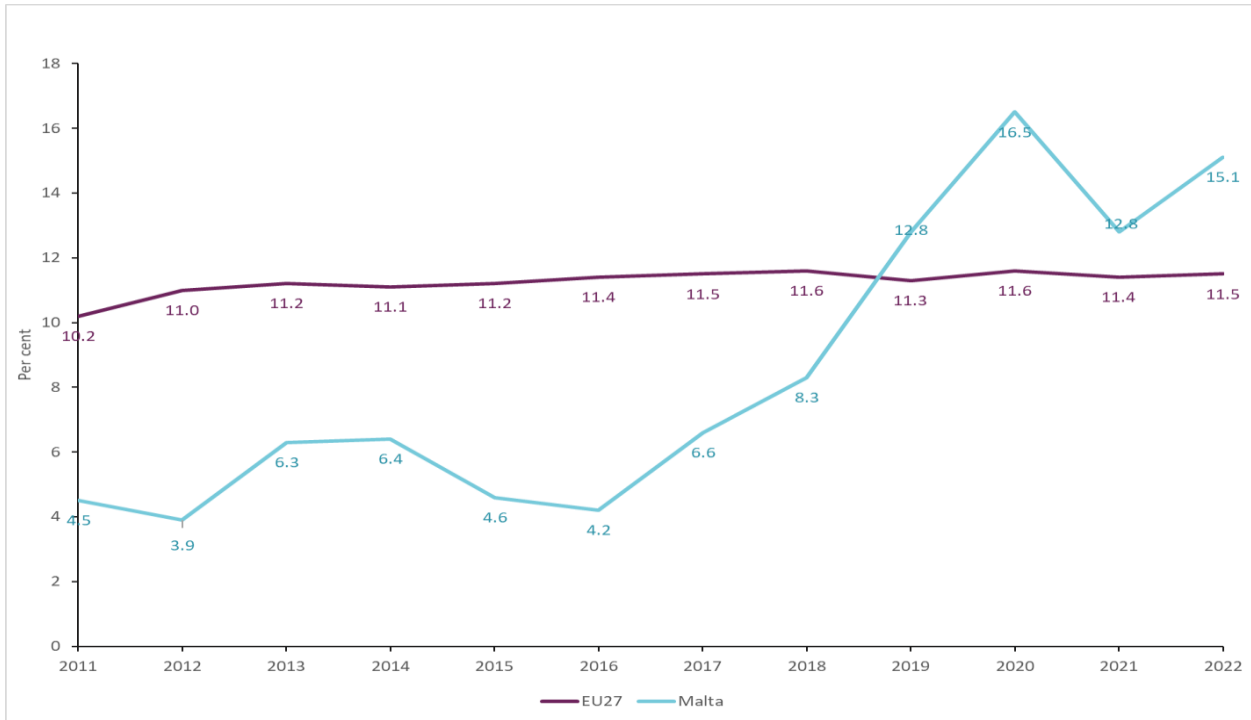
**Figure 5 Gross domestic product, domestic material consumption and resource productivity trends, Malta, 2000–2023, index (2000=100)**



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_mfa], [env\_ac\_rp] & [nama\_10\_gdp] (accessed 21 August 2024)

