



MALTA

**Voluntary National Review
on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

2018

Foreword by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta, Hon. Joseph Muscat



The concept of sustainable development has at its very foundation the respect towards the integrity and stability of natural resources and ecosystems, whilst promoting human development and meeting human needs. This concept has been at the forefront of Malta's Foreign Policy well before the concept of sustainable development became internationally recognised and included in mainstream discourse.

It was in 1967 when Dr Arvid Pardo, Malta's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), set in motion a fifteen-year process that culminated in the adoption of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Subsequent legal developments earned Dr Pardo the title of 'Father of the Law of the Sea'. Malta's proposal was remarkably innovative at the time, putting forward the concept that the seabed, ocean floor, and sub-soil are 'the Common Heritage of Mankind', to be used for peaceful purposes and for the exclusive benefit of humanity, thus preventing the unsustainable use or misappropriation of resources and minerals.

In 1968, Malta took the initiative to put the phenomenon of ageing on the UN agenda. After years of elaborate work on the subject, the World Assembly on Ageing was convened in 1982, leading to the unanimous adoption of the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing that remains the cornerstone of worldwide policy on ageing even today. Later that same year, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 37/51, which recommended the promotion of training and research as well as the exchange of information and knowledge to provide an international basis for social policies and action on ageing.

Two decades later, Malta once again called upon the UN for the creation of an appropriate forum that would take immediate action to review the phenomenon of climate change and propose legal and political measures to address global warming and its environmental and socio-economic implications. This proposal led to the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution 43/53 on the 'Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind' on 6th December 1998. Malta's initiative was the beginning of a process that culminated in two international legal instruments: The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol (KP), both being important precursors to the Paris Agreement on climate change of 2015.

The concepts set out in UNCLOS, in the Vienna International Plan of Action, and in the UN climate change instruments remain as valid today as when they were adopted. Such instruments, together with several other ones adopted by the international community over the years, are based on the concept of the protection of resources and sustainability.

Malta has always been conscientious and sensitive to the importance of protecting natural resources, which determine our future, and believes that sustainability starts at home. Yet, given the current levels of globalisation and interconnectivity, no single nation-state can advance sustainably without the collective support of other states, be it close or far. We need to stand united to advance global sustainability and, thus, safeguard our present and our future, in line with our responsibility, for generations to come.

Malta remains committed to continue moving forward along this path. This Voluntary National Review – Malta's first – supports this commitment and it is with pleasure that we share our progress with other states with which we are making this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Muscat', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph Muscat

Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta

Foreword by Malta's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, Hon. Carmelo Abela



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has provided nations across the globe with a form of blueprint; a 'code' which, when implemented jointly and fully, will transform the world into a sustainable and prosperous one, *leaving no one behind*. This 'code', which comes in the form of 17 Goals, is unique in a number of ways, not least in its universal and transformative nature. The power of this 'code' rests, however, in the capacity of states to implement it, fully and jointly. Only then can we truly reap the benefits of our efforts.

The concept of sustainable development is key to Malta's long-term endurance and prosperity. Being an island with limited natural resources entails the need for smart strategies to maximise our potential, whilst protecting and preserving our natural habitat. Development therefore needs to be mindful and strategically planned.

Over the past few decades, Malta graduated from a developing state in the 1990s to a developed nation, faced by a dearth of natural resources, and today Malta flaunts a strong and booming economy, enriched by our ever-growing services sector and diminishing unemployment levels.

As the Minister responsible for international development and for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, I remain strongly committed to the Agenda's success. During Malta's Presidency of the Council of the European Union last year, international development was amongst our priorities, culminating in the adoption of the European Consensus on Development on 7th June 2017. The Consensus aligns European development action with the 2030 Agenda, fully integrating the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

This Voluntary National Review is an opportunity for Malta to share its efforts in the field of sustainable development. We hope that our Review, which contains an overview of Malta's policies and initiatives that have been contributing to the attainment of the UN development goals, may be of inspiration to other nations. Similarly, we take inspiration from the rich information, best practices, and lessons learnt that are contained in other reviews shared annually at the High Level Political Forum.

The year 2030 is near, yet far. As a community of nations, we still have a long way to go before we can deem our efforts to be a success against the commitment we made three years ago when we adopted this ambitious Agenda.

Every effort counts. In this regard, our national commitment remains unwavering. On its part, Malta will continue moving forward, guided by the concepts of sustainability and by the SDGs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carmelo Abela". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Carmelo Abela

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion

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1. Introduction

An ancient Maltese proverb – *'Tieħu bla ma trodd, is-swar thott'* (if you keep using up resources unsustainably, you will end up dismantling the fortifications too) - warns that, unless the exploitation of resources is backed by replenishment, even the most durable and abundant resource will reach a point of extinction.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 can be seen as a global recognition that development should be conducted without risking the depletion of natural resources. This Agenda has provided each state with a set of important guidelines of how to reach sustainability. These are reflected in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), further broken down into 169 targets and indicators, which have at their very core the aim of ending poverty, protecting the planet, and promoting global peace and prosperity.



Figure 1: The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

The Goals are a blueprint for the world's future. They are in their very nature universal, interlinked and transformative. They are instrumental as a tool for creating awareness and national ownership.

However, in order for the SDGs to be truly effective and bring about the much needed change on a global scale, their strength lies in being implemented by each state and in the development of global partnerships. This Voluntary National Review (VNR) seeks to provide a snapshot of Malta's efforts over the years in moving closer to sustainable development practices, both pre- and post-Agenda 2030.

Malta has a population of almost half a million inhabitants. Based on UN data released in 2015, when Malta's population stood at 420,000, Malta ranked 7th among UN States in terms of population density. Malta has come a long way in its development, and investment in human capital has compensated for the scarcity of natural resources. Malta's particular characteristics play a central role in the contribution to sustainable development, which does not remain an option but becomes a lifeline towards prosperity and livelihood.

The VNR starts by giving an overview of Malta's specific profile and context. This is important since the sustainable development needs of small island states differ greatly from those of big non-island countries, despite a number of overlaps in other areas. It is following an understanding of these particular specificities that the VNR will move towards other chapters, that illustrate Malta's implementation of the 17 SDGs to date, whilst acknowledging remaining gaps.

2. A snapshot of Malta's profile and country context



Figure 2: Map of the Maltese archipelago

Malta, officially the *Republic of Malta*, is a small island state situated to the south of Sicily in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, between Europe and North Africa. The Maltese archipelago is made up of the islands of Malta, Gozo, Comino, Cominotto, and Filfla, of which only Malta, Gozo and Comino are inhabited.

Malta has a rich history of colonial control spanning centuries, having been occupied by the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, the French, and the British, and ruled by the Order of St. John. Having gained independence from Britain in 1964 and become a Republic in 1974, Malta is today a Parliamentary Republic.

The Maltese archipelago has a total land area of 316 sq km and a coastline of 140km. The estimated population of Malta and Gozo at the end of 2016 was 440,433. Maltese and English are the two official languages, with Maltese also being the national language.

- ***Malta's territorial challenges***

As an island state, Malta is faced with inherent challenges and limitations, especially when compared to mainland Europe. Such challenges include the lack of accessibility to European infrastructure, limited natural resources, a high population density, and lower economies of scale.

Malta's natural resources are limited to limestone, salt, and arable land. Malta has few natural freshwater resources and relies heavily on desalination. Malta's deep coastal waters and land spatial constraints pose significant challenges to alternative sources of energy such as wind farming, both offshore and on land. Malta is dependent on imported fossil oil for most of its energy needs, and this heavily impacts both the economy as well as the carbon footprint of the island. Malta's high urban density also poses significant challenges to the transport sector.

The concept of insularity, territorial imbalances, and regional differentiation is even more accentuated in Gozo, Malta's sister island. With an area of just 67 sq km and a total resident population of 54,321 as at end 2016, Gozo is heavily dependent on the sea transport link with Malta. Characterised by a more elderly population, Gozo is highly dependent on the tourism, agriculture, and fishing sectors.

- ***Malta's climate, natural resources, and biodiversity***

Malta's climate is typically semi-arid Mediterranean, characterised by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Malta suffers from a lack of natural water resources, having no natural rivers or lakes, with the country's freshwater supply stored in groundwater aquifers or obtained through rainwater harvesting. The lack of natural resources is further exacerbated by the high population density, which leads to higher water demand. Given the increased pressure on the islands' aquifer systems, sustainable water management is at the top of the Maltese Government's political agenda. The Maltese Islands are rich in biodiversity, characterised by different types of habitats such as coastal, sand dunes, woodland, and rocky habitats, amongst others.

- ***Malta's political structure***

Malta is a constitutional Republic, and a Parliamentary democracy. It gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1964 and became a Republic within the Commonwealth, in 1974. Malta joined the European Union on 1 May 2004, together with nine other countries. In terms

of population, it is the smallest EU Member State. On 1 January 2008, Malta adopted the euro, and the Central Bank of Malta became a member of the Euro-system.

The Head of Government in Malta is the Prime Minister, who leads the administration for five-year terms. The Head of State, however, is a House of Representatives-elected President who serves a largely ceremonial role. The electoral system used is that of proportional representation by means of a Single Transferable Vote. The national Government is led by the Prime Minister, who heads a Cabinet. The President has the duty of safeguarding the Constitution and can assist in solving political deadlocks in time of need.

The Maltese Islands comprise 68 localities in Malta and Gozo, administered through Local Councils, which are responsible for the general upkeep of their localities. Local Councils are responsible for the collection and removal of household waste within the parameters of the national Waste Management Plan for the Maltese Islands 2013-2020. They are not responsible for taxation policies. In addition, Local Councils are also empowered at law to promote social policy initiatives within their localities. These include working with people having special needs, with children and young people having literacy problems, with the elderly, persons with mental health problems, in community care, as well as taking initiatives in the area of preventive care.

- *Malta's economic situation*

Malta is one of the fastest-growing economies in the EU, with an average rate of 4.1% in the period 2004 to 2017, compared to 1.4% for the EU as a whole. In 2017, Malta recorded a nominal GDP of €11.1 bn, an increase of 9% over 2016. Furthermore, in 2017, Malta recorded a General Government surplus which accounted for 3.9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Over the past five years, the annual unemployment rate for Malta has been on the decline, reaching 3.6% in the fourth quarter of 2017. Malta has moved towards a knowledge-based and innovative economy, with a focus on services. In addition, the services industry has grown at a faster pace than other sectors following accession to the EU in 2004. In particular, Malta's financial and online gaming sectors have experienced substantial growth. The financial sector has succeeded in developing a high level of expertise in certain areas. Tourism has also experienced significant growth, the result of a combination of factors including a drive towards improved infrastructure and hotels, the introduction of low-cost airlines, and EU investment in the restoration of historic sites. Malta achieved progress with R&D expenditure as a percentage of GDP, increasing from 0.61% of GDP in 2010 to 0.77% of GDP in 2015, and 0.61% in 2016 (2016 figure is on a provisional basis). ICT development has also led to significant socio-economic growth, particularly through e-commerce. A shift towards a digital economy remains vital to ensuring the sustainability of local SMEs.

3. Transitioning from a developing to a developed State – Malta’s journey

Malta achieved its independence in 1964, when it was still a developing country. At that time, a United Nations study recommended mass emigration ‘as the only feasible solution in the long’. The predicament proved false as Malta embarked on a continuous strong economic growth path, which transformed the economy to a state where, today, the country requires foreign labour to maintain its momentum.

Prior to Independence, the Maltese economy relied largely on the military budget of the United Kingdom in Malta and servicing of foreign naval ships. With the dockyard industry, starting to lose viability in the first decade following Independence, Malta started relying on emigration to alleviate the pressures of unemployment and lack of economic growth. During that time, Malta’s population declined by 7% as emigration outnumbered natural growth.

During the 1970s, the economy grew sharply, driven by a strong rise in the capital stock, which by 1980 was three times its size when compared to 1970. This contributed to raise the total factor productivity, significantly. In the second decade after Independence, Malta embarked on an industrial policy providing financial and taxation incentives to foreign firms to relocate to the island. During that time, Malta also adopted a tourism policy and embarked on a programme of accommodation and infrastructural development to meet the growing needs of the increasing number of visitors. Malta was one of the few countries that was not affected by the international recession of 1974.

During the eighties, Malta’s economic development slowed down following a decline in investment, a sharp drop in the number of visitors to the island, and the international recession of 1981-82. The period of recession was followed by an economic boom in the following decade as a result of a large increase in capital investment, in an effort to improve public utilities and modernise infrastructure.

Malta joined the European Union in 2004 and, since then, the country has undergone a period of deep economic change, granting Malta the status of a developed country. The country adopted new policies on taxation in line with European directives and managed to attract a large number of international firms in the financial, insurance, and internet gaming sectors, among others. Maritime and aircraft registers were established, together with aircraft maintenance operations. Tourism boomed, particularly following the introduction of low-cost airlines operating from more routes from across Europe to Malta.

The massive changes in investment, taxation, and infrastructure, together with reforms in working practices and education, led to a sharp rise in output, profitability, productivity, and employment. Malta transformed its growing public debts and rising balance of payments deficits into massive surpluses. For the first time in its history, between 2012 and 2017, Malta recorded balance of payments surpluses for six consecutive years with an average of 6.2% a year. This slashed its public debt level by 29% to 51% of the gross domestic product. The most

important development during this period was the unprecedented increase in the growth of employment, particularly among the female population, as a result of new welfare policies and investment in education.

4. Policies promoting Sustainable Development in Malta – an Overview

The notion of Sustainable Development was first introduced in Malta in the Development Planning Act of 1992. The Act is an attempt at codifying laws in relation to development planning and makes provisions for the planning and management of development, for the establishment of an authority with powers to that effect, and for matters connected therewith or ancillary thereto. The Development Planning Act established an Authority and gave it powers to promote proper planning and sustainable development of public and private land and sea. Since 1992, the Act has been amended various times and has been supplemented by a number of subsidiary laws, development plans and planning policies.

In 2001, the Environment Protection Act established the National Commission for Sustainable Development, which was set up in 2002. The National Commission was entrusted with the role of advocating on national sustainable development across all sectors; reviewing progress in the achievement of sustainable development; and achieving further progress. Following public consultations, in 2006 the National Commission proposed a Sustainable Development Strategy for the Maltese Islands 2007-2016, which was endorsed by Cabinet in December 2007. The Malta Strategy builds upon the Sustainable Development Strategy of the EU and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development. The Malta Strategy identifies 20 priority areas, all of which are accompanied by targets and indicators. These areas include the environment, the economy, society, cross cutting issues, and implementation of the Strategy. The Strategy, thus, provides a framework for a systematic approach within an institutionalised process of consultation and consensus building and guides policymakers on different sectors.

The Sustainable Development Act was later adopted in 2012, resulting in a legislative framework mandating Government to mainstream sustainable development in its policies. The Act provides for a system of Sustainable Development Coordinators in every Ministry, which role has been assigned to Permanent Secretaries. The Act also proposes the setting up of a Sustainable Development Network; a Sustainable Development Focal Point in every Government department, agency or entity; as well as the setting up of a Guardian of Future Generations.

The Guardian of Future Generations, as established by Article 8 of the Sustainable Development Act, has the aim of safeguarding inter-generational and intra-generational sustainable development in Malta. It is a board composed of four members: a Chairperson, who is appointed by the Prime Minister; and three members, appointed by the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment, and Climate Change. The Guardian of Future Generations shall endeavour to facilitate closer collaboration between all stakeholders in the

pursuit of the right balance between socio-economic development and environmental stewardship in the Maltese Islands. The Guardian of Future Generations is in line with the proposal championed by Malta in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro. The proposal was put forward by the Maltese Foreign Minister of the time, Guido de Marco, yet was blocked by other UN Member States and never made it into the final declaration.

Article 14 of the Sustainable Development Act of Malta requires Parliament to annually hold a discussion without a vote on a Sustainable Development Annual Report which is tabled by the Minister concerned. The Annual Sustainable Development Report highlights national commitments taken in favour of sustainable development. The most recent debate on the subject matter was held on 1st November 2017 during which the last two annual reports were discussed. The 2017 Sustainable Development Annual Report is expected to be presented in Parliament later this year.

The Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED) was approved by Parliament in July 2015 as the official document that addresses spatial issues for the Maltese Islands in the coming years. It regulates the sustainable management of land and sea resources covering the whole territory and territorial waters of the Maltese Islands, and sets out objectives in relation to the sustainable development and use of land and sea space. The Plan offers a shift from traditional land use planning to a more holistic spatial planning approach.

The Development Planning Act of 2016 regulates the provision for sustainable planning and management of spatial development, for the establishment of an authority with powers to that effect, and for all associated matters. The Act places a duty on the Government to enhance the quality of life for the benefit of present and future generations, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, through a comprehensive sustainable land use planning system. The Act also establishes the structure of the Planning Authority.

5. Incorporating the SDGs in national frameworks

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development in 2015, the Maltese Government has been working on the development of a national Vision 2050. The aim of the Vision 2050 will be to offer guidelines towards long-term sustainable development in Malta, whilst integrating the 2030 Agenda by offering a framework for the mainstreaming of sustainable development across all levels of Government. The Vision 2050, once adopted, will be followed by a national Strategy and Action Plan to assist in its implementation. The Vision acknowledges that whilst some targets may be achieved in the short to medium term, others require a longer timeframe, hence the 2050 target. The Vision is based on the three pillars of sustainable development, along with some cross-cutting elements. It places a strong basis for a holistic governance framework, with an accentuation on increasing the awareness of sustainable development. The Vision contains suggestions for decoupling of the economy and

for more green growth, and addresses data structures and monitoring frameworks, including suggestions towards their restructuring for more effective data collection.

The objectives of the Vision 2050 will be based on more efficient resource utilisation and the long-term management of, and investment in human, social and material resources, which is particularly relevant for Malta's profile. The Vision introduces the concept of a sustainable society by protecting natural resources and safeguarding health, which is essential to the development and prosperity of every society. A most important element of the new proposed Vision 2050 is the strong focus on prevention, rather than mitigation. The Vision calls for the mainstreaming of sustainable development policies and measures and acknowledges that further action at national level is needed to ensure the long-term protection of the critical resources that constitute the basis of sustainable development.

6. Creating SDG Ownership

The Sustainable Development Act (2012) establishes a whole-of-government approach and a coordinating mechanism for sustainable development policy in Malta, through the setting up of a Focal Point Network. The Network, which falls under the organisation of the Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development & Climate Change (MESDC), involves the participation of a senior representative from each Government Ministry. The Network meets periodically and has at its objective the sharing of information on progress or developments related to sustainable development in Malta.

The Focal Point Network has thus created a mechanism of ownership across Government, ensuring that all Government Ministries are informed of developments in relation to sustainable development in general, and the 2030 Agenda in particular. It offers a forum for the exchange of information and is a much-needed network given the interlinkages that exist among the 17 SDGs and their associated targets, which so often overlap in the work of the respective Ministries. In this regard, the Network is a catalyst for closer cooperation among Government Ministries, leading to increased harmonisation across the public sector to move towards more sustainable development practices, whilst promoting the removal of silos, which so often hinder sustainable development efforts.

The Focal Point Network also proved to be an essential tool for this review to take place, facilitating the collection of data and input.

7. Methodology and Process for Preparation of the Review

The decision to deliver a VNR during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of 2018 was taken following the participation of Maltese Government officials at the 2017 HLPF. It was felt that the timing was right to conduct a national review, where Malta could join other nations in the 2030 Agenda's follow-up and review mechanism.

As a first step, a Task Force within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion (MFTP) was set up with the task of coordinating and collating input among Government Ministries, and eventually in drafting the Review itself.

Notification to other Government Ministries of the decision to deliver a VNR at the 2018 HLPF was made during a Focal Point Meeting that took place in October 2017, where information was shared, including plans in relation to the Review. The Focal Point Network greatly facilitated the work of the Task Force by offering direct contact to senior officials from each Government Ministry whilst ensuring that those contacted were already aware of plans in relation to the review.

Malta's compact and centralised administration greatly facilitated the preparatory work for the VNR. The Task Force contacted each Government Ministry and meetings were held between the Task Force and senior Government officials. A set of guidelines were prepared by the Task Force and were presented to each Ministry. These were useful in guiding line Ministries in identifying specific areas of work falling under their respective Ministry that contribute to the 2030 Agenda, using the SDG targets as a checklist. This led to more focused input and data in relation to the SDGs, ensuring harmonisation in the input collected, which greatly simplified the work of the Task Force during the collation and drafting stage. Ministries were also tasked with liaising with sectors of Government falling under their respective responsibility, such as Government Agencies, Foundations, Commissions, and other entities, as part of their exercise in presenting input to the Task Force. The Task Force served as a central point of reference to Government and all other stakeholders involved.

The Task Force extended its consultations to include Parliament, the private sector, and civil society. Furthermore, the Task Force held meetings with the National Statistics Office in order to discuss data relative to the SDGs. Such data is presented as Annex 1 to the VNR.

All information and data contained in the VNR represents information up until mid-March 2018, which was the cut-off-date given to all stakeholders consulted.

8. Updating Malta's ODA Policy Framework

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion is responsible for Malta's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Policy. To date, Malta's ODA policy is guided by its 2014-2020 policy document, entitled 'Official Development Assistance Policy and a Framework for Humanitarian Assistance'.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, and of the European Consensus on Development in 2017, Malta's ODA policy is being updated through a new ODA Implementation Plan. The new ODA Implementation Plan will seek to promote greater synergies with the private sector, particularly through the promotion of opportunities arising under the European External Investment Plan (EIP) and the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD).

Building on Malta's previous ODA policy framework, the new policy will give priority to projects implemented by Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDOs) in North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East as a means of promoting stability and prosperity in Malta's immediate neighbourhood and beyond. However, the new ODA policy will allocate special preference to projects to be implemented in countries where Malta has representation on the ground, whilst NGDOs will be encouraged to move away from small projects towards larger, high impact, multi-annual projects. This is in order to maximise the mandate of Malta's diplomatic, consular, and other representations by giving them a role in facilitating the implementation of ODA projects, whilst also offering a means of follow-up to review the impact of such projects in the long term. By promoting bigger projects instead of smaller and more sporadic ones, the intention is to have a more focused ODA contribution with higher impact, focusing directly on the development needs of the countries concerned.

The new ODA Implementation Plan will continue to allocate funds for scholarships, whilst focusing also on capacity building courses as a means of assisting developing countries in strengthening their capacities in different areas.

The last section of the new draft Plan reflects a continuation of the previous ODA policy, focusing on humanitarian aid funding. This is in recognition of the humanitarian-development nexus where Malta is committed to contribute financially or in-kind to assist countries affected by natural or man-made disasters.

9. Setting up of the Malta Development Bank

The Malta Development Bank Act, 2017 (Act XXI of 2017 CAP 574) was passed in Malta on 5th May 2017 and came into force on 24th November 2017 through Legal Notice No. 340 of 2017. The setting up of the Malta Development Bank (MDB) is an important contributor to sustainable development, as acknowledged in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.

The MDB's strategic objective is to address market failures by offering financing facilities to support productive and viable operations where the market is unable or unwilling to accommodate such activities on its own, in whole or in part. These market failures have been estimated to range between €2.3 billion and €3.1 billion, equivalent to 29% - 39% of GDP over five years. The MDB's operations are focused on the provision of facilities to SMEs and infrastructure projects that contribute to national or regional development.

In terms of EU State Aid rules, the MDB cannot conduct business in competition with credit institutions. Accordingly, the MDB is precluded from accepting deposits from the public. Moreover, it will only be prepared to provide financing facilities if there is documentary evidence of a market failure (i.e. that a request for financing of a viable project has been turned down by a bank in part or whole due to, for instance, a higher risk profile or shortage of collateral). Such documentary evidence is intended to ensure that the MDB will not be crowding out market operators. The MDB will thus be operating as a lender of last resort on a non-competitive basis, as well as performing a countercyclical role in support of the national socio-economic objectives.

The MDB's remit of activities cover a wide range of possible operations where there is market failure. In general terms, the MDB will be engaged in the following main sectors:

- Private Sector Development, in particular financing the private sector through innovative financing, credit enhancement, venture capital, advisory function;
- Skills and Technology, in particular sustaining competitiveness by investment in innovation, skills, knowledge-generation and technology;
- Infrastructure development of regional or national importance;
- Green Economy, in particular supporting clean energy and energy efficiency projects, sustainable transport, and water resources;
- Community Services, in particular supporting socially-oriented initiatives and social enterprises operating community services in such sectors as education, health, and housing.

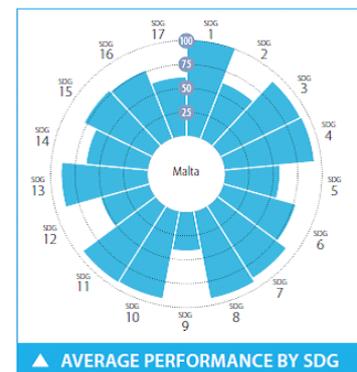
The MDB's vision is to make a significant contribution towards sustainable economic development that benefits the Maltese people by encouraging inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development. It will do this by linking

entrepreneurship, investment, and economic growth to improved living conditions, a higher quality of life, and better social inclusion.

