

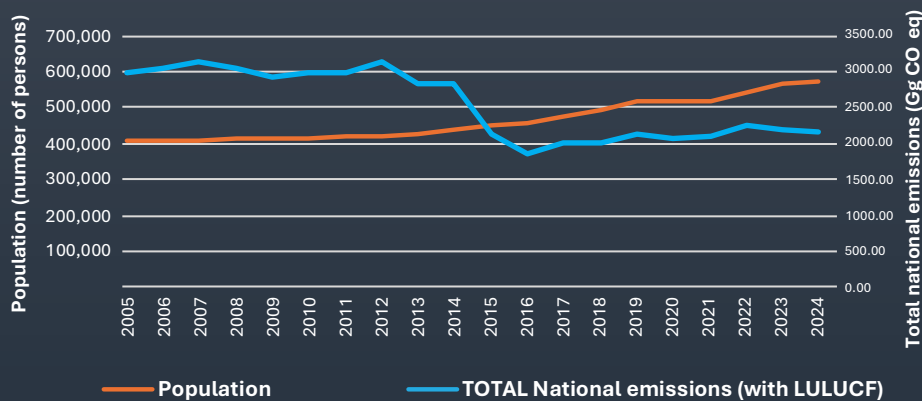
Emissions

JUNE 2026

Figures on emissions can sometimes provide a striking perspective on Malta's greenhouse gas emissions, but these figures require careful analysis and context rather than just headlines. The methodology behind the statistics and attention to what they indicate to are also crucial.

Emissions per Capita

- Malta has **one of the lowest per capita emissions** in the European Union.
- Malta **succeeded in decoupling emissions from population growth**, mainly through changes in the power generation sector.



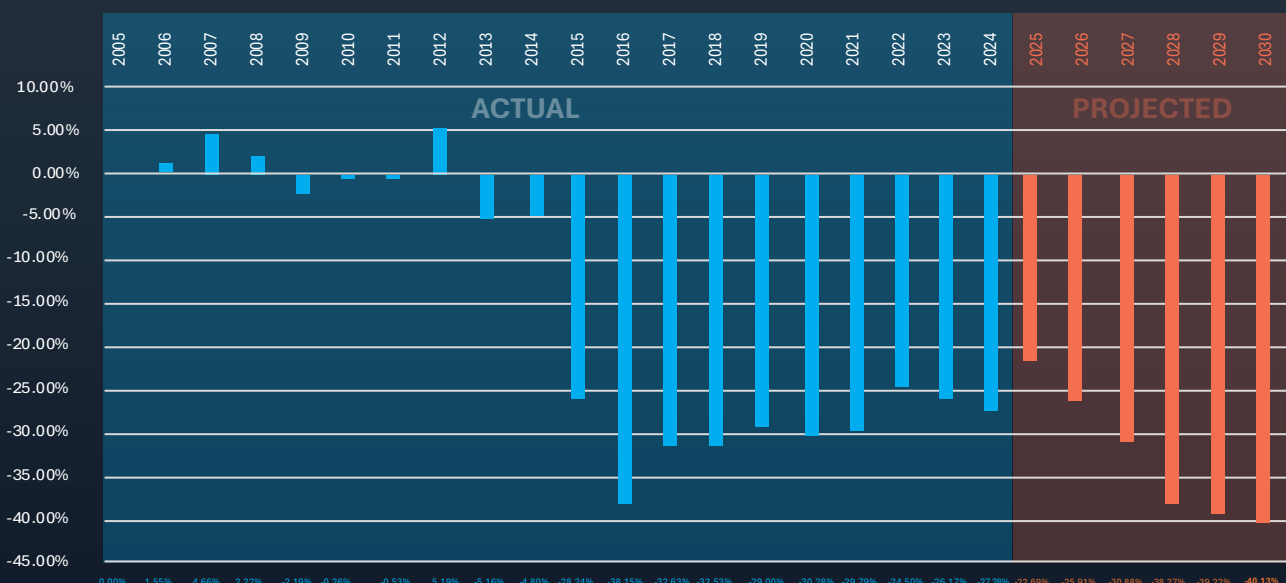
Source: CAA based on Eurostat Population Data



Malta's population has increased steadily since 2005, while total emissions have decreased significantly after 2013. This means emissions per person are lower today, showing cleaner energy use and improved efficiency.

Figure 1: Emissions per capita (tCO₂ eq per person).

