



Bathing Water Profile

PROFILE 26 – Data updated for 2025

XAGHRA: Ramla l-Hamra

NADUR: San Blas Beach

Dahlet Qorrot Bay



13 August 2026



Direttorat ghas-Sahha Ambjentali
Environmental Health Directorate

Update to the Bathing Water Profile based on the report by the European Environment Agency issued in May 2026

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 25 covers 4 monitoring points situated in the locality of Xaghra and Nadur as per **Figure 2, 3 & 4 and Table 1**. Located along Gozo's northern coast Ir-Ramla il-Hamra is characterised by a reddish sandy beach and sand dunes, this being the largest remaining sand dune system in the Maltese Islands. Ir-Ramla il-Hamra is situated at the mouth of a wide river valley between Nadur and Xaghra. The area is dominated by the sandy beach and associated sand dunes, whilst the surrounding landscape is made up of gently sloping hills, blue clay slopes on the western side and exposed cliffs on either side of the bay. The bathing waters D15 and D16 are located within this protected and environmentally sensitive area. Furthermore, Ir-Ramla il-Hamra is one of only two bathing areas in Malta where smoking is prohibited, reflecting the importance of safeguarding both public health and the site's unique natural environment.

The sandy beach at San Blas Bay is situated in a secluded and quiet area, surrounded by rocky landscape. This makes the bay unique and spectacular. Access to the beach is mainly on foot, via a very steep, narrow pathway. The sand is reddish-orange, similar to that of Ir-Ramla il-Hamra, attained from the presence of the Green Sand layer outcrops. Dahlet Qorrot Bay is a small inlet nestled in the northern cliff face of Gozo and can be reached from Nadur. Scenery at this site includes extensive views of rock fall formations (Rdum). Several boat houses present in the vicinity

The monitoring points D15, D16, D17 & D18 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 2025 the monitoring day where 12th May till 19th 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 2025 indicated that 88.5% of the bathing water classified as excellent quality, see **Figure 5**. (European Environmental Agency, 2026).

Figure 1: Star Classification





Location and Sampling of Official Bathing Area

Table 1: Co Ordinates of Sampling Point

Bathing Water ID Numbers	Longitude	Latitude
D15 (MT0260266300000D15 ¹)	14.281674	36.061823
D16 (MT0260266300000D16 ¹)	14.286388	36.062365
D17 (MT0260264300000D17 ¹)	14.300615	36.056929
.D18 (MT0260264300000D18 ¹)	14.316518	36.048903

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

Figure 2: GIS for the Official Bathing Area of D15 & D16

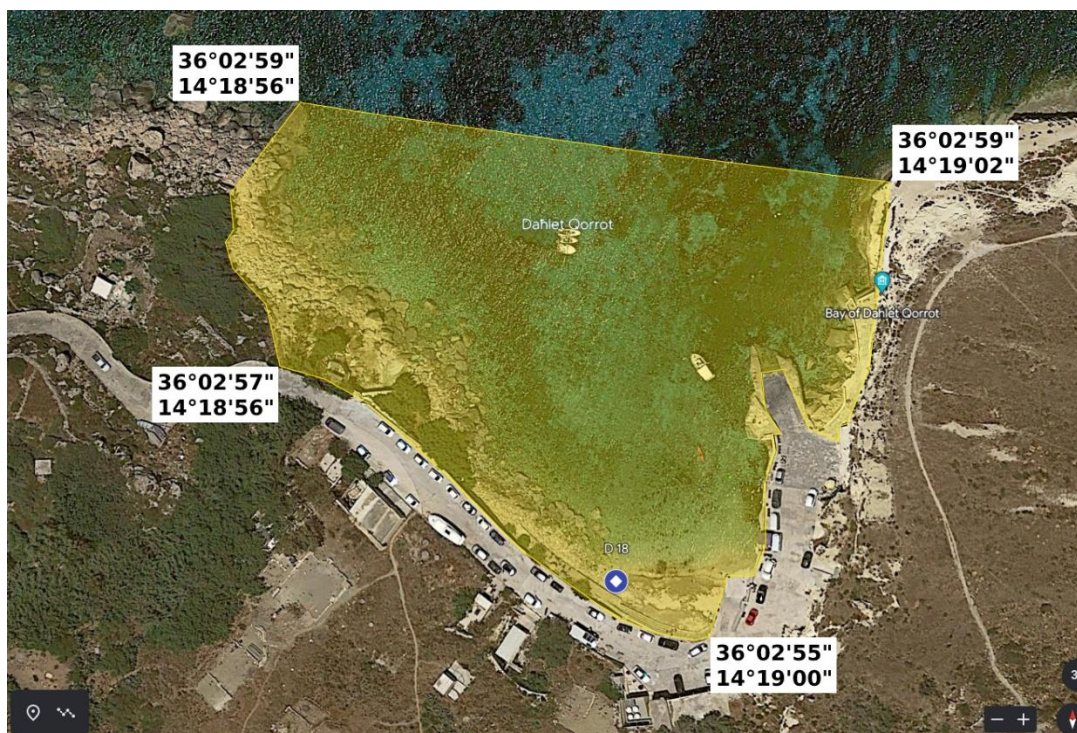




Figure 1: GIS for the Official Bathing Area of D17



Figure 4: GIS for the Official Bathing Area of D18





Classification updated for the year 2025.

