

# Waste prevention country profile

# Malta

February 2025



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European Environment Agency



## Country profile: Malta

### General information

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Name of the country/ region  | Malta  |
| Geographical coverage of the waste prevention programme (national/ regional)                                   | National   |
| Type of programme (stand alone or integrated into waste management plan or into the circular economy strategy) | Integrated into waste management plan  |
| Title of programme and link to programme   | Long term waste management plan 2021-2030<br><a href="https://era.org.mt/long-term-waste-management-plan-2021-2030/">https://era.org.mt/long-term-waste-management-plan-2021-2030/</a> |
| Duration of programme  | 2021-2030  |
| Language   | English  |
| Contact person in the country/region   | Christopher Cousin, Environment and Resources Authority<br>Antonio Macchia, Circular Economy Malta   |
| Development process of the programme/ revision   | N/A  |
| Foreseen budget for implementation of the programme  | N/A  |



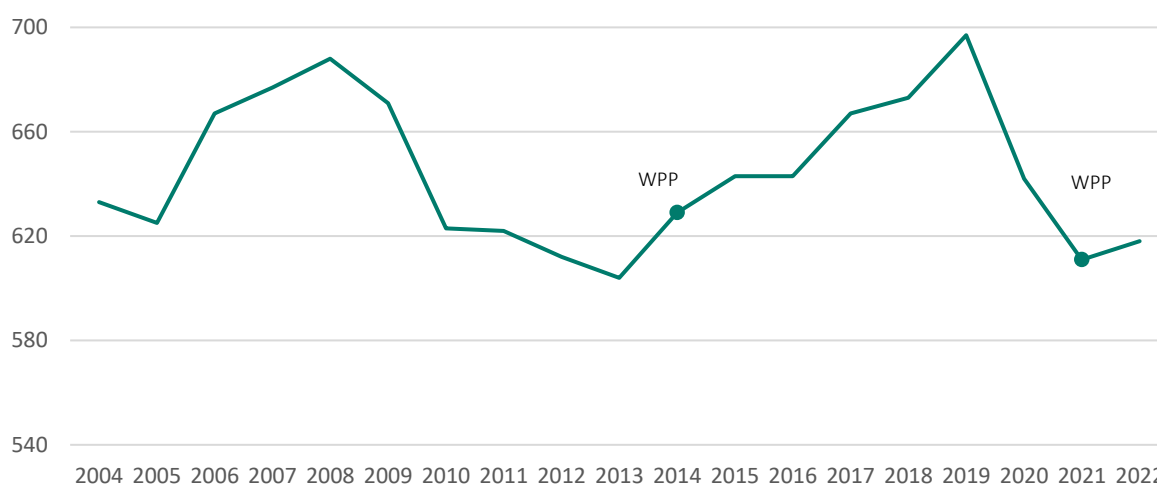
## WASTE GENERATION

The following figures illustrate the progress towards waste prevention and decoupling of waste generation from economic growth in Malta:

### Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)

Municipal solid waste (MSW) generation per capita has fluctuated between 600 and 700 kg, reaching its first peak in 2008 before declining, primarily due to the economic slowdown following the financial crisis. Another peak occurred in 2019, followed by a reduction in subsequent years, largely attributed to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2020 and 2022, municipal waste generation in Malta remained stable (Figure 1). In 2022, the country generated 618 kg per capita of municipal waste, significantly exceeding the estimated EU-27 average of 513 kg per capita.