In terms of MDB's Business Plan, the MDB will be offering five main types of facilities, namely loans, guarantees, and, to a lesser extent, equity participation, underwriting, and advisory services. As regards the lending model, the MDB's financing operations will consist primarily of second-tier lending, with an estimated 60% of facilities to be extended through financial institutions and other intermediaries. In terms of Article 5 of the MDB Act, the Government shall guarantee up to 100% of all obligations of the Bank and up to 100% of the loans, facilities, or guarantees issued by the Bank.

10. Implementing the SDGs and associated targets

The SDG Index and Dashboards 2017 Report produced by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the Bertelsmann Stiftung gave Malta a global ranking of 22nd out of 157 countries, with an index score of 77% and a regional score of 69.9%. This ranking encourages Malta to continue working towards a holistic implementation of the SDGs.



Based on the input received from all the stakeholders consulted, the following sections provide an overview of efforts undertaken by Malta to move ever closer to sustainable development, and how such efforts are contributing to the implementation of the SDGs. Malta has chosen to report on progress in all of the 17 SDGs, as follows.

- ***SDG 1: No Poverty***

Reducing Poverty and Social Exclusion

Malta's National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion 2014-2024, launched on 19th December 2014, is a comprehensive policy based on extensive consultation. It addresses poverty from six dimensions, namely income and benefits, employment, education, health and environment, social services, and culture.

This strategy focuses on four main groups: children, elderly persons, unemployed persons and the working poor. The strategic policy document presents an overview of the main poverty and social exclusion indicators, and outlines Malta's socio-economic and demographic realities and challenges. A total of ninety-four strategic policy actions are outlined.

In effect, the measures being undertaken by the Maltese Government to combat poverty and social exclusion are yielding positive results to the extent that Malta has experienced two successive decreases in its AROPE (At Risk of Poverty and Social Exclusion) figures.

To measure poverty, Malta uses the criteria harmonised across the EU, namely Statistics compiled on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). This is a household survey conducted using similar methodology and concepts across all EU Member States. In 2016, 20.1% of the total population was considered to be at risk of poverty and social exclusion. This data indicates that the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate is well below the EU average of 23.5%, a positive indicator for Malta.

The National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion is being complemented by a number of other national strategies and policy documents, including:

- *National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing 2014-2020;*
- *National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disability;*
- *National Strategic Policy for Positive Parenting 2016-2024;*
- *National Children’s Policy 2017;*
- *National Strategic Policy on Dementia 2015-2023;*
- *National Social Report 2015 (mentions persons with disabilities);*
- *Pensions reform.*

Dimensions	Policy Actions	Actions being addressed	Actions not yet addressed	No. of measures/projects feeding into the policy actions
Income & Social Benefits	14	13	1	71
Employment	13	10	3	29
Education	17	16	1	57
Health and Environment	11	11	0	48
Social Welfare Services	8	8	0	24
Children & Young People	5	5	0	35
Elderly	6	6	0	15
Other Vulnerable Groups	6	6	0	19
Housing	5	5	0	12
Culture	9	9	0	23
Total	94	89	5	333

Figure 3: National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion 2014-2024 – Overview of Implementation (covering the period 2014-2017)

National Children's Policy

Following consultation with children, the National Children's Policy was launched in November 2017, covering the period 2017-2024. In line with target 1.2, this policy presents Malta's way forward for safeguarding and promoting the rights and general wellbeing of all children. The policy adopts a life-course approach and recognises the heterogeneity that prevails among children as a result of their different backgrounds.

A Case Study

Malta: The LEAP Project – Helping the most deprived 'take the leap' out of poverty

LEAP centres present a community one-stop shop offering multiple services, including professional advice and support in employment, access to training and child day care, social work, and community services. A multi-disciplinary team consisting of service area leaders, community workers, and social workers cooperate to help alleviate poverty and create an inclusive community. Following the successful EU-funded LEAP pilot project, locally-based Family Resource Centres and Regional Development Centres were set up with the aim of providing a point of reference within the community for various forms of social support with the aim of fighting poverty and social exclusion.

In 2013, nearly a quarter of the population in Malta, equivalent to 99,020 people, were at risk of poverty or social exclusion and 29,290 households were receiving non-contributory social security benefits. The LEAP project, initiated through the European Social Fund, acknowledges that in order to help the most deprived be lifted out of poverty, more assistance is needed and, as a result, the project offers accompanying measures to the distribution of food packages, under the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived 2014-2020 (FEAD). Ultimately, the project strives to make its target group less dependent on social support by helping one or more family members enter the labour market, either through further education or direct employment.

The LEAP project offers personalised support to families and uses its elaborate network to direct families to the relevant social service providers, e.g. housing authorities, social security services, education pathways, and childcare facilities. With the consent of the families, LEAP Project staff carry out home visits which are then used to put together a family profile. An analysis is conducted to see which channels are to be followed to effectively help families out of poverty. A social mentor is assigned with every family and the joint work carried out by the social mentor and family members eventually identifies the family's needs, where a plan is created to address the specific needs of the family. There is regular contact between the family and their mentor to make sure that families are following their personalised plan.

Making Work Pay

In recent years, positive trends have been recorded in Malta's social protection system that were the result of reforms and enhancements activated to keep the benefits system abreast of the changing social needs and challenges in the country. The reform package included measures aimed at 'Making Work Pay'. Such measures are meant to encourage and assist social beneficiaries to take up work by providing encouragement and incentives for inactive people to take up work. The success of such measures is reflected in Malta's low unemployment rate.

As per target 1.4, Malta continues to promote financial literacy via initiatives undertaken both at Government level, and by other key market players such as the Malta Stock Exchange, the Malta Financial Services Authority, and the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority. These provide various elements that contribute to improved financial literacy of individuals and SMEs who want to access financing solutions.

- SDG 2: Zero Hunger

National Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands 2018-2028

The agricultural sector in the Maltese Islands has been significantly re-shaped following Malta's accession to the European Union and changes throughout its various facets are still ongoing. Thus, the National Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands 2018-2028 is intended to steer the agricultural sector into a more sustainable direction, by providing the means along which it can develop and flourish, whilst remaining within the parameters of the EU Common Agricultural Policy and other pertinent regulations.

The Policy is intended to provide a clear direction to all relevant stakeholders, ranging from public entities involved with certification, permits, and decision making, to private entities directly involved in the agricultural scenario that intend to invest or diversify their business. As the overarching objective of this Agricultural Policy, a 'vision' for the Maltese agricultural sector was identified and agreed upon between Government entities, representatives of the private sector and the farming community. This vision contemplates the development of a policy that targets the following critical targets:

- Increasing the competitiveness of active farmers and livestock breeders by focusing on quality and encouraging diversification;
- Facilitating the entry of young farmers by creating a cost-effective agri-business sector;
- Fostering sustainability of farming activities by adapting to the local geo-climatic conditions;
- Ensuring that farmland is managed by genuine farmers for agricultural purposes and related activities.

The Policy has been issued for public consultation with a view to involve all pertinent stakeholders and operators within the agricultural sector.

Quality Regime for Agricultural Products in Malta

Malta currently has few registered quality-labelled products. However, the Maltese Islands have vast potential to tap the markets with quality labelled products. It is essential for the agricultural and food processing sectors to reconnect with Maltese consumers to meet the demand for fresh and quality assured products.

In February 2014, an agreement was signed between the Government and the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari to provide Technical Assistance for the Setting Up of a Quality Regime for Agricultural Products in Malta. This agreement is conducive to the establishment of a Quality Regime that will allow for the development of a Quality Mark for Agricultural Products in Malta.

The Quality Regime consists of the following:

- binding product specifications for each product which identify the production method and the elements that characterise the “superior quality” of the product or the farming and production method;
- an origin label;
- a control system of the product and method specification;
- a compulsory traceability system of the chain which guarantee the transparency of the scheme and assures complete traceability of products.

Organic Farming

With a total surface area of the Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) of 10,254 hectares, Malta ranks as the smallest in Europe. Organic agriculture occupies a relatively small part of the total agricultural acreage in Malta. With a share of approx. 0.2% (21.27Ha) Malta's organic agriculture is below average compared to other EU countries however Malta's ambition is to develop this sector further.

The objectives of organic agricultural farming are:

- To ensure that organic farming in Malta is a production system that relies on natural biological cycles, organic manure, and biological pest control without the application of synthetic fertilisers and plant protection products;
- To improve the productivity and competitiveness of food and farming businesses, with better environmental performance;
- To combine tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment, promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.

Seed Bank Facility

As regards SDG 2, Gozo is planning to set up a seed bank facility that is intended to conserve genetic material from endangered species or ecosystems. This project will be implemented within the context of a collaborative effort involving authorities and universities in Malta and Sicily. This new facility may also become useful in due course for the storage of genetic material related to agricultural production and the conservation of local agricultural genetic material that is endangered due to replacement by modern varieties.

Food Aid Programmes

Since 2016, food aid programmes have been implemented through the EU co-financed Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), which provides non-financial assistance to vulnerable citizens in EU Member States. The programme addresses food deprivation and targets the most deprived households, particularly those including children and the elderly, through the periodic distribution of food packages. Additionally, a Government funded food distribution programme (SFFD) is also being implemented and targets other vulnerable households, which are not benefitting from the FEAD programme. Over 27,000 vulnerable families in Malta are being assisted through these programmes.

- SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

Malta's universal health coverage

The Maltese healthcare system provides universal coverage, where a comprehensive package of services is offered to all entitled¹ individuals free at the point of use. Malta scores 79% on the Universal Health Coverage Tracer Index that reflects coverage of essential health services. Malta has one of the lowest rates of unmet need for medical care, scoring well below the EU average.

¹ 'Entitled individuals' refers to all those who are covered by the Social Security Act. Temporary visitors from EU Member States have direct access to public health care upon presentation of a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The Refugees Act lays down the criteria for access for refugees and persons who have Temporary Humanitarian Protection status.

Indicators	Malta progress 2017
3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access, among the general and the most disadvantaged population)	Universal Health Coverage Tracer Index - 79%
3.8.2 Number of people covered by health insurance or a public health system per 1,000 population	In Malta, entitlement to public health services is ' <i>practically universal</i> '

Table on Target 3.8

Maternal and Infant Mortality

Malta's maternal mortality rate is down to 9 per 100,000 live births, and all births are attended by skilled health personnel, as per the below table:

Indicators	Malta progress 2017	World progress 2015 (2017)
3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	9/100,000 live births	216/100,000 live births
3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	100%	78%

Table on Target 3.1

Work is being undertaken to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age. In order to reach this target a number of measures have been put in place, which include a project to introduce phenylketonuria (PKU) screening and sensory integration therapy. In 2018/2019, a screening for deafness for all newborns and a national screening programme for congenital neonatal hypothyroidism was also put in place.

Indicators	Malta progress 2017	World progress 2015 (2017)
3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate	6.4/1,000 live births	43/1,000 live births
3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate	4.4/1,000 live births	19/1,000 live births

Table on Target 3.2

Addressing and preventing communicable and other diseases

Under target 3.3, Malta has launched and is implementing the following strategies, which remain ongoing:

- *Prevention, Control and Management of Tuberculosis: A National Strategy for Malta (2012)*
- *Communicable Disease strategy (2013)*
- *National plan for the elimination of Hepatitis C by 2025 launched for consultation on February 2018. Plan includes widening entitlement to medications for the treatment of Hepatitis C*
- *Updating current availability of HIV treatment*
- *Introduction of rapid HIV testing at genitourinary clinic as well some private pharmacies. A mobile HIV testing clinics project is in the final stages of implementation.*

Additionally, persons with HIV are entitled to free medical treatment. Screening of all blood products for emerging viruses to ensure safety of blood products is undertaken.

Malta has a National Immunisation Schedule which provides free access to immunisation for various vaccine-preventable diseases including the recent introduction of the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine for 12 year-old girls and Hepatitis B vaccine (97% of children are covered).

Indicators	Malta progress	WHO Region	European
3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease	224 deaths per 100,000 (in populations age 30–69 years, 2014 data)	379 per 100,000 (in populations aged 30-69 years, 2014 data)	
3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate	7.2 per 100,000 (increasing trend, especially Males, 2014 data)	10.5 per 100,000 (2014 data)	

Table on Target 3.4

Other ongoing strategies undertaken by Government in relation to SDG 3 include the following:

- A Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease in Malta (2010)
- Healthy Weight for Life (2012-2020)
- National Breastfeeding Policy And Action Plan (2015-2020)
- Food and Nutrition Policy And Action Plan (2014-2020)
- Diabetes: A National Public Health Priority. A National Strategy for Diabetes (2016-2020)
- The National Cancer Plan (2017-2021)

Other Healthcare services

Other measures contributing to prevention, good health, and wellbeing in Malta include:

- Introduction of a screening programme for cervical cancer and further expansion of age ranges for the breast cancer and colorectal cancer screening programmes;
- Introduction of fast-track nurse and nurse navigators that guide cancer patients through multidisciplinary management during their cancer illness;
- Introduction of free glucose monitors and glucose-testing sticks for all insulin-dependent diabetics as well as the addition of new anti-diabetic medications on the national formulary;
- Investment in the upgrading of renal dialysis machines;
- Inauguration of a stroke rehabilitation unit.

Mental Health and Disorders

Malta has also laid out a national screening programme for symptoms of autism in 18 month-old children.

The Malta Inspire Foundation has a ‘Structured Training and Education Programme (STEP) Early Years’, which is a specialised programme for children aged 2-5 years with difficulties on the autism spectrum.

The main aim of the ‘Early Years’ intervention programme at Inspire is to provide each child with training that will build on his or her strengths, teaching new skills, and providing compensatory skills for areas that require development. The programme also aims to provide parents with information to help them better understand their child’s behaviour and needs, thus improving the outcome for the child. The programme is accredited by the National Autistic Society (NAS) UK.

Content of the programme includes:

- support in coping within the mainstream educational setting (and preparing for school years)
- independent skills training
- social competence development training
- functional spontaneous communication
- cognitive skill development
- play skill development
- child engagement
- generalisation of skills
- proactive approaches to challenging behaviour
- parental empowerment

A perinatal mental health project involving the screening of pregnant women for mental health problems by midwives was also introduced. These women are followed up by psychiatrists and obstetricians at a joint clinic during and after their pregnancy.

Individualised multidisciplinary care plans for inpatients at psychiatric facilities have also been introduced. A new acute psychiatric hospital is in the process of being built and the current psychiatric hospital is undergoing a five-year refurbishment plan which will turn it into a state of the art facility. A mental health strategy is being developed together with protocols relating to inpatient psychiatric care.

Sexual and reproductive health-care services

With regard to universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, Malta has implemented the National Sexual Health Policy (2010) and a National Sexual Health Strategy (2011), both of which refer also to persons with disabilities. Malta has also introduced assisted reproductive technology, including in-vitro fertilization (IVF), as part of the national health service.

A case study

MY SELF-MY BODY

MY SELF – MY BODY is a project implemented by the Inspire Foundation and co-funded by the Malta Community Chest Fund for Voluntary Organisations. It involves sex education to people with intellectual disabilities as well as support to their parents/guardians in order to address such a sensitive topic and ensure a holistic approach towards a fulfilled life.

A common misconception is that people with an intellectual disability do not need education related to their sexuality because they will always remain ‘child-like’ and therefore non-sexual. People with an intellectual disability have the same range of thoughts, attitudes, feelings, desires and fantasies as people without disabilities. Yet, they often have fewer opportunities to engage in age-appropriate behaviours than others of the same age. It is important that all young people are educated and given the chance to explore, enjoy and express their sexuality in positive, healthy and safe ways.

The Programme will be delivered free of charge in the afternoon between the months of October 2018 and February 2019. The aim is develop the project further after its expiry.

Treatment of Substance abuse and Alcohol

As a means of addressing target 3.5, Malta has in place a National Drug Policy that is specific to its needs. The Policy’s main objectives is to ensure a high level of security, health protection, well-being, and social cohesion. Malta evaluates its drug policy through ongoing indicator monitoring and specific research projects. A National Drug Focal Point monitors the drug situation in Malta and monitors and compiles relevant data. In 2018, Malta will have its first National Alcohol Policy that will address three main areas of intervention - underage drinking, harmful drinking in adults, and drink-driving. These policies underpin efforts to strengthen the prevention and treatment of drug use as well as in tackling the harmful use of alcohol.

Infrastructure in the health sector

As a means of promoting affordable and equitable access of infrastructure related to the health sector, Government has provided capital investments on ongoing infrastructural projects for

the construction of primary and secondary healthcare facilities and ongoing upgrading of emergency preparedness. The Government has introduced an electronic card scheme and electronic prescriptions to manage free patients' medicines entitlement. Work is also underway on the establishment of new registers on dementia, rare diseases and cerebral palsy, in addition to long-standing, established registers for births, birth defects, cancer, deaths, injuries, and transplants.

The national e-health programme includes various projects planned for the period 2017 – 2021 utilising both national and EU funds. The programme aims to further develop Malta's e-health infrastructure. Examples include the 'MyHealth' project, that gives patients and private family doctors access to healthcare data securely online, and the 'Converge' project, which aims to establish a national electronic health record.

Other medical services

The Malta Medicines Authority regulates medicinal products and pharmaceutical activities, while ensuring their good quality. The Authority also evaluates requests and monitors clinical trials carried out in Malta. The Malta Laboratories Network provides a focal point for the industry on the island, fostering cooperation between different sectors. The laboratory carries out testing for harmful pesticides in water, as well as toxicology and criminal forensic tests used by the police and the Law Courts.

Other measures in this area include the adoption of the patient charter, the setting up of a Valletta Technical Group, comprising 10 countries which negotiates with the pharmaceutical industry to contain the ever-increasing prices of new drugs, and the launch of new chemotherapeutic drugs on the national formulary. As part of Malta's commitment towards providing quality healthcare, a restructuring of services is underway to increase the delivery of elective care in the community instead of in hospital. The *Pharmacy of Your Choice Scheme*, which has been running for 10 years, enables patients to collect medications they are entitled to for free from their chosen pharmacy. A recent project also covers the delivery of medications to the homes of elderly patients eligible for this service. Furthermore, new care homes are being opened for elderly people who can no longer cope with living on their own. Other services include a physical education programme for older adults to promote active ageing and to maintain and improve physical wellbeing.

In an effort to reduce waiting lists for different medical services, out-of-hours scheduling of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and investment in new medical equipment have been undertaken. Several training sessions for medical staff have also been organised, focusing on different areas of specialisation.

- **SDG 4: Quality Education**

- 100% enrolment of children aged 4 onwards
52,480 students are enrolled in primary and secondary education (as of November 2017)
1,229 students studying vocational subjects in secondary schools
3,525 Learning Support Educators in all schools
11,543 students currently attending the University of Malta
Over 8,000 people have enrolled for 400 Adult Learning courses

Education in Malta: Key figures

Malta's educational system

Malta provides free education, which is compulsory from ages 5 to 16, from early childhood to tertiary education in state institutions. During the scholastic year 2017/2018, a total of 52,480 students were enrolled in primary and secondary education in Malta and Gozo.

Schools 2017/18	Primary and Secondary
Non-State	22,296
State	30,184
TOTAL	52,480

Malta's expenditure on education is relatively high, representing 5.6% of its GDP in 2015. With the 2013 introduction of co-education in all secondary schools and the establishment of Middle Schools within the secondary level, a number of structural changes within school buildings were required. Currently, there are 16 ongoing structural projects with a total estimated cost of around €40 million.

Access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education

As per target 4.2, Malta set up a scheme in 2014 which offers free childcare services to children up to the pre-school age of 3 years, whose parents are in employment or education. This service provides young children with safe and quality child care, and a stimulating learning environment, and establishes school-going habits under the care and guidance of professionals.

In 2016, 31.4% of children up to age 3 were in formal childcare institutions. Furthermore, 98.4% of children aged 3-16 years were participating in formal childcare settings in 2015, compared with 83.3% in the EU. In 2016, Malta had a 100% enrolment of children aged 4-5

years in pre-primary education. An after-school hours service, 'Klabb 3-16', is available for children aged 3-16 in 30 state primary schools and consists of different activities such as arts, drama, physical education, science experiments, and educational talks.

In October 2016, the University of Malta's Faculty of Education started offering a three-year full time B.A. (Hons) in Early Childhood Education and Care. This course provides graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills, competences, and dispositions to work with 3-5 year olds, mainly in educational settings.

Equal access to education and vocational training

Gender discrimination is being overcome through the development and implementation of different educational policies, being:

- The *National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for All (2012)* educates children to regard diversity as a key value in the development of society;
- The *Framework for the Education Strategy 2014 - 2024 (2014)* places emphasis on students learning to live together;
- The *National Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020* supports inclusivity and empowers marginalised communities through lifelong learning as part of a strategy to invest in talent and provide equal opportunities for enhanced labour market integration and social cohesion;
- *A Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving in Malta 2014 (2014 – 2020)* supports students in making the best out of their school years, from early childhood to the end of compulsory school and beyond;
- Malta also implemented the *Respect for All Framework (2014)* which addresses two pillars – 1) learning to be and 2) learning to live – together;
- Malta also developed the *Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools Policy (2015)*. The aim is to have a school environment that is safe, inclusive and free from harassment and discrimination for all members of the school community.

Malta has put in place a number of measures to increase the rates of literacy and numeracy as outlined in target 4.6. Primarily, Malta set up a National Literacy Agency to promote reading among young children, students, youths, and families. Secondly, Maths Support Teachers were introduced in primary schools to assist teachers and make Maths a more enjoyable and attractive subject. On average, in 2015 Maltese students showed an improvement in science literacy, reading literacy, and mathematical literacy compared to 2009, registering the best improvement in Maths.

Throughout compulsory education in Malta, Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are embedded in the curricula. Students are equipped with the right skills and behaviours towards other individuals. Educational

institutions are engaged in a number of development projects which increase their competence in the field of education and training for sustainable development. This includes collaboration with NGOs, that are active in providing nature visits, campaigning, publications and programmes such as *EcoSchools*, *Dinja Waħda (One World)*, *YRE (Young Reporters for the Environment)*, and *LEAF (Educating about Forests)*.

As outlined in target 4.b, Malta is offering a number of scholarships, through its ODA. These are complemented by other Scholarships in Climate Action, offered as part of the Government's commitment under the Climate Finance Package to provide support for capacity-building in developing States. Three scholarships were offered under this Package for students in Postgraduate Studies at the University of Malta starting in October 2017. The scholarships offer students from developing States the opportunity to focus their studies and research according to their national needs and realities. The aim of these scholarships, funded by the Government of Malta, complement other national climate action projects and provide the opportunity to educate and train young people from developing States on how to manage mitigation of adaptation to and governance of climate change.

Education for Persons with disability

The Inspire Foundation has developed a training programme for persons with intellectual disability in the form of workshops, each lasting 30 weeks. The programme is designed to facilitate students' movement from school to post-secondary activities, including postsecondary education or employment training. Students attending this training will have the opportunity to brush up areas they are finding difficulties in and help them to be better prepared when they come to accessing employment training or further education. Inspire aims to have the programme level rated by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education so that persons with intellectual disability who participate in the workshops will benefit from a recognised qualification at the end of their training, this could help them in their journey towards sustainable employment.

Reducing early school leaving

The Maltese Government is working on a reform called 'My Journey: Achieving through different paths, to be implemented in lower secondary schools in 2019/2020. 'My Journey' introduces applied subjects, thus changing the secondary education system into three main streams: general subjects; vocational subjects; and applied subjects. Students will be able to choose one stream or a mix of the three. The reform is aimed at reducing the number of early school leavers by making education relevant to more students and to a changing labour market.

Promoting cultural diversity

The Malta Arts Council enables creativity through education and creative excellence with a focus on culture and the arts. The Council helps foster relationships between all stakeholders while promoting knowledge-building and sharing through dissemination of best practices and valid information.

Through the ŻfinMalta Dance Ensemble, the Government provides Education and Outreach community programmes, making dance accessible while creating projects for people of all ages, ethnicity, economic backgrounds, and abilities. Government's Fondazzjoni Kreattività acts as a catalyst for all forms of expression, by providing space and extending experience to reach all people and involve them in interactive participation. The Foundation establishes itself as a centre for cultural exchange with other countries, thus cultivating a sense of cultural identity based on local dimensions and international diversity in the light of Malta's development of cultural tourism.

Heritage Malta has special educational programmes targeting children of different age groups as part of organised school visits. These educational programmes are based on the educational curriculum and address specific areas of study. Furthermore, the agency operates the Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage, which runs undergraduate and postgraduate academic courses in the field of conservation together with the University of Malta and vocational courses organised in conjunction with the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). In addition, the Institute also offers a number of short courses available to the public.

