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**Skills4Sports**

**Increasing the Employability of NEETs by tackling the skills gap for  
the Sports Sector**

### **A.3.2.1**

## **Situation Analysis & Report**

WP3 – Research Tools & Development



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## The 2014-2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme

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## The European Union

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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## INTRODUCTION

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This Situation Analysis Report has been designed in the framework of the ENI CBC MED project “Skills4Sports” which aims to increase the employability of NEETs in the Mediterranean area by tackling the skills gaps for the Sports Sector. The analysis will be used as a tool for the Project Partners to better understand what the current situation in their country is in regards to the skills development and the employment requirements in the sports sector.

As a result, for conducting this report, a clear, detailed and realistic picture of the opportunities, resources, challenges and barriers regarding the sports skills development in the sports sector is going to be reported for the Malta proper. The thematic focus is especially on the current situation in Malta, on the legal framework and on the public support.

### 1. *Skills4Sports framework*

In the MED region youth unemployment is twice as high as adult unemployment. In the Southern Mediterranean, young people are three times more likely to be out of a job (ILO,2017). Contrarily, prominent sectors, like the sports industry, face challenges finding the right skills for their rising needs. The European Association of Sports Employers and the UNI Europa Sports (European trade union federation), both observe skills shortages and mismatches, along with gender inequality in the sector. Furthermore, the Union for the Mediterranean has identified digital skills as a key for employability in the region, especially for NEETS and youth. The sports sector is thus in need for more skilled employees and at the same time capable to offer opportunities to the NEETS and youth. The sports industries of the Mediterranean region are showing significant rise in employment. The highest Annual Average Growth Rates, between 2012 and 2017, were observed in Greece (+19%), and Malta (+12%), accounting for 0.8% of total EU employment, with 4 in 10 workers being aged 15-29. The identical challenges and characteristics of the NEETS of the Mediterranean, as well as the frequent mobility of athletes and sports professionals, call for a cross-border approach to reduce the skills gap, offering new career opportunities.

Skills4Sports aims to increase the employability of NEETS of the Mediterranean area by cultivating new professionals for the thriving Sports sector, reducing the mismatch of skills and involving key stakeholders in the process. The project will strengthen multilateral cross-border cooperation between social and solidarity economic actors of participating regions thus creating better perspectives for social inclusion through increased employability, of NEETS. Both the training opportunities offered by the project, and the support network, "Strategic Alliance for Skills4Sports", will contribute to a matured working environment in the sports industry of the region. Increased capacities of the available workforce will lead to better jobs that offer even more opportunities.

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## METHODOLOGY

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The creation and preparation of the Situation Analysis Report for Malta has been based on four different methods:

- ✓ Desk research
- ✓ Online survey with stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project
  - Interviews with Stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project
- ✓ SWOT Analysis report
- ✓ PESTLE Analysis report

The main results and key information from the Online survey at the national level are presented in the last sections of this report.

### 2. *Key words*

To better understand the situation in Malta, research and analysis of current trends and situations are necessary.

Before continuing with the desk research and the state of the art of the skills development in the sports sector, the key definitions used throughout this methodology will be introduced. These key definitions is used to look for literature that fits within the scope of the Situation Analysis Report, including existing quantitative and qualitative data about the problem and the number of people/organizations affected.

#### **NEETs**

NEET is an acronym for 'not in employment, education or training', used to refer to the situation of many young persons aged between 15 and 29, in Europe. The aim of the NEET concept is to broaden understanding of the vulnerable status of young people and to better monitor their problematic access to the labour market (Eurofound).

#### **Key Stakeholder**

An individual, group, or organisation that might affect, be affected by, or perceive itself as affected by a decision, activity, or outcome of a project (PMBOK Guide, 2017). Stakeholders also may exert influence on the project, project deliverables, or the team in order to satisfy their own agenda.

#### **Skills development**

The process of identifying the skill gaps, and developing and honing these skills. It is important because skills determine the ability to execute any plans with success.

**Sport sector/ industry**

Sport industry is an industry in which people, activities, business, and organizations are involved in producing, facilitating, promoting, or organizing any activity, experience, or business enterprise focused on sports.

### 3. *Online survey*

For this study, the methodology of questionnaires was applied within the main collectives who take part of S4S project in Malta. For this purpose, two types of questionnaires were created; one for stakeholders and one for beneficiaries.

The data was collected between 10 of April 2021 and 10 of May 2021. During this timeframe, different ways of communication were used, such as emails, phone calls or meetings in person with both collectives.

About the invitations sent to the beneficiaries: a total of 20 were sent by email, 15 were contacted by phone, 3 people were called directly and 13 were met in person. About the stakeholders invitations, the main communication tool was email. Up to 70 emails were sent to stakeholders with the invitations to participate in the online survey. In addition, around 6 stakeholders were contacted in person and 3 by phone.

The response ratio was pretty good, however our expectations were higher. A total amount of 30 beneficiaries and up to 20 stakeholders answered the questionnaires.

The sample used for this study, based on the universe (small Maltese population), is already fairly representative of the reality of the country. Moreover, of the sample chosen, the beneficiaries and stakeholders who responded to the questionnaires account for around 40% and 35% respectively. More information on the last sections of this study.

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## 2. *OVERVIEW OF MALTA AND GOZO*

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**Malta**, island country located in the central Mediterranean Sea. A small but strategically important group of islands, the archipelago has through its long and turbulent history played a vital role in the struggles of a succession of powers for domination of the Mediterranean and in the interplay between emerging Europe and the older cultures of Africa and the Middle East.<sup>1</sup>

The smallest country in the European Union, the Republic of Malta carries with it great economic and strategic importance. Economically, Malta has been able to maintain a robust performance over the past years: household consumption and net exports have been the main determinants

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malta>



of economic growth.<sup>2</sup> The country has also been subject to the ongoing migrant crisis in the Mediterranean region. Serving as home for thousands of African asylum seekers in the early 2000s, Malta has been able to almost virtually shut down the flow of migrants in 2015<sup>3</sup>. Instead, the migrants are rather being taken to Italy and other European countries. However, because of Malta's geographic position, the number of illegal immigrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea from the Libyan coast has been expected to increase with further closure of other European routes. It has the 47<sup>th</sup> highest migration rate in the world.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of 2018, the number of inhabitants living in Malta amounted to 493.559, with 460.171 and 33.388 residing in the Malta, and Gozo and Comino regions, respectively (*Table 1*). The highest share of Malta's total population, 16.6 per cent, was accounted by persons between 30 and 39 years of age (with 28.586 and 14.273 persons) living in the Northern Harbour and Northern districts, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

	MALTA			Malta			Gozo and Comino		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
0-9	23 462	21 996	45 458	21 958	20 607	42 565	1 504	1 389	2 893
10-19	22 307	21 142	43 449	20 734	19 609	40 343	1 573	1 533	3 106
20-29	37 334	33 897	71 231	34 978	31 668	66 646	2 356	2 229	4 585
30-39	39 719	35 408	75 127	37 383	33 375	70 758	2 336	2 033	4 369
40-49	32 220	29 615	61 835	30 268	27 841	58 109	1 952	1 774	3 726
50-59	29 860	29 191	59 051	27 527	26 893	54 420	2 333	2 298	4 631
60-69	29 495	29 840	59 335	27 287	27 613	54 900	2 208	2 227	4 435
70-79	18 728	21 548	40 276	17 285	19 757	37 042	1 443	1 791	3 234
80-89	6 648	10 507	17 155	6 110	9 584	15 694	538	923	1 461
90+	826	1 958	2 784	732	1 769	2 501	94	189	283
Total	240 599	235 102	475 701	224 262	218 716	442 978	16 337	16 386	32 723

Note:

1. Data as at 31 December.

*Table 1 . Total population by age group, region and sex: 2017. Source: Malta Report 2020*

The population table 1, shows the age and sex structure of the MALTA population by region in 2018. It shows left-to-right symmetry suggesting almost equal female-male distribution in both regions across most of the ages, except for the 75 years of age and older where there was a broader share of females than males and which happened to be more pronounced in the Gozo and Comino region. The age demographic structures differed between the two regions. The

<sup>2</sup> EU Economic and Financial Affairs – Country Report Malta 2016 [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2016/cr2016\\_malta\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2016/cr2016_malta_en.pdf) 3 June 2016

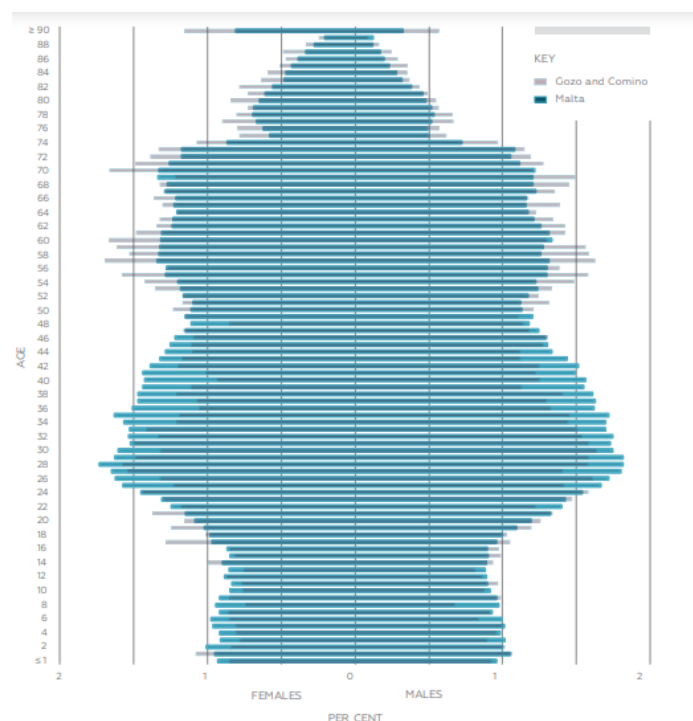
<sup>3</sup> The Economist – High wall, narrow sea <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21678248-migrants-once-flocked-malta-host-eu-african-migration-summit-not-anymore-high-wall> 14 November 2015

<sup>4</sup> CIA – The World Fact Book. “Europe: Malta” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mt.html> 12 October 2018.

