



MINISTRY for HEALTH and ACTIVE AGEING
15, PALAZZO CASTELLANIA, MERCHANTS STREET, VALLETTA, MALTA

Bathing Water Profile

PROFILE 29 – Update 2024

COMMUNO: San Niklaw Bay

Santa Marija Bay



01 October 2025



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Update to the Bathing Water Profile based on the report by the European Environment Agency issued in May 2025

Under the provisions of the Bathing Water Directive (BWD), 2006/7/EC, as transposed by Legal Notice 125 of 2008 and amended by Legal Notice 237 of 2011 87 bathing water monitoring points are monitored in the Maltese Islands. The monitoring data and other information regarding bathing water management are reported to the European Environment Agency at the end of the official monitoring season to assess and publish information on the state of the Bathing Water of the Maltese Islands. This bathing water profile is in accordance with, regulation 11, and Schedule III of the legal notice.

Bathing water profile 29 covers 2 monitoring points situated in Comino Island as per **Figure 2 & 3 and Table 1**. Both bays are located on the Island of Comino which form part of Natura 2000. San Niklaw Bay is a sandy beach and the seabed within the bays is mainly composed of white sand with some rock and coral outcrops. The area is surrounded by natural vegetation and a touristic complex. Santa Marija Bay is also a sandy beach with sand dunes and surrounded

by vegetation and tamarisk trees. The bathing water has a slipway which is found at one end of the beach. A public camp site is located in the proximity of the beach.

The monitoring points D22 & D23 have been monitored for 23 weeks, by the Environmental Health Directorate. The monitoring period for the official bathing season starts on the third week of May till the third week of October. For the year 2024 the monitoring day where 13th May till 20th October.

The bathing water quality is based on two microbiological parameters (Escherichia coli and Intestinal enterococci). These two parameters determine the classification of the bathing water quality as 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient' or 'poor'. The symbols shown in **Figure 1** below correspond to this classification. The European Environment Agency report for the year 2024 indicated that 92% of the bathing water classified as excellent quality, see **Figure 4**. (European Environmental Agency, 2025).

Figure 1: Star Classification





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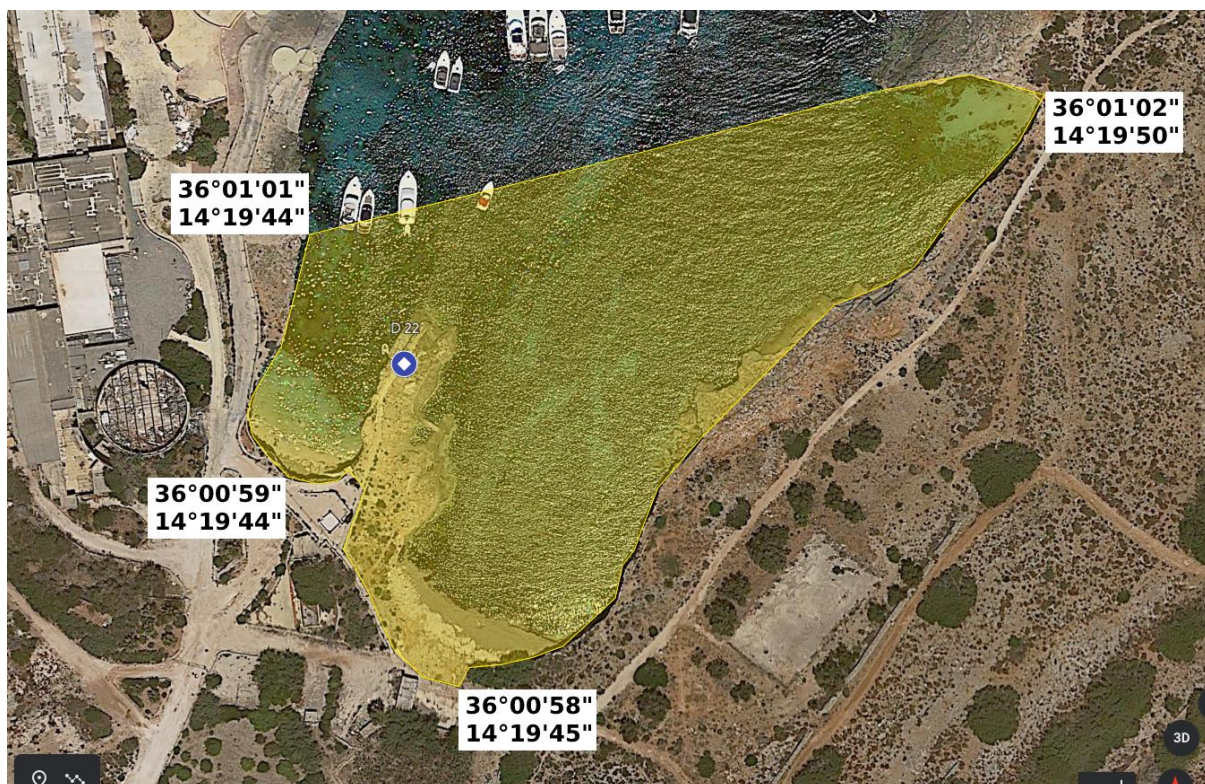
Location and Sampling of Official Bathing Area