Prioritising the digitisation of education

Malta is currently in the process of developing an Open Education Resources Policy, to be published in 2018. Malta is introducing a ground-breaking nation-state pilot project using open standards blockchain technology to secure learning credentials and empower citizens in their lifelong learning journey. Every education certificate being issued will be notarised on the blockchain by the end of 2018. Furthermore, the 'One Tablet per Child' (OTPC) scheme has been established to ensure that all children in the 4th year of primary school are given a fair and equal opportunity to be closer to technology.

Making VET Accessible, Relevant, and Attractive

Malta has been investing heavily in Vocational Education and Training (VET). The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) offers 185 full-time and over 300 part-time vocational courses and collaborates closely with local industries to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and competences within its curricula are appropriate and relevant. MCAST currently offers 51 training programmes on apprenticeships, and has launched the Skills Kits programme, offering more flexible, customised pathways towards achieving a certification.

Youth Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET)

Malta has various initiatives aimed at assisting youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET), such as:

- *SEC Revision classes*: Following formal education, young people can apply for up to three Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) Revision classes if they have obtained a low grade in more than one core subject (Maltese, English, Mathematics and Physics).
- *ICT Summer Course*: An ICT summer course is available to NEETs who participated in the first phase of the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP), or who have completed education. Each participant is offered 60 hours of ICT training, and successful participants are awarded the ECDL standard certificate or the Practical ICT course (MQF 2).
- *NEET Activation Scheme II*: This scheme began in July 2016 as a follow-up to the NEET Activation Scheme I and aims at encouraging the re-integration of NEETs through targeted intervention. The scheme is divided into three phases. During the first phase participants are individually profiled. In the second phase, participants can choose between entering into some form of continued education in one of Malta's accredited institutions or undertake 240 hours of work exposure in either a simulated or actual place of work (only those selecting this option move to phase 3). During the third phase, if the individual performs well, they are offered a six-month traineeship and further theoretical tuition to help them in this regard. Employers are incentivised to provide these traineeships through a tax deduction for every trainee offered a six-month place.

- *SDG 5: Gender Equality*

Promoting Equal Treatment in Employment

Malta's *Equal Treatment in Employment Regulations* put the principle of equal treatment in employment into effect, by laying down minimum requirements to combat discriminatory treatment on the grounds of religion, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, and racial or ethnic origin. These regulations are applicable through all the stages of employment life, such as access to employment and vocational training, retraining, practical work experience, and employment conditions.

In order to encourage women to join the labour market, the Maltese government worked on measures that include access to *free childcare services, a maternity leave fund, and an increase in maternity leave*. In addition, other measures relating to free and assisted reproductive services (IVF) and the availability of the morning-after-pill over the counter were launched.

All these measures aim to strengthen policies and legislation towards greater gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in all levels of society.

The *Council for Women's Rights* was set up in 2017 to strengthen the dialogue between the Government and civil society. The Council is made up of 23 representatives from registered organisations who work on women's rights. The aim of these measures is to mainstream equality in all aspects of Government's processes. Whilst Malta has experienced an increase from 3.5% in 2012 to 8.4% in 2017 of positions held by women in senior management who are board members, and an increase from 6.8% in 2012 to 13.8% in 2017 of positions occupied by women in executive positions, Malta remains below the EU average. In this regard, in 2017, Malta declared its commitment to promote gender-balanced representation in the labour market through proposals to ensure that boards within major entities are composed of a minimum of 40% of the least represented sex. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) created the *Directory of Maltese Professional Women* to give further visibility to professional women and their competences in various fields. The qualifications, experiences, and skills of these professional women are highlighted to enhance their opportunities of being appointed to serve on boards, committees or other decision-making positions. More than 250 professional women are registered on this Directory.

In recognition of the value of care and domestic work, outlined in target 5.4, single persons under pensionable age can apply for a Carers' Allowance if they are taking care of their relatives on a full-time basis. This allowance is subject to a means test and maximum rate of €91.17 per week. Single or married persons under the pensionable age can apply for an Increased Carers' Allowance if they are taking care of close relatives on a full-time basis in the same residence. This allowance is not subject to any form of a means test and is €141.75 per week.

In order to further promote gender equality and encourage both private and public entities to take positive action in this respect, the NCPE also awards the *Equality Mark* to companies that truly foster gender equality in their work policies and practices by implementing measures that go beyond what is required by legislation. By February 2018, there were 80 certified organisations with over 21,300 employees working in certified conditions.

The NCPE is undergoing a reform with the aim of transforming it into a Commission for Human Rights and Equality. The newly formed Commission shall address identified gaps in the field of human rights in a bid to ensure that Malta has an internationally accredited Human Rights and Equality Commission.

The Government also rolled out the '*X*' *non-binary gender marker* on ID cards and passports. This will be further facilitating the lives of trans and intersex people, as they would no longer be restricted to identifying themselves as male or female on their official documents.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)

Furthermore, Parliament adopted a Bill aimed at the full implementation of the Council of Europe's *Istanbul Convention* with the aim of addressing issues on domestic violence, trafficking in human beings and gender-based violence. Malta remains committed to suppressing human trafficking through several initiatives, including the development of victim assistance services, training of Government officials, and raising of public awareness. In January 2017, the Monitoring Committee tasked with overseeing Malta's implementation of human trafficking related measures approved the Fourth National Action Plan against Human Trafficking, which covers the period January 2017 to December 2019. The implementation of this Action Plan aims to ensure the implementation of international commitments by Malta, including the objectives of the EU and other international organisations, thereby confirming Government's commitment in this sphere. The fourth Action Plan places a particular focus on women and child trafficking. One of the major objectives, in fact, is to enhance capabilities for the detection of child trafficking cases.

As per target 5.3, in 2014 Malta outlawed female genital mutilation, forced sterilisation, and forced marriage.

Educating schoolchildren on Equality

The following activities have been organised in promotion of equality through education:

- A drama activity was set up by the NCPE entitled '*Theatre in Education*', reaching over 2,000 secondary school students through performances.
- An event for post-secondary and tertiary students was organised by the NCPE, entitled '*Equality beyond Uni*', held at the University of Malta in November 2017. This included the screening of the film '*Burning Bikinis*', a photo exhibition, and music.
- A *roving van* was situated in 6 post-secondary and tertiary schools in Malta and Gozo between February and May 2017. Male students were asked for their feedback on gender-related topics. The input was then uploaded on NCPE's Facebook page. In total, 900 students were reached.

Promoting digital literacy among women

With reference to target 5.b, basic Digital Skills in Malta improved in 2017. To this end, the Malta Council for Science and Technology participates in the Gender Action project which analyses EU Members States' progress towards implementation of gender equality in research and innovation (R&I) through national action plans, training events, and mutual learning opportunities for policy makers, whilst building new collaborations to advance gender equality in international cooperation in the field. A few examples of upcoming initiatives include career school visits targeting girls, and the launching of Guidelines for Increasing and Retaining

Women in ICT. Additionally, gender initiatives are promoted to target employers to increase and retain women in ICT. Social media is used to publicise these initiatives.

Future Plans

Malta is currently drafting a *Human Rights and Equality Act* which will streamline and strengthen equality laws by bringing together principles on equality that are currently in various laws. Additional consultation with stakeholders is planned and the aim is to present the Bill to Parliament by end 2018.

- **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

Malta's water consumption

Despite being surrounded by seawater, Malta is one of the driest countries in the world, having no natural rivers or lakes. The country's freshwater supply is stored in groundwater aquifers or obtained through rainwater harvesting. The lack of natural resources is further exacerbated by the Maltese islands' high population density, which leads to a high water demand. The natural water availability in Malta stands at around 70m³/person/year; well below the 500m³/person/year level which the UN defines as the manageable water supply capacity threshold. In as much, sustainable water management is at the top of the Maltese Government's political agenda.

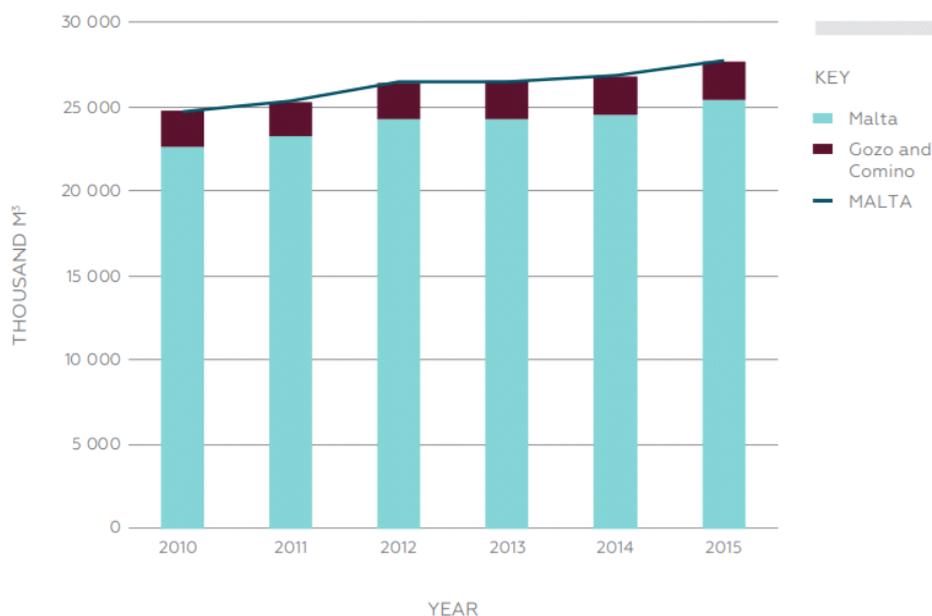


Figure 4: Water Consumption by region and year (NUTS 3)

The main existing Government measures and programmes that are actively implemented and directly/indirectly address SDG 6 are collected in the framework of programme documents such as the Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP).

High water demand in the Maltese Islands highlights the need for water resources to be used effectively and efficiently to ensure that Malta has sufficient resources to meet its national water demand. Within this context, the 2nd River Basin Management Plan (RBMP), also known as the 2nd WCMP, proposes a strategy based on the application of water demand management and water supply augmentation measures to comprehensively address the national demand whilst ensuring sustainable use of natural water resources.

Despite these challenges, Malta’s population already enjoys 100% access to safe and affordable drinking water. Security of good quality water supply for all the population was ensured through the use of reverse osmosis sea-water desalination technology. Malta has been at the forefront of technological development and application/management frameworks to ensure the development of high efficiency protocols in water production. This comprehensive management approach has resulted in significant reductions in energy costs of desalinated water production, ensuring the affordable availability of water for the population.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
m ³						
MALTA						
Groundwater Production	12 784 120	13 060 554	13 298 978	13 788 433	13 963 037	13 438 345
Pumping Stations	6 830 271	7 053 880	6 765 131	7 395 918	7 362 043	6 783 757
Boreholes	5 953 849	6 006 674	6 533 846	6 392 516	6 600 994	6 654 588
Annual reverse osmosis production	16 109 456	16 722 082	17 646 924	16 791 994	16 508 928	17 804 425
Gozo water polishing plant reject	131 318	132 757	115 947	96 775	103 780	86 585
Total Production	28 762 258	29 649 879	30 829 955	30 483 652	30 368 185	31 156 185
Network losses	4 024 696	4 331 118	4 353 755	3 962 502	3 569 548	3 466 709
network losses as a % of total production	14.0%	14.6%	14.1%	13.0%	11.8%	11.1%
Consumption	24 737 562	25 318 761	26 476 200	26 521 150	26 798 637	27 689 476

Figure 5: Public water production and consumption

The Government is working on a water quality and supply improvement project, which consists of the reconfiguration of the groundwater network and blending system in Malta to better manage the supply of improved water quality and ensure an adequate supply of good quality drinking water when demand is high.

Treating wastewater

The discharge of contaminants is illegal in Malta. In fact, as outlined in target 6.3, all wastewater produced is treated prior to its discharge to ensure improved quality of coastal waters. Furthermore, Malta plans to increase controls on the discharges to the sewer system in

order to protect its resource value and further enable its reuse function. Increased controls will improve waste disposal management in the sewage network.

'New Water'

Water reuse is one of the main measures being considered under Malta's 2nd RBMP. In 2017 farmers started reaping the benefits of the first of three polishing plants. The development of these three polishing plants (two in Malta and one in Gozo) is planned to further treat wastewater and produce around 7 million m³ of highly polished reclaimed water, also known as 'New Water', for use in agriculture, landscaping, industry, and also aquifer recharge. Through this investment, new opportunities for shifting the water use of the agricultural and commercial sectors to a new, alternative resource will be provided. This will help reduce the extraction of groundwater, which in 2015 was 35.2% of the total water resources when compared to 44.5% in 2001.

In the coming years, Malta will be investing in the extension of the 'New Water' distribution network to enable its availability at the point of use through the installation of dispensing points along rural roads. This will reach a wider range of customers whilst contributing to achieving sustainable results for water using 60km of dedicated infrastructure for water distribution. Farmers will have access to this water through a prepaid card system.

The water network management framework progressively continues to reduce leakage levels and ensures full inter-connectivity between all water supply hubs, ensuring water-use efficiency. This framework has significantly reduced leakages in the public distribution network, which in turn helped lower the demand on source water from desalination plants and the groundwater abstraction network. Through this measure, the infiltration of seawater into the sewers located below sea level will also be reduced, hence lowering the risk of contamination of Malta's groundwater resources and protecting the resource value of wastewater for the development of 'New Water' resources.

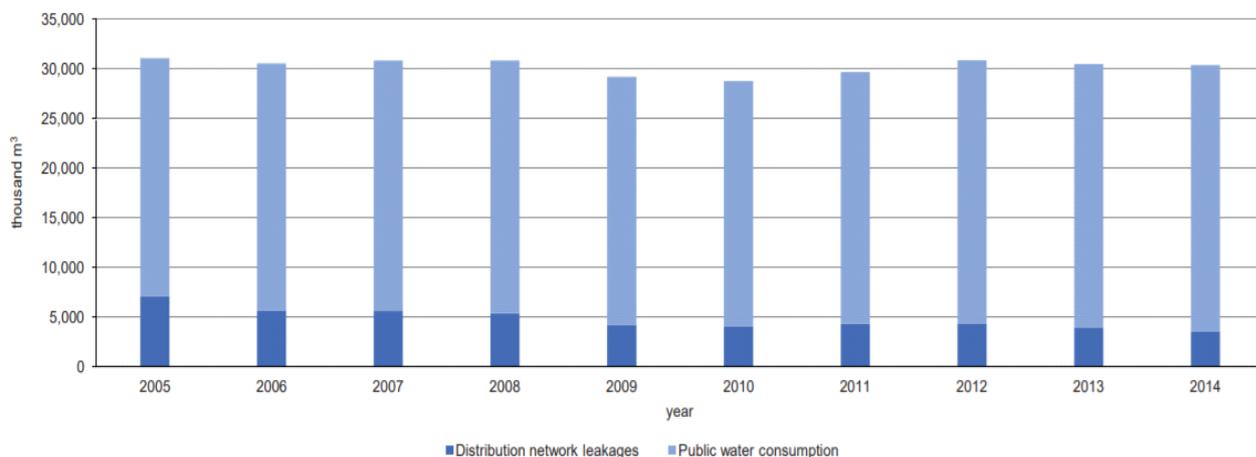


Figure 6: Public water production, leakages and consumption

Rainwater harvesting

Rainwater harvesting in Malta presents a problem given that rainwater is seasonal and varies during the seasons. This results in a mismatch between supply and demand, which could be mitigated by storage. To this end, during 2017 the Government continued to implement a number of initiatives to further encourage the harvesting and use of rainwater in the domestic sector. In particular, the Government extended the Domestic Cisterns Restoration (Wells) Scheme. Eligible expenditure includes repairs of cisterns (wells) and installation of second-class water systems. In 2017, 145 applications were received.



Photo 1: A water reservoir in Malta's countryside

A financial incentive scheme to support the development of rainwater runoff facilities in the agricultural and commercial sectors is being implemented. Rainwater collected from relatively clean surfaces can be used as second class water without treatment, for clothes washing, floor washing, landscaping, and for use in cooling towers, amongst others.

Water-use efficiency and water scarcity

The *per capita* water demand of the population is one of the lowest in the EU, which indicates the awareness of water being a scarce resource in the Maltese islands. However, more can be done to reduce water consumption. A primary step incorporates awareness of the impact of one's decisions, which could result in considerable savings, for example reducing shower time

by 1 minute or washing clothes at 30°C. Within this context, the National Water Conservation Awareness Centre inaugurated in May 2017 will raise awareness on the challenges in the water sector and the need for conservation and management of this scarce natural resource. The Government will seek to develop a long-term campaign to increase awareness among the public, whilst also increasing water use efficiency at user level.

In 2018, a pilot initiative to upgrade the water use efficiency of public buildings and structures will be launched. The reduction in water consumption achieved in public buildings will help guide similar measures in the private sector.

Technical guidance documents to assist operators in achieving best practice in water management practices will also be published. Malta will continue to support water-use efficiency measures by establishing a national eco-labelling scheme to clearly identify efficient water-use fixtures and appliances. The eco-labels, once adopted, will support consumers in making an informed choice on the water consumption characteristics of any new fixtures and appliances which they intend to acquire.

Water resources management

The integrated management of water resources at water catchment district level, as outlined in target 6.5, is crucial. Available water resources need to be fairly allocated to the different stakeholders while taking into account sectoral requirements in terms of quality and quantity. Malta's water policy objective is to achieve the integrated management of water resources to ensure the sustainable use of water, and that the qualitative status of water meets EU standards. These objectives will be achieved through conservation measures, and water-pricing policies that provide adequate incentives for users to use water resources efficiently in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive, and the use of alternatives to groundwater, as well as enforcement.

In this respect, integrated water resources management is applied at the national level through the RBMP and related Programme of Measures. It is through the implementation of this RBMP, that the Government aims to achieve a high level of integration in the management of water resources, thereby ensuring sustainable future use.

Participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management

Malta firmly believes in the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management as per target 6.b. Through the River Basin Planning Cycle, Malta ensures a high level of community and stakeholder participation, as decisions on certain measures will involve balancing the interests of various groups.

An expression of interest for the establishment of a stakeholder water table was issued, which will enable the continuous review of the relevant plans and ensure cooperation between different levels in order to achieve common goals.

Malta will continue to work on eliminating wasteful practices and move towards the conjunctive use of groundwater with other non-conventional sources such as desalination, treated sewage effluent, and storm water.

- *SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy*

Malta's Energy Policy Framework

Malta has no fossil-fuel resources and limited renewable indigenous energy resources. The Energy Policy launched in 2012 addressed Malta's energy challenges and was significantly influenced by a number of EU energy and environmental policies. The policy document was based on five fundamental principles: Efficiency and Affordability; Security of Supply; Diversification; Flexibility, and Sustainability. Six key policy areas were identified to address these objectives, namely the need to: increase energy efficiency, reduce reliance on imported fuels, ensure stability in energy supply, improve the country's carbon footprint, move towards efficient and effective delivery of energy, and provide policy support to the energy sector.

Following the adoption of the 'Paris Agreement', Malta has set itself a number of headline targets for 2020 and is developing a holistic, integrated Energy and Climate Plan, which covers the 2021-2030 period. An Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (IMSC) involving several stakeholders was set up to oversee the drafting process of the Plan.

In this context, Malta's energy sector has been undergoing significant upgrading to address these objectives by implementing a clear roadmap that includes the following important milestones:

- Diversifying Malta's dependence on the importation of oil through the achievement of a diversified energy mix;
- Reducing the carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions of the country through improved efficiency in generation capacity;
- Replacement of heavy fuel oil with natural gas and gas oil, and renewable sources;
- Enhancing and strengthening the security of supply of the country whilst ensuring the availability of appropriate back up capacity;
- Stimulating investment in renewable energy sources through the provision of appropriate incentives;
- Achieving a degree of interconnection for electricity supply; and
- Overhauling the generation capacity of the country with a view to achieving higher efficiency gains whilst stimulating investment in natural gas infrastructures.

Affordable, reliable and modern energy services

In 2017, the last heavy fuel oil power plant in operation in Malta was withdrawn from operation and placed on cold standby. On the same day, the new 4 Gas-Fired high efficiency combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) as well as natural gas (LNG) supply and regasification facilities were inaugurated. In addition, the recently built 144MW power plant has been converted to run on natural gas instead of heavy fuel oil. Enemalta plc, as the sole Distribution System Operator (DSO), also executed a number of upgrades in its Distribution Centres to consolidate the national electricity distribution grid. It also plans to invest €80 million to upgrade and expand major nodes of the national electricity network and improve the quality of service.

Energy-wise, until very recently Malta operated a small, completely isolated system. Supported by EU policy and funding, the electricity network has been connected to the European grid via Sicily since March 2015. Nowadays, the 200MW electrical capability of the interconnector constitutes the largest source of energy supply for Malta.

Furthermore, the Malta-Italy gas pipeline interconnection project, which was identified as a Project of European Common Interest, aims at eliminating Malta's isolation from the Trans-European gas network. Following a study completed in 2017, which identified the optimal route, a preliminary marine route survey will be conducted in 2018. This project was awarded €3.68 million for the financing of the studies to be undertaken in the next 2.5 years under the Connect Europe Facility. It will deliver natural gas more efficiently, eliminating the need for liquefaction, shipping and regasification as in the case with LNG. The plan is to have the pipeline commissioned by 2024.

These developments show that Malta is adopting a diversified energy mix, based on two gas-fired plants, the Malta-Italy Interconnector, grid-connected renewable energy sources (mainly through PVs), and an adequate level of emergency capacity through the gasoil-fired plants, thus removing dependence on heavy fuel oil. This transition led to major air quality improvements, a drastic reduction in Malta's carbon footprint, and a cost-effective electricity generation mix that ensures the long-term sustainability and stability of the current low electricity tariffs for residential and business customers.

Water production is a considerable energy consumer in Malta and accounts for around 6% of the electricity consumed. Reverse osmosis desalination plants are utilised to meet a significant share of Malta's potable water demand. Several actions have been taken to reduce energy consumption in the operations of water production and distribution, including reducing power requirements in the transfer and distribution of water through certain pipelines; the upgrading of reverse osmosis high pressure pumps and energy recovery systems; and the replacement of auxiliary pumps. Further investment, amounting to more than €2 million, will be directed towards the improvement of the Reverse Osmosis plants with the aim of reducing electricity consumption. It is expected that the implementation of Phase 1 will be completed by end of 2018, while Phase 2 is expected to be completed by mid-2019.

As a result of investments in the energy sector, lower tariffs for electricity for the domestic sector came into effect in March 2014, whilst, those for the non-residential sector came into effect in March 2015. Malta nowadays has one of the lowest residential electricity prices (€12.5 per 100 kWh) in the EU.

Investing in renewable energy: Photovoltaic (PV) systems

Local production of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) is conditioned by specific geographic, environmental and spatial planning constraints. Malta's land area is very limited, its population density is high and its natural environment is rich but fragile. On the other hand, RES are typically land-intensive. Accordingly, several types of RES are being used so as to exploit all possible advantageous sites and situations.

Malta has an obligation to achieve a 10% target for the share of energy from renewable sources in the country's gross final energy consumption in 2020. A separate target of at least 10% RES share in the final consumption of energy in transport is also applicable. In 2016, Malta's share of renewable energy was of 6.0%, below the EU average of 17%, despite having seen an improvement when compared to previous years.

In May 2017, Malta published its revised National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP), incorporating new priorities, projects, and initiatives put forward for the energy sector. The revised NREAP seeks to fully exploit all reasonable indigenous sources of RES in a sustainable manner. The target is expected to be reached mainly by exploiting solar energy (Photovoltaic and solar water heaters), heat pumps, biofuels, imported biomass, and energy recovery from waste.

Renewable energy sources will continue to play an important role in Malta's energy mix. In fact, electricity generation from small and large-scale photovoltaic (PV) installations is expected to continue to increase steadily, reaching approximately 185 MWp generating circa 278 GWh in 2020; almost 11.5% of the gross final electricity consumption.

Solar radiation is very stable and predictable in Malta. Therefore, PVs are the most robust and suitable of all RES technologies for Malta and generally considered as a low risk investment with very predictable returns. Demographic factors however impact the amount of renewable energy that can be obtained from domestic rooftop PVs. The local population has seen an increase of 20% over the last 30 years, which has driven the building industry to shift from house-type buildings towards more multi-storey buildings. This has resulted in less available rooftop space, with a direct effect on the potential RES availability.



Photo 2: Large-scale rooftop photovoltaic (PV) installations

To address these challenges, in October 2017, Malta launched a Solar Farm Policy for commercial businesses. The policy encourages solar farm development that achieves dual or multiple uses of land, to ensure that urban areas are utilised in a more efficient manner. Thus, the Policy prioritises large-scale rooftops, car parks, industrial areas and quarries. It is estimated that between 15MWp and 20MWp of PV systems can be installed in the use of roofs in industrial zones for the installation of PV systems.

The Government is developing a partnership with private enterprises with the aim of developing solar farms on property owned by Government or its entities. Families who do not have access to a roof can invest in communal solar farms. The scheme, launched in October 2016, allows households to invest in virtual photovoltaic (PV) ownership. Work on the first communal solar farm is at an advanced stage, with households already benefiting from such a scheme. This scheme was fully subscribed to within a few days.

