

Malta

Malta, which became independent from Britain in 1964, had no intermediate tier of governance until the creation in 1994 of directly elected *kunsilli* (local councils) grouped in three regions which were transformed into five regional committees (*kumitat reġjonali*) from 2009 (Council of Europe: Malta 1998, 2006; Law No. 15/1993; No. 153/1994; and No 320/2011). Regional committees consist of the mayors of local councils from within the region and the region president is elected by all the councilors from within the region (Law No. 320/2011, Art. 4). The regional committees do not have any administrative or executive set up and the central government has in 2018 not yet decentralized responsibilities (Committee of the Regions 2005; Council of Europe: Malta 1998, 2006; Law No. 12/2010, Art. 5; Ragonesi and Mifsud 2015). A regulation adopted in 2015 gave regional committees some competences in street lightning, cultural activities, and waste management (Law No. 320/2011, Art. 19) but the Local Enforcement Systems Agency, which is a central government agency, controls all the regional funds (Law No. 320/2011, Art. 29; Ragonesi and Mifsud 2015). With an average population size of around 81,000 inhabitants the regional committees do not meet the population threshold for regional government.

Subnational authority rests with the local councils. A constitutional revision in 2001 recognized local councils as units of self-government (C 1964, Art. 115A; Law No. 13/2001) and from 2001 onwards, local councils obtained competences in public libraries, enforcement of traffic, environment regulations, and the provision of local e-government (Law No. 292/2001; No. 293/2001; No. 67/2002; No. 93/2002; No. 114/2002; No. 314/2002; and No. 197/2003).

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