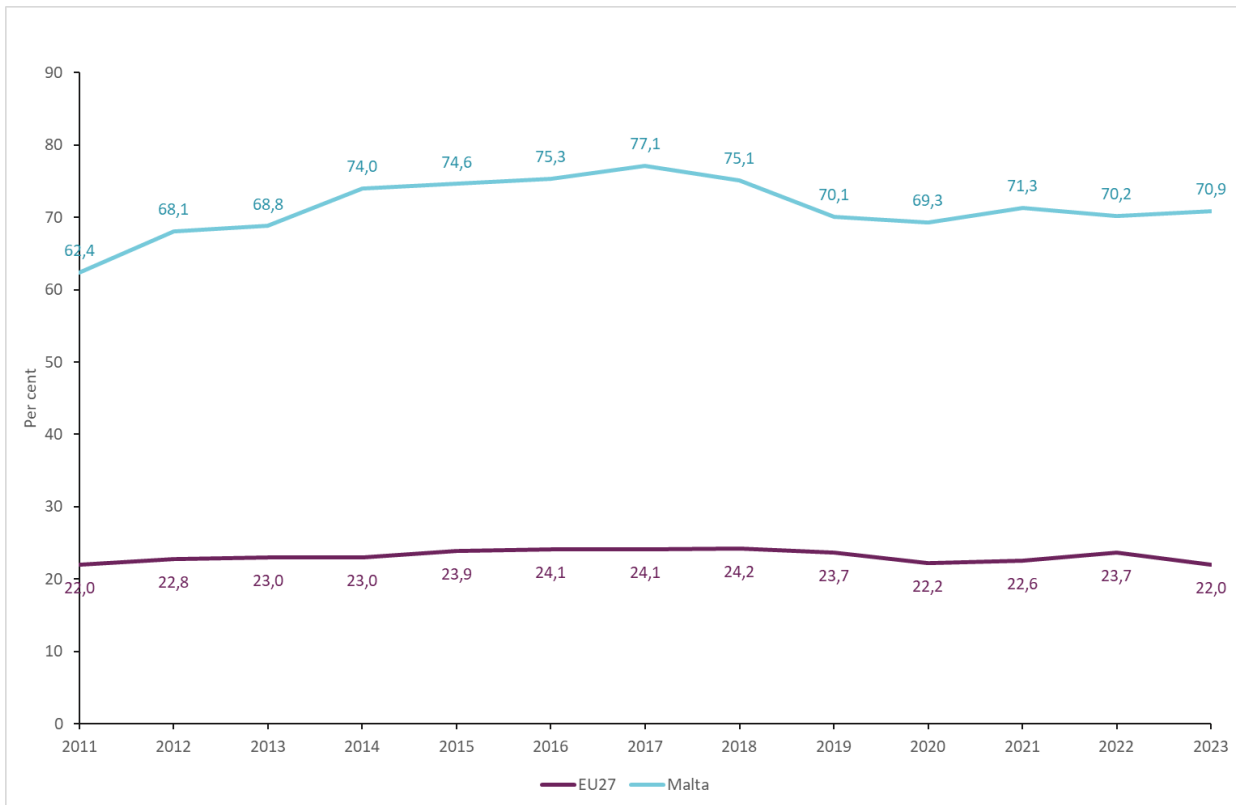


**Figure 6 Circular material use rate in Malta, 2011–2022, per cent**



Source: Eurostat (2024) [env\_ac\_cur] (accessed 21 August 2024)

**Figure 7 Material import dependency in Malta, 2011-2023, per cent**



Source: Eurostat (2024) [cei\_gsr030] (accessed 21 August 2024)

## Existing policy framework

### Dedicated national and/or regional and/or local strategy, roadmap or action plan for circular economy

Malta has a **Circular Economy Strategic Vision – Towards a Circular Economy 2020–2030**<sup>5</sup>: it was developed to go along with the government's plans to build the country's first waste-to-energy plant and continue its efforts to reduce landfilling. The vision aims to establish an environment that will lead to the development of a sustainable, low-carbon, resource efficient, and competitive economy, in line with the EU Commission's Circular Economy Strategy.

The following **actions** have been identified:

- 1) **Fiscal incentives** for the donation of products;
- 2) **Extended producer responsibility (EPR)** schemes for various types of waste and measures to increase their effectiveness, cost efficiency and governance;
- 3) Deposit-refund schemes and other measures **to encourage the efficient collection** of used products and materials;
- 4) Sound **planning of investment** in waste management infrastructure, including through European funds;
- 5) Promote **sustainable public procurement** to encourage better waste management and the use of recycled products and materials;
- 6) Use of fiscal or other means to **promote the uptake** of products and materials that are **prepared for reuse or recycled**; and
- 7) Support **for research and innovation** in advanced recycling technologies and remanufacturing.

The implementation of Action 3, governed by S.L. 549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations<sup>6</sup>, started in the last quarter of 2022, with an update on its operation provided below. Action 4, focusing on the sound planning of investment in waste management infrastructure, including through European funds, is currently being implemented with ECOHIVE<sup>7</sup> (elaborated below).

#### Referring to Action 3:

Circular Economy Malta (CEMalta) has implemented a **Beverage Container Refund Scheme (BCRS)** to encourage the return of single-use beverage containers. This scheme aims to boost collection and recycling endeavours while diminishing litter and fostering circular practices. Through the BCRS, a refundable deposit is applied to the sales of beverages, incentivizing consumers to return single-use containers. Subsequently, these returned containers are collected, sorted, and recycled. The entire process is governed by Subsidiary Legislation 549.134 on Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations<sup>8</sup> to ensure its effectiveness and compliance. By enhancing the collection and recycling of beverage containers, the Scheme contributes to **bolstering national recycling efforts** and **reducing litter**, thus enhancing the circular economy (CE) in Malta.

Following the first full operational year of the Beverage Container Refund Scheme, a comprehensive data analysis covering the period from January 2023 until December 2023 reveals **significant progress both in collection and recycling efforts**. Over this period, the total number of beverage containers placed on the market surpassed 250,000,000 beverage containers. The distribution of these containers comprised 63% PET single-use containers, 27% aluminium cans, and 10% glass bottles.