<sup>5</sup> [https://nso.gov.mt/en/publications/Publications\\_by\\_Unit/Documents/02\\_Regional\\_Statistics\\_\(Gozo\\_Office\)/2020/Regional\\_Statistics\\_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf](https://nso.gov.mt/en/publications/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/02_Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/2020/Regional_Statistics_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf)

population in the Malta region showed relatively higher concentration in the 20 to 39 years of age with a relatively equal female-male distribution. However, the age structure of the population of the Gozo and Comino region displayed a higher proportion of persons over the 50 years of age with a relatively equal female-male distribution. Despite the fact that when compared to Gozo and Comino region the Malta region had higher shares in the 0 to 9 age group, the distribution by sex was evenly distributed.<sup>6</sup>

During the period 2012 and 2018, the population of the Malta region increased every year with an overall growth of 69.084 inhabitants. In particular, the Northern Harbour district registered the highest population growth of 30.3 per cent, followed by the Northern district registering a growth of 28.2 per cent, while the least growth was recorded in the Southern Harbour district, registering a growth of 4.3 per cent. Similarly, the population of the Gozo and Comino region increased every year where there was an overall population growth of 1.966 inhabitants<sup>7</sup>. (*Graphic 1 ; Graphic 2*)



*Graphic 1 . Malta population growth 2012-2018*

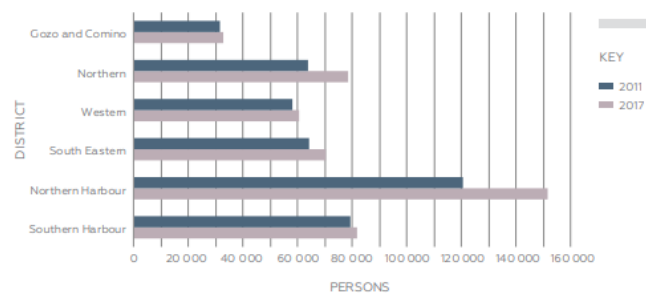
<sup>6</sup> [https://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications\\_by\\_Unit/Documents/02\\_Regional\\_Statistics\\_\(Gozo\\_Office\)/2020/Regional\\_Statistics\\_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf](https://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/02_Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/2020/Regional_Statistics_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications\\_by\\_Unit/Documents/02\\_Regional\\_Statistics\\_\(Gozo\\_Office\)/2020/Regional\\_Statistics\\_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf](https://nso.gov.mt/en/publicatons/Publications_by_Unit/Documents/02_Regional_Statistics_(Gozo_Office)/2020/Regional_Statistics_Malta-2020%20Edition.pdf)

	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
	2011			2012			2013		
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>207 695</b>	<b>209 851</b>	<b>417 546</b>	<b>210 383</b>	<b>212 126</b>	<b>422 509</b>	<b>214 533</b>	<b>214 891</b>	<b>429 424</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>192 119</b>	<b>194 024</b>	<b>386 143</b>	<b>194 782</b>	<b>196 305</b>	<b>391 087</b>	<b>198 905</b>	<b>199 063</b>	<b>397 968</b>
Southern Harbour	39 606	39 868	79 474	39 636	39 851	79 487	39 589	39 883	79 472
Northern Harbour	59 276	61 067	120 343	60 666	62 288	122 954	63 091	63 889	126 980
South Eastern	32 608	31 741	64 349	33 240	32 111	65 351	34 035	32 438	66 473
Western	28 859	29 304	58 163	29 025	29 499	58 524	29 207	29 629	58 836
Northern	31 770	32 044	63 814	32 215	32 556	64 771	32 983	33 224	66 207
<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>15 576</b>	<b>15 827</b>	<b>31 403</b>	<b>15 601</b>	<b>15 821</b>	<b>31 422</b>	<b>15 628</b>	<b>15 828</b>	<b>31 456</b>
Gozo and Comino	15 576	15 827	31 403	15 601	15 821	31 422	15 628	15 828	31 456
	2014			2015			2016		
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>220 488</b>	<b>219 203</b>	<b>439 691</b>	<b>226 396</b>	<b>224 019</b>	<b>450 415</b>	<b>231 663</b>	<b>228 634</b>	<b>460 297</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>204 708</b>	<b>203 250</b>	<b>407 958</b>	<b>210 500</b>	<b>207 990</b>	<b>418 490</b>	<b>215 605</b>	<b>212 486</b>	<b>428 091</b>
Southern Harbour	39 888	39 945	79 833	40 150	40 123	80 273	40 318	40 346	80 664
Northern Harbour	66 600	66 452	133 052	69 778	68 909	138 687	72 424	71 349	143 773
South Eastern	34 594	32 824	67 418	35 177	33 265	68 442	35 680	33 507	69 187
Western	29 373	29 785	59 158	29 636	30 047	59 683	29 924	30 207	60 131
Northern	34 253	34 244	68 497	35 759	35 646	71 405	37 259	37 077	74 336
<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>15 780</b>	<b>15 953</b>	<b>31 733</b>	<b>15 896</b>	<b>16 029</b>	<b>31 925</b>	<b>16 058</b>	<b>16 148</b>	<b>32 206</b>
Gozo and Comino	15 780	15 953	31 733	15 896	16 029	31 925	16 058	16 148	32 206
	2017								
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>240 599</b>	<b>235 102</b>	<b>475 701</b>						
<b>Malta</b>	<b>224 262</b>	<b>218 716</b>	<b>442 978</b>						
Southern Harbour	40 961	40 621	81 582						
Northern Harbour	76 988	74 676	151 664						
South Eastern	36 548	33 942	70 490						
Western	30 228	30 464	60 692						
Northern	39 537	39 013	78 550						
<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>16 337</b>	<b>16 386</b>	<b>32 723</b>						
Gozo and Comino	16 337	16 386	32 723						

Graphic 2 Total population by sex, region/district and year: 2011-2017. Source: Malta Report 2020

Over the six-year period, the highest increases in population were experienced in the elderly population cohorts of both regions, while the population of between 10 and 19 years of age registered the largest decrease in both regions. The population of the 0-9 years of age registered an increase of 15.8 per cent in the region of Malta while it recorded an increase of 4.7 per cent in the region of Gozo and Comino. (Graphic 3)



Graphic 3 . Population by district and selected years. Source: Malta Report 2020

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### 3. NATIONAL KEY FACTS AND OVERALL DATA

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#### 1. Political system

Malta is a single-chamber parliamentary republic with a head of government - the prime minister - and a head of state - the president - whose role is largely ceremonial. The country is divided into 5 regions. Each has its own regional committee, which serves as the intermediary between local and national government.<sup>8</sup>

#### 2. Geographical system

Located right in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, lying some 93 km south of Sicily, 288 km north of Libya, and about 290 km east of Tunisia, located in the passageway between Africa and Europe.

The Maltese Archipelago is comprised by five islands: Malta (the largest), Gozo, Comino, and the inhabited islets of Kemmunnett (Comminotto) and Filfla.<sup>9</sup>

The largest island of the archipelago, Malta, remains the cultural, commercial and administrative centre.

One of the smallest countries in the world, with an area of just 316 sq km. Yet it is one of the densest, with over 417,000 residents.

The climate is mainly Mediterranean, which is typified by mild winters and hot summers.

But there is a lot more to keep them busy, including expansive beaches, a thriving nightlife and 7,000 years of intriguing history.<sup>10</sup>

Within the country there are 67 local councils; 53 in Malta and 14 in Gozo.<sup>11</sup>

There are no mountains, streams or lakes in Malta, but only minor springs. The southwest coast is mainly steep sea-cliffs and the land tilts gently seawards to the northeast. The flora and fauna are rich with c. 2,000 species of plants and more than 3,000 species of animals recorded to date; a relatively large number of species are endemic. The main ecosystems are maquis, garrigue and steppe.

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<sup>8</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta_en)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malta>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/About%20Malta/Pages/The%20Maltese%20Islands.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/About%20Malta/Pages/The%20Maltese%20Islands.aspx>

The islands are riven by valleys which drain runoff during the wet season. The average annual rainfall is c. 530 mm of which some 85% falls during the period October to March. The mean monthly temperature range is 12-26°C. The islands are very windy and sunny. Natural water resources depend on percolating rainwater which collects in limestone aquifers by also by desalination of water from the sea.

The resident population density is 1,140 per km<sup>2</sup>. Some 38% of the land area is cultivated and c.16% is built up. Environmental problems include accelerated soil erosion, quarrying, disposal of waste, high levels of chlorides and nitrates in the water supply, and loss of habitats and wildlife.<sup>12</sup>

The geographical classification of Malta and Gozo consist of 6 regions (Figure 2) which are: 1) Gozo & Comino, 2) Northern, 3) Northern Harbour, 4) Southern Harbour, 5) Western, 6) South Eastern. At a smaller level, Malta and Gozo are also divided in 68 districts (Figure 3).

Graphical Illustration of MALTA by NUTS Classification



Figure 1 . Graphical Illustration of Malta. Source: Malta Report 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Schembri P.J. (1993). Physical geography and ecology of the Maltese Islands: a brief overview. In S. Busuttil, F. Lerin, & L. Mizzi (Eds.), Malta : food, agriculture, fisheries and the environment (pp. 27-39). Montpellier: CIHEAM.

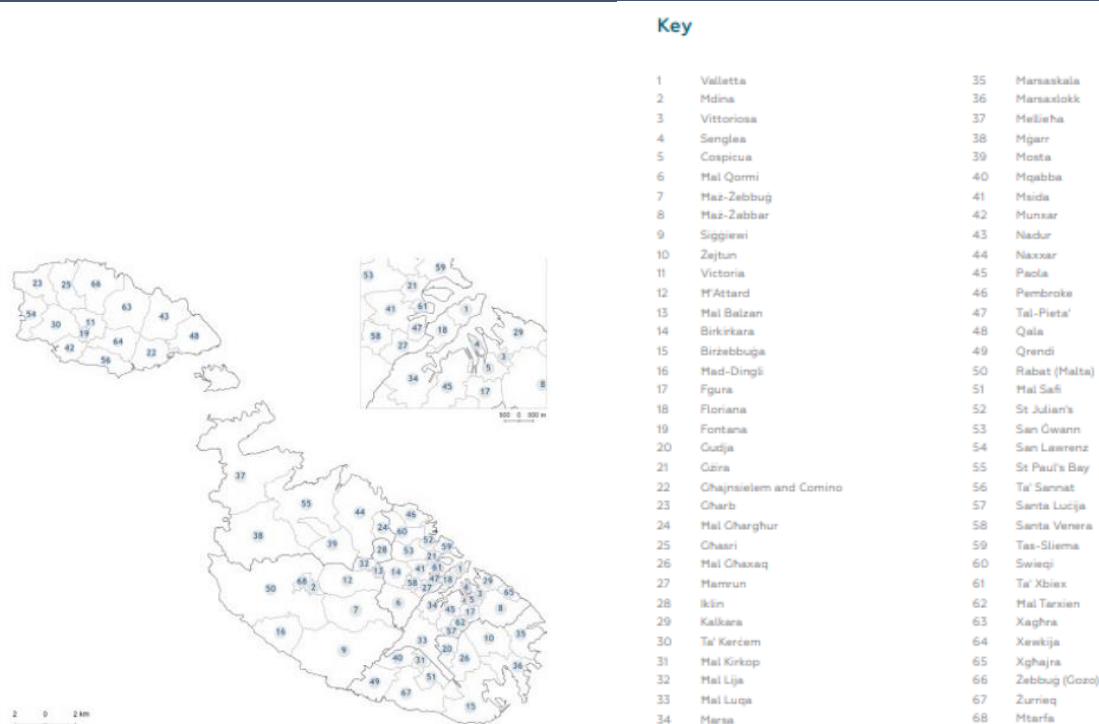


Figure 2 . Graphical illustration of Malta. Source: Malta Report 2020

### 3. Economic system

By 2018, Malta's economy kept growing faster than the EU average, supported by a thriving services sector. The most important sectors of Malta's economy in 2018 were wholesale and retail trade, transport, accommodation and food services (21.0%), public administration, defence, education, human health and social work activities (16.8%) and Arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities; activities of household and extra-territorial organizations and bodies (15.0%).