**Figure 1 Municipal waste generation in Malta (kg per capita), 2004-2022**



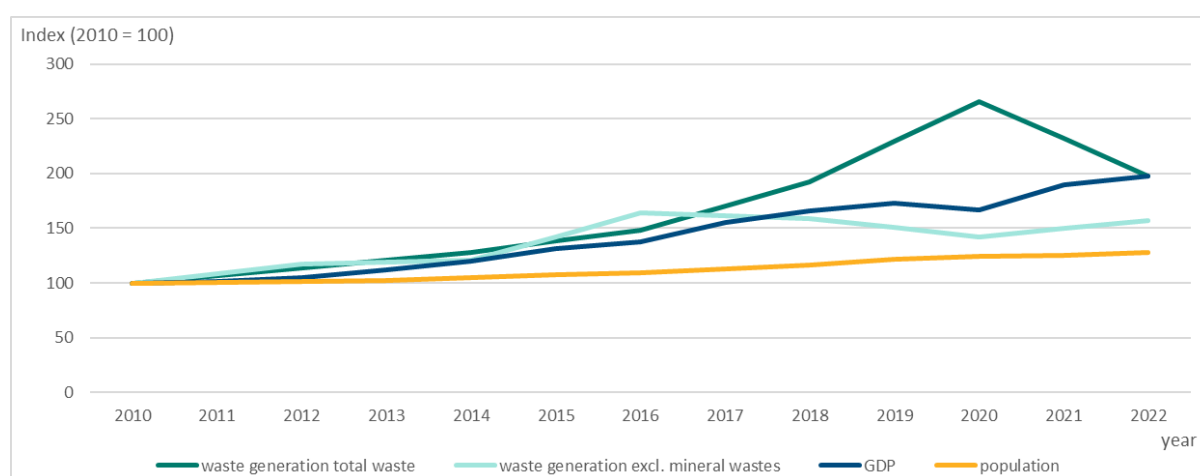
**Source:** Eurostat [ENV\_WASMUN].

**Note:** As of reference year 2020, new reporting rules apply for calculating recycled municipal waste pursuant to the targets laid down in Article 11.2(c-e) of Directive 2008/98/EC.

## Total waste

The total amount of waste generated in Malta has doubled over the last 12 years (Figure 2), and it seems that both economic growth and population growth could have triggered this development. This trend is primarily driven by the largest waste category, namely mineral waste from construction and demolition. Excluding such mineral waste categories would therefore result in a significantly smaller increase of generated waste over the past years. The trend of waste generation excluding mineral wastes is driven by the trend of mixed ordinary waste, except in 2016. This peak was a result of end-of-life oil rigs exported for recycling in that year. Ferrous metal wastes were also the main driver of the increase in total waste excluding major mineral wastes in 2022. Malta's GDP showed a steady growth until 2019 but dropped in 2020, most likely due to the Covid-19 outbreak. There are no clear indications of decoupling of waste generation from economic growth.

**Figure 2 Generation of waste (total and excluding major mineral wastes), population and economic development, 2010-2022**



**Source:** Eurostat [ENV\_WASGEN, NAMA\_10\_PC, DEMO\_GIND]

**Note:** Waste generation data for odd years are interpolated.

## WASTE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

### Objectives and priorities

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|---|---|
| 1. Waste prevention objectives of the Programme<br>- quantitative objectives (waste reduction)<br>- qualitative objectives (reduction of hazardous substances/ environmental impacts) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foster a culture of resource efficiency by encouraging alternative choices that contribute towards sustainable consumption, changing attitudes towards preventing unnecessary use, and encouraging the repair and reuse of items rather than discarding them early in their economic lifetime.</li><li>• Create new business opportunities for greener products, repair services and secondary markets.</li><li>• Provide economic incentives to support society in transitioning towards voluntary prevention and reuse initiatives (p. 91).</li></ul> |
| 2. Sectors covered  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commercial sector</li><li>• Industry sector</li><li>• Household</li></ul>   |
| 3. Priority waste types   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• food (organic),</li><li>• packaging,</li><li>• non-packaging paper,</li><li>• single-use plastics,</li><li>• textiles,</li><li>• electric and electronic equipment (EEE), and</li><li>• construction and demolition material. (p. 88)</li></ul>   |
| 4. Target groups  | The Ministry for Environment Energy and Public Cleanliness (MEEC) will engage with stakeholders, learn from specialised expertise and collaborate across public and private sectors to work together to make a difference and instil a culture change that promotes waste prevention. (p. 91)   |

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## Targets, indicators and monitoring

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|    |                                       |   |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Indicators used to monitor progress   | N/A   |
| 2. | Quantitative targets                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The preparing for re-use and the recycling of MWS shall be increased to a minimum of 55% (by weight) by 2025, 60% by 2030, and 65% by 2035. (p. 27)</li><li>• The amount of municipal waste landfilled is reduced up to a minimum of 10% of the total amount of municipal waste generated (by weight) by 2035 (p.27)</li></ul>                              |
| 3. | Monitoring mechanism of the programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The plan's implementation is monitored through a periodic internal evaluation of each measure, including coordination with various entities identified as key enablers.</li></ul>   |
| 4. | Evaluation of the programme           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The evaluation will take place through a preliminary, midway and end review. In each case, there will be close communication with the stakeholders involved in the direct actions of the measures. The assessment will be based on the type of policy instrument used, the stakeholders involved and whether the outcome can be measured. (p.209)</li></ul> |

