

# BWD Report For the Bathing Season 2014

## Malta

The report gives a general overview of information acquired from the reported data, based on provisions of the Bathing Water Directive<sup>1</sup>. The reporting process is described below, as well as state and trends of bathing water quality in Malta.

### 1. BWD reporting in the season 2014

In 2014 bathing season, 87 bathing waters have been reported in Malta. For each bathing water, five groups of parameters have been delivered<sup>2</sup>:

- *identification data* – including name, location, geographic type of bathing water and availability to bathers;
- *seasonal data* – including season start and end, national quality classification in present season, potential management measures and changes in quality;
- *monitoring results* – disaggregated numerical values of two microbiological parameters – intestinal enterococci and Escherichia coli (also known as E. coli), recorded at each water sample taken;
- *abnormal situation periods* – periods of unexpected situations that have, or could reasonably be expected to have, an adverse impact on bathing water quality and on bathers' health; reporting is optional;
- *short-term pollution periods* – identifiable events that adversely affect water quality by faecal contamination; reporting is optional.

<b>Total reported</b>	<b>87</b>
Coastal	87
<b>Max season period</b>	<b>161 days</b>
Coastal	19 May to 26 Oct
<b>Samples taken</b>	<b>8132</b>
<b>Share of bathing waters with good or excellent water quality</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>New BWD implemented in</b>	<b>2009</b>

The authorities of Malta report data according to the new BWD (2006/7/EC) since the season 2009. The data for the season 2014 were delivered to the European Commission by **21 November 2014**.

Altogether, **87 bathing waters** have been reported – 0.4% of all bathing waters in Europe. Out of all bathing waters in Malta, none have been newly identified in 2014 season. All bathing waters in Malta are of coastal type. **8132 samples** were taken at bathing waters throughout the season – 93 per bathing water on average.

<sup>1</sup> Directive BWD 2006/7/EC, available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:064:0037:0051:EN:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> See the BWD Data Dictionary for detailed explanations: <http://dd.eionet.europa.eu/datasets/3151#tables>

The maximum bathing season period was from 19 May to 26 October, i.e. 161 days altogether. Detailed information on bathing waters is available from national portal at [https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public\\_health/environmental-health/health\\_inspectorate/env\\_hlt\\_risk\\_management/bathing\\_water\\_profiles.aspx](https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public_health/environmental-health/health_inspectorate/env_hlt_risk_management/bathing_water_profiles.aspx).

## 2. Assessment methodology<sup>3</sup>

During the bathing season, water samples are taken and analysed for two bacteria, *Escherichia coli* and intestinal enterococci which may indicate the presence of pollution, usually originating in sewage or livestock waste. The results of the analysis are used to assess the quality of the bathing waters concerned and to provide information to the public on the quality of the water in the bathing sites concerned.

The monitoring requirements under the New Bathing Water Directive are:

- taking of a pre-season sample (taken shortly before the start of the bathing season) <sup>4</sup>;
- a minimum of four samples per season<sup>5</sup>;
- a minimum of one sample per month<sup>6</sup>.

The conditions described above must be met for all bathing waters. If these rules are satisfied, the bathing water is categorised as 'sampling frequency satisfied'. If not all monitoring requirements are fulfilled the bathing water is categorised as 'sampling frequency not satisfied'. All bathing waters met the described monitoring requirements set by the Directive. Table 1 shows the statistics of bathing waters according to satisfied BWD monitoring requirements.

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<sup>3</sup> The methodology used by the EC and the EEA is described here, while results of assessment by national authorities may somewhat differ. However, the provisions of the Directive should be followed in any case.

<sup>4</sup> A pre-season sample is taken into account at total number of samples per season.

<sup>5</sup> Three samples are sufficient if the season does not exceed eight weeks or the region is subject to special geographical constraints.

<sup>6</sup> If, for any reason, it is not possible to take the sample at the scheduled date, a delay of four extra days is allowed. Thus, the interval between two samples should not exceed 31 + 4 days.

