

CASE STUDY



MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT,
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Directorate for Environment and Climate Change (DECC)

DECC, within the Office of the Permanent Secretary, was set up to design, evaluate and oversee environment and climate change policies. DECC plays a monitoring role in the implementation of environment and climate related strategies and action plans, including waste.

Wasteserv

Wasteserv is responsible for organizing, managing and operating integrated systems for waste management including collection, transport, recycling and disposal of solid and hazardous waste.

this is food waste. In October 2018, following a pilot project, the Ministry for Environment Sustainable Development and Climate Change (MESDC) and Wasteserv rolled out a nationwide collection of organic waste from households. However, food and hospitality establishments do not have an obligation to separate food waste recycling and are a critical location for waste generation from visiting tourists.

Reason for participation

Participation in TRiFOCAL allowed Malta to conduct a pilot collection of organic waste from selected food and hospitality establishments alongside an awareness campaign provided insights which they could use to support the development of future waste policies. Reducing the amount of food wasted also provides Malta with a renewable source of energy to utilise.

As an additional benefit, Malta could build upon previous food waste prevention campaigns such as 'Don't Waste Waste'. (Please see [Malta closure report](#) for more details).

Background

The TRiFOCAL replication programme in Malta took place in Summer 2019 and included three overall goals:

- reducing avoidable food waste created by citizens,
- increasing citizen food waste recycling, and
- reducing meat consumption within the Maltese population.

The project worked with both the general public and hospitality and food service businesses.

Key organisations involved in this project included the Directorate for Environment and Climate Change (DECC) and Wasteserv.

Country Context

Malta has an area of 316 km² and the highest population density of any other EU member state with 1,260 people per km². In addition, the number of tourists is increasing, with a record number of 2.6 million people visiting the island in 2019. This combination means waste generation is increasing, with a lack of space of where to dispose of this waste. In the latest Eurostat reports, Malta was the second highest EU waste generator per capita, with 648 kg per person per year. Nearly half of

Objectives

Malta focused on all three of TRiFOCAL's 'Small Change Big Difference' campaign messages: healthy sustainable eating, food waste prevention and food waste recycling. Beyond communicating these messages to the public, engaging further with the business sector was a key aim and pilot collection of food waste from hospitality and food service businesses was implemented.

Overall, Malta's objectives can be broken down into 3 key areas:

1. Understand the potential of food waste separation and collection from food and hospitality establishments via a pilot project

2. Improve understanding of challenges and opportunities in commercial food waste prevention and recycling
3. Increase awareness on sustainable eating, and the prevention and recycling of food waste

Key Audiences

Food and hospitality establishments were a key focus in communicating these messages, since these play a large role in food waste creation.

Activity

Working together with Wasteserv, Marsaskala Local Council, and food and hospitality establishments in the area, 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.

Food and hospitality businesses were specifically chosen within the locality of Marsaskala as Wasteserv had already been collecting waste from establishments in this area, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, given the proximity of the treatment plant to the neighbourhood. This meant that the pilot project was easily implementable causing minimal disruption.

The project communicated with the public using social media platforms to advertise and encourage conversation about TRiFOCAL's messages to complement the work done with the corporate sector.

Challenges

The project encountered several challenges throughout every stage of the project including:

- Short timeframe from when Malta joined the project.
- Peak season for hospitality so engaging with restaurants was a challenge.
- Logistical challenges with waste collection.

Evaluation

Method

The project was evaluated in the following ways:

- The barcoded organic waste bags and mixed waste bags collected during the pilot were weighed and the data was analysed.
- There was a qualitative evaluation using direct engagement and collated feedback on initiatives implemented to reduce food waste within and separately collect it from hospitality and food service businesses.
- A short complementary questionnaire on food waste habits at home and when eating out was issued to the general public.

Results

The main benefit of replicating this campaign was the improvement in understanding of the logistical challenges, and environmental opportunities relating to the separate collection of food waste from hospitality and food service businesses.

There were also several indirect benefits, such as the food and hospitality establishments in the pilot project discussing forming an association to better manage waste collections and local issues. The organisations involved were also approached by several education leaders who had been aware of the campaign and were keen to communicate the TRiFOCAL messages in schools.

2.7 tonnes of organic food waste were collected and diverted from landfill as part of the business pilot and the project managed to engage with nine food and hospitality establishments to achieve this, giving an indication of food waste generated by these types of business.

Qualitative research conducted through surveys found that most food waste occurs at the customer side, which enabled the establishments to better focus their efforts in food waste minimisation. A further conclusion was that the key barriers to separating food waste for collection lay in the collection times and available places to leave waste outside at night for morning collection.

These findings will feed into upcoming waste policy measures in Malta's Waste Management Plan 2021-2030.

Conclusion

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. These outcomes will feed into future policy in Malta.

Business understanding of the issues of food waste prevention and recycling appeared to increase in the nine pilot businesses as demonstrated by collaboration on waste collection and wider community work.