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## Prevention measures

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| <p>Implemented prevention measures according to Article 9</p> | <p>Malta's Single-Use Plastic (SUP) Strategy looks to protect the environment and human health from plastic pollution by reducing the consumption of SUP products and increasing the quality and quantities of SUPs collected for recycling. (p. 89)</p> |
|   | <p>The Ministry has successfully implemented several measures from the Waste Prevention Programme for the Maltese Islands 2014-2020, particularly focusing on outreach activities and communications. (p. 89)</p>  |

The waste prevention programme includes the following measures that are proposed to avoid waste generation (Chapter 1.5):

Table 1: Specific waste prevention measures structured according to Art 9 WFD

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Promote and support <b>sustainable consumption</b> models</p>   | <p>Encourage retailers to offer discounts for customers who bring their own container (p. 93)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This measure would act as an economic incentive for customers to bring their own containers and cups for food, beverages and other products. Other economic activities to which this initiative could apply include cafes, take-aways and similar establishments. In order to support these initiatives, the Ministry will look to facilitate a promotional platform for green retail outlets that are identified and qualifiable for a green label.</li> </ul> <p>Provide economic incentives to support packaging-free initiatives and products with less packaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This measure could also include incentives to encourage the use of refillable products including laundry detergent and other cleaning products. MECP will also explore fiscal incentives to ensure the prices of these items are competitive enough to attract consumers. This measure will also support the catering industry to limit excess waste when serving customers.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Encourage the design, manufacturing and use of products that are <b>resource-efficient, durable</b> (including in terms of life span and absence of planned obsolescence), <b>reparable, re-usable</b> and <b>upgradable</b>.</p> |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Target products containing <b>critical raw materials</b> to prevent that those materials become waste.</p>  |  |
| <p>Encourage the re-use of products and the setting up of systems promoting <b>repair and re-use activities</b>, including in particular for electrical and electronic equipment, textiles and furniture, as well as packaging and construction materials and products.</p>  | <p>Support the establishment of a re-use and repair centre: (p. 91)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MECP would facilitate the creation of a centre where people can take items which are suitable for repair, upgrade or reuse. The centre can also serve as a hub for skills training or repairing items and will act as a blueprint for other re-use centres.</li> <li>- Re-use, upgrade and repair activities will be promoted through positive economic incentives, quality assurances and warranties to improve confidence in second hand goods. (p. 92)</li> </ul> <p>Develop fiscal incentives to promote repair and reuse activities: (p. 92)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to level the playing field in favour of repair and reuse initiatives MECP shall explore fiscal initiatives to make repair and reuse activities more economically viable.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Encourage, as appropriate and without prejudice to intellectual property rights , the <b>availability of spare parts, instruction manuals, technical information</b>, or other instruments, equipment or software enabling the repair and re-use of products without compromising their quality and safety.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Reduce waste generation</b> in processes related to industrial production, extraction of minerals, manufacturing, construction and demolition, taking into account <b>best available techniques</b>.</p>   | <p>Exploring fiscal incentives targeting recycled materials in construction (p. 94)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MECP intends to explore the potential to level the playing field and bring the price of recycled materials in line with that of virgin materials to reduce pressure on raw materials and incentivise recycled materials</li> </ul>  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Reduce the generation of food waste in primary production, in processing and manufacturing, in retail and other distribution of food, in restaurants and food services as well as in households as a contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to reduce by 50 % per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and to reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030.</p>   | <p>Develop legislation for the diversion of food waste from landfill (p.94)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MECP shall consult with relevant stakeholders, such as food giveaways and food banks, on the development of legislation on food waste.</li> </ul> <p>Collaborate with farmers, volunteers and civil society organisations to encourage the practice of ‘gleaning’ (p. 97)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This would involve voluntary organisations collecting unsold or surplus food from farms to redistribute to communities in need.</li> </ul> <p>Identify source and reason for food waste occurring at the primary production level, including farms, fish farms and food factories, in order to gain a better understanding of ways to prevent food waste. This research could include site visits, surveys, waste composition analyses and interviews and will be aligned with EU requirements for food waste measurement. (p. 100)</p> |
| <p>Encourage food donation and other redistribution for human consumption, prioritising human use over animal feed and the reprocessing into non-food products.</p>  | <p>Limit retail and distribution outlets from discarding unsold food.</p> <p>Overcome barriers imposed by current legislation restricting the redistribution of food. Through collaboration with relevant authorities including the public health authorities, an assessment will identify any possible amendments to regulations which can simplify food waste prevention measures</p>   |
| <p>Promote the reduction of the content of hazardous substances in materials and products, without prejudice to harmonised legal requirements concerning those materials and products laid down at Union level, and ensure that any supplier of an article as defined in point 33 of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council provides the information pursuant to article 33(1) of that regulation to the European Chemicals Agency as from 5 January 2021.</p> |   |
| <p>Reduce the generation of waste, in particular waste that is not suitable for preparing for re-use or recycling.</p>   |   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Identify products that are the main sources of littering, notably in natural and marine environments, and take appropriate measures to prevent and reduce litter from such products, where Member States decide to implement this obligation through market restrictions, they shall ensure that such restrictions are proportionate and non-discriminatory.</p> |  |
| <p>Aim to halt the generation of marine litter as a contribution towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds.</p>   | <p>Pilot a smoking ban on several local beaches (p. 95)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The purpose of this initiative would be to limit the amount of cigarette butts and cigarettes that are disposed of improperly and littered on beaches.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Develop and support information campaigns to raise awareness about waste prevention and littering.</p>   | <p>Develop an eco-label or accreditation for supermarkets, retail stores and catering establishments participating in environmental initiatives (p. 96)</p> <p>Prepare standardised waste prevention messaging for hotels and tourist accommodation</p> <p>Revisit the national minimum curriculum to promote waste prevention learning (p. 102)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This may include partnering with relevant stakeholders to introduce formal waste prevention education within schools and other educational institutions such as food waste prevention within the Institute for Tourism Studies.</li> </ul> <p>Organise a series of cooking roadshows and community cooking lessons to promote local produce, healthy eating and food waste prevention across various localities. (p. 102)</p> <p>Encourage the display of lifespan information and repairability information on electrical items at the point of sale, particularly for large appliances such as refrigerators and washing machines, and consumer equipment such as mobile phones and laptops.</p> <p>Promote existing rental and loan schemes for clothing, particularly clothing for special occasions (p. 103)</p> <p>Carry out awareness-raising efforts to support uptake of recycled materials and greener construction practices.</p> |

