Bathing water quality 2024
Country factsheet

Portugal

June 2025

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European Environment Agency

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Bathing water quality in the season of 2024

Portugal

Under the provisions of the Bathing Water Directive, about 22 thousand bathing waters are monitored in Europe each season. The monitoring data and other information regarding bathing water management are reported to the European Environment Agency by 29 reporting countries in Europe (EU-27 Member States, Albania and Switzerland), to be assessed for the annual European report and more detailed national reports.

1. BWD reporting in the season of 2024

Bathing waters in the season 2024	
Total reported	673
Coastal	512
Inland	161
First identified in 2024	6
Delisted in 2024	0
Total reported samples	4653

Bathing water quality in the season 2024	
Excellent	556 (82.6%)
Good	73 (10.8%)
Sufficient	15 (2.2%)
Poor	9 (1.3%)
Not classified	20 (3%)

The quality of bathing waters is classified according to two microbiological parameters (Escherichia coli and intestinal enterococci), considering the minimum quality standards defined in the Bathing Water Directive. 95.7% of all reported bathing waters[1] are in line with the minimum quality standards of the Directive, thus classified “sufficient” or better.

More information at the **national bathing water portals:**

Mainland: https://www.apambiente.pt/apa/epoca-balnear-2024

Azores: https://portal.azores.gov.pt/web/drotrh/aguas-balneares

Madeira: https://www.madeira.gov.pt/draac/Estrutura/DRAAC/Areas/...

[1] »All reported bathing waters« means all bathing waters identified by a country, including those that could not be quality classified.

2. BWD monitoring

Each bathing water that is identified by the reporting country needs to have a monitoring calendar established before the bathing season. The monitoring calendar requirements can be summarised as follows: (1) a pre-season sample is to be taken shortly before the start of each bathing season; (2) no fewer than four (alternatively, three for specific cases) samples are to be taken and analysed per bathing season; and (3) an interval between sampling dates never exceeds one month.

The assessment also investigates whether the requirements of the monitoring calendar were met (Table 1).

Table 1: Bathing waters in 2024 according to implementation of the monitoring calendar

	Count	Share of total [%]
Monitoring calendar implemented All monitoring calendar conditions listed above are implemented at the bathing water.	651	96.7%
Monitoring calendar not implemented Not all monitoring calendar conditions listed above are implemented at the bathing water. It may be quality-classified if enough samples are available in the last assessment period.	22	3.3%

In addition to the monitoring calendar, management specifics of the last assessment period of four years are also assessed. The status primarily indicates whether the complete dataset of four seasons is available, but also points out the reasons as to why the bathing waters do not have the complete last assessment period dataset. The latter may indicate developing conditions at the site – most importantly, whether the bathing water has been newly identified within the period, or any changes have occurred that are likely to affect the classification of the bathing water.

Table 2: Management specifics in the last assessment period of 2021–2024

	Count	Share of total [%]
Continuously monitored A bathing water has been monitored in each bathing season of the last assessment period.	633	94.1%
Newly identified A bathing water was identified for the first time within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned for full four years after reported.	25	3.7%
Quality changes A bathing water was subject to changes described in BWD Art. 4.4 within the last assessment period. Such status is assigned for full four years after reported.	2	0.3%
Monitoring gap A bathing water was not monitored for at least one season in the last assessment period. No quality classification is made if not enough samples are reported for the most recent season.	13	1.9%

3. Bathing water quality

3.1 Coastal bathing waters

Coastal bathing waters are situated on the sea or transitional water coastline, with respective parameter thresholds defined in Annex I of the Directive. They are subject to more strict thresholds than the inland bathing waters. The quality trend is shown in Figure 1. Number of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period 2021–2024 is given in Annex I.