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<sup>5</sup> [Circular Economy Strategic Vision – Towards a Circular Economy 2020–2030](#)

<sup>6</sup> [The Beverage Container Refund Scheme \(BCRS\) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations](#)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ecohive.com.mt/>

<sup>8</sup> [The Beverage Container Refund Scheme \(BCRS\) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations](#)

Remarkably, the collection efforts during this period were substantial, with an overall collection rate reaching 78% of the beverage containers placed on the market. Specifically, PET containers demonstrated the highest collection rate at 83%, followed closely by aluminium cans at 80%, and glass bottles at 74%. Moreover, the recycling endeavours yielded commendable results, with recycling rates standing at 75% for PET single-use containers, 77% for aluminium cans, and 73% for glass bottles.

#### **Referring to Action 4:**

ECOHIVE stands as the largest investment in Malta's waste management sector, heralding a pivotal shift towards a circular economy. In line with the industrious nature of bees, this comprehensive project aims to **process waste sustainably while yielding valuable resources** – energy and agricultural compost. Comprising four distinct waste management plants – ECOHIVE Energy, ECOHIVE Recycling, ECOHIVE Organic, and ECOHIVE Hygienics – ECOHIVE promises to **revolutionize Malta's waste management landscape**.

#### *Waste-to-Energy Plant (ECOHIVE Energy)*

The Waste-to-Energy (WtE) project in Malta, is set to revolutionize waste management practices. Utilizing cutting-edge moving grate technology, this facility will treat non-recyclable waste generated in Malta, diverting it from landfill disposal. Moreover, the plant will generate approximately 126GWh of electricity annually, contributing to Malta's **renewable energy goals**. With a capacity of 192,000 tonnes annually the WtE facility is expected to mark a significant milestone in Malta's journey towards a more sustainable and circular economy.

#### *Organic Processing Plant (ECOHIVE Organic)*

Augmenting the sustainability efforts, an Organic Processing Plant will also be a part of the ECOHIVE Complex. This facility will **convert organic waste into biogas and agricultural compost**, significantly reducing landfill-bound biodegradable waste. Expected to process approximately 74,300 tonnes of organic waste annually, the Organic Processing Plant represents a critical component of ECOHIVE's circular economy framework.

#### *Other Components of ECOHIVE*

Complementing these core facilities are the **Material Recovery Facility and Skip Management Facility**, each playing a vital role in Malta's waste management ecosystem. The Skip Management Facility will process bulky waste from open-topped skips, separating the bulky waste into different waste streams, to reduce landfill waste, while recovering valuable materials. Together, these components underscore ECOHIVE's commitment to **resource recovery, waste diversion, and environmental sustainability**. By fostering innovation and collaboration, ECOHIVE endeavours to propel Malta towards a greener, more resilient future.

### **Mainstreaming circularity across sectors**

The Beverage Container Refund Scheme (BCRS)<sup>9</sup> implemented in Malta represents a significant policy measure aimed at mainstreaming circularity across sectors and actors, meaning that the scheme impacts various areas of society and the economy, not just one specific sector. It involves consumers by incentivizing them to return beverage containers, affects different actors of the supply chain from producers and importers to retailers who must implement the deposit system, supports waste

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<sup>9</sup> [The Beverage Container Refund Scheme \(BCRS\) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations](#)

management and recycling efforts through a **structured return process**, and operates under a regulatory framework ensuring compliance.

Here's how:

- **Incentivizing Consumer Behaviour:** By applying a refundable deposit to the sales of single-use beverage containers, the BCRS directly incentivizes consumers to return these containers for recycling. This aspect of the scheme engages consumers in the circular economy process, encouraging responsible consumption and waste management practices.
- **Boosting Collection and Recycling Efforts:** The BCRS contributes to bolstering collection and recycling endeavours by establishing a structured system for the return, sorting, and recycling of beverage containers. This organized approach ensures that a large portion of the containers placed on the market are collected and recycled, thereby reducing waste and promoting resource efficiency.
- **Regulatory Framework for Effectiveness and Compliance:** Governed by S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations, the BCRS operates within a regulatory framework designed to ensure its effectiveness and compliance. This regulatory oversight helps maintain standards for collection, sorting, and recycling processes, fostering transparency and accountability within the system.
- **Data-Driven Evaluation and Improvement:** The comprehensive data analysis conducted after the first full operational year of the BCRS provides insights into its performance and impact. By examining metrics such as collection rates and recycling rates for different types of beverage containers, policymakers can assess the effectiveness of the scheme and identify areas for improvement. This data-driven approach enables continuous refinement of the BCRS to optimize its contribution to Malta's sustainability objectives.