In 2017, a total of 366 households started benefitting from their participation in a communal PV scheme. Earnings are scheduled on a six month basis and all beneficiaries forming part of the scheme were selected on the grounds that they do not have access to a private roof and thus cannot install a PV system. The communal PV scheme was backed up by a 997kWp PV farm (equivalent to approximately 3,700 panels) which is expected to generate about 1500MWh annually.

As regards domestic PV, between 2010 and 2015 there was a sharp increase in the uptake thanks to the incentives offered by Government through various schemes, attractive feed-in

tariffs, and the decreasing price of the technology, which increased the attractiveness of the investment. In fact, installations of PV systems are expected to contribute 4.7% out of the 10% national RES target by 2020. The PV generation capacity at the end of 2017 was 112 MWp, having increased by over 15MWp during 2017. It is envisaged that a cumulative PV capacity of around 185MWp is needed by 2020 for Malta to meet its renewable energy target.

The Government has extended the scheme promoting domestic PV until mid-2018, with grants of up to 50% of the capital cost being capped at €2,300. There were 5,292 beneficiaries from this scheme in 2015 and 2016. Schemes on the purchase of solar water heaters, roof insulation, double glazing, and feed-in tariffs have also been extended. By the end of 2017, 9,538 families benefited from the solar water heater scheme, while 1,830 families benefited from the roof insulation and double-glazing scheme.

Gozo also invested in alternative energy systems through the installation of photovoltaic panels, with an investment amounting to €473,000 financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2007-2013. This project involved the installation of renewable energy facilities that increased the generation of green energy on the island of Gozo. The biggest solar panel system in this project was installed at the Government Experimental Farm, where 730 panels, which generate approximately 832 units of electricity per day, have been installed. In 2016, the Government fully commissioned a 231-panel photovoltaic project which is expected to generate approximately 100,000-kWh of electricity annually. A study is currently being conducted within the Ministry for Gozo with the scope of identifying renovation strategies to improve the energy efficiency of the Ministry, which will serve as a public example for energy efficiency in buildings.

Investing in renewable energy: Heat Pumps and Solar Water Heaters

Heat pumps for space heating are based on well-established technology, which is now being promoted for water heating as well. The major application of heat pumps in Malta, as a country with a Mediterranean climate, has traditionally been in cooling. Heat pumps are estimated to contribute 1.58% of the 10% national RES target by 2020.

The Maltese Government incentivised high efficient air conditioners (using heat pump technology) through a scheme launched in 2007 whereby households purchasing a Class 'A' unit would benefit from a refund against the purchase price.

Solar water heaters (SWHs) are estimated to contribute 0.92% of the 10% national RES target by 2020. Over the past years, the Government has launched a number of grant schemes to promote the use of solar water heaters for households and the industry. The Government also issued a number of schemes for the non-residential sector. The first scheme for industry was launched in December 2008 with an allocation of €20 million to fund investments in eco-innovative solutions. Another scheme was launched in May 2018 as a tax rebate scheme, targeting the larger industry aimed at addressing investments in energy efficiency.

Investing in renewable energy: Biofuels

Reaching the 10% renewable energy target in the transport sector is mainly based on biofuel blending with transport fuel, with a minor contribution from electric vehicles that would be partially powered by renewable electricity.

Biofuels are estimated to contribute 2.10% of the 10% national RES target by 2020. Government is actively promoting electro-mobility through a number of incentives. Incentives are aimed at encouraging the scrappage of old and polluting vehicles, whilst replacing them with new and efficient vehicles, receiving additional grants if these are replaced by electric vehicles. By the end of 2017, €437,000 were provided in grants, resulting in the registration of 73 electric vehicles. This scheme remains ongoing. As from 2018, Registration Tax has been removed for all new and used Electric Vehicles, including motor cycles, battery driven electric mopeds, hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and range extender electric vehicles used by an individual, private or commercial companies, NGOs, Local Councils and Government Departments. Furthermore, in order to encourage further take up of these cleaner vehicles, the annual circulation licence fee will also be free for the first five years, following which a €10 fee will apply.

Another scheme issued annually since 2013 is the Gas Conversion Scheme, whereby vehicle owners are provided with compensation when converting their diesel/petrol vehicle to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), thereby contributing to improving air quality. The scheme was extended in 2015 and had been widened so as to include commercial vehicles. In 2017, 220 vehicles benefited from this scheme. A total of €50,000 was allocated for this scheme in 2018.

The Government is commissioning the Alternative Fuels Study in 2018 to identify future alternative fuels other than electricity, in order to determine the fuel or fuels most feasible for use by road transport in Malta, taking into consideration demand and supply, availability of technology, cost of the infrastructure required, as well as environmental, regulatory, planning, and safety issues. Following a preliminary study to assess the feasibility and Cost Benefit of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) maritime bunkering, a more detailed study is currently underway which will provide recommendations regarding the development of LNG as a marine fuel. This study is expected to be completed by 2018.

The biofuel substitution obligation, requiring importers and wholesalers of petrol and diesel to place a pre-determined amount of biofuel on the market during 2017, reached 7.5% in 2017. The enforcement of this obligation will ensure that Malta remains on track to meet its 2020 target on renewable energy in transportation.

Improving Energy Efficiency

In a report published by Eurostat in February 2018, Malta was identified amongst the leading EU Member States that reduced their primary energy consumption, with a 22.5% reduction

between 2006 and 2016. This was mainly due to investments made in the energy sector, which led to improved power generation and distribution efficiency. In the case of household and other small consumers, investments were directed at incentivising the uptake of new, clean technology through several schemes/grants, as well as fostering behavioural change through financial incentives and information campaigns to promote energy efficiency.

In April 2017, Malta submitted its National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP 2017) to the European Commission. In brief, NEEAP highlights the following measures and/or actions to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy demand:

- Electricity tariffs to promote energy efficiency among consumers;
- Smart metering of electricity to empower consumers to manage their energy consumption intelligently;
- A requirement for large enterprises to perform high quality energy audits every four years;
- Encouraging non-SMEs to sign voluntary agreements with the Agency to pursue energy efficiency measures;
- The inclusion of renewable energy in households in the drafting of the ‘Minimum Energy Requirements for Building Guidance’ and the ‘Nearly Zero Energy Building Plan’;
- Continuation of residential schemes until 2020 to encourage the adoption of new technology which contributes to energy efficiency (such as grants for the installation of photovoltaic systems, solar water heaters, roof insulation, double glazing, and air-to-water heat pumps);
- Improvement in transport efficiency, highlighting the ongoing ‘scrappage’ scheme as critical for the rejuvenation of the Maltese car fleet; and
- Upgrading of the national electricity distribution network.

Promoting Energy Efficiency in Households

In 2016, a specific scheme was designed to identify vulnerable households, conduct home visits, and provide advice on how to reduce energy and water consumption and, if merited (depending on the condition of the appliance), replace the most inefficient appliance with a new energy efficient model free of charge. A total of 470 house visits were conducted, out of which, 250 households qualified for the appliance replacement scheme. Apart from enhancing such families’ standard of living and lowering their energy bills, the measure will also offset 20 tons of CO₂ emissions through energy savings.

Promoting energy efficiency in construction

The Malta Planning Authority is promoting energy efficiency in the design of buildings through various policies and guidelines. For instance, all developments are to make proper use of space, avoiding unnecessary circulation and the formation of long and dark corridors. Where corridors are inevitable, developments should aim to include breaks along their length, allowing light to permeate through. Moreover, the Planning Authority also encourages the consideration of specific energy conservation measures, the use of renewable sources of energy, and resource management in the formulation of the design, layout and materials of all new developments in view of producing nearly zero-energy buildings.

The National Plan outlines the strategy and actions necessary for achieving ‘Nearly zero-energy buildings’ after the end of 2018 for buildings occupied by public authorities, and by the end of 2020 for all buildings respectively. The plan will be mainly implemented by:

- Improving the building envelope, mainly through regulation but also through some minor grant schemes such as roof thermal insulation material and double glazed windows or doors;
- Incentivising the purchase and installation of renewable energy harvesting systems.

Promoting Energy Efficiency in Public Buildings

Government and public entities have undertaken several measures and projects to increase energy efficiency in their spheres of activity, including the following:

- Central Government buildings are being gradually refurbished to meet at least the established minimum energy performance standards of buildings, or otherwise reach equivalent savings;
- Incorporating renewable and energy efficient technologies when planning new schools and refurbishments;
- Investing in double glazing in 11 public schools;
- Replacing old air-to-air heat pumps in various Government buildings, local support offices, ‘Day Centres’, and Fire Stations;
- Implementation of Green Public Procurement (GPP);
- Replacing desktop-based systems with laptops as these consume less energy.

Promoting Energy Efficiency in Industry

The ‘Investing in Energy Project’, launched in 2016, is an outreach project through a public-private partnership which aims to bring about an improvement in energy efficiency within SMEs in the manufacturing, wholesale, and retail sectors. Furthermore, it also aims to facilitate the exchange of best practices relating to energy management systems in SMEs. In fact, one of the deliverables of the project is to demonstrate examples of available technology and achieved results in implemented projects. This project will also propose voluntary agreements with

SMEs to implement energy conservation measures stemming from the energy audit report. The information contained in the audit reports as well as data collected from different sources will also be used to design new measures/initiatives for the various sectors; non-SMEs, SMEs, and households.

Through the Energy Audit Voucher Scheme, enterprises can also identify opportunities for energy savings and apply for funding through tax credits. Private enterprises are invited to propose projects that achieve a higher level of energy efficiency. Technologies considered range from intelligent lighting systems, heat pumps, industrial pumps, and to process improvements.

The ‘Energy Efficiency Partner Initiative (EEPI)’ is another initiative that was set up to foster, and improve relations between Government and large enterprises, with the aim of adopting energy efficiency practices. Through the initiative, organisations are being encouraged to sign a voluntary agreement, committing to implement measures that increase energy efficiency on an annual basis. EEPI partners are required to report on energy efficiency measures implemented, along with increases in energy efficiency achieved. This information is also utilised by the Government to identify trends and facilitate policy-making. Firms participating in the EEPI are recognised for their commitment towards environmental and social responsibility and are granted use of an official EEPI logo for marketing purposes.

International Cooperation

Malta is a member of the International Renewable Energy Agency, shortly known as IRENA, which is an intergovernmental organisation that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future. It also serves as the principal platform for international cooperation and a repository of policy, technology, resource, and financial knowledge on renewable energy. Through membership of IRENA, Malta helps promote alternative energy and energy security, helps combat energy poverty, and encourages sustainable development conducive to a better quality of life. A global summit on renewable energy was held in Malta in September 2012. The summit convened Ministers responsible for energy from small islands in diverse parts of the world, such as the Pacific, Oceania, and the Caribbean. It offered a platform for discussion among island states concerning the adoption of renewable energy for islands.

Malta also participated in what is known as the ‘Greening the Islands’ web platform, which connects island innovations (‘community of the islands’). This is a global initiative launched to promote sustainable island projects and encourages the replication of such projects in as many locations as possible. The well-established series of conferences have gone live-stream since 2017, through a new web app designed to promote collaboration for innovative solutions.

- *SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth*

Economic Growth in Malta

Real GDP *per capita* in purchasing power parity in 2016 was 4.1% higher than in 2004, representing a mean average annual growth of about 3.0%. Malta decreased its resource productivity by 5.2% between 2001 and 2016, which represents an average annual decrease of 0.3% despite the staggered growth in GDP. In 2016, the contribution of Gozo and Comino to the national Gross Domestic Product amounted to 4.3% of the National Total.

Over recent years, Government has introduced a number of structural reforms with the scope of supporting consumer and business confidence whilst increasing productivity, potential output, living standards and sustaining per capita economic growth, in line with target 8.1. These reforms include:

- Strengthening fiscal responsibility to ensure sound public finances whilst ensuring long-term sustainability of public finances;
- Improving small and micro-enterprises' (SMEs) access to finance;
- Improving the quality of the business environment;
- Encouraging higher labour participation rates, improving education outcomes and reducing skill gaps;
- Encouraging greater investment in research and development;
- Reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion and social solidarity;
- Investing in sustainable tourism, strengthening the financial services sector, and ensuring a dynamic economy

Financial Sector

Through its EU membership, Malta participates in the Banking Union as well as the Capital Markets Union. This encompasses the application of common supervision for banks through the Single Supervisory Mechanism, a Single Resolution Mechanism, common depositor protection rules, as well as the application of the Single Rulebook which implements the Basel III international standards.

As from 2018, the MiFID II (Markets in Financial Instruments Directive II) and MiFIR (Markets in Financial Instruments Regulation) became applicable, enhancing the stability of local capital markets through improved transparency and oversight of financial markets, and improved rules for the conduct of businesses thus enhancing regulatory and supervision convergence with the EU internal market.

In December 2017, Malta transposed the Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive into national law, further strengthening existing requirements in terms of anti-money laundering, improving the fight against money laundering activities and against the financing of terrorism.

Through its participation in the European Banking Union, the Capital Markets Union initiatives, as well as through the application of EU Regulations and Directives, Malta is continuing to strengthen the capacity of the domestic financial institutions, helping improve the resilience of the sector while also furthering integration and reducing barriers, in line with target 8.10. These initiatives continue to ensure access to banking, insurance, as well as financial services for all citizens and businesses.

Economic Productivity and support to SMEs

The Government of Malta has throughout the years actively sought to continue increasing foreign direct investment, economic growth, and productivity through the diversification of the economy (Target 8.2).

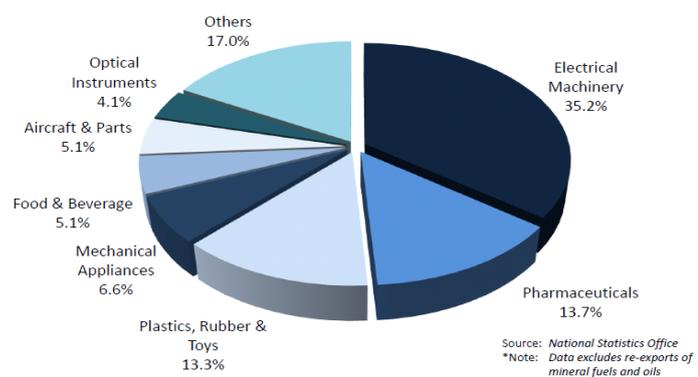


Figure 7: Productivity sectors in Malta

Economic sectors that did not exist fifteen to twenty years ago, such as pharmaceuticals and aviation, now contribute substantially to the economy in terms of employment and exports. Similarly, sectors which used to contribute significantly to the local economy in earlier years, such as textile manufacturing, now form only a negligible part of the economy. Such changes create a continuous need for labour force upskilling, investment in innovation as well as the need to increase and improve access to finance for investment purposes.

Whereas employment in industry has decreased somewhat, from 45,833 in 2005 to 36,485 in 2016, gross value added (industry excluding construction) has grown, from €725.6m to €930.5m over the same period, signalling increasing productivity and higher value added production. At the same time, employment in services has increased drastically, from 101,214 in 2005 to 154,736 in 2016, contributing to the growth in employment from 150,213 to 187,171 over the same period.

Malta has undertaken a number of steps to promote entrepreneurship, and to encourage the growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (Target 8.3). The following are a number of such initiatives:

- *Family Business Act*: In order to support Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), many of which are family businesses, a Family Business Act was adopted in September 2016. Following publication of the legislation, a Regulator was appointed and a Family Business Unit was set up, together with a website and coordination with

the entities operating the fiscal and governance incentives. The legislation entered into force on 1st January 2017.

- *SME Week*: An SME Week is organised annually, stretching for a period of one month. This event, which includes conferences, seminars, training sessions, fairs, and info-sessions, aims to provide insight into national and EU opportunities aimed at supporting micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. The SME Week aims to generate public awareness, especially amongst prospective business founders or those that are already in business and wish to grow and expand their business activities. Such an event includes the collaboration of the Malta Employers Association; the Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs; the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry; and the General Retailers and Traders Union. The 2016 Malta SME Week focused on female entrepreneurship.
- *Take Off Business Incubator*: This is an initiative developed by the University of Malta focusing on proof-of-concept projects and technology start-ups with high potential. The Incubator provides work space, business support and advice to innovation-driven, scalable start-ups. About 80% of projects originate outside the University while 20% involve students on the University's post-graduate entrepreneurship programme. The *Take Off* staff and external mentors help the start-ups draw up business plans, set milestones and achieve independent functioning within 12-24 months. The Incubator has supported more than 16 start-ups that have generated over €400k of revenue, raised over €1 million in equity investment and employed over 50 employees.
- *Shop opening hours*: Legislation regulating shop opening hours has been amended to improve flexibility and efficiency in the retail sector, with the intent of strengthening job-growth and productivity. The new regulations, introduced in January 2017, are expected to stimulate the retail sector whilst facilitating shopping opportunities for both tourists and local residents, ensuring that all retail outlets can compete on a level playing field.
- *Business 1st*: This project was launched on 4th October 2017 by setting up a specific Centre aimed at serving the needs of the business community. The Centre helps to cut down on excessive red tape when obtaining information or when following procedures to set up and run a business. Furthermore, through the continuous effort of updating paper-based forms into electronic services, *Business 1st* will be providing real-time services to businesses throughout their setting-up phases and further on. The Centre offers information on the various Government services and incentives; promotes the use of online services; organises information sessions on Government services and new initiatives relevant to the business community; and facilitates the processes associated with the start-up phase.

Promoting Research and Innovation (R&I)

Malta's National R&I Strategy 2014-2020 aims to support high value added economic activity that includes knowledge-driven growth. The goal of the Strategy is that of embedding research and innovation at the heart of the Maltese economy to spur knowledge-driven and value-added growth and to sustain improvements in the quality of life. A monitoring system for the implementation of the strategy is currently being set up.

Improving resource efficiency in production

In line with target 8.4, a vision document for the development of Malta's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) has been prepared in order to determine the most cost-effective manner towards low carbon development. During the 8-week consultation period, launched in May 2017, several submissions were received and these have been incorporated into the process of drafting this strategy.

The Government is currently in the process of awarding a contract for a feasibility study which will ultimately result in recommendations as to how the Maltese financial system can cater in the most effective and efficient way for green investments.

Promoting productive employment

Malta has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the European Union, and one of the biggest challenges facing the economy is a shortage of workers. In 2017, Malta recorded an increase in employment of 5.37%. This represents the highest increase among EU Member States, when compared to the previous year. Employment opportunities, coupled with support structures and financial incentives, have shown visible results in the number of people entering or re-entering the labour market. Economic forecasts confirm that real GDP growth is expected to remain strong and employment growth will continue throughout 2018 and 2019.

In fact, according to the latest Eurostat data, portrayed in the graph below, Malta has already achieved the EU's Europe 2020 target of 70% employment rate, after reaching a level of 71.4% in 2017 for people aged 20 to 64.

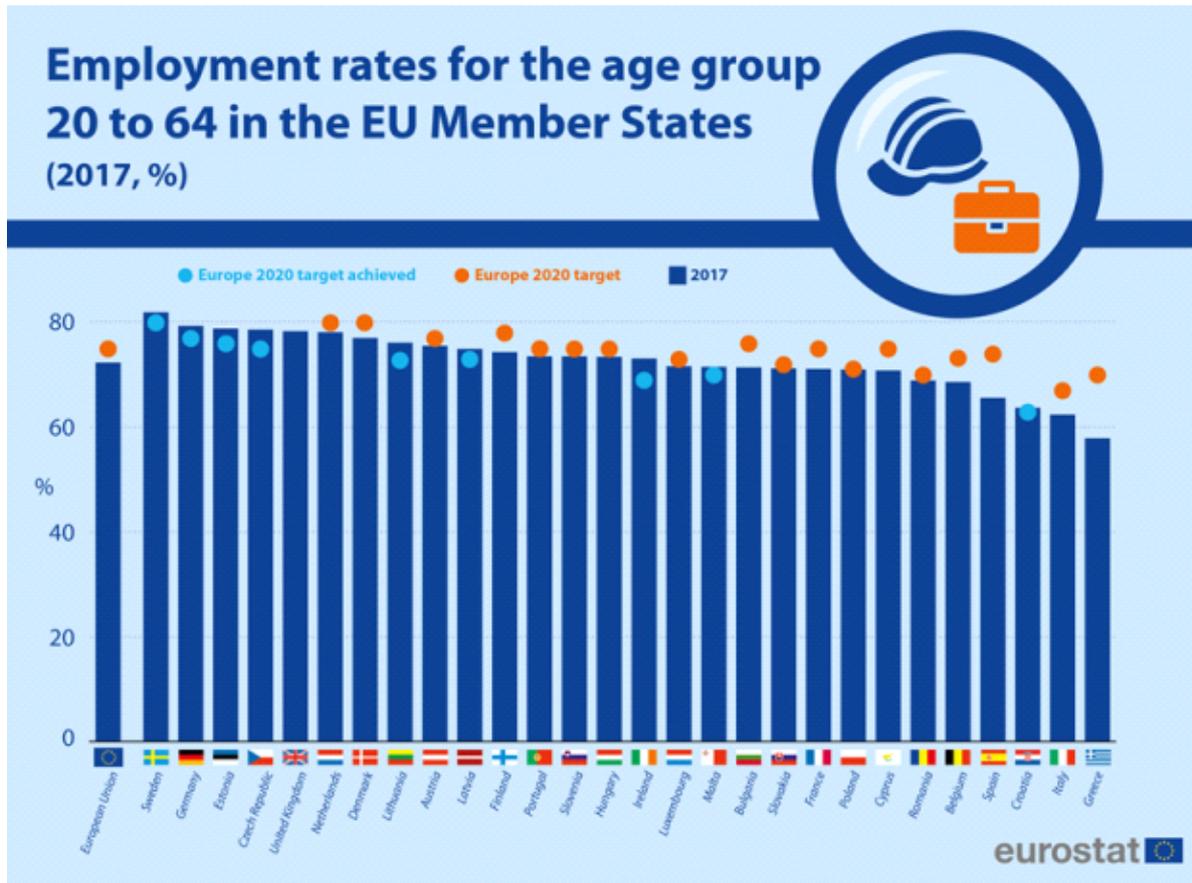


Figure 8: Graph showing EU employment rates for the 20-64 age group (Source: Eurostat)

The Maltese Government has implemented a package of measures consisting of reforms aimed at making work pay as a means of addressing the inactivity rate, particularly of women, and dependency on the welfare state. The measures introduced under the ‘Making Work Pay’ umbrella provide the right conditions to enter the labour market, and seek to effectively help people commit themselves to work whilst becoming less dependent on social benefits.

‘Jobsplus’, Malta’s Public Employment Service, empowers, assists, and trains jobseekers whilst also promoting workforce development. It also assists employers in their recruitment and training requirements. Through ‘Jobsplus’, the Government provides various training schemes to equip individuals with the skills needed to find gainful employment. Such schemes include:

- *The Traineeship Scheme*, which is intended to provide jobseekers with initial vocational training (pre-employment training) to find and retain employment;
- *The Work Exposure Scheme*, which is intended to facilitate the transition into employment by providing jobseekers with initial hands-on training that will help them obtain the knowledge, skills and competences required to find and retain employment;

- *The Training Pays Scheme*, which assists individuals to develop their skills by participating in further off-the-job education and training;
- *The Work Programme Initiative*, which focuses on the re-integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market for persons aged 25 years and over;
- *The Mature Workers Scheme*, which incentivises employers to hire older workers by benefiting from tax deductions. The scheme is available to employers, including self-employed individuals, who as from 2014 employ persons aged between 45 and 65 years;
- *The Access to Employment Scheme (A2E)*, which provides assistance to businesses to recruit individuals who are the most disadvantaged among job seekers and inactive people;
- *The Bridging the Gap Scheme*, which is designed to support clients in their transition period from unemployment to employment. The scheme is targeted at registered persons with disability and other people in disadvantaged situations. Through this scheme, the employer can evaluate the performance of the client in the workplace before proper engagement. The individual can then transit to the *Access to Employment* scheme.
- *The Sheltered Employment Training (SET)*, which is a one-year programme aimed at preparing individuals with severe mental, physical, and/or intellectual disability for employment;
- *The NEET Activation Scheme II*, which is part of the Youth Guarantee programme, where young individuals are encouraged to take part in work exposure and traineeships, following a targeted profiling phase. The Youth Guarantee also offers an ICT Summer Course and the opportunity to undertake Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) revision classes for the resit examinations in Maltese, English language, Mathematics, Physics and Biology.

A Job Bridge Training Centre was also set up and offers various training opportunities to vulnerable jobseekers to enhance their prospects for gainful employment. Various outreach initiatives take place in order to increase awareness of the services and schemes available to prospective jobseekers.

In 2015, legislation was enacted to specifically address equal pay and precarious work. The main intent of this legislation is to ensure that contractors awarded contracts by Government departments or public sector organisations observe employment laws. Any companies which do not observe employment laws are disqualified from participating in Government and public sector tendering processes. Furthermore, the salaries of individuals employed by private

contractors who provide services to public entities and Government are pegged with those of Government employees performing similar duties.