The services sector continues to grow rapidly, but companies face increasing difficulties in access to finance. The services sector continues to enjoy solid growth. Tourism continues to grow all year-round, albeit at a slower pace than in recent years. The gaming industry is a key contributor to Malta's economic performance, although it entails governance risks, with potential cross-border implications, given the international significance of the sector. Malta is also set to play an increasing role in blockchain solutions and virtual financial assets, and has adopted a national strategy on artificial intelligence. In addition to ongoing labour-shortages, difficulties in access to bank services and bank credit are a growing business concern, particularly for small businesses<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf) , pp. 5-6

Productivity has significantly improved, but research and innovation still play a limited role in the economy. Malta has experienced significant growth in investment and productivity experienced a sizeable growth in the past decade. Small and medium-sized enterprises are the main contributors to economic growth and employment.<sup>14</sup>

Intra-EU trade accounts for 57% of Malta's exports (Germany 16%, Italy 12% and France 11%), while outside the EU 6% go to both Singapore and Japan. In terms of imports, 72% come from EU Member States (Italy 25% and Germany 8%), while outside the EU 4% come from China and 3% from India.<sup>15</sup>

Since the global recession that took hold around the first decade of this century, Malta registered a more favourable economic performance than most other euro area countries. In recent decades Malta's gross domestic product (GDP) has steadily risen and converged towards those of the advanced economies of the European Union (EU). Thus, while in 1980 Malta's GDP per capita stood at just 48% of Germany's, Europe's leading economy, by 2014 it had risen to 68%.<sup>16</sup>

EU funds and programmes contribute to addressing structural challenges in the Maltese economy. Support from the EU programmes focussed especially on sustainable and inclusive growth and sustainable transport. Research facilities have been built and business infrastructure has been strengthened. EU programmes have also helped to promote inclusion in education and vocational training.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, progress in reaching the national targets under the Europe 2020 strategy is mixed. Malta has met its targets on employment and tertiary education attainment. However, it is expected that Malta will narrowly miss its 2020 renewable energy target. Other areas require further efforts to achieve the set targets. These areas include R&D expenditure, early school leaving, poverty reduction, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. *COVID-19 economic effects*

The COVID-19 pandemic was having an acute impact in 2020 on critical sectors of Malta's economy including tourism and external trade, leading to a temporary and limited increase in the unemployment rate. A modest recovery is forecast in 2021 and 2022 but considerable uncertainty surrounds the evolution of the pandemic and the impact of the change to less beneficial trading relations between the UK and the EU. After a major crisis-induced plunge in 2020, the general government balance is set to gradually improve, while public debt is expected to peak at 60% of GDP in 2021.

<sup>14</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf) , p.6

<sup>15</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta_en)

<sup>16</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/malta_en)

<sup>17</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf) , p. 6

<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf), p. 4

Until recently, Malta has recorded one of the highest real GDP growth rates in the EU. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, has shaken the foundations of that growth model, which is strongly reliant on tourism and immigration.<sup>19</sup>

## 5. Population factors in Malta

Malta has one of the highest population densities in the world, though the increase in the country's population has somewhat levelled off since the mid-20th century, with a considerable decline in the birth rate. At the same time, the death rate has remained fairly stable, having fallen only slightly, while the infant mortality rate has dropped significantly. About one-third of the population is under 30.

According to Table 2, the birth rate in Malta has increased since 2011. The biggest rate being in the Northern Harbour area and an overall actual increase of nearly 200 new births in 2017.

Since 2011, there has also been an overall increase in the death rate from 3,879 deaths in 2011 to 3,289 deaths in 2017.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>4 165</b>	<b>4 130</b>	<b>4 032</b>	<b>4 191</b>	<b>4 325</b>	<b>4 476</b>	<b>4 319</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>3 879</b>	<b>3 837</b>	<b>3 748</b>	<b>3 920</b>	<b>4 030</b>	<b>4 131</b>	<b>4 033</b>
Southern Harbour	761	734	694	707	722	724	738
Northern Harbour	1 131	1 154	1 128	1 204	1 251	1 235	1 183
South Eastern	730	715	683	662	719	711	679
Western	569	550	523	544	556	602	542
Northern	688	684	720	803	782	859	891
<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>286</b>
Gozo and Comino	284	293	284	271	295	345	286
<b>Residence unspecified</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>

Source: Identity Malta

Table 2 . Total resident live births by parents' region/district of residence and year. Source: Malta Report 2020

<sup>19</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/forecasts/2020/autumn/ecfin\\_forecast\\_autumn\\_2020\\_mt\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/forecasts/2020/autumn/ecfin_forecast_autumn_2020_mt_en.pdf) p. 108 -109



	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>MALTA</b>	<b>3 267</b>	<b>3 418</b>	<b>3 236</b>	<b>3 270</b>	<b>3 442</b>	<b>3 342</b>	<b>3 571</b>
<b>Malta</b>	<b>2 993</b>	<b>3 130</b>	<b>2 936</b>	<b>3 033</b>	<b>3 129</b>	<b>3 067</b>	<b>3 289</b>
Southern Harbour	727	772	762	750	773	778	745
Northern Harbour	1 008	1 065	980	983	1 061	955	1 104
South Eastern	420	441	398	420	420	443	460
Western	461	447	389	466	448	458	479
Northern	377	405	407	414	427	433	501
<b>Gozo and Comino</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>282</b>
Gozo and Comino	274	288	300	257	313	275	282

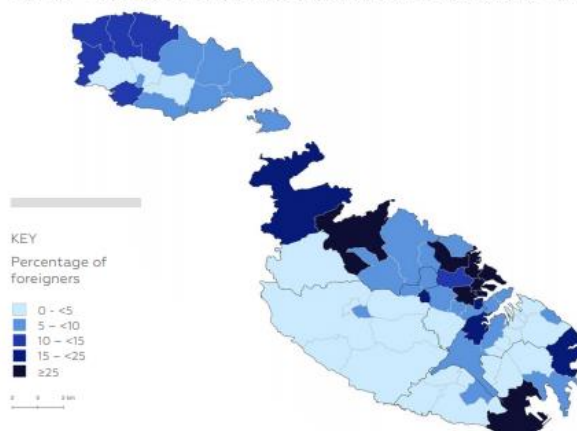
Source: Department of Health Information and Research (DHIR)

*Table 3 . Deaths by region/district of residence and year. Source: Malta Report 2020*

Aside from the Maltese population, there are small communities of British nationals, Sindhis, Palestinians, and Greeks on the islands. Since the 1990s, influxes of more transient but no less significant groups have arrived from North Africa and the Balkans and, in the early 2000s, from countries of sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to take into account the migration flux (figure 1). The birth rate in Malta is still a positive one and this can also be due to the increase of the migration of young foreigners in Malta. The intermediate 2019 Eurostat population projections envisage faster population growth for Malta than previous projections due to higher projected migration flows.

MAP 1.1.3 – Percentage of foreigners to the total population of each locality: 2017 (LAU 2)



*Figure 3 . Map percentatge of foreigners to the local population of each locality: 2017. Source: Malta Report 2020.*

The rapid population growth (+17% in the past 10 years), mainly due to economic migration from both EU and non-EU countries may exacerbate existing social and environmental challenges. The

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malta>

need to cater to a larger and more diverse population presents particular pressures for the housing market, social services, health services, and the education system.<sup>21</sup>

After a strong decline, the risk of poverty or social exclusion is stabilising, but some groups are still at high risk. Strong economic growth and job creation helped to reduce the risk of poverty or social exclusion in recent years. However, this risk remains high for specific population groups, such as single earner households, the low-skilled, older people, and non-EU nationals. Inequality is stable, but some disparities remain. Malta has relatively moderate inequality of income compared to EU averages (the income quintile ratio stood at 4.28 in 2018 against 5.17 in EU, and is stable), despite the fact that equal opportunities remain limited for some groups. The unmet need for medical care is low with little variation between income groups. Disparities in education outcomes are strong and linked to socioeconomic background, disability status and type of school.<sup>22</sup>

The population is rapidly ageing and labour shortages continue to remain a challenge. At the same time, the labour-market participation of certain groups remains low. Although the employment rate of women has increased significantly in recent years, the gender employment gap was still high in 2018, one of the highest in the EU. The labour-market participation of older people (between 55 and 64) and people with disabilities remains below the EU average. In addition, Malta continues to face challenges in the area of education and skills, which impede inclusive and sustainable growth. Both the share of low-skilled people and the early school-leaving rate remain high, despite improvements in recent years. Basic skills attainment is also still weak.<sup>23</sup>

However, according to the EU report, migration is likely to dampen pension outlays.

Inequalities and poverty have stabilised after declining in recent years, but certain groups face higher risks of poverty. Child poverty has decreased, but children whose parents are single, foreign or with low income are at higher risk of poverty. The social integration of non-Maltese people, despite their high participation in the labour market, is limited.

### 1. *NEETs population in Malta*

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions (Eurofound, 2012) states that the future of Europe depends upon the 94 million Europeans aged between 15 and 29. This generation will live in an era of full globalisation and has to cope with the responsibility of an ageing population. This puts a lot of pressure on governments to ensure that youths develop into highly skilled individuals, find employment, and contribute to developing a

<sup>21</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf), p. 5

<sup>22</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf), p. 9

<sup>23</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf), p. 9

country's human capital (NIACE, 2013). If countries truly want to fully exploit the potential of young people, they need to be productively employed and integrated into society.<sup>24</sup>

Unemployment is an important indicator with both social and economic dimensions (Eurofound, 2013). Rising levels of unemployment may result in a loss of income for individuals, increased pressure with respect to government spending on social benefits, and a reduction in tax revenue. From an economic perspective, unemployment may be viewed as unused labour capacity (Eurofound, 2012).<sup>25</sup>

Since 2013, in Malta there has been a decrease in unemployment, due to several reasons such as the increase of tourism and services, the increase of Egaming companies as well as possibly tax advantages for companies. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, Malta's labour market was tight and the unemployment rate reached a historical low of 3.6% in 2019. National safety measures to contain the virus affected employment, and the unemployment rate is expected to reach 5.1% in 2020, decreasing to 4.1% in 2022, in line with an accelerating economic growth.<sup>26</sup> However, Covid19 has been the cause of a considerable increase in unemployment (graphic 4). However, some unemployment is unaccounted for because people would not be registered anywhere.



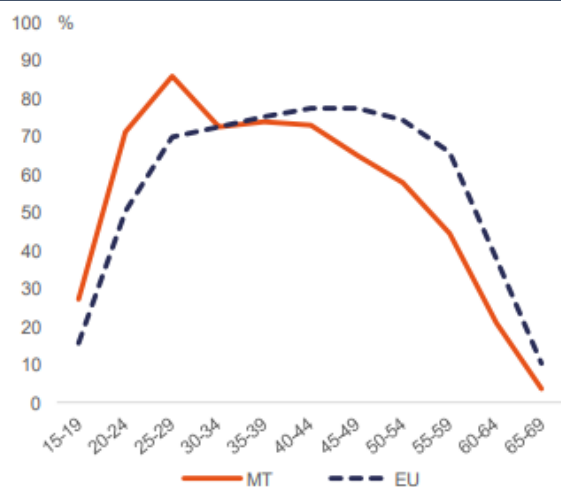
*Graphic 4. Registered Unemployment. Source: NSO*

Another issue could be gender-age inequality. Intersectionality implies more than one discrimination in one person, which brings us to the graphic 5.