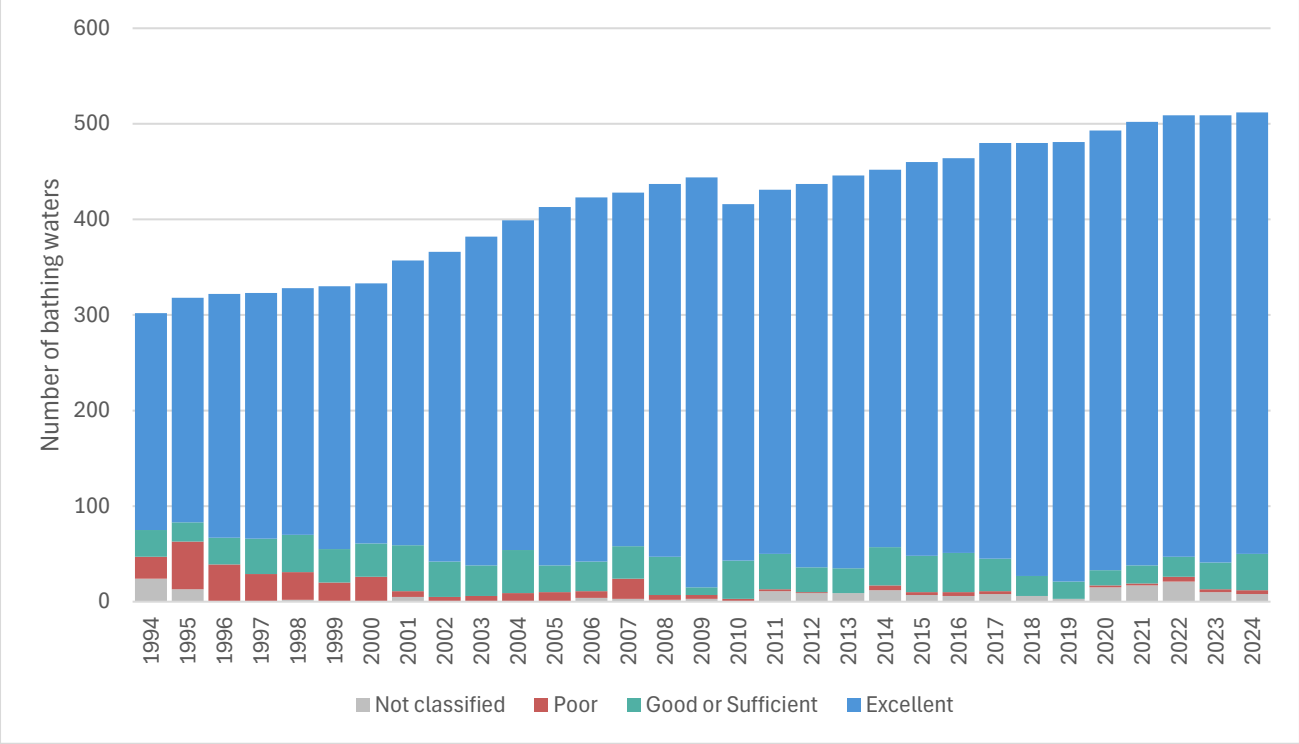

Figure 1: Trend of coastal bathing water quality. Notes: Each column represents an absolute number of bathing waters in the season. Quality classes “good” and “sufficient” are merged for comparability with the classification of the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

3.2 Inland bathing waters

Inland bathing waters are situated at rivers and lakes, featuring fresh water and with respective parameter thresholds defined in Annex I of the Directive. The quality trend is shown in Figure 2. Number of bathing waters by quality class for the last assessment period 2021–2024 is given in Annex I.