Table 1: Co Ordinates of Sampling Point

Bathing Water ID Numbers	Longitude	Latitude
D23 (MT0260262200000D23 ¹)	14.336301	36.016638

¹NB this code is the site reference code used by the European Environment Agency.

Figure 2: GIS for the Official Bathing Area of D22





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Figure 1: GIS for the Official Bathing Area of D23

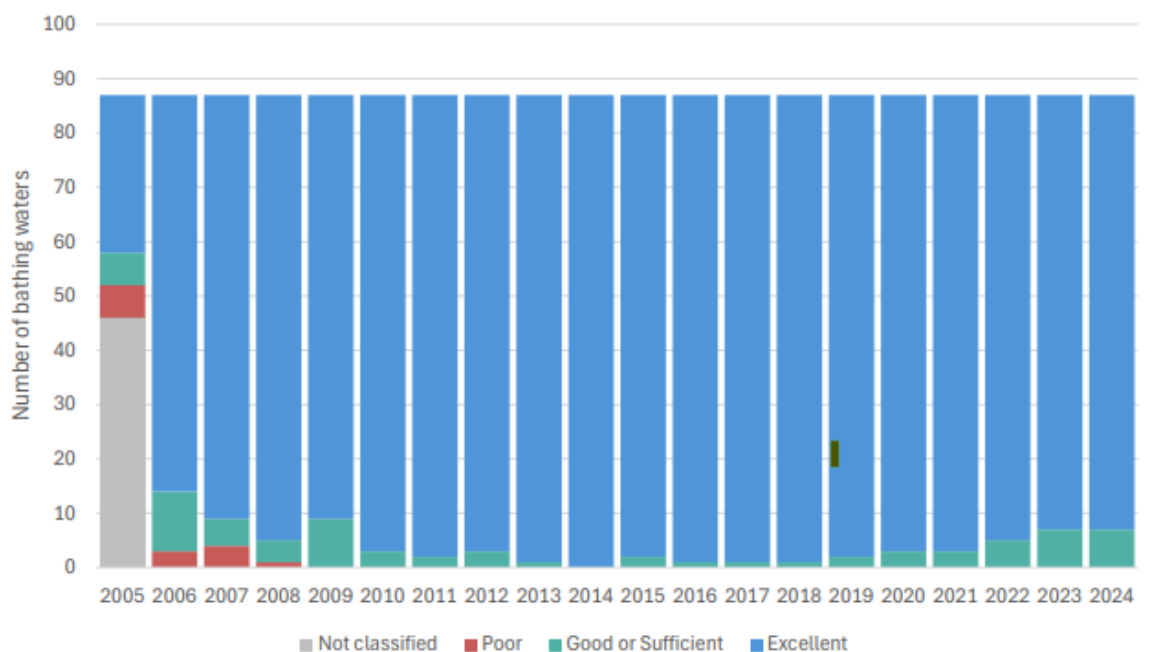




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Classification updated for the year 2024.