<sup>24</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) (p.10)

<sup>25</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) (p. 10)

<sup>26</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/forecasts/2020/autumn/ecfin\\_forecast\\_autumn\\_2020\\_mt\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/forecasts/2020/autumn/ecfin_forecast_autumn_2020_mt_en.pdf) p. 108-109.



Source: European Commission

Graphic 5 . Women employment rates by age cohort. Source: European Commission.

According to the “Census on Youth NEETs: Report of Findings” study, the NEETs population in Malta is highly heterogeneous and seems to consist, in decreasing order, of Transition NEETs, Floating NEETs, and Core NEETs. These sub-categories could also possibly be further sub-divided into two further sub-segments, with one sub-segment demonstrating traits somewhere in between those of a Transition and Floating NEET, and second sub-segment demonstrating traits somewhere in between those of a Floating and Core NEET.<sup>27</sup>

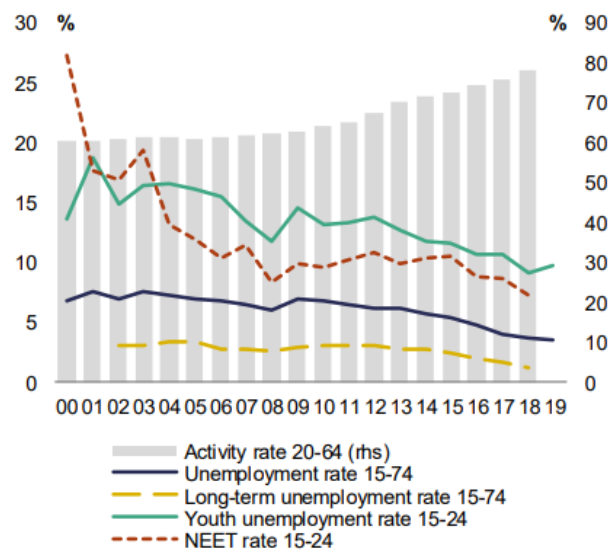
In the local context, NEETs are generally **youths who are not in education, employment or training**, but can be categorised into the following subgroups: single parents, persons with disability, long-term registered unemployed, and the unregistered unemployed.<sup>28</sup>

This demographic is at risk of social exclusion or of becoming long-term unemployed. Most are not actively looking for employment, and as a result, the limited skills acquired deteriorate quickly. These youths tend to lack suitable preparation for the world of work, such as a structured CV that enables them to match their skills and experience to future employment and/or educational opportunities. In many cases, the lack of adequate skills is combined with challenging backgrounds, which makes it increasingly difficult for these youths to enter and remain in the job market<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.8.

<sup>28</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.8.

<sup>29</sup> <https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Pages/About-us.aspx>



Graphic 6 . Key employment indicators. SOURCE: European Commission.

Following the Country Report of Malta 2020 done by the European Commission, this situation explained above seems to be still more complex: poor educational outcomes are set to impede future growth. Persistently high student underachievement and early school leaving make it difficult to meet the need for skilled labour. This also has long-term implications for social inclusion, because children from socially disadvantaged families are less likely to benefit from the best education opportunities and are more likely to lag behind their more advantaged peers. Measures have been taken to make education more inclusive. The average performance of Maltese pupils remains below the EU average and an increasingly diverse student population poses challenges for the Maltese education system. Increased coordination and more use of evidence-based approaches may make reforms and investment in education more effective.<sup>30</sup> The early-school-leaving rate has been declining in recent years, but it remains one of the highest in the EU<sup>31</sup>.

Long-term unemployment is of particular concern, as it increases the risk of long-term exclusion of young people from the labour market and society (Eurofound, 2014). Young people are particularly vulnerable to the adverse consequences of long-term unemployment; it is recognised that the loss of work experience early on in life, with its implied loss of human capital, is likely to have scarring effects on future labour force participation and earnings (Eurostat, 2014).

According to a Eurofound study conducted by Mascherini et al (2012), Malta falls within what the authors refer to as 'Cluster 2'. This cluster is characterised by having a majority of NEETs who are inactive. It includes southern Mediterranean – countries like Greece and Italy – and eastern/central European countries – like Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Slovakia. With

<sup>30</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf) , p.5

<sup>31</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european\\_semester\\_country-report-malta\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2020-european_semester_country-report-malta_en.pdf) , p. 16.

the exception of Poland and the Czech Republic, the countries in this cluster are generally those with the highest NEET rates in Europe. The share of NEETs who are female is much higher than the EU average. While the majority of NEETs are inactive, as in the first cluster, these characteristics seem to be driven by very different dynamics.<sup>32</sup>

Table 1. Persons registering for work under Part I and Part II of the unemployment register by period, region, age group and sex

Age group and sex	Annual average 2019			Annual average 2020			March 2020			March 2021			April 2020			April 2021		
	Malta	Gozo	Total	Malta	Gozo	Total	Malta	Gozo	Total	Malta	Gozo	Total	Malta	Gozo	Total	Malta	Gozo	Total
<b>Under 20</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>133</b>
Males	53	2	55	91	7	98	59	7	66	82	13	95	94	8	102	68	11	79
Females	28	3	31	59	4	63	35	3	38	48	2	50	70	7	77	51	3	54
<b>20-24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>195</b>
Males	67	11	78	183	20	203	101	22	123	116	9	125	263	24	287	111	8	119
Females	33	4	37	116	11	127	62	12	74	76	10	86	184	18	202	65	11	76
<b>25-29</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>178</b>
Males	66	6	72	189	11	200	108	3	111	103	10	113	246	16	262	94	17	111
Females	35	4	39	140	9	149	64	4	68	64	2	66	199	17	216	63	4	67
<b>30-44</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>1,259</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,359</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>694</b>
Males	350	35	385	610	46	656	426	35	461	459	37	496	772	58	830	438	41	479
Females	121	16	137	361	24	385	201	17	218	229	15	244	487	42	529	202	13	215
<b>45 and over</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>1,190</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>1,279</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1,112</b>	<b>1,358</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>1,474</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1,048</b>
Males	547	50	597	785	48	833	619	43	662	703	41	744	891	57	948	655	42	697
Females	233	36	269	405	41	446	271	33	304	328	40	368	467	59	526	311	40	351
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,533</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>2,939</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3,160</b>	<b>1,946</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>2,125</b>	<b>2,208</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>3,673</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>3,979</b>	<b>2,058</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>2,248</b>
Males	1,083	104	1,187	1,858	132	1,990	1,313	110	1,423	1,463	110	1,573	2,266	163	2,429	1,366	119	1,485
Females	450	63	513	1,081	89	1,170	633	69	702	745	69	814	1,407	143	1,550	692	71	763

Table 4 Persons registering for work, according to period, region, age group and sex. Source: NSO

Further trends specific to the Island state of Malta are the following (Mascherini et al., 2012):

- Youth Unemployment makes up 14% of the total unemployed;
- There are roughly as many young females as males who are unemployed;
- The composition of young people in employment are generally classified as 'employees' (rather than self-employed, implying that young people are still dependent on 'finding a job' rather than 'creating a job');
- 20% of all youths are in part time employment and 18% are in temporary employment;

<sup>32</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.13

- 40% of young people are in temporary employment because they could not find a permanent job.<sup>33</sup>

*“Youth Unemployment and an Unskilled Workforce”*: this Europe 2020 strategy highlights that Malta needs to make the best possible use of its greatest asset – human capital according to the European Commission. This is an urgent matter as the country has one of the lowest employment rates in the EU (63.2%), a very high number of early school leavers (22.6%), and a low amount of students attaining tertiary education (22.4%).

Research (e.g. Tamesberger & Bacher, 2014) shows that the majority of Youths NEET’s highest level of education is a School Leaving Certificate. Resulting in the skill set of NEETs being relatively low. As stated earlier, Youths are the future. Thus, if a country wants to grow and Youths NEET Census Report 2015<sup>23</sup> develop its economy, it is this generation that must be developed into highly skilled individuals, find employment, and contribute to developing Malta’s human capital.

## 2. Characteristics

The population of Maltese youths aged 16 to 24 according to the NSO Demographic Review 2013 published in August 2015 was 46,942. According to the ETC (Employment and Training Corporation known as Jobsplus) the number of youth NEETS in Malta was 6,749 (14.4%) by April 2015. However, after the research the researchers says that due to lack of information on the data base, it is highly probable that the number of youth NEETs thought to be NEETs by the ETC at the start of this research, is significantly lower than 6,749.<sup>34</sup>

Male			Female		
3,856 (57.1%)			2,893 (42.9%)		
<i>16-17</i>	<i>18-20</i>	<i>21-24</i>	<i>16-17</i>	<i>18-20</i>	<i>21-24</i>
1,350	1,422	1,084	1,114	908	871
(35.0%)	(36.9%)	(28.1%)	(38.5%)	(31.4%)	(30.1%)

*Table 5. Distribution by Age and Gender of Population for Maltese youth NEETs. Source: Census of Youth NEETs<sup>35</sup>.*

<sup>33</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) (p.14)

<sup>34</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) (p.105)

<sup>35</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf), p.63

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**SEPARATED BY DISTRICTS:** <sup>36</sup>

**DISTRICT 1: GOZO AND COMINO.** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 in District 1 according to NSO was 3,621. According to the ETC, the number of youth NEETS within this district was 917 (25.3%). 52% male, 47,7 % female.

**DISTRICT 2: NORTHERN.** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 in District 2 according to NSO was 7,492. According to the ETC (as at April 2015), the number of youth NEETS within this district was 1,141 (15.2%).

**DISTRICT 3: NORTHERN HARBOUR.** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 within this district according to NSO was 12,667. According to the ETC, the number of youth NEETS within this district was 1,894 (15%).

**DISTRICT 4: SOUTH EASTERN.** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 within this district according to NSO was 7,943. According to the ETC, the number of youth NEETS within this district was 803 (10.1%).

**DISTRICT 5: SOUTH HARBOUR** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 in District 5 according to NSO was 8,428. According to the ETC, the number of youth NEETS within this district was 1,101 (13.1%).

**DISTRICT 6: WESTERN.** The population of youths aged 16 to 24 within this district according to NSO was 6,791. According to the ETC, the number of youth NEETS within this district was 893 (13.1%) (page 70)

Across the 6 districts, there were no significant discrepancies by gender, with circa 58% males and 42% females across districts. In the case of age, there was a significantly higher proportion of younger youth NEETs in District 6 = Western and older youth NEETs in District 1 = Gozo & Comino. <sup>37</sup>

**Results study done in 2015** <sup>38</sup>

*(based on approximately 300 respondents that took part on that research)*

The following information was part of the results of the study carried out to identify NEET's population in Malta.

- Parental Influence: It is clear that the majority of NEETs are still living with their parents (90%) and have ongoing interactions with family members. This implies that they are heavily influenced by the family and may either get low exposure to the labour market or poor career guidance (e.g. Mroz & Savage, 2006). In addition, the majority of participants reported to have

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<sup>36</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.64-69

<sup>37</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.92

<sup>38</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.89-90



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a traditional family set-up; namely the father as breadwinner and the mother as homemaker. This has implications on how they would likely perceive the labour market and their career prospects.