Figure 5: Results of bathing water quality in Malta from 2005 to 2025

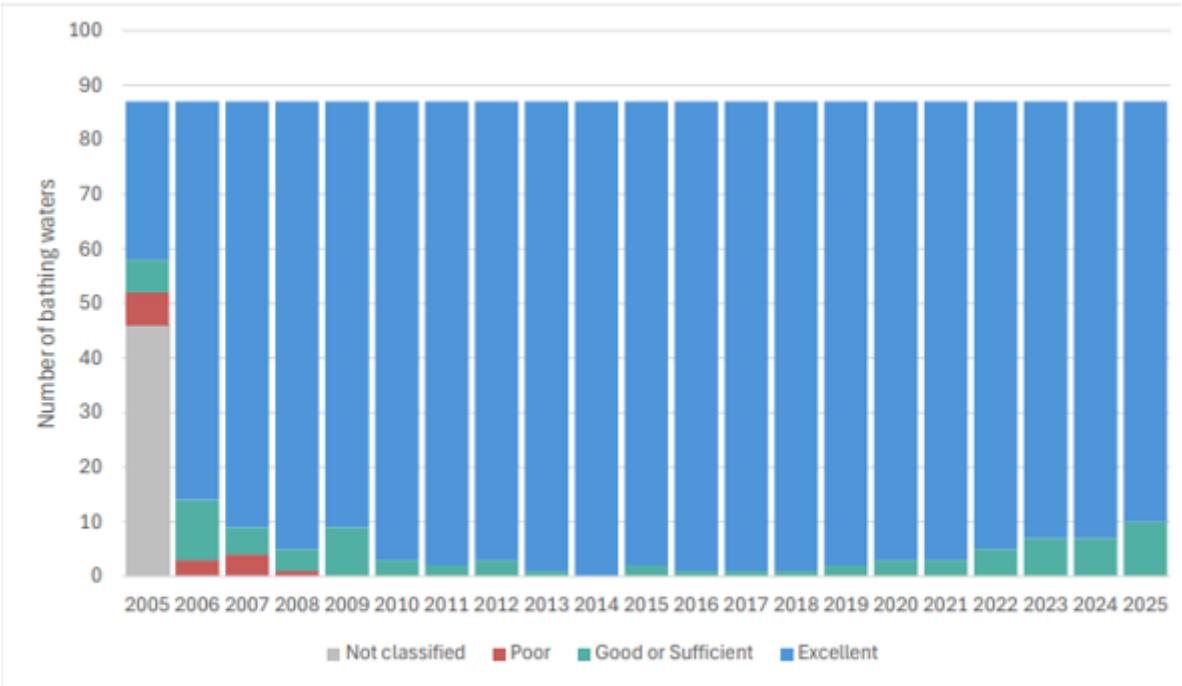


Figure 3: Results of bathing water quality in Malta from 2005 to 2025

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, 2026)

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

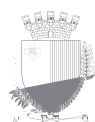


Table 3: Bathing water quality classification at (2022 - 2025)



2006/7/EC Classification <i>based on four years data</i>				
Bathing Water ID Numbers	Year	Escherichia coli	Intestinal Enterococci	Overall Classification
D15	2025	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D16		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D17		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D18		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D15	2024	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D16		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D17		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D18		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D15	2023	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D16		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D17		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D18		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D15	2022	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D16		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D17		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
D18		Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

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



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

The risk factor for D15, D16 D17 & D18 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 temporally closing the monitoring site D15, D16 D17 & D18 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 2025

No sites covered by this Bathing Water Profile were temporarily closed during the bathing season of 2025.

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.

+356 2095 4992 during Office Hours:

or

+356 2545 0000 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.



General Contact Details:

Address:



Environmental Health Directorate
Health Inspectorate Services
Continental Business Centre
Triq il-Ferrovija,
Santa Venera, SVR 9018
Malta.

Telephone: +356 2095 4992

Email: complaints.ehd@gov.mt
wrau.ehd@gov.mt

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

References:

European Environment Agency (2026). *Bathing water results 2025 – Malta:*

https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/in-depth/bathing-water/state-of-bathing-water/bathing-water-country-factsheets-2025/malta_bathing_water_2025.pdf

European Commission: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/european-bathing-water-quality-in-2025>

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



Version Control			
Version number:	Date:	Next review due:	Comments:
26.1	June 2013		
26.2	June 2014		Annual data for 2013 added
26.3	May 2015		Annual data for 2014 added
26.4	June 2016		Annual data for 2015 added
26.5	May 2017		Annual data for 2016 added
26.6	June 2018		Annual data for 2017 added
26.7	June 2019		Annual data for 2018 added
26.8	June 2020		Annual data for 2019 added
26.9	July 2021		Annual data for 2020 added
26.10	October 2022		Annual data for 2021 added
26.11	July 2023		Annual data for 2022 added
26.12	June 2025		Annual data for 2023 added and other information on the bathing site
26.13	July 2026		Annual data for 2025 added