For the year 2018, the vacation leave entitlement of all employees has been increased by an extra day. Moreover, a consultation process will be initiated regarding a proposed measure that would entitle employees to receive the equivalent number of days as vacation leave for public holidays that occur on weekends. Special consideration is also being given to employees diagnosed with cancer, in view of their need to be away from the workplace for treatment purposes.

Engaging Persons with Disability in Employment

In 2015, Government commenced enforcement of the 1969 Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, requiring employers that employ over 20 employees to ensure that 2% (full time or equivalent) of their workforce is comprised of persons with disabilities. In lieu of this, annual stipulated fines are levied, going towards an employment fund for persons with disabilities. A Workplace Accessibility Tax Deduction Scheme that supports employers to render the workplace accessible for employees with disabilities, is in place.

The Lino Spiteri Foundation was also set up as a public-social partnership providing job-coaching to persons with disabilities, as to finding and retaining employment, while benefiting from fiscal benefits for employers employing persons with disabilities.

The Equal Opportunities Compliance Unit (EOCU) of the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) also has a specific section dealing with disability discrimination complaints related to Employment.

Promoting a larger female workforce

In relation to target 8.5, the Maltese Government remains committed to achieve full and productive employment by making work more attractive to all. A measure that contributes to the achievement of this goal is Government's provision of free childcare services to all parents in full employment or to those undertaking studies. The Free Childcare Scheme introduced by the Maltese Government in 2014 encouraged more women to enter or re-enter the labour market. The employment rate of women (20-64 years) increased to 58% in 2017 when compared to 43.8% in 2011. Notwithstanding this improvement, the percentage remains less than the EU average of 66.5%.

Furthermore, Malta has in place the Klabb 3-16 initiative. The main notion of this initiative is to provide children with an educational experience instead of a child-minding service only. The service runs from 7am until 6pm, thus being convenient for working parents, while ensuring that children are benefiting from a structured, well-planned programme.

In order to strengthen employees' work-life balance, Government continues to explore legislative ways of granting new rights that help citizens strike a balance between the right to work and the right to enjoy private/family life. Such measures include adoption leave as well as leave for persons undergoing In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF). With respect to the latter, prospective parents who undergo IVF treatment in Malta or abroad are entitled to 100 hours of leave with full pay, which may be used in a non-continuous manner and shall be available for up to 3 IVF processes.

Moreover, consultations are also being held with respect to the introduction of new measures, such as a proposal whereby parents may avail themselves of the sick leave entitlement whenever dependents are sick.

Youth and Employment

As a means of addressing youth unemployment, the Youth Guarantee scheme (ESF.01.002 - Youth Guarantee 2.0) is an EU-funded project, developed for young people aged 15 to 25, which consists of four education- and employment-related initiatives: the NEET Activation Scheme II, SEC Preventive Classes, MCAST Preventive Classes, and the ICT Summer Courses. Based on preventive and assistive measures, each opportunity is designed to help young people continue their education, or increase their chances of finding satisfaction and success in the world of work.

Statistics in 2016 show that about 80,000 youths aged between 15 and 34 years found gainful employment. Of these, 55.2% were males. In the majority of cases, employed youths worked full-time (86.2%), had an indefinite contract (92.0%) and were employees (92.7%). It is to be noted that 89% of youths aged between 15 and 24 years are in training and education.

Prohibiting child labour and combatting human trafficking

In line with target 8.7, child labour is prohibited in terms of the Malta Criminal Code. Malta does not have child labour problems, nor are there any child soldiers. Steps are being taken, through a National Action Plan, to address cases of forced labour. The Malta Police Force has registered an improvement of its performance in this regard.

Also in line with target 8.7, a victim referral procedure is in use to improve the identification of victims of human trafficking. Such referral is supported by written Standard Operating Procedures. Several training events have been held to keep officers concerned informed of relevant developments. A Memorandum of Understanding was entered into between the Malta Police Force and the Ministry responsible for social policy, to continue developing and expanding a framework of cooperation for the provision of social support services for victims of human trafficking. Subsidiary legislation enacted under the Immigration Act provides for

the legal process of identification, granting a reflection period to potential victims in order for them to consider cooperating with the Police.

Tourism as a vehicle for growth and jobs

In line with target 8.9, tourism is an important economic sector, horizontally and vertically integrated with multiple other sectors, comprising the Maltese economy. The National Tourism Policy refers to the Vision for Tourism 2030 as promoting and managing year-round tourism growth to the Maltese islands through the dual principles of competitiveness and sustainability. Whilst recognising that tourism brings about vibrant economic growth, full recognition is also given to the fact that it creates its own pressures on sustainable development. In this regard, the sector is contemporarily sensitive to these very pressures. To guarantee the long-term sustainability, attractiveness, and competitiveness of Malta's tourism, the industry needs to operate within a sustainable national framework. Actions aimed at improving the business environment for tourism enterprises are constantly being supported, particularly when such actions enhance entrepreneurship and contribute to networking, innovation, corporate and socially responsible investment and sustainable consumption.

Work conducted by Heritage Malta preserves Malta's cultural heritage, acting as a catalyst for Malta's tourism potential. During the past two years, several works have been carried out in various cultural sites. In view of Malta being a 2018 European Capital of Culture, Government set up the Valletta 2018 Foundation which enables social, economic, cultural, and environmental growth that will transform Valletta into a creative city; improve the quality of life in Valletta through culture; stimulate awareness of Malta's cultural identities; and drive collaboration and excellence in culture and the arts in Malta.



Photo 3: St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta

As a result of the economic stimulus generated from tourists' expenditure, the number of jobs supported by such expenditure stands at 40,000 full-time equivalent jobs. The full employment impact of tourists' expenditure represents around 29% of total employment in the Maltese economy. Education, capacity building, training, and lifelong learning opportunities in tourism will be safeguarded and improved. Efforts shall be undertaken to generate more tourism professions, rewarding employment, and high-status work environment with competitive pay, along with equal pay for equal work and healthy working conditions.

The STAR Awards have been running for the past 13 years and are an important initiative through which outstanding employees who work directly or indirectly in the tourism industry gain public recognition for their commitment, hard work, and diligent attitude and for making the tourist's experience a memorable one. Other significant activities which contribute towards investment in the industry relate to the Erasmus+ Improving the Digital Skills, and the Quality Performance within the Catering Sector in Malta. A Skills Card (Proficiency Acknowledgement in Tourism) will soon be launched, which shall award quality in human resources in the tourism and hospitality sector in Malta, on the basis of ongoing monitoring and certification of personnel in tourism.

In April 2017, the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) launched a Recognition of Prior Learning scheme. Workers who are willing to further their studies are being offered a skills and knowledge recognition process that evaluates the learning obtained through their working years. With the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), individuals seeking further education will obtain an evaluation of their current state of knowledge, which will in turn identify the tuition needed to achieve accredited certification. With this measure, employees already engaged in the industry will now be able to have their skills and experience taken into account when applying to further their studies. This initiative will lead to more qualified employees in the tourism and hospitality sector.

With regard to Gozo, measures have been taken to sustain and increase economic growth on the island, as follows:

- *Supporting Marketing Initiatives for Specific Niche Markets in Gozo*, is a scheme supporting tourism operators in the following areas: (a) Sports and adventure tourism (including diving); (b) Religious tourism; (c) MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events); and (d) Weddings. Operators must be registered with the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA); must be located in Gozo; and must engage in international advertising initiatives, and/or participate in international fairs and events abroad.
- The *Gozo Vocational Fund* is administered by the Rotary Club Gozo, to which the Government has contributed €10,000. Its objective is to assist youths living in Gozo to further their careers by providing financial assistance which can be used for (a) short courses of study; (b) personal tuition or mentoring; (c) tools, books, or similar materials; and (d) assisted work placements.



Photo 4: Mgarr Harbour, Gozo

To foster sustainable tourism growth in Gozo, the Government is also consistently promoting cultural events, both locally and abroad. Cultural events contain a substantial element of voluntary community work. Support includes direct financial support and promotion events through a cultural event calendar that is distributed in international fairs, along with promotion on digital media platforms. Gozo's efforts in this area have been recognised through the Quality Coast Gold Award. Gozo has also been included as one of the Top 100 Sustainable Destinations in the world, and recently as the Top sustainable destination in the Mediterranean.

- ***SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure***

Promoting the digital market

The Government is currently increasing the number of free Wi-Fi hotspots that can be found across Gozo. The aim of this ongoing project is to reduce, and eventually eliminate, the digital divide. Furthermore, by means of mobile phone applications, Government services and information in Gozo are now available 24/7.

The Government has launched a scheme to support business entities in Gozo to attend International Internet Technology Events abroad. The initiative is directed towards business entities based in Gozo which are specialised in the development of high tech and software products, or specialist companies in digital media operations. The Government supports participation in one international internet technology-related event per business entity per year, to ensure that Gozo-based operators remain abreast of developments in the industry, fostering innovation and growth.

In 2017, the Malta Business Bureau participated in an Erasmus+ VITA Project, which enables the training of trainers on the concepts and application of Virtual and Augmented Reality Technology. The project is in response to the need to upskill EU citizens in digital literacy. The EU's Digital Skills and Job Coalition (2016) reports how a staggering 45% of EU citizens are still considered to be digitally illiterate, hence the need for further exposure to digital technology.

Promoting social enterprises

The Government has been steadfastly developing legislation entitled The Social Enterprise Act, the scope of which is to assist Social Enterprises in their operations. Social enterprises are economic actors whose main purpose is to create a positive social impact, in line with target 9.2. The legislation is being developed in line with EU principles and models. Extensive work and research was carried out as part of the development of legislation to cater for this unregulated sector in Malta. Following endorsement by Cabinet, the Bill was published as a white paper for public consultation. Alongside the Bill, incentives and schemes are being developed. The aim is to support the legislation and to encourage organisations to establish themselves as social enterprises and assist them in their creation and growth. Following the completion of an economic impact assessment, the legal notice and the Bill will be tabled in Parliament for the necessary endorsement.

Access to financial services in support of entrepreneurship

All enterprises in Malta (incl. MSMEs) have access to financial services, including insurances, bank accounts and online payment services. Consequently, targets 8.3, 9.3 have already been met. However, access to investment finance can at times be a challenge. There are several ways this is being addressed, and the following are a few non-exhaustive examples, including programmes offered by banks in collaboration with the Government or EU institutions.

The InnovFin Scheme is applicable to a wide range of business sectors, excluding construction and real estate activities, mining and quarrying, tobacco and alcoholic beverages, trade in weapons and ammunition, casinos, gaming, and any illegal economic activities. The InnovFin SME Guarantee falls under the Horizon 2020 EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. It provides for 50% risk sharing by the European Investment Fund (EIF) on the

financing of loans, resulting in a maximum guarantee of €500,000 per MSME. It also offers competitive interest rates and repayment terms over 10 years.

The EREM CBSI lending facility offers local MSMEs a loan portfolio of €25 million for their borrowing requirements. EREM CBSI stands for European Risk Enhancement Mandate (EREM) for Cooperative Banks and Small Institutions (CBSI), and is a joint fund raised by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) to support the financing of European businesses. The €25 million portfolio equates to a minimum of 25 projects costing €1 million and over, with each project allocated 50% of the MSME's total loan requirement from the EREM CBSI funding, subject to a maximum loan of €500k per project.

'Business Accelerate' focuses on the different stages of entrepreneurship, determining who is eligible for the scheme including start-ups, growth and expansion of current business operations, as well as the launch of research-based projects. Sectors eligible for the scheme include tourism-related activities, inclusive of accommodation and restaurants; manufacturing, including the development of new products and services; wholesale and retail services, and associated logistics and storage operations; the creative sector, including arts, entertainment, and recreation; and Research & Development & Innovation (R&D&I) activities.

The Joint Assistance Initiative for Maltese Enterprises (JAIME) is a facility which blends European Regional Development Funds (ERDF), Horizon 2020 funds, and European Investment Bank resources to provide a full 75% guarantee of the €50 million portfolio. This guarantee allows for the provision of lending to SMEs with reduced collateral obligations and a favourable interest rate with a reduction of more than 2% on the current credit risk premium. The demand for the JAIME facility has exceeded projected targets. At the end of 2016, over €30 million had been sanctioned through the financing package, assisting over 245 SMEs. This momentum was sustained in 2017, ensuring that the full pot of €50 million allocated to the facility will be contracted prior to the planned end date.

In February 2016, the Malta Stock Exchange launched a new SME-oriented capital market called Prospects. The objective of Prospects is to facilitate access to capital through the issuing of equity and/or bonds by SMEs, as well as to create a structure that will allow for succession planning for the SME. The benefits of admission to Prospects by the SME include:

- Access to capital formation, through the issue of equities and corporate bonds;
- Brand awareness and a higher market profile;
- The preparation for the issue, or sale, of equity as part of a succession planning process;
- Good corporate governance;
- The opportunity to eventually migrate to a listing on a regulated market;
- Securing new capital at a competitive coupon rate in the case of a bond issue;
- Conditions that may be more favourable when compared to other, more traditional, methods of raising finance;

- An opportunity for existing, or new, equity holders to exit the market efficiently in the case of an admission of equity;
- Access to capital finance without the need to provide collateral.

In 2015, Zaar was launched as Malta’s local crowdfunding platform. The initiative is a collaboration between the Malta Business Bureau (which is a collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association) and the University of Malta, with partial funding by the Government. The platform has supported an average of two campaigns each month. Currently Zaar helps its clients to fundraise on the basis of rewards, meaning that those pledging a donation will receive a non-financial reward to thank them for their interest and support. Zaar campaigns are backed by mentoring, support, and public relations guidance, to help each of the campaigns take off and to help guide them into the best crowdfunding direction.

The Malta Arts Council launched a new fund for creative industry platforms. The aim is to facilitate the creation of support platforms that provide targeted services to accelerate sector growth in a sustainable fashion and help creative professionals improve their product and launch it on the market. Supported platforms may provide niche sectors with a variety of services ranging from access to professional mentoring, networking and international participation opportunities, shared services, work spaces, and export development support. The Fund builds upon the Council’s Create2020 strategy on business development and the goal to support creative practitioners turn their artistic ideas into sustainable economic activities that can reach new markets locally and internationally.

Beyond these initiatives to improve access to investment finance, a gap was identified with regard to access to finance for failed entrepreneurs. This is partly the result of a cultural stigma associated with failure. Currently effort is being invested in developing a legislative framework that would hopefully allow failed entrepreneurs to have a “second chance”. That would mean that honest entrepreneurs who might have failed, would still have the possibility to start over and have access to credit.

Promoting greener enterprises

To promote sustainable development among enterprises, which is also in line with target 9.4, the Sustainable Enterprise Award was set up in 2015. The Award rewards Maltese enterprises, in particular micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), or foreign enterprises operating in Malta, for their efforts to change their practices, with the aim of increasing economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The Government works in collaboration with the Clean Technology Centre (University of Malta) and the Chamber of Commerce, to design the criteria, vet applications, and award the prizes (including monetary prizes) through the evaluation committee.

In 2017, Malta Enterprise and the Energy and Water Agency launched an initiative to assist businesses with an annual electricity consumption in the range of 10,000-75,000KWh to carry out an Energy Audit. Energy Audits are planned with the scope of identifying and prioritising actions that improve energy performance, reduce energy waste, and obtain related environmental benefits. Beneficiaries receive support to identify solutions for better energy efficiency, to reduce operational costs through energy savings. Furthermore, the Energy and Water Agency and the Malta Business Bureau have launched a scheme encouraging enterprises to enter into a voluntary agreement to implement various energy efficient measures. To date, 23 enterprises have entered into a voluntary agreement.

The bicycle and pedelec bicycle grant, and the grant for the installation of bicycle racks by companies and organisations, was renewed for 2018 with a budget of €200,000. In 2017, there were 1,811 eligible applications. In addition, a grant of €150,000 has been allocated to incentivise private companies to invest (on a 50:50 co-financing rate) in secure parking for their employees who use bicycles as the mode of commuting. A further €30,000 have been allocated for Local Councils to invest in initiatives promoting secure cycling within the local community. A lower VAT rate on bicycle rental has also been implemented in order to encourage its use.

- ***SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities***

Promoting equal opportunities

By virtue of Maltese law, all laws, clauses in collective agreements, and individual contracts which discriminate are considered to be null and void. Discrimination in employment is prohibited by virtue of the Employment and Industrial Relations Act (Cap 452) and the Treatment in Employment Regulations (S.L. 452.95).

Government introduced a number of policies and reforms aimed at alleviating the bottom income strata of the population. In 2016, the income share of Malta's bottom 40% of the population, expressed as a percentage of income, stood at 22.2%. One major pillar has been the commitment to making work pay as a way of ensuring that young people are encouraged to move from dependence on the benefit system to employment, training, and education. The most important policies are the following:

- Introduction and extension of the in-work benefit
- Tapering of social benefits
- Introduction of the guaranteed minimum pension
- Increases in pensions and tax-exempt pensions subject to capping
- Reduction in the income tax

- A grant of €300 paid to each person of 75 years and over, still living in their own household.
- A first-time buyer scheme
- Doubling of the rental subsidy granted by Government to those families with a low level of income. The criteria for eligibility will also be widened. Lessors entering into a rental agreement (for a 7-year period) with families considered to earn a low income, will benefit from a reduced rate of income tax of 5% on the rental income. This will not be applicable in cases where the rented property is located in a Special Designated Area, which calls for higher value property rentals.

Regarding inequalities, and insofar as income is concerned, an agreement on the minimum wage was reached on 28th April 2017 between the Government, the Opposition, and Social Partners represented on the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD). The measures agreed upon are designed to preserve wage relativities and industrial relations, while addressing social inequalities. These involve a weekly salary increment of €3 for all workers who have been employed for a year on a minimum wage basis.

In contribution to target 10.4, the weekly cost of living allowance for the years 2018 and 2019 will be supplemented by an addition of €1 increase each year, thus increasing the minimum wage by €8, between 2018 and 2019. It was also agreed that a Low Wage Commission would be set up by 2020, to establish a mechanism that would determine whether the minimum wage requires reviewing. The Low Wage Commission will report directly to the Prime Minister. It will be composed of equal representation of trade unions, employer organisations, and Government representatives. The Commission will ascertain that any change in the minimum wage is affordable in terms of sector vulnerabilities and productivity gains. It would also factor any economic and/or legislative measures taken in the interim that would have an impact on labour costs. The Low Wage Commission will submit its recommendations to Government every four years, the first of which will be due in 2023.

In line with target 10.a, Malta supported the work of the EU Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) / GSP+ / Everything But Arms (EBA), Africa Caribbean and Pacific Economic Partnership Agreements, the inclusion of trade and sustainable development provisions in EU FTAs, and the commencement and finalisation of FTA negotiations with developing countries. It has also supported special and differentiated treatment for the most vulnerable developing countries in the WTO negotiations (e.g. special treatment under the Trade Facilitation Agreement). However, it also considers that a differentiation between the development levels of developing countries should be taken into account, with Least Developed Countries (LDCs) being a priority. Malta, as part of the EU already provides duty-free, quota-free (DFQF) treatment for imports from LDCs under the EBA instrument. Furthermore, Malta, as part of the EU has also deepened its commitments in the services sector to the LDCs (as part of the Special and Differential Treatment (SDT)). Moreover, Malta has also engaged in Commonwealth discussions on trade and development policy issues.

Promoting gender inclusion

In 2016, Malta became the first country in Europe to outlaw ‘conversion therapy’. In 2017, Malta retained its top ranking on the Europe ‘rainbow map’ of rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people, unveiled during the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia.

On 12th July 2017, Parliament approved the Marriage Equality Bill during its third and final reading, making Malta the 25th country in the world, and the 15th in Europe, to approve such a law. This development modernises marriage law through the mainstreaming of equality for all. All couples are free to contract into marriage, be they of the same or a different sex, and also to parent children without having unnecessary references to their gender or biological make-up on their children’s birth certificates. This also means that all discrepancies between husband and wife have now been removed. For example, both are now free to take on their partner’s surname without distinction. Their offspring would then take on the family surname that the couple chooses on their marriage day. In further contribution to target 10.3, the Government is also planning the introduction of free health services relating to gender identity and sexual characteristics, to facilitate access to treatment for transgender persons. This includes the introduction of legislative instruments to this effect.

Promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities

Following the adoption of Malta’s National Disability Policy in 2014, Malta will be implementing a National Disability Strategy in 2018, following widespread national consultation. Additionally, all Government Boards have persons with disabilities represented within their composition, a process that is already at an advanced stage, and which also includes the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD), Malta’s independent monitoring mechanism for disability rights.

The *Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act* seeks to mainstream economic and social rights of persons with disabilities in Malta. It contains specific titles dealing with the areas of Employment, Education, Access, Provision of Goods, Services and Facilities, Health, and Accommodation. The Act provides for different forms of relief, including recourse to criminal proceedings.

A number of disability-specific policies have been implemented, including:

- A *rent subsidy scheme* which is available for persons with disabilities who need assistance to rent a private property. Subsidies given are based on the size of the family and on income;
- Entitlement to *Full Disability Allowance* for persons with disabilities earning less than the Minimum Wage;
- Incentives for Trusts and Foundations catering for persons with disabilities;
- Fiscal incentives for employers to hire persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the *Access for All* Standards have been implemented and apply to all buildings. These standards cover all areas of physical accessibility in relation to buildings and the outside areas, such as pathways, entrances, types of doors, and entry bells/phone systems. Most historical and cultural sites, public and educational buildings, and public spaces have also been made accessible to persons with disability.

Migration and mobility

As regards legal migration, the admittance of third country nationals for purposes related to work, family reunification, study, and economic self-sufficiency, are regulated by the *ad hoc* subsidiary legislation enacted under the Immigration Act (Cap 217). Decisions are subject to review by a special Board set up under the said Act.

Malta is a receiving country in terms of migration flows, and is in turn becoming increasingly diverse ethnically, culturally and linguistically. On 15th December 2017, Malta's first-ever Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan, entitled 'Integration = Belonging', was launched. This Migrant Integration Strategy creates a framework for understanding successful integration through the migrants' own sense of belonging to Maltese society, and the space Maltese society allows for such integration in its different sectors and strata. The process launched by this first Strategy is especially necessary, as this diversity is expected to continue to increase in the years to come, especially in view of projected labour market needs. A key initiative to ensure the Strategy's effectiveness is the setting up of an Integration Unit which serves as the main Governmental coordinating body that imparts information, receives integration requests, and follows migrants' progress on their integration in Malta.

Integrated border management is a concept developed to ensure forward-looking, efficient, uniform, and cost-effective management of the EU's external borders, while serving various EU policies and interests, such as internal and external security, migration management, and the need for international relations. The concept, which is part of the Schengen acquis and the new Frontex Regulation, is a necessary tool for the constant readiness to respond to emerging threats, promotes fundamental rights, enhances coordination and planning among national and Union agencies, provides comprehensive situational awareness, and ensures the functional integrity of EU borders. In terms of target 10.7, Malta's integrated border management strategy covers 11 components: (1) border control, (2) search and rescue, (3) risk analysis, (4) cooperation between Member States supported and coordinated by the Agency, (5) inter-agency cooperation among the national authorities, (6) cooperation with third countries, (7) technical and operational measures within the Schengen area to counter cross-border crime, (8) returns, (9) large-scale information systems, (10) quality control mechanism, and (11) Union funding instruments. Respect for fundamental rights, education, training, and research and development are horizontal aspects to these components. Returns and readmission remain a necessary component of a comprehensive border and migration policy, and Malta plans to continue administering the successful Assisted and Voluntary Return programme.

- ***SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities***

Promoting a sustainable transport system with a focus on public transport

A number of multimodal and modal shift initiatives are being undertaken in Malta, such as: Tal-Linja (bus) card and Ferry transport common ticketing, as well as the STREETS Project. This project contributes towards the strengthening of efficiency, sustainability, and integration within a joint transport system aiming at improved internal and external accessibility, and competitiveness.

Infrastructure project interventions are currently in process and others have been completed with the aim of addressing traffic congestion by addressing bottlenecks and using tidal traffic systems.

The Road Safety Strategy, published in 2014, sets out a 10-year plan for safer land transport systems with the aim of achieving 50% reduction in fatalities, 30% reduction in grievous injuries, and 20% reduction in slight injuries by 2024. The Road Safety Strategy embraces the basic concepts of Safety through Engineering.

The maritime and aviation sectors have established highly-developed accident analysis mechanisms and are benefiting from the results of their investigation. In 2015, the rate of people killed in road accidents in Malta was 2.5. Since road transport accidents represent the highest number of accidents each year, Malta has been improving accident data collation processes since 2017 and is now providing backdated information on road traffic accidents to comply with EU CARE database requirements. The data collection carried out is also required to classify the severity of injury under the MAIS format, so that serious (MAIS3+) can be analysed at EU level.