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Additional implemented prevention measures, not covered by Article 9

Recruit Green Champions to serve as spokespersons for waste prevention in businesses, schools and supermarkets (p. 97)

Develop a Continuous Professional Development Programme on Waste Prevention. (p. 97)

Establish a Waste prevention index (p. 98)

- establish an index or a series of indices to measure waste prevention and to gather consistent data for the monitoring of progress towards achieving established targets. Such index will be aligned with EU waste prevention targets and reporting requirements.

Organise Ministry-led activities to promote waste prevention in collaboration with key stakeholders, such as textile up-cycling events, repair cafes and surplus food cooking events. (p. 98)

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## **FOOD WASTE PREVENTION**

### Food waste generation

The Maltese National Statistical office announces that 22 % of food is wasted within the country. The household food waste is thereby estimated to be around 129 kg per capita, which equals to 56.812 tonnes per year. (UNEP 2021) <sup>1</sup>

The Maltese biodegradable kitchen and canteen waste increased throughout the years reaching 7,460 tonnes in 2018 in comparison to 1,370 tonnes in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

### Measures to prevent food waste

Awareness-raising measures to prevent food waste such as to “promote food waste reduction in 30 radio, television and newspaper interventions” and to “seek strategic alliances with supermarkets to have authorised personnel available on their premises to advise customers on consumption patterns and wiser food purchase” were achieved through numerous articles, TV and radio adverts, and supermarket stunts. These supermarket stunts promoted food waste reduction by creating awareness about purchasing and consumption habits and engaging with customers at supermarkets to advise on smarter food practices. Food waste prevention messages were also communicated through a roadshow across various localities with the support of a well-known chef who demonstrated how food scraps and leftover food can be integrated in new recipes to reduce wastage.