- Parenthood: 11.1% of the participants interviewed reported to be parents themselves. The implications of this are that they may be unable to work to raise children and also because they find it a major problem where to leave their children.
- Education: The vast majority have at least a School Leaving Certificate, O-level or diploma. A small number also have a tertiary level of education. In addition, 43% have claimed to have undergone some form of apprenticeship or training experience after leaving school. This suggests that these youths may be better defined as Floating NEETs (RaE, 2007) and have potential for learning provided that the education model used is in tune with their needs. In fact, more than half of the participants, in spite of having some basic form of qualification, are demotivated and disinterested in the current form of education.<sup>39</sup>
- Work-experience: Although 76% have some form of work experience, mostly doing odd jobs, only 41% had a full-time job experience. This implies that the majority of participants have never had the benefits of planning long term careers or settling down in specific roles. Those doing part-time jobs were not doing so on a voluntary basis but because they had no better options. In fact, 70% claimed to be more in support of having a full-time job.<sup>40</sup>
- Plans for the future: The majority of respondents reported to have plans for their future careers or potential job opportunities. This still leaves a good 43.3% claiming that they have no plans on how they should best approach job opportunities or career prospects.
- Employment sectors: One can clearly notice that the majority of the respondents would preferably go for the more traditional sectors. This implies that either they are still averse to new employment realities or that they have very little exposure to new emerging sectors. In fact, the new sectors are more likely to offer the best salaries and opportunities for growth. Moreover, only 6% of the participants claimed to consider starting their own business which indicates they are more into job seeking rather than job creation. This is in line with previous European survey findings (e.g. Mascherini et al., 2012).
- Knowledge of the Youth Guarantee Programme: 70% of the respondents never heard about this programme and 52% do not know if their friends are actually participating in the

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<sup>39</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.89

<sup>40</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.90

programme, implying that the programme is not well-exposed. Moreover, had they to participate in the programme, the most recurring reason to do so would be financial (68%) followed by a quest for more support (57%). This indicates that candidates either Youths NEET Census Report 2015 90 have or see no significance in the scheme for engaging in employment or have little understanding about the scheme. In line with the literature (e.g. Alegre et al., 2015; Chen, 2011), such schemes and programmes are not always in practice as effective as initially planned and their purpose requires further thought.<sup>41</sup>

The mean school leaving age for the 277 respondents was 16.67 years (SD = 1.82), with ages ranging from 11 to 23. With respect to qualification, most of the respondents are in possession of a School Leaving certificate 45.5%, 32.1% have at least an O level, 10.1% have a diploma, and 3.2% have at least an A level. From the 10.8% that selected the 'other –please specify' category, 8 were in possession of an undergraduate degree, 1 obtained a Master's degree, 5 stated MCAST (*Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology*) or ITS (*Institute of Tourism Studies*) without highlighting the qualification, while the remaining 4 were not in possession of any qualification.<sup>42</sup>

When asked to highlight if they have learning difficulties such as dyslexia, ADHD or dyspraxia, out of 276 responses, 16.4% stated that they do. From these 45.2% feel that they were not given adequate support, with two opting not to reply to this question. 275 respondents provided reasons why they stopped their education or training. The single largest group reported that they were not interested in education (44.7%). A breakdown of the responses is presented in Table 3. In the 'other – please specify' category, the following reasons were the most prevalent: finished their course (15), continued or plan to continue (13), preferred to work early (10), bullying at school (2). When asked if they have been involved in any further learning such as short-term courses or apprenticeships 276 replied. From these 42.8% said that they did. When asked to specify such courses, the following were the most prevalent: MCAST courses (17), ETC courses (13), Youth Guarantee (8), hairdressing (8), & ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) (7).<sup>43</sup>

When the respondents were asked if they have any plans to engage in any educational or training courses, 276 replied and from these 56.7% reported that they have plans. They specified the following: hairdressing (15), security/police/soldier (14), computing/IT (13), childcare (9), beautician (9). Additionally, 18 mentioned MCAST, 8 A-levels and/or the University of Malta, and 3 a Masters without specifying the area of interest. The respondents were asked to indicate the sort of courses they would prefer if they were to participate in some form of educational or training courses (they could choose more than one option). 260 replied to this question and the following is a summary of the responses: part-time courses (84), classroom-based courses (67), full-time courses (66), day Youths NEET Census Report 2015 47 classes (62), individual attention (49), evening classes (49), and online courses (37). In the 'other-please specify' category, 23 respondents mainly highlighted that they were not interested (8), that they don't know (8) Finally,

<sup>41</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.91

<sup>42</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.49

<sup>43</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.46-47

respondents were asked to indicate whether the majority of their friends are in education or training. Out of 275 responses, 43.3% stated 'Yes', 36.5% stated 'No' and the remaining 20.2% reported 'don't know'.<sup>44</sup>

Out of 277 respondents, 76.2% (i.e 211) reported that they have work experience . When asked to specify their employment type, the results were: part time (53.1%), full-time (45.5%), apprenticeship (9.5%), casual work (7.6%), and volunteer work (5.2%). (They could choose more than one option). The respondents (273) were asked to specify why they were currently unemployed using six specific statements and an 'other – please specify category'(table 6).<sup>45</sup>

Reason	Frequency (%*)
Have not found the job that I like	134 (49.1)
I don't have the necessary qualifications	70 (25.6)
Personal reasons	62 (22.7)
Medical reasons	19 (7)
Not interested to work	10 (3.6)
Family pressures	9 (3.2)
*percentage of respondents choosing this specific option	

*Table 6. Reason for currently not being employed. Source: Census Youth Neets<sup>46</sup>*

Other reasons referred to: raising young children (14), just finished studying, waiting for results or going to continue studying (9), to take care of a family member (4). When asked if they would you like to find some form of employment, 257 from 276 respondents (i.e. 93.1%) replied in the affirmative. When all respondents were asked to reveal their career plans for the future , 275 replied as follows: full-time employment (189 -68.7%), part-time employment (45 -16.4%), no plans 9.5% (26) and 'other' 5.54% (15),with the most prevalent being: self-employed (5), continue or following their studies and 81.5% (from 271) believe that they have the support needed to achieve the above plans.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.48-49

<sup>45</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.49-50

<sup>46</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p.50

<sup>47</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) p. 50

Regarding the reasons that would help them get into work (255 respondents answered this question), the results on Table 5 provides a descriptive summary.

(they could select all those that apply)

Statement	Frequency (%)
Promise of employment or the opportunity for education, employment or training	209 (82.3%)
Financial incentives	171 (67.3%)
Support and encouragement from my family	147 (57.9%)
Constant support and guidance from professionals	143 (56.3%)
Local school or employer opens days aimed at encouraging youths like me to get back into work or education	134 (52.8%)
Basic classes in reading, writing, maths and computer skills	112 (44.1%)

*Table 7. Reasons for possible participation in the Youth Guarantee Programme. Source: Census Youth Needs.<sup>48</sup>*

Of 270 people, more than the 30% answered that they did not know about the Youth Guarantee Programme.

The respondents were presented with eight statements reflecting possible barriers or obstacles that could prevent them from getting into work, education or training. A summary of the responses is presented in list below.<sup>49</sup>

- *Lack of work experience (72.7%)*
- *Worried that I will not have enough time with my child (62.5%)*
- *My lack of required skills and qualifications (59.6%)*
- *My family or close friends are not able to provide childcare (48.3%)*
- *There are no suitable jobs in my locality (38.1%)*
- *My lack of self-confidence (34.4%)*
- *Financial factors – cost of transport, clothes, etc. (33.6%)*
- *I do not want to lose the flexibility/freedom I currently have (27.4%)*
- *I don't know how to prepare for a job or qualification (26.8%)*

<sup>48</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p. 53.

<sup>49</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.53-54.

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- *Prejudice or discrimination (21.2%)*
  - *Working will not improve my financial situation (16.9%)*
  - *I have a learning difficulty or disability (12.4%)*
  - *I have a mental health condition (6.2%)*
  - *I am concerned about losing the security of social benefits (5.2%)*
  - *My parents/partner/friends do not want me to work (2.9%)*

## 6. *Characteristics of the labour market*

### 1. *Employment*

When assessed in terms of employment and competitiveness measures, it should be noted that the job-rich economic growth of the first decade post-EU accession was partly driven by the expansion of a number of labour-intensive services sectors. On the one hand, this reflected social changes, such as the ageing transition and the rising female labour participation rate. This has meant that certain activities that were previously conducted informally by housekeepers are now being serviced in the formal economy. Thus, whereas in 2004 there were about 3.300 workers in residential care services, by 2014 they had more than doubled to 6.700. This constituted a tenth of all employment growth, and was slightly higher than the increase observed in the gambling & betting sector. Another change noticeable during this decade and which has resulted in a spike in employment was the spread of contracting-out. Over a tenth of the overall increase in employment between 2004 and 2014 occurred in security, office administrative and support services.<sup>50</sup>

The unemployment rate has declined to 5.3% in 2015, with Malta being one of just three countries in the EU that registered a decline in the unemployment rate compared to the pre-crisis level. Additionally, various estimates point to a downward trend in the structural unemployment rate that started in the mid-2000s.<sup>51</sup>

Following EU accession in 2004, the number of EU nationals working in Malta has increased by 13 times, to nearly 15,600 in 2014. In addition, there were approximately 6,200 third-country nationals working in Malta in 2014, four times the amount present a decade earlier.<sup>52</sup>

In terms of occupational distribution, foreign workers are mainly clustered at both ends of the skill spectrum, the higher end where skills are scarce and the lower end where jobs are no longer that attractive for Maltese workers. At the sectoral level, the remote gaming sector, hotels &

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<sup>50</sup> [Understanding the Maltese economy.pdf](#) , p.20.

<sup>51</sup> [Understanding the Maltese economy.pdf](#) , p.21.

<sup>52</sup> [Understanding the Maltese economy.pdf](#) , p.23.

restaurants and professional services & administrative support accounts for nearly half of all foreign employees in 2014.<sup>53</sup>

Diversification, both towards new sectors as well as specific niches within established ones, has increased the flexibility and the resilience of the economy, making it less subject to industry-specific disturbances and to cyclical fluctuations. The increased supply of labour, driven by a higher female participation rate and an influx of foreign workers, addressed possible shortages in the labour market, both in the low and highly skilled sectors and prevented an increase in wage growth that would have adversely affected the country's competitiveness<sup>54</sup>

Labour market indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 <sup>5</sup>
Activity rate (15-64)	67.8	68.9	70.6	72.2	74.7	75.8
Employment in current job by duration						
From 0 to 11 months	9.9	10.3	12.4	13.9	15.1	:
From 12 to 23 months	10.7	10.1	11.6	12.4	14.2	:
From 24 to 59 months	18.9	19.7	18.7	19.6	20.1	:
60 months or over	59.4	59.0	57.3	54.0	50.3	:
Employment growth*						
(% change from previous year)	5.4	4.1	4.3	8.1	5.7	5.1
Employment rate of women						
(% of female population aged 20-64)	54.3	55.3	58.0	60.6	64.1	66.8
Employment rate of men						
(% of male population aged 20-64)	81.1	82.1	83.5	84.7	86.0	86.3
Employment rate of older workers*						
(% of population aged 55-64)	39.5	42.3	45.8	47.2	50.2	51.2
Part-time employment*						
(% of total employment, aged 15-64)	15.3	14.3	13.9	13.7	13.2	12.5
Fixed-term employment*						
(% of employees with a fixed term contract, aged 15-64)	7.7	7.5	7.6	6.0	7.9	8.7
Transition rate from temporary to permanent employment (3-year average)	12.9	15.0	:	:	27.0	:
Youth unemployment rate						
(% active population aged 15-24)	11.7	11.6	10.7	10.6	9.1	9.2
Gender gap in part-time employment	21.1	20.0	19.7	18.0	15.5	15.7
Gender pay gap <sup>(2)</sup> (in unadjusted form)	10.6	10.4	11.0	12.2	:	:
Education and training indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Adult participation in learning						
(% of people aged 25-64 participating in education and training)	7.7	7.4	7.8	10.6	10.9	:
Underachievement in education <sup>(3)</sup>	:	29.1	:	:	:	:
Tertiary educational attainment (% of population aged 30-34 having successfully completed tertiary education)	28.6	29.1	32.0	33.5	34.7	:
Variation in performance explained by students' socio-economic status <sup>(4)</sup>	:	14.5	:	:	:	:

\* Non-scoreboard indicator

(1) Long-term unemployed are people who have been unemployed for at least 12 months.