### Circular economy policy elements included in other policies

Circular economy policy element	Included in policy
<p>In line with Measure 1 within the Construction and Demolition Strategy, <b>a set of standards for the construction industry</b> was developed in 2022. The aim of this Standard (SM 810:2022 - Recycling-oriented Deconstruction, Controlled Excavation Works, and Classification of Waste) is <b>a guide for good practice and a reference for everyday use by actors involved in the construction industry prioritizing the reduction of waste generation and highlighting the importance of saving raw material resources, while providing guidelines to properly classify waste generated from the demolition, excavation and construction to ensure the better management of such waste.</b> Furthermore, the technical document - Standardization of Apertures, provides for the standardization of apertures to allow for more interchangeability in terms of easier repairs or replacements and higher re-use potential due to standard fitting sizes.</p> <p>Measure 3 in the Construction and Demolition Waste Strategy aims to introduce <b>a new regulatory framework directed at the management of CDW.</b> In fact, in December 2023, the Construction and</p>	<p><u>The Construction and Demolition Waste Strategy for Malta 2021-2030</u> aims to further help the transition towards a more circular economy and hence closing the loop of products' lifecycles, by identifying options for the management of waste arising from construction and demolition activities. The main objective of the Strategy is to identify management options for waste from construction and demolition activities. It addresses current sector issues and outlines potential short-term and long-term measures to be adopted, with the goal of transitioning waste treatment from backfilling to re-use and recycling.</p>

<p>Demolition Waste Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.161) were published. These Regulations identify the main actors in the local construction and demolition industry and set out each actor's responsibilities concerning the management of waste generated from the industry. The Regulations introduce the requirement of the submission of a pre-demolition audit for certain types of developments, intending to identify the waste that will be generated and the potential treatment of such waste. Furthermore, these Regulations also introduce waste management targets for specific developments. These targets aim to increase the circularity within the sector.</p>	
<p>CEMalta has launched (April 2024) the <b>Bring Your Own Container (BYOC) Initiative</b>, aligning with the country's commitment from the Long-Term Waste Management Plan 2021-2030. <b>The initiative promotes reuse over single use</b>, in favour of mitigating climate change by reducing landfill waste and prolonging the lifetime of items used. Businesses, government, and consumers collaborate to reshape habits towards circularity, with local establishments receiving recognition. Comprehensive guidelines ensure smooth operation, prioritizing transparency and compliance. It is a <b>voluntary program</b> where various economic operators offering economic incentives for consumers to bring their own containers are rewarded with a recognition mark. The BYOC <a href="#">website</a> provides further explanation and displays recognized establishments on a web map. These establishments display the BYOC logo on their storefronts.</p> <p>The <b>regionalization reform</b> as from 1st January 2023, whereby collection of waste is organized at regional level (rather than at Local Council level) was implemented with the <b>aim to improve economies of scale and collection standards</b>. A harmonized collection schedule for all Local Councils in Malta has also been implemented to improve waste separation throughout Malta for residents and tourists alike.</p> <p><b>Establishment of differentiated gate fees for deposition of waste at public facilities, which incentivize waste separation and treatment options higher up the hierarchy</b>, as the landfill gate fee is being progressively increased on a yearly basis from EUR 40 (in 2023) to EUR 120 per tonne of mixed waste deposited for landfilling in 2027. On the other hand, the gate fee for source-separated dry recyclables is EUR 0.50.</p> <p>The plan identifies the establishment of <b>mandatory waste separation</b> (in place for everyone since April 2023) as a key measure <b>to increase recycling efforts and the quality of recyclable material, as well as decrease the amount of waste being landfilled</b>, in line</p>	<p>The <u>Long Term Waste Management Plan</u> aims to maximize the resource value of waste through holistic waste management solutions by adopting a collaborative approach whilst fostering the necessary behavioral change. This Plan is intended to be the cornerstone of a process that will strengthen the transition to a CE.</p>

