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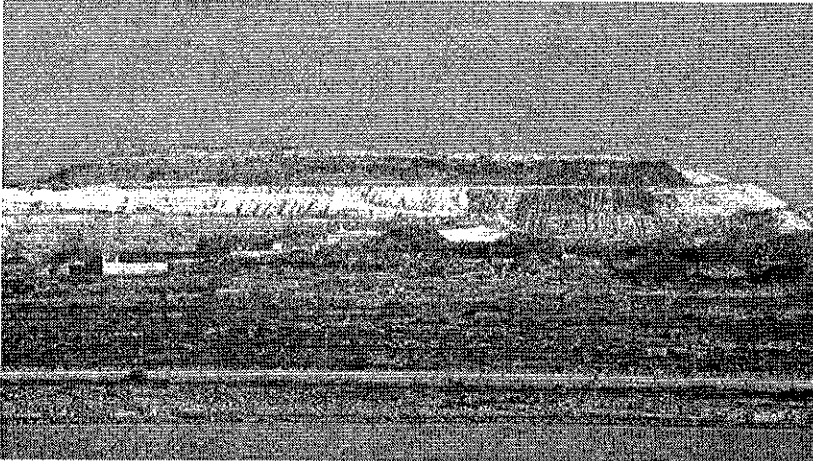
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Monday, November 27, 2017, 11:20 by Claire Caruana

## Malta has poorest EU recycling rate... and it's getting worse

### Recycling down from 10% in 2012 to 6.7% in 2015



Malta recycles less than 10 per cent of its waste as concerns mount that the Maghtab landfill will reach full capacity in less than two years. Photo: Steve Zammit Lupi

Recycling remains an unpopular habit in Malta, with only 6.7 per cent of waste being reused despite the stress placed of late on better management.

Malta recycled the smallest quantity of municipal waste according to a study issued recently outlining the progress among member states on sustainable development goals. The figures were issued by the European Union's statistics office, Eurostat, on the latest available data, which is for 2015.

The volume of Malta's recycled waste kept dropping for three years running, with the figure reaching almost 10 per cent in 2012, only to go down to under seven per cent in the year under review.

The figures emerge as concerns mount that the Maghtab landfill will reach full capacity in less than two years' time.

The data shows that in the EU, about 45 per cent of municipal waste was recycled in 2015, up from 25.3 per cent in 2000 and 38.3 per cent in 2010.

*About 45 per cent of the EU's municipal waste was recycled in 2015*

The major obstacle Malta faced, the report noted, was the "inherently small scale of the Maltese market" and the need to achieve economies of scale in recovery and recycling of waste compared to other member states. All EU members bound themselves to recycling 50 per cent of waste by 2020.

During the launch of a recycling campaign last week, Environment Minister José Herrera acknowledged that Malta still had "a long way to go" before reaching the 2020 targets.

"The waste management issue is a challenge the government faces, and more work on it is needed," Dr Herrera said, adding that in the coming months, efforts to address the issue would be further stepped.

The minister indicated that recycling would be made compulsory under new waste separation laws being drafted.

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