Since 50% of all air accidents occur just before the threshold of runways, the continued maintenance of the public safety zones in the final approach to the runways is imperative. In this regard, an important measure indicated in the Transport Master Plan 2025 is to keep the national aviation safety programme updated. The national aviation safety programme is an essential component to ensure the continued safety of the aerodrome and the aircraft registered in Malta. Recently compiled, the safety programme requires routine review to ensure that it is maintained in an up-to-date status at all times. Moreover, a study on improved airside traffic circulation is required for suitable airside traffic regulation, including traffic management and control mechanisms. Legislation should be updated to include provisions safeguarding the aerodrome against activities and developments in the surroundings that may cause unacceptable risks for aerodrome operations. The National Transport Strategy recognises the need to ensure an accessible and affordable transportation system to all disadvantaged social groups. It also acknowledges the need to move towards a planning system which improves and facilitates affordable modes of transport (e.g. walking and cycling).

The strategic goals which aim to improve transport accessibility and mobility in Malta are:

- Easy access to daily facilities: there is a need to work in parallel with spatial planning strategies in order to make walking the obvious choice for short trips to daily facilities and to increase cycling within urban areas for short trips.
- Convenient and reliable journey times: This concerns travelling to locations which are not normally within walking distance, such as work, hospitals, and occasional leisure. Congestion must be reduced through the increased use of other transportation modes and by exploring whether new forms of transportation are required to achieve this outcome.
- Ensuring equitable and sustainable approach to all transport modes: Malta must move towards facilitating inter-modal travel. Walking and cycling need to form an integral part of urban mobility and infrastructure design. Public Transport needs to be prioritised so that it is not subject to general levels of congestion.
- Management of freight and urban logistics: there is potential to improve urban logistics operations and services.

Another strategic goal indicated in the National Transport Strategy is that of safe and secure transport. Transport security can vary greatly, covering everything from terrorist attacks to graffiti. The following aspects explain further the direction of this Strategy:

- Resilient critical infrastructure: critical infrastructure must be protected from all types of hazards by enhancing resilience through advance planning. A risk management approach refers to the continuous, proactive, and systematic process to understand, manage, and communicate risks, threats, and vulnerabilities across the transport system;
- Extend the lifetime of high quality infrastructure: infrastructure must be designed in accordance with the required standards and specifications, which must be constantly reviewed;
- Rapid response to emergencies and accidents: every part of Malta must have good access to emergency services, such as those at hospitals. This includes the management of operations and coordination with different entities that are involved in emergency responses.
- Crime and terrorism: safety for all users of collective transport, aeroplanes, and ferries is of utmost importance. The transportation system needs to be designed so as to minimise crime.

In addition, the Civil Protection Department has in place a regional evacuation plan that facilitates the evacuation of civilians, using transport assets available, which includes transportation of vulnerable persons, including persons with disability. Moreover, the Department is currently in the process of installing a new IT system which will notify the home address of persons with reduced mobility, so that in the event of an evacuation, the Geographic Information System (GIS) system will assist the Department in responding to the emergency with the necessary resources.

In 2011, the Government undertook a public transport reform, in which 546 buses (444 Non-Euro classified buses and 102 Euro 3 buses) were removed and 229 Euro 5 buses were added. Another 204 Euro 6 buses were added in 2015-2017. In 2017, public transport carried over 48 million passengers, an increase of 11.4% on the previous year. All new buses are accessible to passengers with reduced mobility and are environmentally friendly, producing low emissions with the latest safety technology.

Measures are being taken to encourage the use of scheduled public transport. These include the launch of a mobile application, an upgraded Journey Planner, and allowing 16-20 year olds to travel by bus for a year for free; a scheme introduced in 2017 and extended to 2018. The aforementioned mobile application is an innovative app that aims to improve the user's experience of the public transport service. It enables the user to locate the closest bus, view which bus routes serve the closest stop, as well as determine the estimated time of arrival of buses arriving at the closest stop within the next 30 minutes. The application makes use of GPS technology where every bus transmits its current location to the central system.

In addition, prospective drivers are undergoing a training programme that covers the rules regarding vehicle use in relation to the environment, e.g. moderate fuel consumption through eco-driving and limitation of pollutant emissions. As from 1st January 2016, following training, car drivers can drive selected motorcycles without the need of a separate licence. The measure aims to encourage drivers to use smaller and more fuel-efficient modes of transport. Since the introduction of the measure, 1,716 drivers have been certified, 940 of which have registered a motorcycle in this category.

Safeguarding cultural heritage

The Planning Authority is also strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard cultural heritage by:

- Identifying, designating, and managing areas, buildings, structures, sites, spaces, and species for protection and appreciation;
- Safeguarding protected areas;
- Re-appraising the value of the character, amenity, and distinctiveness of designated areas and site for their built heritage value;

- Restoration Grant Scheme for Grade 1 or Grade 2 Scheduled Buildings within Urban Conservation.

Promoting energy efficiency

New buildings are to be built in line with minimum energy performance requirements, depending on the type of buildings. Renovated buildings will also follow the stipulated energy efficiency levels. Energy consuming services within buildings will comply to a set of standards, to ensure a minimum level of energy efficiency. A certificate has to be issued for verification. Heating and cooling equipment within buildings shall be periodically inspected to ensure that the equipment operates at optimum efficiency. An Energy Performance Certificate is issued for newly built, sold or rented buildings, and a national database of such certificates is kept.

Supporting the development of national infrastructure

The port of Valletta is undergoing updating. The first phase of the refurbishment and upgrading of the Deep Water Quay has been completed. The second phase, which aims to expand the Deep Water Quay for large cruise liners is to commence in 2018. Other infrastructural development projects planned to start in 2018-2019 include the development of three existing and new landing places for commuter ferries funded by European Regional Development Funds, as well as landing places for the Gozo-Malta fast ferry. Investigations on the feasibility of a tunnel between Malta and Gozo are currently ongoing, with tests being carried out on some of the cored samples.

With an investment of approximately €7.5 million, a number of roads will be built and upgraded. A study is currently underway to evaluate the introduction of a Mass Rapid Transport System (MRT) for Malta. The study includes an options analysis of all possible MRT solutions, including light rail. The best option has already been identified and now the study is looking into the details of this option. The study is to be completed by 2018.

Promoting green spaces

In line with target 11.7, the Ministry for Gozo has selected the Ulysses Grove site at Xewkija, for conversion into an accessible and green public space, suitable for families and conducive to social inclusion, relaxation, and physical activity. A 1 km track will be installed on the site for walking, running, and for bicycle use. Throughout the implementation of this project, special attention will be given to the natural environment. The first stage, for which the call for offers has already been issued, will see the process of levelling to strengthen the base of the area the track will cover. The second phase will include the construction of a new entrance, and other works, such as the repair of rubble walls. The third phase will see the installation of an open-air gym, and the installation of benches.

- ***SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns***

Promoting sustainable tourism and the cultural and natural heritage

Tourism can contribute towards a green economic transition. Management of cultural attractions and the creation of new attractions is key towards sustainable tourism development. The cultural assets located in the Maltese Islands play a critical role in the tourism offering and in this regard, capital investment is constantly taking place in support of our environmental and cultural resources.

The Government implements and executes restoration works on public property and rehabilitation initiatives within the main local historical urban contexts. Heritage Malta is the national agency in charge of museums, conservation practice, and cultural heritage. It is committed to bringing culture closer to the people by facilitating interpretation and accessibility, both physical and intellectual. The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage fulfils the duties of the State in ensuring the protection and accessibility of Malta's cultural heritage. It is responsible for all scientific investigations regarding cultural assets and for the full record keeping and management of documentation. It also advises and coordinates with the Planning Authority, on issues regarding land use and development, to safeguard cultural heritage.



Photo 5: Palace Armoury, Valletta

Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti is a non-profit making organisation with the aim of spreading awareness of the island's extensive heritage, locally and internationally, through museums, exhibitions, and publications. The Foundation also endorses the digitisation of archives, library and historic documents, as well as manuscript collections.

The creation of new attractions that appeal to different tastes can enhance the development of new tourism niches, revive depressed areas, upgrade tourism zones, improve socio-economic prospects, and support sustainability.

Some key examples of such investment include:

- The cultural programme devised for the year 2018 in view of Valletta's recognition as European Capital of Culture;
- Restoration and development of the Grand Harbour fortifications;
- Development of Valletta's entrance, the new Parliament building, and restoration and reuse of the old Opera House as an open-air theatre;
- Heritage and cultural trails in Malta and Gozo;
- Museums in Valletta (MUŻA), Victoria Gozo Museum, Ċittadella project;
- Other heritage conservation projects, such as the Hypogeum, Hagar Qim, Mnajdra temples, Ġgantija temples, Castile Square, and the Grand Master's Palace, amongst others;
- Restoration of the Grand Master's Palace, the National Library, and the Auberge de Castille in Valletta, as well as numerous chapels and historic buildings around Malta;
- Building of a public aquarium (including marine visitor attraction, and ancillary facilities such as restaurants, souvenir outlets and parking spaces), a diving institute, and car parking facilities.

Through a project supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2009-2014, an environmental management system was installed at the World Heritage Site of Hal-Saflieni to stabilize the environment of the site, ensuring its conservation and continued accessibility to the public.



Photo 6: Hypogeum of Hal-Saflieni

Furthermore, future projections are also taking place for a major project related to the regeneration of the Marsamxett Harbour area in Valletta, which includes restoration of bastions, churches, streets, and buildings around the city and upgrading and renovation works to develop a creative industry cluster.

A good investment climate needs to be supported by sustainable entrepreneurial investment, which in turn stimulates sustainable consumption and production. A national voluntary award scheme was launched in 2002, known as the Eco-certification, which focuses on best practices covering environmental, socio-economic, and cultural sustainability of hotels and farmhouses on the Maltese Islands. In 2012, the scheme became mandatory for new hotels and two years later, it became a requirement for hotels taking advantage of the Policy for Height Limitation. The eco-certification is recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

Malta depends heavily on coastal and maritime tourism. In tandem with the Agenda developed by the EU's Ocean Governance initiative and the focus on sustainable blue economies, efforts will continue being undertaken to improve the use and interpretation of our marine environment. Key initiatives are in focus at a local level, which include:

- Award of Blue Flag beaches and beach management;
- Maintenance of coastal tourism zones;
- Maintenance of the bathing water quality by, for instance, treating sewage that is subsequently transferred into the sea with no adverse impact;

- Support towards management plans for marine special protected areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation, and Natura 2000 sites;
- The establishment of an Agency which will focus on researching, protecting, preserving, and managing maritime cultural heritage.

Addressing Waste and promoting recycling

Malta's waste policy framework is guided by the EU waste policy. Malta's National Environment Policy (2012) states that, in order to manage waste in an environmentally sustainable manner, Government needs to ensure that the three pillars of sustainable development are taken into consideration in decision-making concerning the waste sector.

The Cleansing Directorate, provides waste management services in order to keep urban and non-urban areas free from litter and illegally dumped waste.

In January 2014, the Government published a Waste Management Plan for the Maltese Islands covering the period 2014-2020, with the aim of moving waste management in Malta up the waste hierarchy through increased prevention, re-use, recycling, and recovery. The overarching principle of sustainable development was the backbone of this plan, by addressing the social, economic and environmental impacts of the options proposed towards improved waste management within the Maltese Islands.

Government has throughout the years developed infrastructure to deal with the various waste streams generated in the Maltese Islands, with the main emphasis being on Municipal Solid Waste. Public facilities include:

- *Bring-in sites*: Some 400 bring-in sites have been established in public areas and in schools. These are intended for the deposit of at source segregated recyclables, namely plastic, paper, metal, and glass. Additionally, there are around another 430 bring-in sites managed by private operators across Malta and Gozo.
- *Civic amenity sites*: Supervised facilities where members of the public can bring and discard a variety of household bulky waste, such as tyres, refrigerators, electronic appliances, waste from DIY activities, and garden waste.
- *Materials Recovery Facility*: This type of facility was commissioned in February 2008 and is intended for the sorting of dry recyclable waste recovered through the kerb-side collection of recyclables, bring-in sites and other at source segregation initiatives. The facility has a permitted capacity to treat 36,000 tonnes of incoming material. Products from this facility are sold to registered brokers and authorised facilities for further processing and export.
- *Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant*: This type of facility consists of the following components: (1) Mechanical Treatment Plant (MTP) for the mechanical separation of municipal solid waste to prepare the organic fraction for further processing; (2)

Digestion and Stabilising (Composting) Plant for the treatment of source-separated biodegradable waste and mechanically sorted biodegradable waste from the MTP in order to produce biogas and digested material to be used as Compost; (3) Combined Heat and Power Plant (CHP), which runs on the biogas produced; and (4) Regenerative Thermal Oxidiser (RTO) to treat gases and odours generated within the closed compartments before being released into the atmosphere. The facility has a capacity to treat 35,000 tonnes of organic material.

- *Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) storage facility*: This facility is used for the storage of WEEE and batteries and accumulators pending export for treatment.
- *Engineered landfills for non-hazardous waste*: Two landfills are in operation since 2004 and 2006 respectively.
- *Thermal treatment facility*: This facility treats animal by-products, clinical waste, and other hazardous waste streams, including sludge and solvents. This facility commenced operations in December 2007 and was funded through the fifth Italo-Maltese Financial Protocol. It has a treatment capacity of around 13,000 tonnes per annum.

An important part of Government's vision is to generate as much energy as possible from the processes of landfilling and waste treatment, alongside the traditional methods of sustainable energy generation, such as solar panels and wind turbines. The estimated amount of energy expected to be generated from the landfill facilities at the Magtab Environmental Complex is that equivalent to the electricity needs of 3,000 households, based on an average occupancy of four persons. Energy is also generated at the Anaerobic Digestion plant, which is at times entirely self-sufficient in terms of electricity, and even manages to return some energy to the national grid during the silent hours.

A 'Don't Waste Waste' campaign was launched in April 2016 with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of waste management, both at business and citizen level, in order to drive a cultural shift in people's behaviour. The waste hierarchy, whereby waste is considered as a resource, guides the campaign. The campaign provides practical tips that can be utilised on a day-to-day basis with the aim of reducing, reusing or recycling waste.

The 'Don't Waste Waste' campaign has issued a call for submissions by businesses implementing good waste management practices, that are willing to promote and showcase such initiatives as examples of good practice. The scheme encourages businesses to submit descriptions of actions that led to better waste management within their organisation. The aim of sharing these best practices is to keep the general public informed about sustainable and green initiatives that are being undertaken by the business community. The idea is to also encourage other businesses to adopt similar sustainable and green innovative practices.

An organic waste pilot project was introduced in 2016 and now includes nine localities in Malta, and the entire Gozo region. The aim is to progressively extend this project on a national scale, permitting source segregated organic waste to be treated at one or more of Malta's waste facilities, where compost is being produced, which helps turn waste into a valuable resource.

The Government is planning to introduce other water-related measures and initiatives, such as the implementation of nation-wide collection of the organic bag, the implementation of the Beverage Container Refund Scheme, and more enforcement, including those of a legal nature.

The Government is currently introducing a scheme offering consumers a financial incentive to return plastic bottles and containers in deposits located in supermarkets and petrol stations. In addition, Government has also introduced a tax on plastic bags as a means of discouraging people from using them.

As regards Government's plan to set up a Waste to Energy Facility, a Technical Committee composed of various social partners was set up in July 2017 to provide direction regarding the technology to be used for the Facility. The main conclusions of the report prepared by the technical Committee were as follows:

- The facility will process 40% of the non-recyclable waste generated in Malta;
- The facility will generate around 69000MW/h annually;
- The proposed technology for the Facility is 'Moving Grate incineration', which is adopted by 80% of similar facilities in the EU;
- Malta will remain committed in reaching EU recycling targets.

In 2018, the Government confirmed its intention to move forward with this plan.

Sustainable Management and Efficient Use of Natural Resources

The Government, through the Ministry for Gozo, participates in an INTERREG Mediterranean project together with partners from Italy, Greece, Albania, and Spain to promote smart and sustainable growth in Mediterranean coastal touristic cities, based on the development of integrated sustainable energy, water, and waste management strategies. Apart from the creation of a "ConsumelessMed" label, the project seeks to promote sustainable tourism models, based on the enhancement of local heritage, natural resources and products, and the promotion of responsible behaviour by tourists. A Committee has been set up in Gozo to assign the label to establishments that wish to adopt it, to manage and promote the label, and to provide administrative and technical support in achieving the benchmarks that award the label.

Water Conservation

Rehabilitation, cleaning, and restoration works of Gozo's valleys took place in 2016. Intervention was aimed at decreasing the risk of local farmers losing their crops as a result of agricultural cropland flooding over the valley sides. Maintenance works of the rubble walls along the valley sides is scheduled. This is expected to increase the overall rainwater storage capacity of the valley.

- SDG 13: Climate Action

Malta's political commitment towards climate action

Malta played a key role in bringing to the attention of the world community the urgent need to conserve climate in the interests of present and future generations. It was in 1988 that Malta requested the inclusion of climate change as an item in the provisional agenda of the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly. In this context, Malta proposed that an appropriate high-level coordinating mechanism should take immediate action to review the phenomenon of climatic change and propose legal and political measures to address global warming and its environmental and socio-economic implications. Following a debate in the Second Committee, Malta presented draft resolution 43/53 entitled: "Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind". The resolution was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 6th December 1988. The Maltese Initiative was the beginning of a complex process that led to international legal instruments on the subject.

Malta's original status under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was that of a Party not in Annex I. In 2009, Malta submitted a formal application for an amendment which would insert Malta in the list of Annex I Parties to the Convention, which Malta now holds. As a Party to the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, Malta has taken various measures on a national level, adopting a number of strategies aimed at achieving its greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments and in adapting to climate change. The existing national institutional structure includes among others, a Climate Action Board established by the Climate Action Act, an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Climate Change, Malta's GHG Emission Inventory Agency, and civil society.

In 2015, Malta adopted the Climate Action Act that commits every person to work with Government to protect the climate and to assist in preventive and remedial measures to this effect. The Act also puts a duty on Government to protect the climate for present and future generations. The Act provides a plan for action to contribute to the mitigation of climate change by limiting greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activity.

In May 2017, the Government issued Malta's Low Carbon Development Strategy. The Strategy identified Government's aspiration for Malta's social and economic development to occur in a low-carbon and climate resilient manner. The Strategy outlines Government's commitment to:

- Uphold national GHG emission reduction commitments in the EU up to 2020;
- Commit to move towards a reduction of national GHG emissions as opposed to pursuing a continued limited increase in emission levels post 2020;
- Progress to reduce national GHG emissions post-2030 in full cognisance of Malta's economic development and priorities of the time;
- Set sector-specific GHG emission reduction targets post 2020 to contribute to meeting reduction commitments taken at the national level and;
- Identify and implement opportunities to enhance climate resilience in Malta.

Throughout the years, there have been a number of initiatives that contribute towards climate change mitigation, such as afforestation efforts and planting of trees, and the use of funding instruments directed towards a low carbon economy. To achieve emission reductions in the tourism sector, in line with global climate policy, a reduction in overall energy use and a switch towards renewable energy sources is key. This can be achieved through innovative research, major investment technology, and strong and integrative international and local policies.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Malta

Malta has had to overcome significant challenges to meet its greenhouse gas objectives. Like other EU Member States, Malta experienced the decoupling of economic and emissions growth. Since 1990 to date, our GDP has grown by 260%, yet our GHG emissions per unit GDP have decreased by 55%.

The National Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report for Malta (2013), a submission under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, provides an inventory of total Greenhouse Gas Emissions at a local scale. CO₂ emissions account for approximately 87.2% share of total gross emissions in 2011. The report shows an overall increase in emissions in the period 1990-2011, with an increase of 44% in CO₂ emissions. Some level of stabilisation and decline can however be observed in the more recent years. The Energy generation sector, represented by two power plants in Malta, is the largest contributor to (overall) greenhouse gas emissions, followed by transport (including road transport, national navigation, and domestic aviation).

Emissions from the transport sector in Malta almost doubled in 2016 when compared to 1990. Moreover, as indicated in the Transport Master Plan 2025, in 2011 the transport sector

contributed for 21.1% of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in Malta. It is interesting to note that the mean temperature in Malta over the past 30 years was higher than the climatic norm of 18.6 degrees Celsius. The following chart indicates the total emissions of CO₂ in kilo tonnes from road transport between the period 1990- 2016:

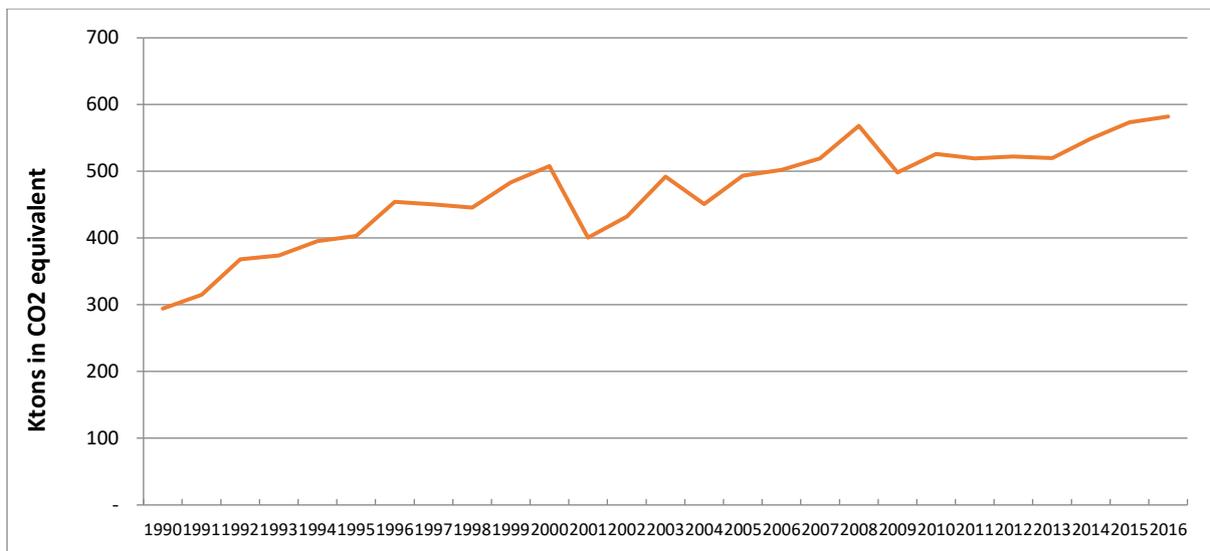


Figure 9: Total road transport emissions in kilo tone CO₂ equivalent

The Government participated in a regional Decarbonated Airport Regions (D-Air) project, co-funded by the INTERREG IVC funding programme. Participation in this project led to the compilation of a Regional Implementation Plan following a series of extensive consultations with stakeholders and operators within the airport regions. This study outlined the data gathered, which reflected the current emissions within the airport boundaries. The study took into consideration all land-based carbon sources, including land transportation, as well as aviation activity within the airport. This data was considered as the baseline by which future policy results could be measured. The Regional Implementation Plan also put forward a list of recommendations that aimed to minimise emissions resulting from airport activity. Some recommendations arising from the study included the use of solar energy through Photovoltaic Units, the installation of Solar Car Ports at the Malta International Airport parking area, improving rainwater harvesting infrastructure/treatment of sewage effluent, and the development of Fixed Power Ground Units to replace the use of Auxiliary Power Units.

As indicated in the Transport Master Plan 2025, a few studies have been carried out to determine the potential impact of climate change and sea level rise on transport infrastructures (including road, ports and airport). Current standards for design and planning of transport infrastructure now require appropriate consideration for both mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change impacts. Innovation in transport infrastructure has now developed methods of

generating and saving of energy, which are to be explored for their potential in the Maltese context.

- ***SDG 14: Life below Water***

International maritime challenges

Mediterranean countries are facing complex challenges in the areas of the sustainable supply of food and energy, securing jobs and economic prosperity, human health, and ageing populations. Innovation, capacity building, and knowledge sharing are key to address the generational change in the labour market, making the blue economy more sustainable, competitive and resilient to economic downturn and/or crisis.

Malta has always been at the forefront of maritime and marine related issues. As a maritime nation, strategically located in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, Malta has sought to address the regional and international maritime community's concern towards the conservation and sustainable use of our seas and oceans, not only for the current generation, but also for those yet to come.



Photo 7: Diving in Maltese waters

SDG 14 calls for implementation of international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which is pivotal to the achievement of all of the SDG 14 targets. One way towards achieving target 14(c) is to irrevocably provide legal protection to High Seas biodiversity in order to close this last ocean governance loophole. The High Seas are a global issue and hence their conservation and sustainable use require a global solution.

An initial assessment exercise of the sea around Malta analysing a number of different elements, including levels of pollution of different substances, underwater noise, and the status of a number of species and their populations, was undertaken at the national scale back in 2012. A set of targets and a programme of measures were recently compiled under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Malta's National Integrated Maritime Policy

The Government, in line with the National Integrated Maritime Policy, is committed to increase awareness with respect to scientific research, and sustainable economic growth. The Government promotes bio-based innovative economic activities and services, such as biotechnology.