Figure 4: Results of bathing water quality in Malta from 2005 to 2024



Trend of coastal bathing water quality in Malta. Notes: Each column represents an absolute number of bathing waters in the season. The 'good' and 'sufficient' quality classes are merged for comparability with the classifications under the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

(European Environment Agency, 2025)

Table 2: Classification of bathing waters

	2006/7/EC Classification based on four years data					
Escherichia coli (cfu/100 ml)	< 250	Excellent quality	< 500	Good quality	> 500	Sufficient quality
Intestinal Enterococci (cfu/100ml)	< 100	Excellent quality	< 200	Good quality	> 200	Sufficient quality



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Table 3: Bathing water quality classification at (2021- 2024)



2006/7/EC Classification based on four years data				
Bathing Water ID Numbers	Year	Escherichia coli	Intestinal Enterococci	Overall Classification
D22	2024	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D23		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D22	2023	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D23		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D22	2022	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D23		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D22	2021	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D23		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Further information on bathing water results is available on the Environmental Health Directorate website www.bathingwater.gov.mt



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Identification and assessment of causes of pollution that might affect bathing waters and impair bathers' health;

The risk factor for D22 & D23 monitoring sites is low risk. The risk factor was calculated on possible sources of contamination and the risk of occurrence. These include rainwater culverts and surface water runoff that discharge directly into the official bathing site, if there any sewage pumping station or main sewers in the vicinity, if currently there is a construction activity ongoing and if in the past four years there were reports of short-term pollution and or a bathing prohibition period.

The probability of temporarily closing the monitoring site D22 & D23 is very low. This was calculated on the number of health warnings issued for the last four years.

Temporary closing of bathing water sites during bathing season 2024

No sites covered by this Bathing Water Profile were temporarily closed during the bathing season of 2024.

What should one do if a pollution incident is noticed?

If a risk of bathing water pollution (on-shore or off-shore) is noted, the Environmental Health Directorate is to be immediately notified by calling.

21337333 during Office Hours:

or

23343223 (Malta)/22156500 (Gozo) after Office Hours / Weekends / Public Holidays:

Or sending an email on: wrau.ehd@gov.mt

When a complaint is received the Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) will investigate accordingly and if necessary, elevate samples. During the period of any short-term pollution and or bathing prohibition, the EHOs will elevate samples from the bathing site on a daily basis to monitor its quality.

Once the nuisance is resolved and the results of three consecutive bathing water samples conform to the parameters stipulated in the Legal Notice 125 of 2008, indicated that there is no risk to bathers, the warning will be lifted.



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URL: <https://environmentalhealth.gov.mt/en/ehs/wrau/bathing-water-programme/>

References:

European Environment Agency (2025). *Bathing water results 2024 – Malta:*

https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/in-depth/bathing-water/state-of-bathing-water/bathing-water-country-factsheets-2024/malta_bathing_water_2024.pdf

European Commission: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/european-bathing-water-quality-in-2024>

Environmental Health Directorate: <https://environmentalhealth.gov.mt/en/ehs/wrau/bathing-water-programme/>



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Version Control			
Version number:	Date:	Next review due:	Comments:
29.1	June 2013		
29.2	June 2014		Annual data for 2013 added
29.3	May 2015		Annual data for 2014 added
29.4	June 2016		Annual data for 2015 added
29.5	May 2017		Annual data for 2016 added
29.6	June 2018		Annual data for 2017 added
29.7	June 2019		Annual data for 2018 added
29.8	June 2020		Annual data for 2019 added
29.9	July 2021		Annual data for 2020 added
29.10	October 2022		Annual data for 2021 added
29.11	July 2023		Annual data for 2022 added
29.12	June 2024		Annual data for 2023 added and other information on the bathing site
29.13	July 2025		Annual data for 2024 added