**Table 1: Bathing waters in 2014 according to compliance with BWD monitoring provisions**

	Count	Share of total [%]
<b>BWs with sampling frequency satisfied and are not new, have no changes or were not closed in 2014</b> These bathing waters have been monitored according to BWD provisions (monitoring frequency satisfied and have pre-season sample. They have been quality-classified (excellent, good, sufficient, poor).	87	100.0%
<b>BWs with sampling frequency not satisfied and that are not new, have no changes or were not closed in 2014.</b> These bathing waters have not been monitored according to BWD provisions (monitoring frequency not satisfied). They may be quality-classified if there is a reasonable volume of samples available.	0	0%
<b>BWs that are new, changed or closed in 2014</b> These bathing waters are new or have been subject to changes that could affect bathing water quality.	0	0%
<b>Total number of bathing waters in 2014</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100%</b>

Bathing waters where sampling frequency was not satisfied can still be quality assessed if at least four samples per season (three samples if the season does not exceed eight weeks or the region is subject to special geographical constraints) are available and are more or less equally distributed throughout the season. Assessment of bathing water quality is possible when the bathing water sample dataset is available for four consecutive seasons. Bathing waters are accordingly classified to one of the bathing water quality classes (excellent, good, sufficient, or poor).

The classification is based on pre-defined percentile values for microbiological enumerations, falling in the certain class given in Annex I of the Directive. This defines different limit values for coastal and inland waters.

Quality assessment is not possible for all bathing waters. In these cases, they are instead classified as either:

- not enough samples<sup>7</sup>;
- new<sup>8</sup>;
- changes<sup>9</sup>;
- closed<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Not enough samples have been provided for the 2014 season or throughout the whole assessment period.

<sup>8</sup> Classification not yet possible because bathing water is newly identified and a complete set of samples is not yet available.

<sup>9</sup> Classification is not yet possible after changes affecting bathing water quality have been implemented.

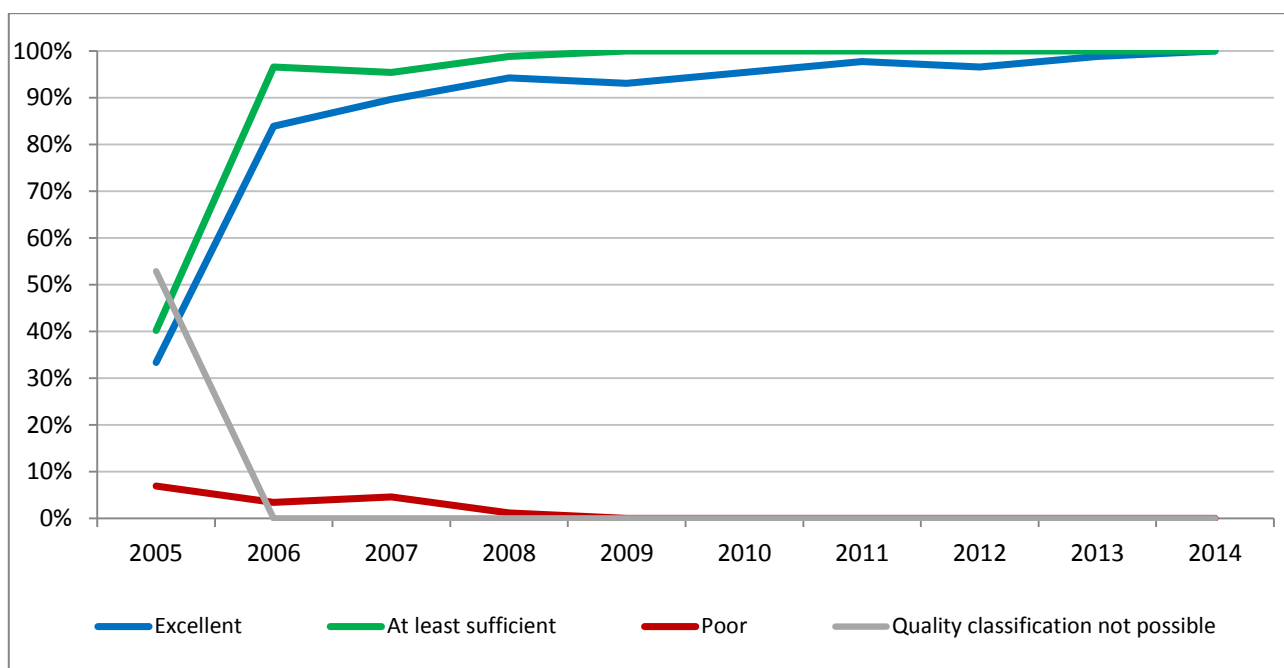
<sup>10</sup> Bathing water is closed temporarily or throughout the bathing season.