<p>with EU commitments. Two <a href="#">Legal Notices</a> amending Waste Regulations (<a href="#">S.L.549.63</a>) and <a href="#">amending Abandonment, Dumping, and Disposal of Waste in Streets and Public Places Areas Regulations</a> (<a href="#">S.L.549.40</a>) were published making the mandatory waste separation enforceable by law, including business, governmental, and non-governmental entities as well as private homes, thus diverting more waste from being landfilled.</p>	
<p>Since the adoption of <b>the SUP Strategy</b>, significant progress has been made as to complete the implementation of a number of measures. More specifically, Malta has enacted a number of <b>laws aiming to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restrict the placement on the market of certain SUPs, oxo-degradable plastics and lightweight plastic carrier bags;</li> <li>- Promote the use of reusable and refillable containers by consumers when buying ready-prepared food and beverages;</li> <li>- Set a deposit return system to collect separately SUP beverage bottles;</li> <li>- Establish extended producer responsibility (EPR) for a number of SUP items; and</li> <li>- Require economic operators to incorporate recycled plastic in the SUP bottles placed on the Maltese market.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, additional complementary actions to reduce plastic waste were implemented by <b>the installation of various drinking water fountains</b> in public areas, the launching a scheme to <b>allow outlets to create green corners within their premises allowing consumers to purchase products in bulk</b>, or the organisation of several <b>awareness raising campaigns to inform consumers</b> of the impact of littering SUP products and about the available waste management options and sustainable alternatives for them.</p>	<p><b><u>Single-Use Plastic Products Strategy for Malta 2021-2030</u></b></p> <p>The Single-Use Plastic Products Strategy for Malta 2021-2030 is a framework acting as a driver that is <b>intended to bring about cultural and behaviour shift within society in terms of its attitude toward single-use products</b>. The implementation of the measures included in the Strategy will further assist Malta to move towards a more circular model, in line with the European Union’s and national principles, as well as protect our environment and human health from plastic pollution.</p>

Since 2022, Malta endeavoured to implement the following measures as part of its Recovery and Resilience Plan<sup>10</sup>:

- In December 2023, the **Construction and Demolition Waste Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.161<sup>11</sup>) were published**. These Regulations identify main actors in the local construction and demolition industry and set out each actor’s responsibilities with respect to the management of waste generated from the industry. The Regulations introduce the requirement of the submission of a pre-demolition audit for certain type of developments, with the aim to identify the waste which will be generated and the potential treatment of such waste. Furthermore, these Regulations also introduce waste management targets for specific developments. These targets aim to increase the circularity within the sector.

<sup>10</sup> [Malta-Recovery-and-Resilience-Plan-2023-7.11.2023.pdf \(fondi.eu\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> [The Construction and Demolition Waste Framework Regulations – S.L. 549.161](#)

- In line with the Construction and Demolition Strategy, in 2022, **a set of standards for the construction industry were developed**. The aim of this Standard (*SM 810:2022 - Recycling-oriented Deconstruction, Controlled Excavation Works and Classification of Waste*) ensures good practice and serves as a reference for everyday use by actors involved in the construction industry prioritising the reduction of waste generation and highlighting the importance of saving raw material resources. Furthermore, the technical document - *Standardisation of Apertures*<sup>12</sup>, provides for the standardisation of apertures with the aim to allow for more interchangeability in terms of easier repairs or replacements, higher re-use potential due to standard fitting sizes. Both the Standard and the Technical Document are referred to in the Fourth Schedule of S.L. 623.08 – Construction Management Site Regulations.

Malta introduced a **regionalized collection system on January 1st, 2023**. This reform centralizes waste collection at the regional level, replacing the previous system handled by individual Local Councils. This shift aims to leverage economies of scale and improve overall collection standards. Additionally, a standardized collection schedule has been implemented across all Local Councils in Malta. This uniform approach aims to **simplify waste separation for residents and tourists**, reducing confusion and promoting proper waste disposal practices.

## Monitoring and targets

### Assessment of circular economy performance

The European Commission has set up a [monitoring framework](#) to keep track of progress towards a circular economy. This framework provides a holistic view as it:

- measures direct and indirect benefits of 'becoming circular' and
- values the contribution of a circular economy in living well within the limits of the planet
- addresses energy and material supply risks.

It consists of **5 thematic sections** with a total of **11 statistical indicators**, some of which have additional sub-indicators. In some cases policy targets exist which should be achieved in the future, and the indicators monitor progress towards these targets. The current monitoring framework is a revision of the original framework which was set up in 2018.

This section elaborates on the assessment of Malta's progress in terms of observed trends over the last 5 years and what country characteristics or policy actions may explain differences between the country its performance and the average EU performance.

Over the past five years, Malta's progress in embracing circular economy principles has shown a mixed trajectory<sup>13</sup>. While there has been noticeable growth in Circular Material Use rates, reflecting broader trends within the European Union (EU), Malta's rates have consistently surpassed the EU27's average since 2019. In 2020, Malta recorded a Circular Material Use rate of 16.5% (compared to the EU27's average of 11.6%). This rate decreased to 12.8% in 2021 (EU27's average of 11.4%), followed by an increase to 15.1% in 2022 (EU27's average of 11.5%). Despite the decrease in 2021, Malta's Circular Material Use rate remained higher than the EU27's average over the cited years.