(2) Difference between the average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. It is defined as "unadjusted", as it does not correct for the distribution of individual characteristics (and thus gives an overall picture of gender inequalities in terms of pay). All employees working in firms with 10 or more employees, without restrictions for age and hours worked, are included.

(3) PISA (OECD) results for low achievement in mathematics for 15 year-olds.

(4) Impact of socio-economic and cultural status on PISA (OECD) scores.

(5) Average of first three quarters of 2019. Data for youth unemployment rate is seasonally adjusted.

Source: Eurostat, OECD

Table 8. Labour market indicators. Source: EU report Malta 2020

<sup>53</sup> [Understanding the Maltese economy.pdf](#), p.23.

<sup>54</sup> [Understanding the Maltese economy.pdf](#), p.24.

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## 4. SPORTS SECTOR LABOUR MARKET

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### 1. Political system

Sports in Malta is funded primarily by the state in various modes and not always in direct funding:

- Land donation to clubs and associations for sports activities
- Facility Investment schemes
- State sports funding
- Private sponsorships for the different associations and clubs
- Educational funding both national and internationally.
- SportMalta initiatives
- Associations' source of funding from international bodies (eg UEFA, FIFA etc.)

The money distributed by the state through its entities and also the money that comes through private funding is mainly used as follows:

1. Upgrading of sports facilities
2. Provision of educational and training opportunities in sports.
3. Subsidies (tax, etc.)
4. Annual contributions to national associations and local entities that operate within the sports sector.
5. Job placements
6. Direct finance
7. The Malta Sport Scholarship Scheme – Ministry of Education (2020)
8. Deduction of taxable income for those who pay for sports training etc

### 2. Economic system

The share of sport-related value added for Malta is 1.75% for the narrow definition and 2.24% for the broad definition of sport. This is above the EU average (1.13% narrow definition and 1.76% broad definition). The highest sport-related value added is in the sector Recreational, cultural and sporting services, followed by Education services second, and Retail trade services third.<sup>55</sup>

The share of what is generally known as the organised sports sector (sports clubs, public sports venues, sports event organizers) is reflected in the statistical definition. The share of value added according to the statistical definition is 0.49%. Sport-related value added (direct effects) amounts to 0.07 bn Euro according to the narrow definition and 0.09 bn Euro with respect to the broad definition. For the statistical definition of sport, it is 0.02 bn Euro.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/studies/study-contribution-sports-economic-growth-final-rpt.pdf> , p. 134

<sup>56</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/studies/study-contribution-sports-economic-growth-final-rpt.pdf> , p. 134



## 5. THE SPORT SECTOR IN MALTA

In the second quarter of 2020, 801.700 people aged over 15 in the EU were employed in the sports and fitness sector, representing 0.4% of total employment.

The majority of sports workers were men (57%) and almost one in two sports workers (48%) were aged between 15-34 years. Almost a third (30%) were aged 35-49 years and 23% were aged 50 or above.<sup>57</sup>

According to the EUROSTAT “Sports Statistics” (ed.2018), a very high number of people practices sport weekly. The percentage of Malta (around 55%) is higher than the EU average of 40%.



Graphic 7. Practising sport, fitness or recreational (leisure) physical activities at least once a week, by sex, 2014. Source: EUROSTAT 2018

Regarding the percentage of people employed in the Sport sector, as it is clearly visible below (table 9), Malta had a very low employment percentage comparing with other EU countries and with the EU average (0,60). However, the last 4 years it's possible to appreciate the increase of that percentage.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Greece	0.31	0.22	0.28	0.40	0.43	0.47	0.53	0.56	0.54
Spain	0.80	0.91	0.96	1.08	1.03	1.05	1.07	1.09	1.09
France	1.09	1.08	0.83 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.64 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.67	0.68	0.64	0.69	0.67
Croatia	0.25 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.29 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.30 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.39 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.30 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.38 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.39 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.39 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.65
Italy	0.46	0.44	0.47	0.54	0.52	0.52	0.57 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.50	0.57
Cyprus	0.80	0.55	0.52	0.57	0.53 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.76	0.77	0.61	0.73
Latvia	0.53	0.67	0.52	0.64	0.60	0.66	0.65	0.91	1.14
Lithuania	0.42 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.41 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.41	0.45	0.51	0.57	0.54	0.57	0.42
Luxembourg	0.51	0.58	0.65	0.49	0.75 <sup>(b)</sup>	1.07	0.82	0.75	0.62
Hungary	0.29	0.29	0.31	0.35	0.44	0.39	0.36	0.42	0.50
Malta	0.38 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.52	0.67	0.66	0.54	0.35 <sup>(u)</sup>	0.68	0.78	0.72
Netherlands	0.87	0.86	0.86 <sup>(b)</sup>	0.89	0.97	1.00	0.92	0.96	1.03
Austria	0.62	0.59	0.63	0.67	0.87	0.66	0.62	0.56	0.71

Available flags:  
**b** break in time series  
**e** estimated  
**p** provisional  
**u** low reliability  
**c** confidential  
**f** forecast  
**n** not significant  
**r** revised  
**s** Eurostat estimate  
**z** not applicable  
**d** definition differs, see metadata  
Special value:  
: not available

Table 9. Employment in Sport by educational attainment level<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20201027-1>

<sup>58</sup> <https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

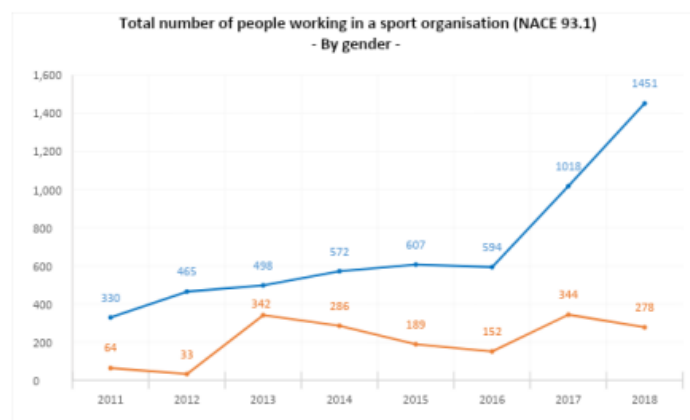


The total number of people working in the Sport and Physical Activity Sector in Malta in 2018 was 1,800. This represents a growth rate of 181% since 2011. This is the total of all those paid staff working in organizations which have their main purpose as Sports Activities and those working in Sport Specific occupations in other types of organizations.<sup>59</sup>

Below (graphic 8), are some statistics about the characteristics of the people employed in the Sport sector in all the occupations:

1) All People Working in Maltese Sports Organisations by Gender

The number of males working in sport organisations has always been more than females. In 2011 males exceeded females by 266 (68%) whereas in 2018 the number increased to 1173 (68%). One can notice that in 2013 the number of females was 342 (41%), the highest percentage for the past 8 years. This shows that this workforce is dominant by males and more females need to be recruited.



Graphic 8. People working in Maltese Sports organisations by Gender. Source: ESSA Report.

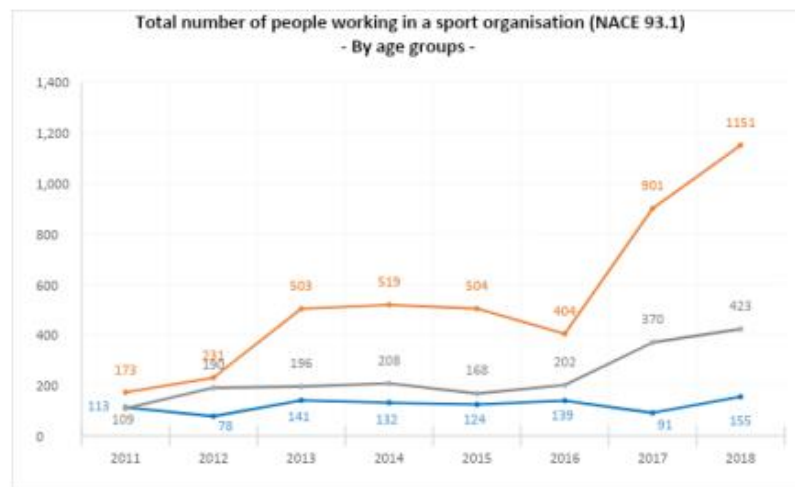
The number of males and females working in sports organisations are clearly different, with a total of 68% more than women by 2018. Although the number of women is increasing, the inequality is totally visible.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup> [https://www.essa-sport.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ESSA\\_Sport\\_National\\_Report\\_Malta.pdf](https://www.essa-sport.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ESSA_Sport_National_Report_Malta.pdf) , p. 20.

<sup>60</sup> [https://www.essa-sport.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ESSA\\_Sport\\_National\\_Report\\_Malta.pdf](https://www.essa-sport.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ESSA_Sport_National_Report_Malta.pdf) , p.21.

Also, the number by age shows the clear importance of the group between 25 and 49 years old (graphic 9).