The Government has developed maritime clusters under the four economic pillars of the National Integrated Maritime Policy, namely food, energy, logistics, and services. Over forty marine and maritime stakeholders, emanating from the public and private sector, are partners and form part of these clusters. The Government will be launching working groups on each economic pillar, with the aim of supporting and strengthening the clusters, while maintaining open dialogue among the sectoral clusters. The clusters offer an integrated approach, and an opportunity for stakeholders to participate and voice their opinion.

Marine litter

In line with target 14.1, a number of underwater and beach clean ups are organised yearly by NGOs in collaboration with Government. Litter collected from beach and underwater clean-ups carried out in the period 2002-2006 amounted to 873kg from 24km of Maltese coastline. Malta is also investigating the role of transboundary contaminants, including litter, through hydrographic pathways and the extent of its contribution to marine contamination. With regard to litter emanating from fishing gear, an existing measure requires that such gear should be labelled and all efforts should be made to recover such fishing gear.

New measures that are being developed to eradicate marine litter include:

- the establishment of formal collaboration with NGOs for participation in Mediterranean coastal clean-up days;
- educational Campaigns for seafarers on marine litter;

- identifying options for redesigning fishing gear or practices to reduce discarded or lost fishing gear;
- implementation of 'Fishing for Litter' scheme;

Eutrophication

The Maltese Islands are to a large extent influenced by the Atlantic Water that flows across the Straits of Gibraltar, connecting the surface flow of the two basins. Marine waters can therefore be described as exposed waters. Hence, nutrients are generally heavily diluted and transported to the open sea. Although occurrence of eutrophication is not unknown to Malta, it is not a frequent or major phenomenon. Attempts to assess eutrophication are very recent and are currently ongoing.

As per the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Malta collects, treats, and discharges domestic and industrial waste waters. Three urban waste water treatment plants are in operation, treating waste water prior to its disposal at sea, thus diminishing impact on the marine environment. Monitoring for nitrate status and their eutrophic state in Malta is carried out every four years. The Maltese Islands were designated as one whole Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, meaning that the measures outlined in the Nitrates Action Programme are mandatory for all farmers. Malta is implementing the Agriculture Waste Management Plan and the CoGap & Nitrates Action Programme to reduce eutrophication issues.

Land-based fish farm installations contribute to the input of nutrients and organic matter. The operational standards for the aquaculture sector are being improved via the environmental permitting process. Joint inspections by a number of Governmental entities are carried out to ensure that industrial operations abide to the best environmental practice.

With regard to the shipping industry, Malta has also regulated the discharge of sewage from ships and has set standards for recreational crafts. Surveys conducted indicate that Maltese coastal waters are of 'good' to 'moderate' status in terms of chlorophyll-a concentrations, which status may vary across seasons.

National exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches

The ecosystem-based approach is being applied to all Maltese waters. Up until 2010, Malta had already designated 5 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as part of the marine Natura 2000 network, which is established under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. These sites conserve the Posidonia sea grass beds and submerged reefs. Seagrass meadows are crucial to our oceans as they produce oxygen, function as a submerged forest for many animals, and other seaweeds, and offer greater resilience to climate change. Malta had designated more than 85% of seagrass meadows as an MPA. In 2012, just after these sites were designated, the EU stated that relative to its size, Malta was one of the countries with the largest contribution to the marine aspect of

the Natura 2000 network, at the time having designated 183 km² of marine areas. Seagrass meadows are also very efficient in carbon sequestration, absorbing large quantities of CO², thus positively effecting the climate and our oceans.

Minimising and addressing the impacts of ocean acidification

Marine acidification is a result of anthropogenic emissions of CO², which is the main greenhouse gas responsible for global warming and climate change. The marine acidification process has not been specifically assessed in Malta and relevant data is only available with respect to pH of seawater, collected as part of a coastal water quality monitoring programme initiated in February 1998 up to 2004. Results indicated that the pH for all stations did not vary significantly and pH generally ranged from 7.8 to 8.5. This monitoring programme was discontinued and the most recent pH data is that collected as part of the 2012 EU Water Framework Directive baseline surveys. In line with previous observations, pH did not vary significantly. Data gaps exist in relation to long-term trend data on pH, and to the actual processes and impacts, if any related to marine acidification in the marine environment.

In the Valletta Declaration of 29th March 2017, adopted by EU Maritime Transport Ministers in Malta during Malta's Presidency of the Council of the EU, Ministers welcomed the progress made at the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) 70, concerning the "setting of 1st January 2020 as entry-into-force date of the 0.5% global sulphur cap for marine fuel". This should significantly reduce the amount of sulphur released into the ocean and seas from 2020 onwards. Since sulphur is linked to acidification, an expected reduction in sulphur dioxide emissions should drastically reduce the rate of acidification.

Fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels

Data on fish populations is generated through the implementation of Malta's National Fisheries Data Collection Programme (NFDCP) initiated in January 2005. The most relevant data for assessing fish populations is generated through the scientific surveys carried out as part of the Data Collection Framework, namely the Mediterranean International bottom trawl survey (MEDITS) and the Pan-Mediterranean pelagic survey (MEDIAS). Malta has been committed to the safeguarding and regulation of fish and fisheries for a number of decades.

The main legal instrument enacting the regulation and management of the fisheries sector in Malta is the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, 2011 (Act II of 2001, Chapter 425). This Act makes provision for the regulation, conservation, and management of the fisheries of Malta and matters incidental thereto, and provides a legal basis for the protection of turtles, dolphins, and other aquatic organisms. Malta has also enacted the Enforcement of Sea Fishing Conventions Order, 2011 (Legal Notice 209/11 and Legal Notice 282/11) which provide for the enforcement of restrictions and obligations emanating from the Fisheries Conventions, to which Malta is a state party.

The EU Common Fisheries Policy is geared towards the exploitation of living aquatic resources that provide sustainable economic, environmental and social conditions, through, inter alia, conservation and management of such resources, limitation of environmental impact of fishing, and management of the fleet capacity. Council Regulation 199/2008, concerning the establishment of a ‘Community framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy, includes provisions on the collection and management of data relating to fishing vessels, their activities, and monitoring. For this purpose, the European Commission adopted Commission Decision 2008/949/EC outlining a multiannual Community programme, pursuant to Council Regulation 199/2008. Within this context, Member States are required to collect economic and stock-related variables. Member States are also required to carry out research surveys at sea to evaluate the abundance and distribution of stocks. This is to be done independently of the data provided by commercial fisheries, and to assess the impact of the fishing activity on the environment. Such surveys are referred to as ‘Fishery Independent Surveys’.



Photo 8: Fish stocks

Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006, concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, relates to the conservation, management and exploitation of living aquatic resources in the Mediterranean. The Regulation also calls for the establishment of Fishing Protected Areas, which are not yet established in Malta, in which fishing activities may be banned or restricted in order to conserve and manage living aquatic resources, or to maintain or improve the conservation status of marine ecosystems.

The Regulation establishes the 25-mile Fisheries Management Zone around the Maltese Islands, which stipulates a number of provisions regulating fishing within this zone. The Regulation prohibits fishing for dolphin fish within the 25 nautical miles Fisheries Management Zone by fish aggregating devices (FAD), from 1st January to 5th August each year. It further stipulates that the number of vessels for dolphinfish fishery shall not exceed 130. The Regulation also sets the authorised trawlable areas within the 25 nautical mile Fisheries Management Zone (Annex V). Malta's Fisheries Management Plans however indicate that the Maltese authorities are currently studying the possibility of relocating part of these authorised trawlable areas due to a rationalisation exercise that has led to the closure of parts of the zones due to the presence of protected habitats.

Malta is also a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) since 7th August 2003. Malta thus observes ICCAT Recommendations which are enforceable, including the ones on the Bluefin tuna catch limits, and has regulated fishery through the Fishery Regulations. The open season for the taking of Bluefin Tuna by Maltese registered fishing vessels commences on 15th April and extends to 31st December each year. However, the season comes to an end once the allocated catch quota for Malta is reached.

Malta is a member of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) since 29th April 1965 and follows the enforceable recommendations issued by the Commission. The GFCM is instrumental in coordinating efforts by Governments to effectively manage fisheries at regional level, following the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas

Malta has recently designated 14 MPAs, nine of which were declared as MPAs in 2016. This comprises roughly some 4,138 square kilometres, which essentially covers a larger area than the country itself. Malta is currently protecting over 35% of all the waters under its jurisdiction. Hence, Malta has achieved more than the set national target for SDG 14.5, since more than the set 10% target has been achieved, along with meeting the marine part of the Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi target 11.

With the designation of the 9 MPAs established in 2016, Malta has further contributed to cover important areas for marine turtles, cetaceans, and a number of protected seabirds. Follow up mechanisms such as monitoring and reporting are provided for in the EU Habitats and EU Marine Strategy Framework Directives. These sites are governed by existing national and regional regulations. The areas identified as important for the turtles and dolphins are likely serving as a migratory corridor and foraging site for these species.

The final steps towards the designation of these MPAs as Natura 2000 sites also entailed an ambitious awareness raising and capacity building component, through a number of EU LIFE projects, including LIFE MIGRATE, which included:

- Training on species identification to a wide spectrum of stakeholders and other sea-users;
- Awareness activities addressed to the general public and preparation and distribution of promotional materials (videos, leaflets, posters, and TV spots) during various promotional national events;
- Production of a number of videos and short clips for TV on the status of marine turtles and cetaceans;
- Promotion and encouragement of educational programmes from the local Government and NGOs, such as specialised courses and lessons on cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises), and other marine species;
- School children events in conjunction with rehabilitated turtles release events;
- Broad public information campaigns on the results of the EU LIFE MIGRATE project in order to enhance awareness and public participation and stimulate a behavioural change.

A specific Conservation Plan for dolphins and marine turtles in Malta, was prepared through the above-mentioned LIFE project, and included a number of actions aimed at ensuring the efficacy of the aforementioned protected areas.

Malta is currently working to establish the management measures for these marine protected areas, in order to ensure that economic, social, cultural, regional, and recreational requirements are adequately considered.

As part of a European regional MPA-network, these sites will help restore and strengthen ecosystem resilience, which will help protect ecosystem services, and may mitigate adverse effects from global warming and other stressors on the marine environment.

Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Malta follows EU regulation in this area. EC Regulation 1967 of 2006 prohibits the use of towed fishing gear on *Posidonia oceanica*, coralligenous habitats, maerl beds, and corals. The trawlable areas are located on shelf and upper bathyal sublittoral sediments mainly characterised by coarse silt. Trawling in Malta therefore excludes areas characterised by sensitive habitats. Further studies were also carried out to enhance knowledge about the distribution of maerl beds and other important habitat types within the Malta Fisheries Management Zone, e.g. the EU LIFE Baħar project.

Impacts of fisheries on non-commercial species are mainly associated with incidental capture of non-target species or by-catch. The most common by-catches in the Mediterranean involve non-commercial benthic species, but may also involve marine turtles and seabirds. Protected species such as marine turtles are landed for rehabilitation purposes. The actual extent of the impact of incidental capture on marine turtles needs to be further studied. Discards generated by the Maltese fishing fleet are not significant, mainly as a result of quotas being used up. The amount of discards generated by set longline fishery is negligible, so no discard information is collected for this fishery.

Blue Flag beaches

As regards Blue Flag Activities, the Government organised a number of activities at the beaches of Hondoq ir-Rummien and Marsalform in Gozo, as part of an initiative to achieve Blue Flag certification by 2017.



Photo 9: Ramla l-Hamra, Gozo

Today, these beaches have been awarded the Quality Beach certification. Beaches must meet 100% of the necessary criteria to achieve Blue Flag certification. One of these criteria is that the beach or surrounding area must host at least five activities during the period of the Blue Flag. The Government managed to successfully organise eight activities at Hondoq ir-Rummien and nine activities at the beach in Marsalform, which were held in collaboration with

local groups and organisations. The activities were suitable to people of all ages and served to raise awareness about the marine environment and to educate about environmental protection. Other activities included health and safety lessons, cultural activities, and recreational activities for the whole family. The Blue Flag certification was renewed for 2018.

- *SDG 15: Life on Land*



Photo 10: Malta's countryside

Supporting Afforestation, safeguarding ecosystems and biodiversity

In Gozo, the Government has invested in the afforestation and development of a family park at Il-Qortin ta' Isopu, in the village of Nadur. The final phase of the restoration of the disused quarry in Nadur has been completed. To date, the project has involved significant earth-moving and re-contouring works covering an area of around 20,000m², included the afforestation of the majority of the area, and the formation of new levels in order to avoid overspill of material onto the surrounding protected area, which is mainly garrigue. Works also included the construction of a reservoir and the planting of approximately 3,900 trees and shrubs. Moreover, the levelling of soil, the installation of an irrigation system, and the formation of paths, have been completed earlier this year.

In an effort to halt the loss of biodiversity, the Government has engaged in the restoration of rubble walls at Marsalforn Valley in Gozo. During 2017, an application was submitted for the restoration and building of 4,000m² of rubble walls located within this valley. The majority of the retention structures were selected following site visits, which showed the structures to be in a perilous state and in danger of collapse, thus threatening the sustainability of the area's habitats.

The Gozo Biodiversity Explorer is another Government initiative aimed at creating awareness and environmental consciousness on Maltese biodiversity. The first part of this project included the design, creation, and installation of acrylic plaques for the trees located at Villa Rundle Gardens in Gozo's capital city, Victoria, and at the bottom of Marsalforn Valley. These plaques contain botanical information in both English and Maltese, about each tree and shrub at these locations. Additionally, several panels were installed at Żebbuġ Primary School for the Leaf project activities. The second planned phase of the initiative is to digitise the botanical database by developing a mobile app that users can access via Android or IOS. The app will contain more detailed information about the tree species, and includes pictures. Extending this project to other locations in Gozo is also being considered.

During 2016, the Government went through advanced preparations to set up a mycology laboratory for researching and experimenting on diseases and mould in plants, vegetables, and fruits at the Gozo Experimental Farm in Xewkija. Such research aims to assist Gozitan farmers in preventing diseases in their agricultural produce. Set up in 2017, this laboratory provides professional advice with regard to agriculture and public health, and is designed to expand Government services in the agricultural sector, including conservation and research.



Photo 11: Valley and countryside in Gozo

Botanical services were given to several projects that required a detailed and technical ecological survey. Several ecological sites, including valleys, and cliff tops were surveyed in 2017 along with tree pruning.

In November 2017, Government announced a public consultation on amendments to the legal framework for the protection of trees in Malta. The amendments being proposed concern the broadening of the protection currently in place, which focuses on the type and age of the tree concerned, with the idea being of broadening protection to the value of specific trees in urban public spaces.

- ***SDG 16: Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions***

Action against corruption and money laundering

The Permanent Commission Against Corruption investigates alleged or suspected corrupt practices and determines sufficient grounds for an in-depth investigation. The Commission also investigates the conduct of public officers, Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries, whose conduct may relate to or be conducive to corrupt practices. The Commission also investigates the practices and procedures of Government departments, local Government authorities, statutory bodies, or other bodies in which the Government has a controlling interest or effective control to facilitate the discovery of any corrupt practices.

Malta is deeply committed to preventing, detecting, and prosecuting money laundering and terrorist financing activities. It has therefore put in place an institutional framework to supervise, gather intelligence on, and take all necessary action against financial crimes. On 11th April 2018, the National Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) Strategy was published, representing a major step forward in Malta's fight against money laundering and terrorist financing. The Strategy is based on the findings of the National Risk Assessment (NRA) to address Malta's highest risks and institutional weaknesses. It represents a comprehensive exercise that covers all key elements of Malta's national framework: from supervision and intelligence gathering to investigation, prosecution, and confiscation. It highlights seven initiatives, broken down into approximately 50 actions, to be implemented over the next 3 years. Implementation has already started with the establishment of a National Coordination Committee.

Equal access to Justice for all

The Attorney General is the Public Prosecutor before the Criminal Court and the Court of Criminal Appeal. The law officers within the Office of the Attorney General appear for Government in the Superior Courts in its civil and criminal jurisdiction, as a Court of Appeal

or Constitutional Court, and before the Court of Magistrates in Malta and Gozo. These law officers advise Government on all legal matters, draft documents or agreements and instruct Government officials on matters that entail the interpretation of legal issues or principles. Law officers also participate in international seminars on legal matters to keep abreast with legal developments abroad.

The Government is committed to provide equal access to justice for all. In this respect, the Legal Aid Malta Agency ensures that persons with low income are professionally and legally represented in a broad spectrum of litigations, defence and advocacy in a democratic society. In fact, the Agency currently has 14 legal aid lawyers in Malta and 4 in Gozo together with 24 Legal Procurators who provide legal aid assistance in civil and criminal cases. Plans are also underway to extend legal aid assistance to Domestic Violence cases.

In order to improve the quality, efficiency, and independence of the national Justice system, since March 2013, the Government has embarked upon a very ambitious project intended to reform the national Justice system. Tangible progress has already been registered, and a number of initiatives were undertaken in order to address backlog. An accurate review of the clearance rate, disposition time, and pending cases of each individual Judge or Magistrate, in both the Civil, Commercial and Criminal sphere, was undertaken. A redistribution of duties within the judiciary was also carried out, and two members of the judiciary were tasked to tackle pending caseload without being assigned new cases. With the opening of a new adjacent multi-storey building inaugurated in October 2014, physical space was created for capacity building, both in terms of new members of the judiciary and new court employees. All this has increased the number of Halls from 24 to 27 and as of 31st December 2017, Malta has 21 Judges, 22 Magistrates, 16 Court Attorneys and 16 Judicial Assistants. Throughout 2018, Malta will start reviewing its case-weighting system in order to better understand the nature and complexity of the cases being registered in courts. Promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, as well as the introduction of a number of e-Justice services, and ICT technologies, are all being applied in order to continue improving the independence, quality, and efficiency of Malta's national Justice system.

Mediation and Arbitration

The Malta Mediation Centre provides a forum where two or more parties in dispute, or in litigation, may voluntarily refer to, or be referred to, by the Court or other adjudicatory authority, in order to resolve their dispute by mediation.

The Malta Arbitration Centre encourages domestic arbitration as a means of settling disputes, and provides the necessary facilities for the conduct of arbitration in Malta. The Centre also advises the Government on any matter related to the field of arbitration in Malta.

Data Protection

The Office of the Information and Data Protection Commissioner protects the individuals' right to data protection, as well as facilitates the right to access information held by public authorities to promote added transparency and accountability in Government. The aim is to have an open society where individuals feel confident that their right to personal data protection is safeguarded, whilst also enjoying their right to freedom of information.

Legal identity and birth registration for all

In line with target 16.9, in January 2012 Malta enacted the Identity Card and Identity Documents Act. In this respect, all persons residing in Malta are required to register their residence. The Act provides for Maltese nationals over 14 years of age to be issued with an Identity Card, whilst foreigners are to be issued with an identification document relative to their immigration status in Malta. Such categories include third country nationals (including persons enjoying international protection, asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers), and EU nationals and their family members exercising their Treaty rights in Malta. A national database stores the relative information. The said Act provides that no authority shall decline to accept the said document as one certifying the identity of its holder. As regards birth registration, all persons born in Malta have their birth registered at the Public Registry in Malta, in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code (Cap. 16).

- *SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals*

Malta's Official Development Assistance

Malta remains committed to reaching 0.33% of ODA/GNI. Malta's ODA/GNI percentage registered an increase of 0.02% in 2017 when compared to 2016, and an increase of 0.05% when compared to 2015, with the 2017 percentage rising to 0.22% of GNI. This upward trend is positive, and notwithstanding the fact that Malta's economy is growing at a fast rate, we are still managing to increase the ODA percentage.

In 2017, the main areas of Malta's ODA spending were on education, welfare, health, and capacity-building. The following is an overview of the scholarships offered, and projects co-financed under Malta's ODA.

- *Scholarships*: Since 2009, Government has been offering four annual scholarships in the areas of diplomacy through the University of Malta, to Palestinian and Tunisian students. An additional two scholarships have also been offered by the University of Malta in full since 2014, for a Master of Arts degree in the field of Humanitarian Action and Cultural Heritage Management to Palestinian students. Since 2015, an additional

scholarship at the University of Malta is being granted to a Tunisian student for a Master of Arts in Humanitarian Action. As from the 2018-2019 academic year, the Government has extended another scholarship to a Palestinian student in the form of a Dual Masters in Conflict Resolution and Mediterranean Security, that the University of Malta has been successfully running with the George Mason University in the United States. The M.A. scholarships are an excellent opportunity for the selected students to garner a deeper understanding on a range of issues related to humanitarian action, and conservation and management of built heritage. These scholarships are a small, yet significant gesture to help Tunisia and Palestine through the challenges they are facing, with a direct contribution towards tolerance, peace, and development.

- As part of its ODA disbursement, the Government also offers Commonwealth and Valletta Scholarships. Since 2015, Malta has been offering scholarships to Ghanaian students through its commitment made at the Valletta Summit on Migration of 11-12 November 2015. These scholarships are offered in support of legal migration to selected African countries as an element of the comprehensive logic of the Action Plan. For the 2018/2019 academic year, a total of four scholarships will be offered for both Ghana and Nigeria, respectively.
- The first Commonwealth scholarship call was successfully launched for the academic year 2017/2018, whereby two Nigerian students were each granted these scholarships.
- *Projects:* Since 2008, the Government has partnered with local Non-Governmental Development Organisations, offering humanitarian and development assistance to developing countries by co-financing several ODA projects. The projects have the aim of supporting economic and social progress based on the notion of ‘eradicating poverty through development’. Malta’s ODA funding assists selected developing countries, (with preference given to countries in North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East) in their development needs. The projects contribute to the direct implementation of the 17 SDGs. Past projects have focused on the root causes of migration, the promotion of education, food security, gender equality, vulnerable groups and health.

Public-Private and civil society Partnerships

On 23rd November 2017, the Commission on Domestic Violence, in collaboration with a number of public and voluntary organisations, launched ‘*Love doesn’t Hurt*’, a nation-wide campaign set to span 16 days, during which various events took place. The campaign formed part of a wider international movement, and was designed to raise awareness on domestic violence and violence towards women. It culminated with a solidarity march.

‘*Making Malta Green and Clean*’ is a public-private campaign launched in 2018. The campaign has the aim of encouraging people to take pride in their street, town or village by keeping it clean and tidy, thus helping to boost Malta’s tourism product. The multi-media campaign is promoted on both radio and online, and educates residents to do their part to make

Malta cleaner, safer, and greener, to the benefits of residents and tourists alike. As part of the campaign, on 24th March 2018, a clean-up in Malta's sandy beach of Ghajn Tuffieha took place, in collaboration with a local NGO. The clean-up was hailed a success as more than 170 enthusiastic volunteers collected over a tonne of waste from the beach.

Regional and International Partnerships

EU cohesion policy is one of the main EU policies contributing to the SDGs. Malta currently implements a number of EU-funded projects. In the implementation of these funds, sustainable development is a key feature. For instance, the Manual of Procedures for Cohesion Funds being implemented during the 2014-2020 cycle, contains a Sustainable Development clause, which states that the objective of the Funds shall be pursued in the framework of sustainable development as a cross-cutting theme, urging beneficiaries to mainstream sustainable development issues throughout the projects' aims and operations.

In partnership with the Italian Port Authority of Catania and the Province of Caltanissetta, Maltese authorities implemented a project by the name of PORT-PVEV, aimed at making ports more energy efficient through the generation of renewable energy and the use of electric mobility in port areas. Specific interventions included, the deployment of electric vehicles to partly substitute conventional vehicles used to service port operations; the instalment of charging infrastructure to all partner port areas to support deployed electric vehicles; solar car charging stations; and off grid electric bike charging stations. CO₂ emissions have been saved as a result of the interventions by the PORT-PVEV in the partner port areas. The project was implemented between 2012 and 2015 with the assistance of an 85% co-financing rate supplied through the Operational Cross-Border Programme Italy-Malta 2007-2013.

Malta participates in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) initiative. This initiative focuses on research and innovation actions in the Euro-Mediterranean region, including non-EU Mediterranean countries, in the following thematic areas:

- Innovative solutions in water management;
- Innovations in sustainable agricultural techniques;
- Novel agro-food value systems.

The national contribution towards the PRIMA initiative is of €5m spread over a ten-year period. Through national funding, Malta also participates in the ERANETMED initiative where three Maltese partners are participating in a project in the development of a future-proof, active, smart micro-grid system. The project started in 2016 and is envisaged to last three years, with a total budget of approximately €200,000. In the same period, another ERANETMED related project was also undertaken and this addressed the aspect of energy and water systems integration and management with a budget of €100,000.

In December 2017, Malta joined the United Nations ‘Clean Seas’ campaign, which aims to motivate a shift towards substantial up-stream actions in the fight against plastic litter. The campaign has the goal of improving the management of industrial plastics, to phase out non-recoverable plastics, and to reduce single-use plastic significantly. The campaign is based on a five-year strategy that involves: educating and engaging citizens; collaborating with Governments and the private sector, and replicating and scaling up the efforts around the world.