### 3. Bathing water quality

The results of the bathing water quality in Malta throughout the past period are presented in Figure 1 (for coastal bathing waters) and Figure 2 (for inland bathing waters). The previous reports are available on the European Commission's bathing water quality website<sup>11</sup> and the European Environment Agency's bathing water website<sup>12</sup>.

#### 3.1 Coastal bathing waters

In Malta, all existing coastal bathing waters met excellent water quality standards in 2014. See Appendix 1 for numeric data.



**Figure 1: Coastal bathing water quality trend in Malta.** Note: the “At least sufficient” class also includes bathing waters of “Excellent” quality class, the sum of shares is therefore not 100%.

#### 3.2 Inland bathing waters

There are no inland bathing waters in Malta.

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-bathing/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-bathing/index_en.html)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/status-and-monitoring/state-of-bathing-water>

#### **4. Information regarding management and other issues**

During the 2014 bathing season, the Environmental Health Directorate issued no temporary closure health warning at any of the bathing areas. As part of the management programme, environmental health officers carry out routine site-inspections so as to check for any possible sources of pollution. These officers also investigate any complaints made by the public and in case of doubt extra samples are collected and sent for analysis at the public health laboratory. In the case that visual evidence of pollution is noted, the effected site will be temporarily closed for bathing. During the bathing season, the Environmental Health Directorate issues a weekly report with the classification for each bathing area based on the Escherichia coli and Intestinal enterococci counts ([https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public\\_health/environmental-health/health\\_inspectorate/env\\_hlt\\_risk\\_management/envhealth\\_bathingwater09.aspx](https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public_health/environmental-health/health_inspectorate/env_hlt_risk_management/envhealth_bathingwater09.aspx)).

All bathing areas monitored as part of the bathing water monitoring programme are clearly identified by fixed information signs indicating the site code and stating that the area is monitored by the Environmental Health Directorate on a regular basis. These information signs are in five languages. If there will be the need to temporarily close any of these areas, a temporarily closure sign is attached at the same site and again the information is provided in five languages, namely Maltese, English, French, German, and Italian. These information signs will be replaced with new information board so as to include further information on the classification of sites and beach profiles.

The Environmental Health Directorate has completed the compilation of 29 beach profiles covering all 87 bathing sites monitored as part of the annual bathing water monitoring programme in 2013. Following the publication of the official classification of bathing sites the Environmental Health Directorate published an up-date of all 29 beach profiles with data for 2013 season. These beach profiles together with the relevant updates can be found at the following link: [https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public\\_health/environmental-health/health\\_inspectorate/env\\_hlt\\_risk\\_management/bathing\\_water\\_profiles.aspx](https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/public_health/environmental-health/health_inspectorate/env_hlt_risk_management/bathing_water_profiles.aspx).

## **5. Bathing water quality assessment presentation in online viewers**

The new legislation requires more effective monitoring and management of bathing waters, greater public participation and improved information dissemination. More on the bathing and other water legislation can be found on the European Commission's website: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/index_en.htm).

The bathing water section of the Water Information System for Europe (WISE), which is accessible at the EEA bathing water website (<http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/interactive/bathing/state-of-bathing-waters>), allows users to view the bathing water quality at more than 21 000 coastal beaches and inland sites across Europe. The data on bathing water quality in 2014 and previous years can also be viewed in WISE bathing water data viewer, an application prepared by TC Vode (<http://bwd.eea.europa.eu/>). The WISE bathing water quality data viewer combines text and graphical visualisation, providing a quick overview of the bathing water's locations and achieved quality.

Citizens have now access to more bathing water information than ever and are encouraged to make full use of disseminated information.