Following these trends, notable accomplishments have been witnessed, particularly in the **management of Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste**, with Malta achieving an impressive 100% recovery rate compared to the EU-27's 88% average in 2018. This success is attributed to the increased recycling of C&D waste and the reutilization of non-metallic mineral C&D waste for backfilling in quarries and recovery

<sup>12</sup> [Standardisation of Apertures](#)

<sup>13</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/env\\_ac\\_cur/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/env_ac_cur/default/table?lang=en)

operations. The forthcoming implementation of the new Construction and Demolition Waste Framework Regulation (S.L. 549.161)<sup>14</sup> is expected to further enhance this positive trend.

**However, challenges persist, notably in municipal waste management.** Malta's municipal waste recycling rate remains significantly below the EU27 average, with noticeable fluctuations observed in recent years. Despite initiatives aimed at improving organic waste collection from households and businesses, further enhancements are necessary to increase participation rates and reduce reliance on landfills. In response to these challenges, the Environmental and Resources Authority issued **two legal notices in 2023, mandating the separation of waste.** This mandate requires all entities, including businesses, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as private households, to **separate organic waste into designated white bags, while recyclable materials such as plastic and paper must be placed in grey/green bags.** Furthermore, Malta has **introduced a regional waste collection system** effective from January 1st, 2023. This reform centralizes collection efforts at the regional level, replacing the previous system managed by individual Local Councils. This shift aims to achieve economies of scale and improve overall collection standards. Additionally, **a standardized collection schedule now applies across all Local Councils in Malta.** This consistency benefits both residents and tourists by reducing confusion regarding waste separation practices. A [webpage – Waste collection Malta](#)<sup>15</sup>, which was translated in 10 languages, was designed to create awareness on the adequate separation of waste and the national waste collection schedule to the large number of foreign residents and tourists in Malta.

The **recycling rates for packaging waste also fall short of EU27 benchmarks.** Underscoring this trend for single-use packaging, Malta implemented the Beverage Container Refund Scheme (BCRS) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations<sup>16</sup>. This scheme covers single-use beverage containers made of plastic, aluminum, and glass. Considering its remarkable performance in 2023, an improvement in recycling rates for packaging waste is expected.

A confluence of country-specific characteristics and policy dynamics may elucidate the variance between Malta's circular economy performance and the EU average. Malta's unique geographical constraints, notably its small size and limited economies of scale, present inherent challenges in developing comprehensive waste treatment infrastructure. Consequently, Malta often resorts to outsourcing waste treatment solutions abroad, underscoring the **importance of fostering international cooperation and collaborative frameworks to extend circularity initiatives beyond national borders.**

Furthermore, Malta faces significant **obstacles** in advancing its circular economy agendas due to heavy reliance on imported products and limited control over product lifecycles and design. These challenges are compounded by market barriers, consumer behavior patterns, and the lack of adequate data on material stocks and waste. **Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policy interventions and engagement with multiple stakeholders to drive systemic change.**

To navigate these complexities, **essential measures include** tailored support programs for small enterprises, clear policy frameworks, reforms in the education system, and strengthened regulatory enforcement mechanisms. Additionally, strategic investments in waste management infrastructure, along with improved access to financing and incentives for circular innovations, are crucial for unlocking Malta's circular economy potential.

## Circular economy monitoring frameworks and their indicators beyond the ones from Eurostat

There are currently no other national or regional CE monitoring frameworks in Malta.

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<sup>14</sup> [The Construction and Demolition Waste Framework Regulations – S.L. 549.161](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Home - Waste Collection](#)

<sup>16</sup> [The Beverage Container Refund Scheme \(BCRS\) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations](#)



## Circular economy targets

### Collection targets for beverage containers

The Fifth Schedule Collection Targets, outlined in S.L.549.134<sup>17</sup>, establish progressive collection goals of single-use containers registered under the Scheme. Both in 2022 and in 2023, the target stands at 70% of the single-use containers placed on the market during each year. It is pertinent to note that the national DRS had started operating in November 2022, therefore the actual operativity for 2022 was for less than two months, while 2023 has been the first full operational year. Moving forward, from January 2024 to December 2024, the target increases to 80%, signaling a **heightened commitment to collection efforts**. Subsequently, from January 2025 to December 2025, the target rises to 85%, reflecting an even stronger emphasis on container retrieval. Finally, starting from January 2026 and continuing indefinitely, the target peaks at 90% of single-use containers placed on the market annually, highlighting a **sustained dedication to enhancing collection rates** over time.

It's noteworthy to consider the collection data for the first full operational year, 2023. During this period, the collection rates for various materials were as follows: PET containers achieved a commendable rate of 83%, surpassing the specified target; aluminum cans reached a respectable 80%, also meeting the set goal; and glass bottles achieved a solid 74%. These figures underscore the effectiveness of ongoing collection efforts and provide valuable insights into the feasibility of attaining the established targets over subsequent periods.