### Don't Waste Waste Campaign

The Don't Waste Waste campaign is an educational and awareness raising campaign on waste management run by the Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change in collaboration with Wasteserv and supported by the Environment and Resources Authority. The main idea is that businesses share their best practices in order to keep the general public informed about sustainable and green initiatives that are being undertaken by the business community and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://catalogue.unccd.int/1679\\_FoodWaste.pdf](https://catalogue.unccd.int/1679_FoodWaste.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>

[https://nso.gov.mt/en/News\\_Releases/View\\_by\\_Unit/Unit\\_B3/Environment\\_Energy\\_Transport\\_and\\_Agriculture\\_Statistics/Documents/2019/News2019\\_197.pdf](https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_B3/Environment_Energy_Transport_and_Agriculture_Statistics/Documents/2019/News2019_197.pdf)

furthermore, to encourage other business in adopting similar sustainable and green innovative practices.<sup>3</sup>

#### TRiFOCAL project

The Trifocal programme took place in 2019 covering three overall goals: (1) the reduction of avoidable food waste created by citizens, (2) the increase of citizen food waste recycling, and (3) the reduction of meat consumption within the Maltese population. Key organisations involved in this project included the Directorate for Environment and Climate Change (DECC) and Wasteserv.<sup>4</sup> Working together with Wasteserv, Marsaskala Local Council, and food and hospitality establishments, a pilot project of daily organic waste collections was conducted. The pilot project lasted for 6 weeks and also involved one-to-one food waste prevention and sustainable eating training with two of the establishments, utilising insight from the Your Business is Food, Don't Throw it Away materials provided through TRiFOCAL. The activities of the project were successful in meeting the objectives of understanding the potential of food waste collection and the challenges and opportunities for commercial food waste recycling. The project yielded positive results by diverting 2.7 tonnes of food waste from landfill, giving an indication of levels of food waste from hospitality businesses and provided a clearer understanding of where waste collection services can be improved.

## REUSE OF PRODUCTS

Malta has not reported any data for reuse of textiles, furniture, electrical and electronic equipment and construction and building materials according to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/19 for the year 2021 by the reporting deadline (EEA, 2024)

#### Measures to support reuse

The objectives of the Construction and Demolition Waste Strategy for Malta (CDWS) are to address the current issues within the construction sector and all the various aspects these intersect with, and to increase the re-use and recycling of construction and demolition waste. (p. 89)

#### **Best practice examples**

##### Saving Our Blue Campaign

Waste reduction and litter prevention measures were carried out in 2019 with the launch of the Saving Our Blue Campaign. Through this campaign, the Ministry embarked on various outreach initiatives to raise awareness about the harmful impact of single-use plastics and littering in public places. Outreach initiatives included awareness raising events on local beaches, during which beach visitors were informed about the hazards of single-use plastics and improper waste disposal. (p. 90)

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.maltachamber.org.mt/en/don-t-waste-waste>

<sup>4</sup> [http://trifocal.eu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Malta-Business-Case-Study\\_v1.pdf](http://trifocal.eu.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Malta-Business-Case-Study_v1.pdf)

## Links to circular economy

Waste prevention is an integral part of the comprehensive transformation towards a circular economy. It reduces the input of natural resources into the economy as well as the necessary efforts to collect and recycle waste.

Approaches for improving circularity are often highly interlinked with successful waste prevention. The following table shows which circular strategies are explicitly integrated into Malta's waste prevention programme.

| Topic                                   | Addressed in the programme | Comments  |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Eco-design                              | No                         |   |
| Repair, refurbishment and remanufacture | Yes                        | e.g. the creation of new business opportunities for inter alia repair services.   |
| Recycling                               | Yes                        | e.g. new recycling targets are set (p. 27)  |
| Economic incentives and finance         | Yes                        | A set of measures on economic incentives (p. 91)  |
| Circular business models                | No                         |   |
| Eco-innovation                          | No                         |   |
| Governance, skills and knowledge        | Yes                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• re-use and repair center as a hub for skills training (p. 92)</li><li>• Continuous Professional Development Programme on Waste Prevention with workshops to share knowledge (p. 97)</li></ul> |