Percentage Change vs 2005- with LULUCF



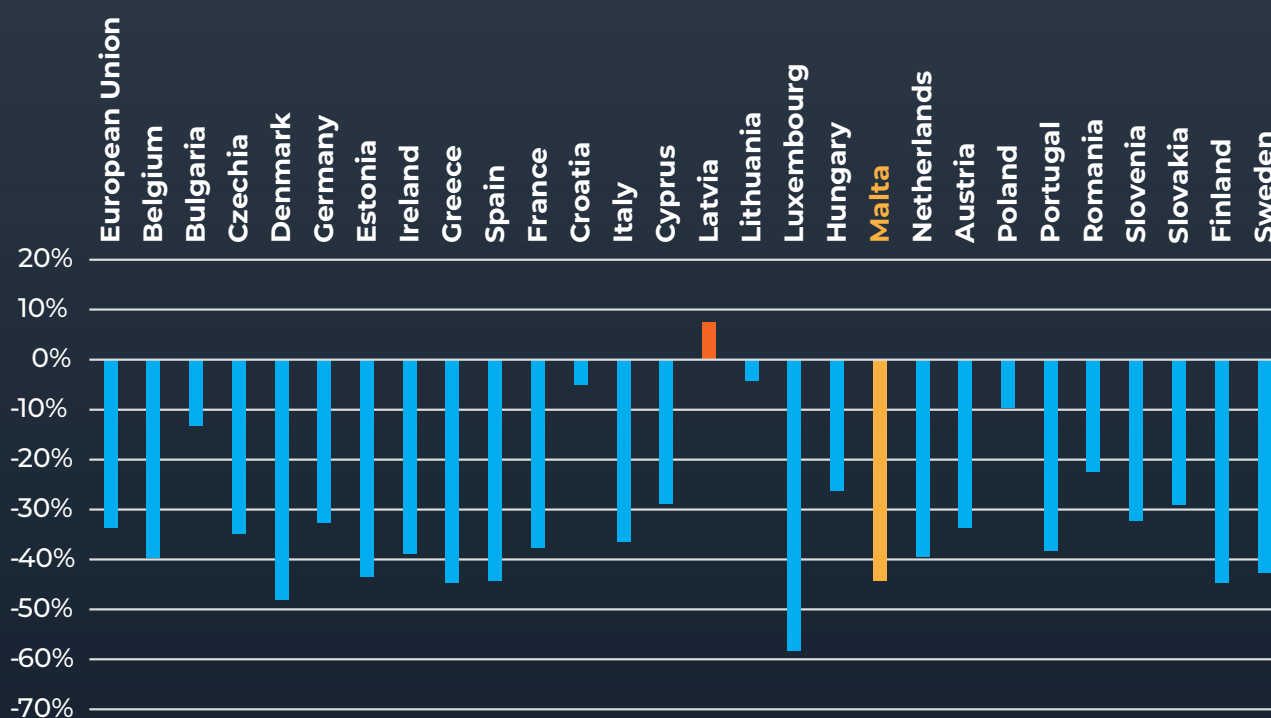
Emissions per Capita

The chart in Figure 1 illustrates the trend in Malta's population alongside total national greenhouse gas emissions (including LULUCF) between 2005 and 2023. Over this period, the population shows a steady upward trajectory, increasing from around 400,000 persons in 2005 to nearly 540,000 persons by 2024, according to Eurostat estimates.

In contrast, total national emissions follow a different pattern. Emissions remained relatively stable between 2005 and 2012, after which they started to decline. A pronounced drop occurred from 2014 to 2016, mainly reflecting the switch from heavy fuel oil to LNG

in the power generation sector. After 2016, emissions continued on the rise mainly driven by the transport sector.

When analyzing and comparing these trends (*rising population and decreasing emissions*) indicate a reduction in emissions per capita over the last decade. Despite population growth, Malta has managed to decouple emissions from demographic expansion. Malta has the 4th highest reduction in emissions per capita in the EU in 2023 over 2005. This highlights Malta's progress towards lowering its per-capita environmental footprint.



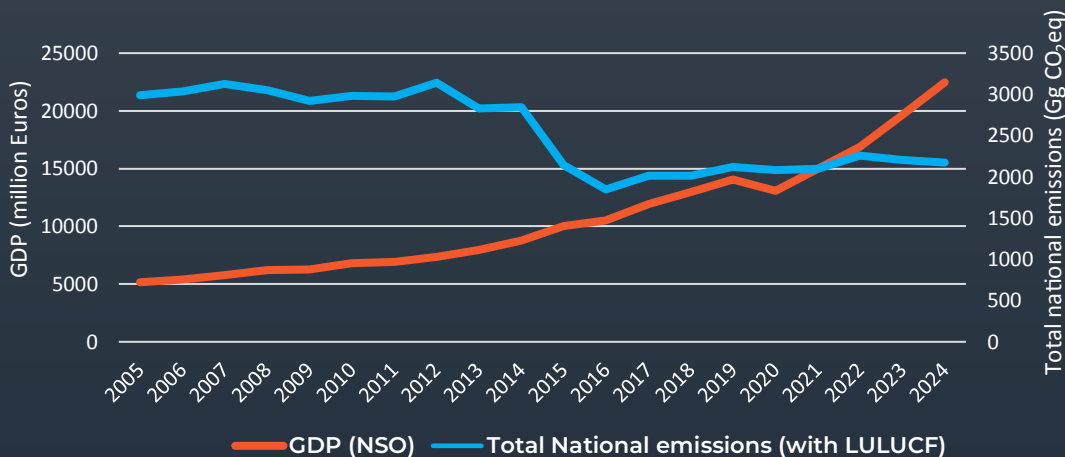
Emissions per capita by Member State. Performance of 2023 over 2005 emission baseline.