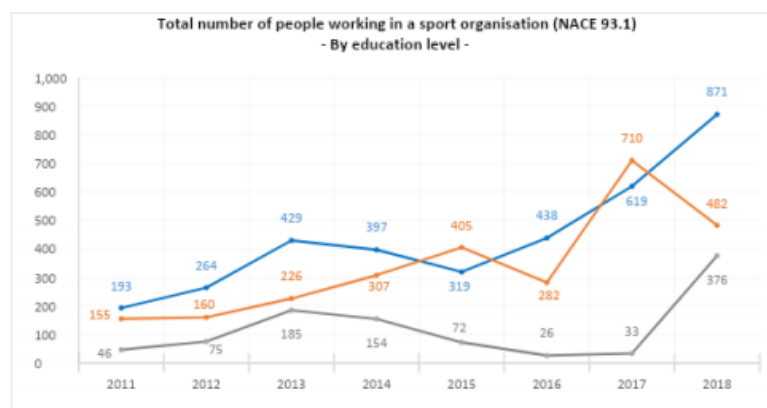
15-24 years old	155 (8.96%)
25-49 years old	1,151 (66.57%)
50+ years old	423 (24.47%)



Graphic 9. Workforce in Sport organisations in Malta by age. Source: ESSA Report 2018

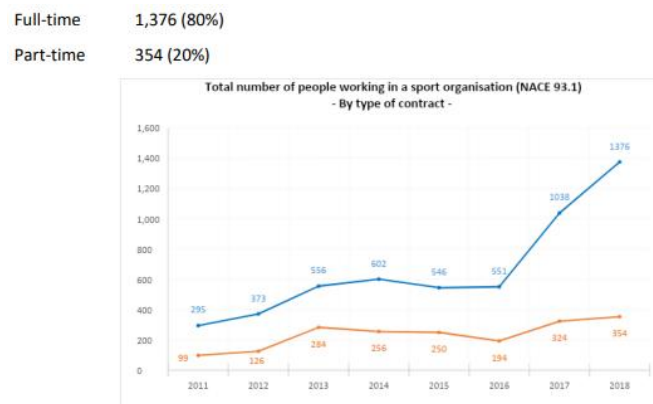
More than half the people employed in Sport organisations in Malta have a low educational level (vide table below):

Low (ISCED 0-2)	871 (50.38%)
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	482 (27.88%)
High (ISCED 5-8)	376 (21.75%)



Graphic 10. People working in sports organisations in Malta by educational level. Source: ESSA

People with full-time contracts in sports organisations have increased since 2016. However, Malta has very few athletes who compete internationally, and only a handful practice their sport on a full-time basis.<sup>61</sup>



Graphic 11. Number of people working in a sport organisation by type of contract. Source: ESSA Report 2018.

Sport has an important role to play in the economy of the state. A report on the economic impact of sport in Malta states that in 2013 sport contributed €80.5 million to the national gross domestic product (GDP), or 1.1% of the total GDP, when taken from a production approach, and €136.6 million, or 1.8%, when taken from an expenditure approach. The contribution to the national GDP is in line with other nations, such as the UK (1.5%) and the USA (2%), however whereas in most nations the largest contribution to the GDP is derived from sports organisations (events), retail and government investment, in Malta it comes from sports tourism. In fact, sports tourism contributes €58.7 million to the country's GDP, with 81% of this deriving solely from scuba diving. In hard numbers, more than 110,000 tourists (7.2% of the whole number of tourists for 2013) visited Malta for sports purposes, with the total expenditure of such tourists amounting to €124.8 million.<sup>62</sup>

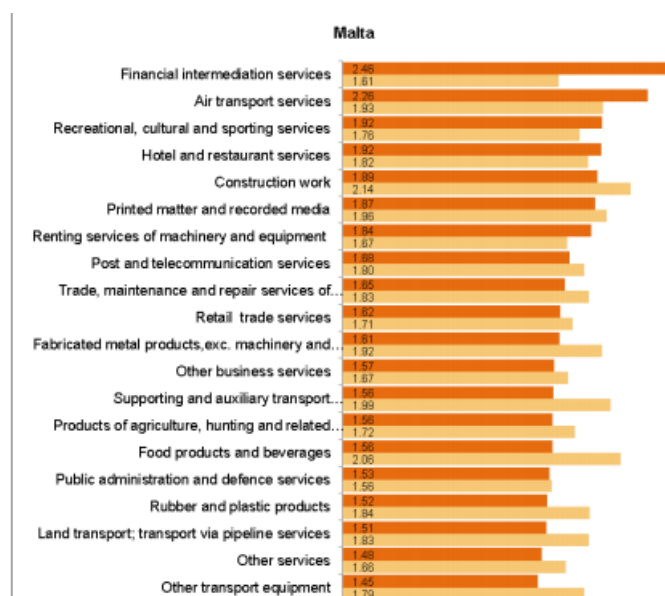
A quick look at the economic impact assessment shows that in 2013, sports organisations, which are the primary backbone of the sports market, spent together with the government, €19.3 million, with €1.7 million dedicated to infrastructural works in sports venues around Malta and Gozo. This accounts for more than 2,000 full-time and more than 4,000 part-time jobs existing in the sports sector.

Multipliers describe the inter-connectedness of a sector with the rest of the economy. The highest sport-related multiplier in Malta can be found in the sector. Financial intermediation services,

<sup>61</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20\(1\).pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20(1).pdf) p.19

<sup>62</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20\(1\).pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20(1).pdf) , p.25.

followed by Air transport services. The sector Recreational, cultural and sporting services is ranked third. The biggest positive difference between Malta and the EU average is “Financial intermediation services” where the Maltese value is 2.46 and the EU average is 1.61 (a positive difference of 0.85)<sup>63</sup>(graphic 12). In addition, one cannot forget the importance of one of the newest economic sectors related to sports: Egaming. Related with this is the subject of funds originating from the gaming sector which is to be channelled for sport purposes. In 2007, the Maltese main body for sports (KMS), today known as “SportsMalta” started some discussions with the Gaming Authority on this subject in order to find a way as to how these funds are to be availed of.<sup>64</sup>



Graphic 12 . Malta - sector- specific multipliers and EU-averages.

This archipelago in the Mediterranean Sea is considered as one of the smallest countries in the world and yet the most densely populated. The total area of this Southern European Island country is just 122 square miles. Although small, the country has been occupied by various foreign powers due to its geographic location which gives it strategic significance in the region.

But with all that aside, one thing is a constant in Maltese culture and that is their love of sports. Football is the top sport in Malta. Football is also one of the oldest sports in the country and most of the national matches are held in the Ta' Qali Stadium.

Another popular sport in Malta is rugby union. Their national rugby team, The Malta Knights, is considered as one of the best in the world even taking down perennial powerhouse teams like

<sup>63</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/studies/study-contribution-spors-economic-growth-final-rpt.pdf> , p.137.

<sup>64</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping\\_sports.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping_sports.pdf) , p. 17.

Croatia, Latvia and Sweden. The Knights has also produced a number of players that went on and now plays for the European Superleague.

Other sports which are important and have a good participation rate are:

- Waterpolo
- Basketball
- Bocci (boules) and Bowling
- Snooker
- Shooting
- Sailing
- Athletics
- Para Olympics
- Netball
- Futsal
- Beach Soccer
- Archery
- Motorsports
- Weightlifting
- Swimming

In most of these sports Malta compete at International level, including Olympics, Small Nations Games, Mediterranean Games, world cup qualifiers and others.

### **Kunsill Malti għall-Isport – KMS / SportMalta**

The KMS was initially set up as a non-executive Board in 1995 with the aims and objectives being the drafting of a Maltese Sports Law while also advising the Minister responsible for sports. In 2002, the House of Representatives unanimously voted in favour of the Sports Act 2002 Chapter 455 which came into effect in February 2003. This Sports Act regulated the principles as well as the aims, objectives and functions of the KMS which now placed the KMS as the Maltese Government authority of local sports.<sup>65</sup>

The Kunsill Malti għall-Isport envisages the maximum use of all public sports facilities in Malta, including those which are government-owned. The KMS is also collaborating with the education authorities and the Ministry for Gozo to ensure fuller use of the various government sports facilities including the sports facilities in Government schools which are closed after school hours.<sup>66</sup> In 2013, the KMS changed its name to SportMalta, its current name.

SportMalta operates under the remit of the Parliamentary Secretary for Recreation, Sports and Voluntary Organisations within the Ministry for Inclusion and Social Wellbeing. Sport Malta's core purpose is to inspire Maltese and Transform the nation through sport and through innovative, fun and meaningful sport experiences.<sup>67</sup> SportMalta's main values are Integrity, Transparency and accountability. Currently, a total of three programmes operate under the umbrella of SportMalta: #OnTheMove, #BeActive Club and Sport Academies.

In addition, SportMalta offers several facilities:<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20\(1\).pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20(1).pdf) , p.33

<sup>66</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20\(1\).pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20(1).pdf) , p.33.

<sup>67</sup> <http://sportmalta.mt/about/>

<sup>68</sup> <http://sportmalta.mt/programmes/>

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- Cottonera Sports Complex
  - Kirkop Sports Complex
  - Marsa Sports Complex
  - National Pool Complex
  - National Shooting Ranges
  - Malta Snooker Academy

Other government-owned facilities:

- Tal-Qroqq Fitness Centre
- Gozo Sports Complex
- Gozo Stadium
- University Sports Hall
- Regional Sports Complex I/o kirkop
- Sports Complex in North of Malta
- School Facilities

### **Maltese Olympic Committee**<sup>69</sup>

Established in 1928, the Maltese Olympic Committee (MOC) is the supreme and exclusive authority on matters relating to Malta's representation at all games falling under the jurisdiction of the International Olympic Committee. The Committee's main commitment is that of encouraging, promoting and funding of Maltese participation in the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Games of the Small States of Europe and Mediterranean Games just to mention a few.

A total of 44 National Associations are affiliated to the MOC.

Aims:

- To educate youth through sport practiced without discrimination of any kind within the Olympic spirit, which requires a mutual understanding and spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.
- Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

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## **6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM IN MALTA**

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In 2005 Malta's government reformed the education system again and created autonomous regional colleges consisting of primary and secondary schools and junior colleges.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> <https://nocmalta.org/about-us/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malta>

In Malta schools are divided into three categories: state schools, church schools and independent schools. Also, there are four special needs resource centres in Malta. These have specialist teachers as well as equipment and other resources for children with learning difficulties. The schools also help with the integration of children of all ages with special needs into mainstream schooling.<sup>71</sup>

State schools are free to all students and can be found in all the main towns or villages in Malta and Gozo. Transport to and from school is also free, as are books and other school materials. Parents will, however, need to buy their children's school uniform.<sup>72</sup>

Compulsory education in Malta is between 5 and 16 years of age. The educational system is structured in four stages: pre-primary (ages three to five), primary (ages five to 11), secondary (ages 11 to 18) and tertiary education. Attending school is compulsory up to the age of 16.

Since Malta is a bilingual country, both English and Maltese are spoken in the classroom and on the playground.

The Education Department caters for various age groups, namely, early years, higher education and lifelong learning apart from compulsory schooling. Quality assurance is a priority and an accreditation unit regulates qualifications.

Research and development fall within the remit of this department and scholarships are awarded on a regular basis.<sup>73</sup>

The University of Malta at Msida and the Malta College of Arts, Science, and Technology (MCAST) are the country's principal institutions of higher education.<sup>74</sup>

The University of Malta is the main university in the country and the highest teaching institution in Malta. It is publicly funded and is open to all those who have the requisite qualifications. There are some 11,500 students including around 1,000 international students from 92 different countries and 450 visiting students, following full-time or part-time degree and diploma courses, many of which run on the modular or credit system. Full-time students get a monthly stipend for attending a university course. Foreigners and part-timers pay fees.

The inclusion of vocational subjects starts from lower secondary level. The current secondary education system enables students to have subject specialisation from the third year of studies at the age of 14. In 2011 a national 3-year Vocational Pilot Project was launched offering vocational qualifications in 4 vocational subjects in several state and non-state schools. Now

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<sup>71</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/Life%20Events/Pages/Moving%20to%20Malta/Education.aspx>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.gov.mt/en/Life%20Events/Pages/Moving%20to%20Malta/Education.aspx>

<sup>73</sup> <https://education.gov.mt/en/refernet/Pages/About-VET.aspx>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Malta>

students have the option of vocational homegrown subjects as optional subjects at Level 3 of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF). This way, vocational subjects have found their way back into compulsory education within standard secondary schools (rather than in specialised vocational schools).