**Table 1: First Operational Year - January 2023 until December 2023 |**

Material	Collection Rate (%)	Collection Targets (%)
PET containers	83	70
Aluminium cans	80	77
Glass bottles	74	73

Fifth Schedule Collection Targets (S.L.549.134)	
Period	Collection Targets
1 Jan 2022 - 31 Dec 2022	70% of the single-use containers registered in terms of the Scheme as having been placed on the market during the same period.
1 Jan 2023 - 31 Dec 2023	70% of the single-use containers registered in terms of the Scheme as having been placed on the market during the same period.
1 Jan 2024 - 31 Dec 2024	80% of the single-use containers registered in terms of the Scheme as having been placed on the market during the same period.
1 Jan 2025 - 31 Dec 2025	85% of the single-use containers registered in terms of the Scheme as having been placed on the market during the same period.
1 Jan 2026 onwards	90% of the single-use containers registered in terms of the Scheme as having been placed on the market during the same period, and for every calendar year thereafter.

### Targets for construction and demolition waste

Regulation 9 of The Construction and Demolition Framework Regulations (S.L.549.161<sup>18</sup>) establishes the following 4 waste management targets for specific types of developments. These targets, which will be effective from 2028, aim to **enhance the reuse and recycling of waste from construction activities** and boost the **demand for secondary raw materials**:

1. minimum of forty percent (40%) of excavated material shall be re-used or recycled;

<sup>17</sup> [The Beverage Container Refund Scheme \(BCRS\) - S.L.549.134 Beverage Containers Recycling Regulations](#)

<sup>18</sup> [The Construction and Demolition Waste Framework Regulations – S.L. 549.161](#)

2. minimum of forty percent (40%) by weight of non-hazardous waste generated during demolition activities shall be prepared for re-use, recycled and, or other forms of material recovery excluding backfilling operations;
3. minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of construction material including that used in finishes shall be made up of re-used or recycled material; and
4. a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the granular material used for construction shall be made up of recycled aggregates.

## Innovative approaches and good practices

### Examples of public policy initiatives (national, regional or local)

→ *Good practice example: Product-related policies, including on the R-strategies (repair, reuse, remanufacturing, etc)*

#### The establishment of a reuse center

Reuse Centers are a good practice approach to promote the Circular Economy in Malta, as part of the ECOHIVE initiative. Located within Civic Amenity Sites in Luqa, Ħal Far, Mrieħel, and Tal-Kus in Xewkija (Gozo), these centers offer a variety of used and 'pre-loved' items such as furniture, toys, musical instruments, ceramics, pet cages, and mirrors, all of which are still in good condition and can be reused.

By donating or purchasing items at these centers, individuals help prevent waste from ending up in landfills, save the energy required for recycling, and reduce the natural resources and energy needed to produce new products. This initiative promotes sustainability and supports further environmental projects by reinvesting proceeds from the sales at the Reuse Centers.

→ *Good practice example: Producer /supplier responsibility*

#### The establishment of the Bring Your Own Container (BYOC) initiative

CEMalta has launched (April 2024) the Bring Your Own Container (BYOC) Initiative, aligning with the country's commitment from the Long-Term Waste Management Plan 2021-2030. **The initiative promotes reuse over single use, in favor of mitigating climate change by reducing landfill waste and prolonging the lifetime of items used.** Businesses, government, and consumers collaborate to reshape habits towards circularity, with local establishments receiving recognition. Comprehensive guidelines ensure smooth operation, prioritizing transparency and compliance. It is a voluntary program where various economic operators offering economic incentives for consumers to bring their own container are rewarded with a recognition mark. The BYOC website<sup>19</sup> provides further explanation and displays recognized establishments on a web map. These establishments display the BYOC logo on their storefronts.

→ *Good practice example: Education and awareness-raising*

#### Continuation of the Saving our Blue Campaign

The Ministry for the Environment, Energy and the Regeneration of the Grand Harbour launched the Saving our Blue Campaign<sup>20</sup> in 2019 with **the aim to raise awareness** on the harmful impact of the single-use plastics and littering in public places. Outreach initiatives include awareness raising events on local beaches, during which beach visitors were informed about the hazards of single-use plastics and improper waste disposal.