Commonwealth Small States Centre of Excellence

The Commonwealth Small States Centre of Excellence (SSCOE) is a joint initiative of the Government of Malta and the Commonwealth Secretariat, launched in 2018. The project sees the establishment of the Centre as a resource (via a web interface) to assist the 32 Small States of the Commonwealth, and other Small States in general, most of which are classified as Small Island Developing States – SIDS, with attaining their SDGs in the priority areas of SDG 3 – Health & Well-Being; SDG 14 – Life below Water; SDG 13 – Climate Actions; and SDG 17 – Partnerships.

In June 2018, the SSSCOE will be launching its first two capacity-building courses, one of which targets specifically practical applications for Blue Growth. Another capacity-building initiative will be targeting strategic negotiations skills for Small States.

The SSSCOE website will act as a host facility to link interested stakeholders to engage and work with each other, matching providers with recipients. The SSSCOE acts as a focal point, specialising as a repository for such knowledge and expertise with several databases relevant to the needs of Small States. The SSSCOE website will carry information on examples of Best Practice and Case Studies of capacity-building in the priority SDG areas. A series of Case Studies with a strong element of innovation have been already published by the Centre on Debt-for-Nature Finance Swap effected by Seychelles, and the Aquaculture Sector in Malta.

As part of its operations, the Centre also generates Concept Notes leading to Project Initiatives which bring diverse stakeholders together on collaborative actions in priority SDG areas. The execution of these actions by multi-stakeholder partnerships deliver practical experiences in sharing of knowhow and expertise. The results and learnings of these actions will be captured and shared over the SSSCOE’s website.

The Centre is looking into accessing emerging technologies, such as satellite-based services and drone monitoring programmes for marine related SDGs. The SSSCOE will also provide templates and tools related to the implementation of national plans derived from examples of North and South domains.

Supporting the WTO framework for universal Trade

Malta has been actively supporting a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable trading system under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) through its engagement within the EU. Malta supports the EU position within the WTO that is intended to develop freer and fairer trade at a global level through multilateral rules.

Increasing the exports of developing countries

Malta supported the work of the EU Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) / GSP+ / Everything But Arms (EBA); the Africa Caribbean and Pacific Economic Partnership Agreements; and the inclusion of trade and sustainable development provisions in EU FTAs. Malta also supported the commencement and finalisation of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with developing countries, and special and differentiated treatment for most vulnerable developing countries in WTO negotiations (e.g. special treatment under the Trade Facilitation Agreement). Malta also considers that a differentiation between the development levels of developing countries should be taken into account, with Least Developed Countries (LDCs) being a priority.

As an EU Member State, Malta provides duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) treatment to imports from LDCs under the EBA instrument. Malta has deepened its commitment in the services sector to LDCs, as part of the Special and Differentiated Treatment. Moreover, it has also engaged in Commonwealth discussions on trade and development policy issues.

Enhancing Global macroeconomic stability

Malta takes active part in the European Semester that aims to enable EU member countries to coordinate their economic policies and address the economic challenges faced at an EU level. The objectives of the European Semester include:

- ensuring sound public finances (avoiding excessive government debt)
- preventing excessive macroeconomic imbalances in the EU supporting structural reforms, to create more jobs and growth
- boosting investment

11. SKOP: Malta's National Development NGO Platform

SKOP, the National Platform of Maltese NGDOs was set up in October 2000 bringing together all NGOs operating in the sector of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The vision of SKOP is to work towards a just world where basic needs are met, where people are empowered, where there is equity in the management and distribution of resources, and where human rights are respected.

SKOP facilitates collaboration as follows:

- *Between members* - SKOP aims at enabling its members to share their experiences. It manages two to three training events annually on topics identified by members themselves. The Platform supports its members in building an understanding of the changing world in which they operate, thus enabling them to adapt appropriately.
- *With the Maltese Government* - as one of Malta's broadest network of NGDOs, SKOP represents the views and interests of the NGDO community to Government.
- *With the European Union (EU)* - As an active founder-member of the pan-European NGDO confederation CONCORD, SKOP has a key role in advocating with the EU about its development policy. SKOP provides its members with information on EU-related issues made available by CONCORD.

SKOP's Working Groups (WG)

Presently SKOP has the following four working groups:

1. *DEAR Working Group*: which specifically focuses on development education and awareness-raising, sometimes referred to as global citizenship education. SKOP has managed the following projects in the field of Development Education:
 - Between September 2012 and September 2015, SKOP participated fully in the TRIALOG V project financed by the European Commission. TRIALOG aimed to strengthen and empower National Platforms (NP) and their members for their effective engagement in the enlarged EU in global development education and development cooperation, and raising public awareness in order to contribute with stronger efforts toward global poverty eradication. SKOP thus aimed to increase the networking between its member organisations, national stakeholders as well as relevant European bodies. TRIALOG supported SKOP in developing its capacities, and those of its members, to deal with development policy issues. Moreover, SKOP implemented annual events to raise awareness about development issues as well as to facilitate the networking between civil society and relevant Government institutions.

- In 2015, through the Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) funding, SKOP organised a public campaign. The campaign produced eight informational banners with the aim of raising awareness on social justice issues among the general public, through the promotion of messages tackling water, gender, food security, climate change, migration, health, young people, and fair trade issues. The aim of the campaign was to provide a civil society perspective on how volunteering within the social justice field helps to develop or improve competences for personal, social and professional development, while contributing to global issues. Banners were set up along Republic Street in Valletta for a whole week from the 27th May to 3rd June 2015. The banners reached out to a wide section of the general public, this being a strategic point and one of the most crowded streets, with an average estimate of 40,000 people visiting Valletta daily. This was an initiative taken by the DEAR Working Group within SKOP.
 - DEEEP Training for Educators in Development Education is a seminar programme aimed to raise awareness among educators and train them to become multipliers on development education in non-formal settings. The seminar was delivered in 15 sessions, 2 hours each, for a total of 30 hours of face-to-face training and 5 hours of personal journal writing. Through this exercise the participants reflected on their own awareness about global issues. The training seminar tackled significant issues such as: Sustainable Development, Consumption, Development and Migration, Climate change, Ethical approaches to development and Children's Rights in the Broader Context of Human Rights. The Learning Objectives were to challenge perceptions and stereotypes about the majority world; to help increase awareness and understanding of the majority world in order to help educators engage with children and young people; to help educators reflect on the connection between their own lives and the international social justice issues, and to be empowered to make a positive difference in the world.
 - E-Books for Children about the SDGs were produced in 2017. This project was funded by FOPSIM through funds obtained from the European Commission. Training videos for educators about the use of the E-books were produced in 2018. This project was funded through SIS.
2. Aid-Watch Working Group (AWWG): This WG monitors and advocates on the quality and the quantity of the Maltese Government's Official Development Assistance. The AWWG is made up of experts from NGOs and academia that aim at holding the Maltese Government to account on its aid quality and quantity commitments. Through its activities, it performs advocacy with institutions and Government officials, builds the capacities of both SKOP's members and Government representatives, networks at a local and European level with fellow civil society organisations or groupings and, finally, raises awareness with a wide range of groups in Malta (Government officials, members of the general public, educators, students, NGOs from other sectors). The AWWG has organised annual national conferences presenting its analysis of the Maltese Government's Official Development Assistance. It also contributes to CONCORD's annual publication - the AidWatch Report.

3. Euro-Med Working Group: SKOP has worked on a project entitled “Supporting Maltese Voluntary Organisations in international development cooperation efforts in the MENA region”. The project aimed at enabling SKOP, its members and other Maltese Voluntary Organisations to engage within the Mediterranean region by establishing dialogue and cooperation with regional networks and national platforms from the neighbourhood.
4. Migration Working Group: This WG enables members to share experience and expertise in a significant area of their activities.

E4C - Educating for Change

During Malta’s Presidency of the Council of the EU, SKOP managed the ‘E4C-Educating for Change project’. This project was co-financed by the European Commission and by the Government.

The overall objective of the project was to strengthen the capacity of civil society and Government to take action on sustainable development and the SDGs on a national and local level. The project aimed to strengthen the role of civil society organisations and local authorities to advocate for the incorporation and implementation of SDGs at a national and regional level. The project also sought to raise the awareness of civil society and policy makers about the SDGs and their relevance for Malta, including the interconnectivity of the global and local development issues. The overarching thematic focus of the project was the implementation and translation of SDGs into action at the national and regional level, with a specific thematic focus on Migration and climate change in the Mediterranean.

In order to reach the established results, the project developed the following strategic lines of action:

1. Engaging in Dialogue and Advocacy for effective policy, which included an analysis and review of national and local policies and practices relevant to the implementation of Agenda 2030; a national report including recommendations for the implementation of Agenda 2030 by Government, including monitoring and evaluation of targets; a Multi stakeholder Conference for launching of the report at National level; and Dialogue with the relevant stakeholders over the course of the project for Government institutions to adopt the recommendations.
2. Strengthening organisational capacity of SKOP and other relevant Civil Society Organisations, and engage them more in development issues and development education. A large part of this project was focused on building the capacity structure and voice of the national platform SKOP and its member organisations. Activities include capacity-building workshop series, networking session, and strengthening of working groups.

3. Strengthening local Government engagement in Sustainable Development, where two main activities were held specifically targeting local councils and NGOs.
4. Outreach: Raising public awareness and engagement on SDGs. This included the provision of small grants for awareness raising campaigns specifically on Agenda 2030; a Young people workshop programme, where SKOP organised a successful international meeting for young adults, followed by a national conference; a general awareness campaign on Agenda 2030 in the form of a series of clips disseminated on TV and Facebook to explain the SDGs in an easily identifiable and understandable manner; a Final conference, which disseminated the results of the project.

SKOP believes that the continuation of the educational campaign is pertinent to the successful implementation of Agenda 2030 in Malta. SKOP needs the continuous financial support of the Government in order to support these campaigns.

12. Conclusion

This VNR, Malta's first since the adoption of the SDGs three years ago, has been positive in a number of ways. Not only has it offered Malta the opportunity of sharing its advancements in the field of sustainable development with the international community, but it has also been a learning process, creating increased awareness, and national ownership of the SDGs, particularly among the public sector. The review highlighted the fact that whilst Malta has several policies in place that have been ongoing for a number of years, they are contributing to the attainment of the SDGs despite not being explicitly classified under the 2030 Agenda framework.

Whilst Malta has already implemented a number of the SDG targets, as reflected in the main chapter of this report and as indicated in the statistical Annex, other targets remain a work-in-progress. Given Malta's particular profile and development standing, not all SDG targets apply in an equal measure, with some being more pronounced than others. Some of the SDG targets do not apply at all, such as those relating to forestry or mountainous regions, which are not part of Malta's topography. In addition, Malta's EU membership entails that several of its policies are aligned to the EU *acquis*, with the EU being at the forefront of promoting sustainable development practices.

Reviewing our implementation of the SDGs has also highlighted the importance of moving away from mitigation and focusing on prevention. This is also the sentiment reflected in the concept of the national *Vision 2050*, which we hope will be adopted later this year.

We consider this review as an important stepping stone in our journey towards 2030 and the dream of leaving no one behind. This review is therefore not an end in itself, but reflects an

exercise which should remain ongoing, whilst working towards breaking down silos as part of our efforts towards attaining sustainable development in line with the SDGs. Whilst we nationally move towards increased economic prosperity, as Malta continues to enjoy heightened economic growth and diminishing unemployment levels, we recognise that our levels of resilience and sustainability need to form part and parcel of our development aspirations.

This VNR therefore underscores Malta's commitment in the field of sustainable development and the recognition that no country can successfully address sustainable development without regional or international cooperation. We will continue supporting international action towards the attainment of the SDGs and a post-2030 scenario, cognisant that action towards sustainable development needs to remain ongoing and long-term. We stand ready to deepen our cooperation with specific developing countries through our ODA, moving towards smarter ODA, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

We share one planet, one mass of sea and one atmosphere. Our time on Earth is limited for each and every one of us, yet our responsibility to future generations needs to guide us in all our actions. As a community of nations, we need to engage in responsible action, and Agenda 2030 is a milestone in this regard. May our levels of enthusiasm and commitment that led us to adopt Agenda 2030 three years ago remain as vibrant as in the coming years, as we work together to create a life of harmony and dignity for both people and planet.

ANNEX

Malta – EU SDG indicator set

Whilst information on policy initiatives, as portrayed in the VNR, has been guided by the UN SDG targets and indicators, Malta, as a Member State of the European Union, is obliged to ensure full compliance with the EU SDG indicator set, in addition to working towards compliance with the UN global data set.

When making use of data for the purpose of this review, it was considered that at the EU level, particular attention was given to the best possible alignment of the EU indicator set with the UN SDG indicator list for global monitoring. It was noted that the latter list is designed for monitoring at a global level, and therefore certain indicators are not always relevant for countries in the EU. That said, when using the EU indicator set, account was taken of the fact that currently 55 EU SDG indicators are identical or similar to UN SDG indicators.

This Annex contains a list of tables per SDG as provided by the Malta National Statistics Office at the time of drawing up this VNR.

Goal 1. No Poverty				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
01_10	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, as % of total population	23.5	20.1	2016
01_20	People at risk of income poverty after social transfers	17.3	16.5	2016
01_30	Severely materially deprived people	7.5	4.4	2016
01_40	People living in households with very low work intensity, as % of total population aged less than 60	10.5	7.3	2016
01_50	People living in households with housing costs higher than 40% of the total household disposable income, as % of total population	11.1	1.4	2016
01_60	Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames or floor, as % of total population	15.4	8.9	2016

Goal 2. Zero Hunger				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
02_20	Agricultural factor income per annual work unit (AWU), expressed in euro per AWU	15,433	10,903	2016
02_30	Government support to agricultural research and development, expressed in million euro	3,146.628	0.281	2016
02_40	Area under organic farming, expressed as % of utilised agricultural area (UAA)	6.69	0.21	2016
02_50	Gross nutrient balance on agricultural land, by nutrient - Nitrogen, expressed in kg per hectare	51 ^e	147 ^e	2015
02_60	Ammonia (NH ₃) emissions from agriculture, expressed in kg per hectare	21.0	123.8	2015
Note: e = estimated				

Goal 3. Good Health and Well-Being				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
03_10	Life expectancy at birth, by sex, expressed in years	Total = 81.0 ^{ep}	82.6	2016
		Males = 78.2 ^{ep}	80.6	
		Females = 83.6 ^{ep}	84.4	
03_20	Self-perceived health, by level of perception - People who said to be in very good or good health as % of the population aged 16 or over	67.5	72.9	2016
03_30	Smoking prevalence - % of the population aged 15 or over	Daily smoker = 19.2	20.1	2014
		Occasional smoker = 4.7	4.0	
		Non-smoker = 76.1	75.9	
03_40	Death rate due to chronic diseases, by sex - Number per 100,000 persons aged less than 65	Total = 122.1	105.3	2015
		Males = 156.5	134.2	
		Females = 89.4	76.1	
03_50	Suicide rate, by sex - Number per 100,000 persons	Total = 11.01	7.87	2015
		Males = 17.3	12.49	
		Females = 5.0	3.24	
03_60	Self-reported unmet need for medical care, as % of the population aged 16 or over - Too expensive or too far to travel, or waiting list	2.5	1.0	2016
Note: e = estimated p = provisional				

Goal 4. Quality Education				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
04_10	Early leavers from education and training, by sex, expressed as % of the population aged 18-24	Total = 10.6	18.6 ^b	2017
		Males = 12.1	21.9 ^b	
		Females = 8.9	15.1 ^b	
04_20	Tertiary educational attainment, by sex, expressed as % of the population aged 30-34	Total = 39.9	30.0	2017
		Males = 34.9	28.0	
		Females = 44.9	32.2	
04_30	Participation in early childhood education, by sex, expressed as % of the age group between 4 years and the starting age of compulsory education	Total = 94.8	100.0	2015
		Males = 94.8	100.0	
		Females = 94.8	100.0	
04_40	Underachievement in reading, maths or science, expressed as % of 15-year-old students	Mathematics = 22.2	29.1	2015
		Reading = 19.7	35.6	
		Science = 20.6	32.5	
04_50	Employment rate of recent graduates, by sex, expressed as % of population aged 20-34	Total = 80.2	94.5 ^b	2017
		Males = 82.0	91.9 ^b	
		Females = 78.4	96.9 ^b	
04_60	Adult participation in learning, by sex, expressed as % of population aged 25-64	Total = 10.9	10.1 ^b	2017
		Males = 10.0	9.1 ^b	
		Females = 11.8	11.2 ^b	
Note: b = break in time series				

Goal 5. Gender Equality				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
05_20	Gender pay gap in unadjusted form, expressed as % of average gross hourly earnings of men	16.2 ^p	11.0	2016
05_30	Gender employment gap - percentage points	11.5	26.1	2017
05_40	Inactive population due to caring responsibilities, by sex, expressed as % of inactive population aged 20-64	Total = 21.4	33.6	2017
		Males = 4.5	3.7 ^u	
		Females = 31.0	43.6	
05_50	Seats held by women in national parliaments and governments, expressed as % of seats	29.0	14.5	2017
05_60	Positions held by women in senior management, expressed as % of positions	Board members = 25.3	8.4	2017
		Executives = 15.8	13.8	
Note: p = provisional u = low reliability				

Goal 6. Clean Water and Sanitation				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
06_10	Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household, expressed as % of total population	1.9 ^e	0.0	2016
06_20	Population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment, expressed as % of total population	:	0.0	2015
06_40	Nitrate in groundwater, expressed in mg NO ₃ per litre	19.1	58.1	2012
06_60	Water exploitation index, expressed as % of long-term average available water (LTAA)	Fresh surface & groundwater = :	48.2 ^s	2015
		Fresh surface water = :	4.6	
		Fresh groundwater = :	114.8	
Note: : = not available s = Eurostat estimate				

Goal 7. Affordable and Clean Energy				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
07_10	Primary energy consumption, expressed in million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	1,542.7	0.7	2016
07_11	Final energy consumption, expressed in million tonnes of oil equivalent (TOE)	1,107.7	0.6	2016
07_20	Final energy consumption in households per capita, expressed in Kg of oil equivalent (KGOE)	557 ^{ep}	181	2016
07_30	Energy productivity, expressed in euro per kg of oil equivalent	8.4	12.4	2016
07_40	Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption - %	17.0	6.0	2016
07_50	Energy dependence, expressed as % of imports in total energy consumption	53.6	100.9	2016
07_60	Population unable to keep their home adequately warm, expressed as % of total population	8.2 ^e	6.4 ^p	2017
Note: e = estimated p = provisional				

Goal 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
08_10	Real GDP per capita, expressed in euro	27,600.0	20,600.0	2017
08_20	Young people neither in employment nor in education and training, by sex, expressed as % of population aged 15-29	Total = 13.4	8.0 ^b	2017
		Males = 11.5	6.9 ^b	
		Females = 15.4	9.2 ^b	
08_30	Employment rate, by sex, expressed as % of population aged 20-64	Total = 72.2	71.4	2017
		Males = 78.0	84.1	
		Females = 66.5	58.0	
08_40	Long-term unemployment rate, by sex, expressed as % of active population	Total = 3.4	1.7	2017
		Males = 3.3	1.8	
		Females = 3.5	1.6	
08_50	Involuntary temporary employment, by sex, expressed as % of employees aged 20-64	Total = 7.7	2.7	2017
		Males = 7.4	2.3	
		Females = 8.1	3.3	
08_60	People killed in accidents at work, expressed as number per 100,000 employees	1.83	2.69	2015
Note: b = break in time series				

Goal 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
09_10	Gross domestic expenditure on R&D, expressed as % of GDP	2.03 ^p	0.61 ^p	2016
09_20	Employment in high- and medium-high technology manufacturing sectors and knowledge-intensive service sectors, expressed as % of total employment	45.8	50.8	2017
09_30	R&D personnel, expressed as % of active population	1.2245 ^p	0.7221 ^p	2016
09_50	Share of collective transport modes in total passenger land transport by vehicle, expressed as % of total inland passengers - Km - Motor coaches, buses and trolley buses	9.2	17.7 ^e	2015
Note: e = estimated p = provisional				

Goal 10. Reduced Inequalities				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
10_10	Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita (Real expenditure per capita)	in PPS_EU28 = 29,100	27,900	2016
		in Volume indices (EU28=100) = 100	96	
10_20	Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita, expressed in Purchasing Power Standard (PPS) per inhabitant	21,903	:	2016
10_30	Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap, expressed as % distance to poverty threshold	25.0	15.9	2016
10_40	Gini coefficient of equalised disposable income (Coefficient of 0 = maximal equality to 100 = maximal inequality)	30.8	28.5	2016
10_50	Income share of the bottom 40% of the population, expressed as % of income	20.9	22.2	2016
10_60	Asylum applications by state of procedure - first-time applicants, expressed in number per million inhabitants	2,361 ^{ep}	3,810	2016
Note: : = not available e = estimated p = provisional				

Goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
11_10	Overcrowding rate by poverty status, expressed as % of total population	Overall =16.6	2.9	2016
		Below 60% of median equivalised income = 29.5	7.5	
		Above 60% of median equivalised income = 13.9	1.9	
11_20	Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, expressed as % of total population	17.9	26.2	2016
11_40	People killed in road accidents, expressed as rate	5.1 ^{bep}	2.5	2015
11_50	Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter - µg/m ³ , expressed as particulates < 2.5µm	14.5	:	2015
11_60	Recycling rate of municipal waste, expressed as % of total waste generated	45.8 ^s	7	2016
Note: : = not available b = break in time series e = estimated p = provisional s = Eurostat estimate				

Goal 12. Responsible Consumption and Production				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
12_20	Resource productivity and domestic material consumption (DMC) euro per kilogram, chain linked volumes (2010)	euro per kilogram chain linked volumes (2010) = 2.0408 ^{ps}	1.4156	2016
		PPS per kg = 2.2004 ^{ps}	1.9667	
12_30	Average CO ₂ emissions per km from new passenger cars, expressed in g CO ₂ per km	118.1	111.8	2016
12_40	Volume of freight transport relative to GDP - index (2005=100)	90.4 ^e	66.3 ^e	2016
12_50	Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness, expressed in kg per capita	Total = 1,717	962	2014
		Hazardous = 120	72	
		Non-hazardous = 1,597	890	
12_60	Recycling and landfill rate of waste excluding major mineral wastes, expressed as % of total waste treated	25	70 ^d	2014
Note: d = definition differs s = Eurostat estimate p = provisional				

Goal 13. Climate Action				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
13_10	Greenhouse gas emissions, expressed in CO ₂ equivalent (base year 1990)	77.9	99.2	2015
13_20	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption - index (2000=100)	89.0	77.1	2015
13_50	Contribution to the international 100bn USD commitment on climate related expenditure, expressed in million euro (current prices)	13,813.88	0.16	2015
13_60	Population covered by the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy signatories, expressed in millions of persons	187.321	0.000	2017

Goal 14. Life below Water				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
14_10	Surface of marine sites designated under the EU Habitats Directive - Marine protected area, expressed in Km ²	395,528	3,490	2016
14_20	Catches in major fishing areas, expressed in tonnes live weight	:c	2,302	2016
14_40	Bathing sites with excellent water quality - Seawater excellent, expressed in %	87	98.85	2016
Note: : = not available c = confidential				

Goal 15. Life on Land				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
15_10	Share of forest area, expressed in % of total land area	41.7	11.5 ^u	2015
15_20	Surface of terrestrial sites designated under the EU Habitats Directive	Terrestrial protected area (Km ²) = 789,081	41	2016
		Terrestrial protected area - Sufficiency Index = 92	98	2013
15_30	Artificial land cover per capita, expressed in m ²	363	173.7	2015
15_40	Change in artificial land cover	:	:	2015
Note: : = not available u = low reliability				

Goal 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
16_10	Death rate due to homicide - Number per 100,000 persons	Total = 0.69	0.72	2015
		Males = 0.89	0.97	
		Females = 0.49	0.47	
16_20	Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area, expressed as % of total population	13.0	10.4	2016
16_30	General government total expenditure on law courts, expressed in million euro	50,031	29	2016
16_40	Perceived independence of the justice system, expressed as % of total population - Very good or fairly good	56	45	2018
16_50	Corruption Perceptions Index (score scale of 0 = high level of corruption; score scale of 100 = very clean)	:	56	2017
16_60	Population with confidence in EU institutions by institution, expressed as % of total population	European Parliament = 45	54	2017
		European Commission = 42	51	
		European Central Bank = 39	47	
Note: : = not available				

Goal 17. Partnership for the Goals				
<i>Code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>EU</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Data reference year</i>
17_10	Official development assistance as share of gross national income (GNI), expressed as % of GNI	0.50 ^p	0.22 ^p	2017
17_20	EU financing to developing countries, expressed in million euro current prices	144,651.0	:	2016
17_30	EU imports from developing countries, expressed in million euro	956,517	700	2017
17_40	General government gross debt, expressed as % of GDP	81.6	50.8	2017
17_50	Shares of environmental and labour taxes in total tax revenues, expressed as % of total taxes	Total environmental taxes = 6.29	8.53	2016
		Labour taxes = 49.79	34.44	
Note: p = provisional : = not available				