Emissions per GDP

- Malta succeeded in decoupling economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions, mainly through changes in the power generation sector.
- Malta grew its economy while lowering its relative emissions intensity, supporting sustainability.



Malta's economy has grown strongly while emissions have declined. This shows that Malta is producing more value with fewer emissions, known as decoupling economic growth from pollution.



Source: CAA based on Eurostat GDP Data

Figure 2: Emissions per unit of GDP (tCO₂ eq/GDP).

The chart in Figure 2 presents the evolution of Malta's GDP alongside total national greenhouse gas emissions (including LULUCF) from 2005 to 2023. Over this period, GDP shows a steady and sustained upward trajectory, rising from just over €5 billion in 2005 to more than €23 billion by 2023. This reflects Malta's strong economic expansion, driven by growth in services, investment, and population.

When analyzing and comparing these trends, steadily rising GDP and declining or stabilising

emissions, demonstrate a clear decoupling between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions. This indicates a positive performance for Malta as for every euro of wealth it generates, Malta is producing less greenhouse gas emissions.

Overall, the chart shows strong progress. Malta has managed to grow its economy while reducing the emissions intensity of that growth, supporting long-term sustainability objectives.

The ETS and ESR

These are common terms in climate action discussions, but what do they mean? The ETS (Emissions Trading System) is a cap-and-trade system where companies compensate for their emissions by buying allowances. The ESR (Effort Sharing Regulation) sets binding national targets for cutting emissions in sectors outside the ETS, which includes fuel use transportation and buildings, and distributes climate targets in these sectors amongst EU member states.

Emissions Trading System - ETS

The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), as set out in Directive 2003/87/EC, is Europe's main tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from large industrial sites and power plants, known as stationary installations.

In Malta, this system applies to power generation installations. These are obliged to monitor, report and verify their emissions yearly and surrender allowances to match the emissions they generate.

The ETS works on a "cap and trade" principle: a limit

is set on total emissions, and installations can buy or sell allowances depending on their needs. This means if an installation emits more, it must purchase allowances on the EU carbon market. If it emits less, it may sell surplus allowances. For Malta, all power generation fall under this system, helping ensure accurate, verified emissions data. This means Malta's ETS emissions are controlled entirely by the cost of allowances under the EU cap making emissions reductions financially advantageous.

Effort Sharing Regulation – ESR

The Effort Sharing Regulation (ESR), Regulation (EU) 2018/842, provides for the distribution of targets in non-ETS sectors amongst Member States by limiting the level of greenhouse gas emissions in a yearly trajectory reaching a set national target by 2030. For Malta, the ESR target is -19% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.

It is important to note that the basis of this distribution according to the EU regulation is based on GDP per capita and cost-efficiency considerations. To achieve this, Malta has committed a number of key measures in the ESR sectors including in the transport sector, energy efficiency in buildings, waste and in heating and cooling.

SOME OF MALTA'S ONGOING EFFORTS

The following are some of the main actions Malta is undertaking to enhance its climate action and reduce or control the emissions intensity in various sectors.

ENERGY



Malta is targeting a 77% reduction in power generation emissions by 2030 (compared with 2005). After transitioning away from heavy fuel oil, it is now developing its second electricity interconnector. Malta aims to increase its share of renewable energy to nearly 25% by 2030 (up from 3.76% in 2013 and 15.08% in 2023). It is also planning to install large-scale battery storage systems. At the same time, Malta is planning offshore wind projects for long-term decarbonisation (beyond 2030), with a procurement process already launched.

WASTE MANAGEMENT



Malta is building new waste-sorting facilities, adopting organic waste treatment systems, installing landfill gas capture technology, and developing waste-to-energy technologies. Malta has made changes to reduce dependence on landfills. Through these and other measures, Malta aims to reduce waste-sector emissions by 2030% compared to 2021.

TRANSPORT



Malta is actively promoting the adoption of electric vehicles and making significant efforts to enhance the EV charging infrastructure. Through the Reshaping Our Mobility initiative, the country is also implementing various mobility reforms.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS



Requiring renewable systems for new buildings that reach height limits, mandating the installation of battery storage and photovoltaic systems, and streamlining permitting processes for renewable energy installations are all measures already implemented or in development to promote a more sustainable building model. Additionally, incentives for energy-efficient home purchases and programs to enhance energy efficiency standards are periodically introduced.

OPEN SPACES



Malta has launched its largest initiative to invest in public open spaces and develop national parks, alongside ambitious tree-planting programs nationwide.