<sup>19</sup> [BRING YOUR OWN CONTAINER \(BYOC\) Initiative - Facilitating the transition to Malta's Circular Economy - CE Malta \(gov.mt\)](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Saving Our Blue – Combating Marine Litter \(gov.mt\)](#)

## Examples of private policy initiatives (sectoral)

### ENgage project - Standards Supporting Circular Economy Initiatives hosted by the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA)

The objective of the ENgage project<sup>21</sup> is to engage countries and organizations in **the development of EU environmental standards**. Maltese and other European environmental non-governmental organisations (eNGOs) can provide crucial contributions to ensure that standards are of benefit to the environment. Moreover, eNGOs help raise awareness among environmental stakeholders and society about the importance of environmental aspects in standardization.

### Schemes or grants for enterprises by the Malta Enterprise

A number of schemes or grants have been launched by Malta Enterprise to facilitate the transition of enterprises to make a green transition. These include:

1. **Smart and Sustainable Investment Grant**<sup>22</sup> which provides business funding to support investments that lead to more sustainable processes and to the enhancement of competitiveness of the enterprise, through the optimisation of the use of resources in their activities;
2. **Business re-engineering and transformation scheme**<sup>23</sup> which aims to help businesses to optimise the use of technology by embracing green technology; and
3. **Support for reducing the environmental impact of construction activities**<sup>24</sup> which aims at supporting investments that reduce the negative impact of construction activities by facilitating the reduction in volume of construction waste, control of dust emission and replacement of equipment.

## The way forward

### Identifying and addressing barriers and challenges

In Malta, **the main barriers and challenges to implementing a circular economy (CE) are multifaceted**. Firstly, **Malta's spatial limitations create significant barriers to developing the infrastructure, logistics, and systems necessary for a robust circular economy**. The constraints on land use, economic viability, and logistical efficiency hinder the implementation of comprehensive recycling and waste management programs.

Given its size as an island nation, Malta encounters constraints in achieving economies of scale. Consequently, the economic viability of establishing comprehensive waste treatment facilities for all waste types remains a challenge, necessitating the outsourcing of waste treatment abroad. To tackle this challenge, **fostering community and international policies** that extend circularity beyond national borders for small island nations like Malta proves beneficial.

**Secondly, the economy heavily relies on small and micro enterprises, comprising the majority of active businesses**. In Malta, of the 58,386 active businesses, 54,872 are micro-businesses and 2,851 are small firms (Business Demography: 2022 - NSO Malta<sup>25</sup>). However, these entities lack resources, investment in

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<sup>21</sup> [MCCAA](#)

<sup>22</sup> [Smart & Sustainable Investment Grant | Malta Enterprise](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Business Re-Engineering and Transformation Scheme | Malta Enterprise](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Support for Reducing the Environmental Impact of Construction Activities | Malta Enterprise](#)

<sup>25</sup> [NSO Malta | Business Demography: 2022 - NSO Malta \(gov.mt\)](#)

research and development, and production capacity necessary for transitioning to a circular economy. Moreover, they predominantly engage in distribution rather than manufacturing processes, limiting their circular activities. Having said so, while there is flexibility, there may be room for improvement in recognizing and capitalizing on CE business opportunities to expand expertise in sustainability among owner-managers. **Additionally, the development of a robust policy framework, along with more effective enforcement of existing regulations and enhanced incentives, could facilitate the adoption of circular initiatives.**

To address these barriers and challenges, **new policy initiatives at European, national, regional, or local levels could include:**

- **Tailored support programs:** Offer assistance to small and micro enterprises, to access innovation funding to aid their transition to circular business models.
- To assess the **inclusion of CE in the Education system.** Revise curricula and provide experiential learning opportunities to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and innovation within CE principles.
- **Sectoral collaboration: Promote knowledge sharing through professional associations and government-industry partnerships to exchange best practices,** while involving local non-profit organizations, and enterprises in the decision making.
- **Public awareness campaigns:** Encourage sustainable practices and eco-innovation through consumer education.
- **International cooperation:** Foster knowledge exchange on circular economy best practices through participation in CE initiatives
- **Government Coordination and Systemic Policy Formulation:** Coordinate efforts across different levels of governance to synchronize priorities, regulations, and funding streams, while embracing a holistic approach to policy formulation.

### Future policy plans

In accordance with RRP measure 1.6, Malta is currently undertaking a **feasibility study on the introduction of extended producer responsibility (EPR) obligations** on textiles, tyres and non-packaging paper. The study aims to evaluate the existing national market trends for textiles, tyres, and non-packaging paper, along with waste management practices related to these materials in Malta, with a view to assess the feasibility to introduce EPR on these waste streams.

European Topic Centre on  
Circular economy and resource use  
<https://www.eionet.europa.eu/etcs/etc-ce>

The European Topic Centre on Circular economy and  
resource use (ETC-CE) is a consortium of European  
institutes under contract of the European  
Environment Agency.