## Appendix 1: Results of bathing water quality in Malta from 2011 to 2014

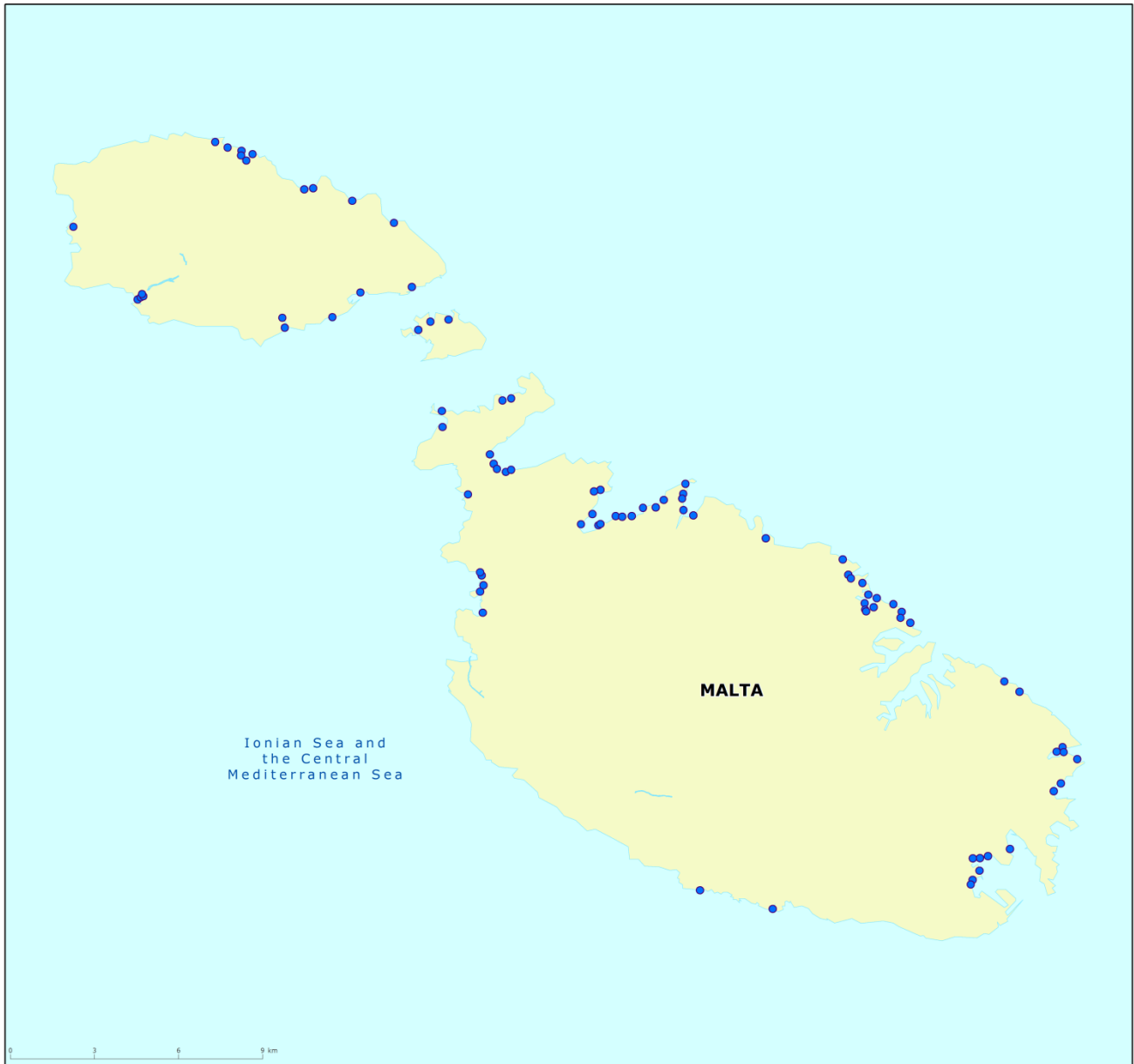
Table 2: Bathing waters in the season 2014 according to quality

		Total number of bathing waters	Excellent quality or compliant with guide values		At least sufficient quality or compliant with mandatory values		Poor quality or non-compliant		Quality classification not possible: not enough samples /new bathing waters/bathing waters with changes/closed	
			No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Total	2011	87	85	97.7	87	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2012	87	84	96.6	87	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	2013	87	86	98.9	87	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	<b>2014</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Note: the class "At least sufficient" also includes bathing waters which are of excellent quality, the sum of shares is therefore not 100%.

## Appendix 2: Bathing water quality map

**Map 1: Bathing waters reported during the 2014 bathing season in Malta**



### Bathing water quality

- Excellent water quality
- Good water quality
- Sufficient water quality
- Poor water quality
- Quality classification not possible: not enough samples / new bathing waters / bathing waters with changes / closed
- No data
- Outside data coverage (data available, not presented on the map)

**Source:** National boundaries: EEA; Large rivers and lakes: EEA, WFD Article 3; Bathing waters data and coordinates: Maltese authorities