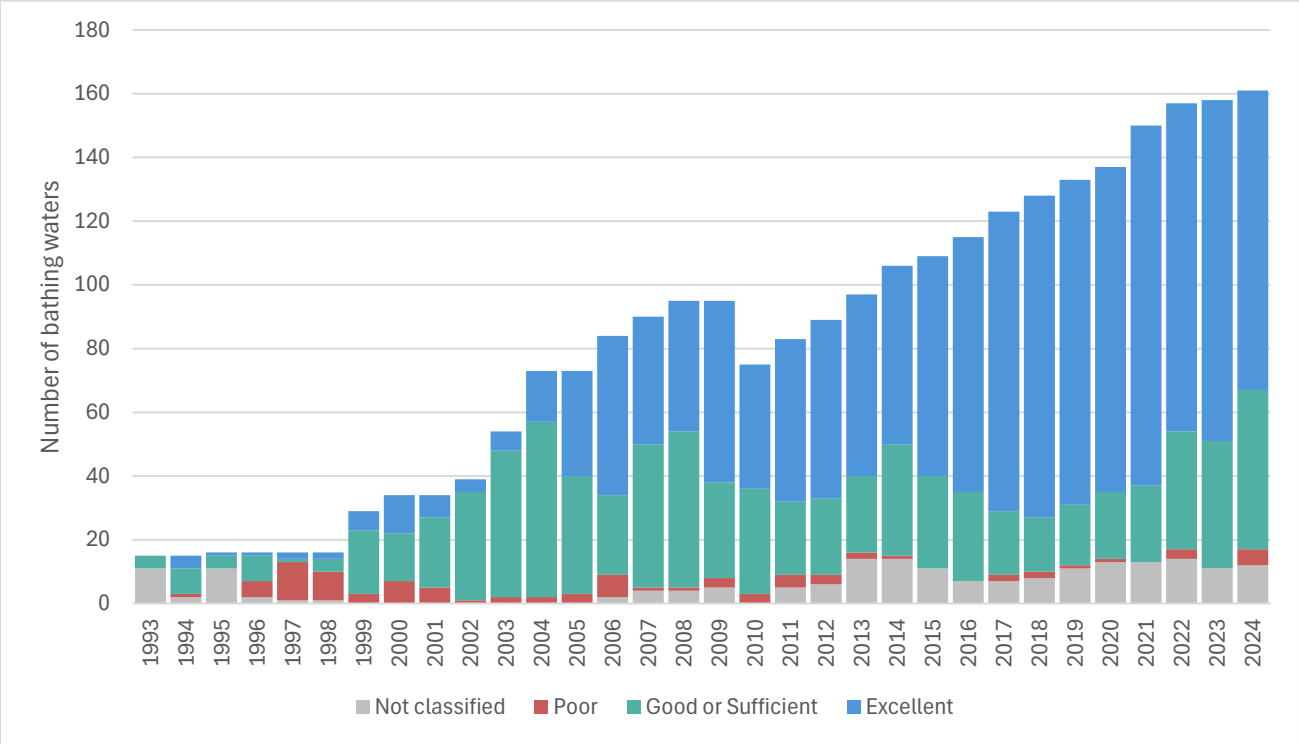

Figure 2: Trend of inland bathing water quality. Notes: Each column represents an absolute number of bathing waters in the season. Quality classes "good" and "sufficient" are merged for comparability with the classification of the preceding Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC.

Annex I Bathing water quality in 2021–2024

Table 3: Bathing water quality by water category and season

		Total number of bathing waters	Excellent		Good		Sufficient		Poor		Not classified	
			Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Coastal	2021	502	464	92.4%	19	3.8%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%	17	3.4%
	2022	509	462	90.8%	19	3.7%	2	0.4%	5	1.0%	21	4.1%
	2023	509	468	91.9%	22	4.3%	6	1.2%	3	0.6%	10	2.0%
	2024	512	462	90.2%	33	6.4%	5	1.0%	4	0.8%	8	1.6%
Inland	2021	150	113	75.3%	21	14.0%	3	2.0%	0	0.0%	13	8.7%
	2022	157	103	65.6%	34	21.7%	3	1.9%	3	1.9%	14	8.9%
	2023	158	107	67.7%	35	22.2%	5	3.2%	0	0.0%	11	7.0%
	2024	161	94	58.4%	40	24.8%	10	6.2%	5	3.1%	12	7.5%
Total	**2021**	**652**	**577**	**88.5%**	**40**	**6.1%**	**3**	**0.5%**	**2**	**0.3%**	**30**	**4.6%**
	2022	**666**	**565**	**84.8%**	**53**	**8.0%**	**5**	**0.8%**	**8**	**1.2%**	**35**	**5.3%**
	2023	**667**	**575**	**86.2%**	**57**	**8.5%**	**11**	**1.6%**	**3**	**0.4%**	**21**	**3.1%**
	2024	**673**	**556**	**82.6%**	**73**	**10.8%**	**15**	**2.2%**	**9**	**1.3%**	**20**	**3.0%**

Note: Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.

Annex II Bathing water quality map

Map 1: Bathing waters reported during the 2024 bathing season in Portugal

Source: National boundaries: EEA; Large rivers and lakes: EEA, WFD Article 3; Bathing waters data and coordinates: Portugese authorities; Digital Elevation Model over Europe (EU-DEM): EEA.