At post compulsory level (MQF Levels 1 to 6) the main state institutions which provide Vocational Educational Training (VET) are the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS).

MCAST provides courses from MQF Level 1 to MQF Level 6 while ITS provide training up to MQF Level 5, which may lead to a continuation of a degree at MQF Level 6 at the University of Malta. The establishment of the MQF and its referencing to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in 2009, was inevitably a concrete cornerstone towards the enhancement of VET. The MQF pushed forward parity of esteem between vocational education and general or academic education and made possible the permeability between VET and higher education which enhances lifelong learning. VET qualifications are now giving access to several courses at the higher levels of the MQF and also enabled VET training providers to link their qualifications to the MQF. VET in Malta is also providing opportunities for learners without any qualification to access and further their education through Initial VET (IVET) qualifications. IVET starts at the lowest level of the MQF (Level 1) and provides a variety of routes for tertiary education attainment.<sup>75</sup>

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## 7. SPORTS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

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Way back in 1947 when the first Teachers' training College was conceived, drill was part of the time-table and the then student teachers had their first lessons with Mr N. Clarke on the roof of a small country house in St Julian's Bay. In 1978, teachers' training was established as a Faculty at the University of Malta and in 1980 the first group of PE student teachers graduated.<sup>76</sup>

During 2006, KMS established a very positive relationship with the Education Division and schools and has embarked on various physical activity and sports programmes to encourage participation by school children. The Community Sports Programme (CSP) and the After School Sports Programme started as a pilot project in a number of schools and planned to extended to other schools as had been happened with the Walking Bus Project.<sup>77</sup>

Physical Education (PE) and Sport is defined by the National Minimum Curriculum (NMC) as a basic subject to be taught in all schools at compulsory educational levels. Physical activity is an

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<sup>75</sup> <https://education.gov.mt/en/refernet/Pages/About-VET.aspx>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.um.edu.mt/ipeds/aboutus/history>

<sup>77</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping\\_sports.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping_sports.pdf) , p. 16.



indispensable means for individual good health. It is recommended that each day children and adolescents accumulate at least sixty minutes of moderate to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA).

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In Malta, considerable pressure is being placed on children, teachers, parents and school management to give overriding priority to examined subjects at both primary and secondary level of education. However, since the appointment of a new Education Officer (EO) for PE in 2008, following a lengthy delay during which the post was vacant, has had a positive impact. Several initiatives have been launched to improve the quality of PE. <sup>79</sup>.

- **Primary**

The teaching of PE was found to be mainly carried out by Peripatetic Teachers. Few Primary School Teachers reported to be holding frequent and comprehensive PE lessons as a continuation of those carried out by the PE Teachers. NAO detected a high risk of many children having less than the four thirty-minute weekly sessions recommended by the Department for Curriculum Management and eLearning (CMeLD). The need for class teachers to be more involved in the delivery of PE lessons was also widely noted during fieldwork. <sup>80</sup>

- **Secondary**

In Secondary Schools, the situation was found to be different from that found in Primary Schools. PE and Sport lessons are taught by specialist PE Teachers who are allocated to specific schools. Secondary School timetable and, therefore, lessons are held regularly. Some Secondary Schools were also involved in programmes organized by the government.

Moreover, another issue that concerns the Maltese authorities is that Malta has high rates of children and adolescents who are either obese or overweight and this is undoubtedly a major cause of concern due to the link between childhood and adult obesity and the significant co-morbidities that are associated with obesity. <sup>81</sup>

## 8. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Malta Sports Act, 2002, has laid a milestone in Maltese legal history. It is the first Maltese statutory enactment regulating sports in general. Historically, the Maltese legislative system contained only very few sections regulating criminal or disciplinary aspects of particular sports, such as the Ninth Legislature (1998 - 2003). <sup>82</sup>

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.parlament.mt/media/65819/4514.pdf> , p. 6 .

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.parlament.mt/media/65819/4514.pdf> , p. 7 .

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.parlament.mt/media/65819/4514.pdf> , p. 7 .

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.parlament.mt/media/65819/4514.pdf> , p. 6 .

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/62359>

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***Act No. XXVI of 2002 - Sports Act 83***

Malta has adopted a pro-active sport-legislation model in enacting the Sports Act on January, 2003. Although the Act produces a legislative structure for sport, it also regulates the financial and logistical support.<sup>84</sup>

***National Sports Policy 2017-2027 85***

The national sports policy 2017-2027, while acknowledging the valuable work done by prior sport administrators, is ambitious and has a wider vision. The policy focuses on three aspects of sport - Sport & Education; Sports Participation; and the Sports industry, aiming that by 2027, sport in Malta serves the needs of all sport people, from performance to grassroots level.

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## ***9. MAIN NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORTS SECTOR***

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- The Parliamentary Secretary for Sports within the Ministry of Inclusion and Well-Being.
- SportMalta
- Ministry of Education: Physical Education in all State Schools
- SkolaSport (National School of Sports)
- National Associations
- Grassroots across all disciplines and at club level.
- University of Malta
- Mcast
- Junior College
- Private Institutions that provide various sports training and courses
- Long-life educational set-ups.

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## ***10. MAPPING OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES***

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Current activities in Malta for NEETS include:<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> <https://parlament.mt/media/1056/xxvi-of-2002-sports-act.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping\\_sports.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping_sports.pdf) , p. 10.

<sup>85</sup> [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20\(1\).pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEDE/Documents/SPORTS%20CALENDAR%20OUTPUT%20(1).pdf) , p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> <https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Pages/Main-page.aspx>

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- ***The Youth Guarantee scheme (ESF.01.002 - Youth Guarantee 2.0)***

The Youth Guarantee scheme is an EU-funded project, developed for young people aged 15 to 25 which provides NEETs with **opportunities for education, training and personal assistance**, thereby facilitating their transition from education to gainful employment, and consequently improving their quality of life and social integration. In collaboration with professional psychologists and youth workers, the Youth Guarantee additionally offers personalised assistance to all NEETs to help them overcome difficulties during their respective programmes, as well as during the period of work exposure.

The Youth 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.

- ***The NEET Activation Scheme II***

*Provides young people (16 - 25 year-olds) who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) with personal/professional training, mentoring and constant support, thereby facilitating their transition from education to gainful employment, while consequently improving their employment prospects, quality of life and social integration.*

*The programme consists of two main phases: training and work exposure/further education.*

*In the first phase, every applicant receives approximately four weeks (80 hours) of training on soft skills modules and also industry based modules.*

*During phase 2, a participant is offered a work placement or they can continue their studies if the applicant desires to further their education level with accreditation from institutions such as MCAST or IT, both options a maximum of 240 hours. Each participant will be paid an allowance after both the training and the work exposure/further education phases based on their attendance rate.*

- ***SEC and MCAST Preventive Classes***

*Students under the age of 25 who fail one of the exams through Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 of their respective course at the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) or MATSEC are offered free preventive classes in a variety of Key Skills and Vocational Subjects during the summer period, in preparation for their final assessments the following September.*

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- **ICT Summer Courses**

*Students aged 15 to 24 are provided with an additional educational opportunity to acquire new and valuable ICT skills and knowledge, through ECDL and a practical Level 2 course. Participants are awarded with an allowance, provided they meet attendance requirements.*

Specifically related to Sports, different organisations and institutions offers the following programmes:

- **SkolaSport** – In the 1970s, this was the first programme to be launched and is getting better. SkolaSport offers training in a wide variety of sport disciplines to children from the very young age of five. Attendance for this program fluctuates from year to year depending on a variety of external factors such as the introduction of football nurseries and the availability of independent coaching facilities.
- **Adventure Sport**

Organised in 1999 by the then Department of Youth and Sport. It was a ten-week programme for persons of over 18 years of age (included Trekking, Life Saving, Rescue, Camping, Orienteering, Mountain Biking, Canoeing, Sailing and Abseiling). Activities were held on Sunday mornings and attendance was overwhelming. Groups of 30 participants normally include at least 5 from rehabilitation centres. The Adventure '99 disciplines Kunsill Malti għall-Isport will work towards the resumption of this programme.

Some of the main programmes and initiatives that Malta currently implements and participates in national as well as in international level are:

- **SPORTSMALTA**

- ✓ **OnTheMove**

This programme offers the opportunity to enjoy sports in various localities through Malta and Gozo. For all ages.

- **Young children programmes:** from age of 4 years to motivate, develop their talents, build confidence and be active.
- **Sport START programme:** children between 7 and 10 years. This programme is a combination of different sports activities.
- **Artistic Sport** (dancing: hip hop, ballet, contemporary and jazz) is also offered in different venues, from entry level to advanced levels.
- **+17:** artistic sessions like Line dancing, sequence and salsa.
- **+60:** very popular programmes with seniors over 60.

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✓ **SummerOnTheMove**

Teaching and helping children and adults develop their skills and motivates/promotes this sport in a healthy way. Beginners' sessions are held for various ages to build confidence in water and enjoy swimming safely.

Up to 7.000 participants in swimming activities from 400 weekly sessions offered in National Pool Complex (Msida) AND Kirkop Complex.

✓ **BeActive Club**

- **Running and Jogging club:** This programme gives access to a number of tracks across Malta. It aims to provide an opportunity for all to take up the most basic form yet cost-effective physical activity-walking. Regular walks in different urban and rural areas are organised periodically.
- **Bike Club:** provides an opportunity for children and adults to take up cycling for fitness, as a competitive sport and as a means of commuting. Includes: road safety and bike repair tutorials.
- **Adventure programme:** The "outdoor and Adventure Programme" provides a series of activities that engage and entice teenagers and adults to be physically active in an exciting setting with a challenging nature whilst discovering the natural beauty of Malta.
- **Elderly Programme:** Includes dancing, yoga, swimming, Tai Chi and resistance training. Provides opportunities to remain socially active.

✓ **Sports Academy**

- **Triathlon:** assists young children and youth to develop their multisport skills and prepares them for the triathlon journey. Currently MYTA has 4 different training groups: Cadets (6-10 y), Minors (11-13y), Youths (14-16y) and Juniors (17-20y).
- **Gymnastics:** perform at highest levels on all four apparatus: technical aspects, flexibility, strength and conditioning. The participants are selected from over 1000 OnTheMove gymnastics participants through a competitive system and regular assessments.
- **Badminton:** provides all the experience needed for athletes to develop and reach the highest levels thanks to a specifically-structured programme that allows each athlete to benefit from the expertise of the best local and international coaches. It also focuses on provide skills and tactics to all the athletes involved.
- **Horse Racing:** provides holistic experience to the sport, prioritising the care of horses, safety aspects of racing and techniques that enable children an youths.
- **Weightlifting:** supports young athletes to learn, practice and compete in a safe environment.
- **Athletics:** Channels athletes to specific programmes that enable the to proceed to higher levels seamlessly in order to be able to compete in national and international competitions.

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✓ **Community Sports Programme**

Launched in March 2007 as a pilot project within three government primary schools and one primary church school. Children are being offered the possibility to practice different sports after school hours within their own school sports facilities. The Kunsill Malti għall-Isport intends to expand this programme with the participation of parents and local community organisations.

✓ **Girls on the Move programme**

Following meetings held with national sports organisations in 2006, the Kunsill Malti għall-Isport decided to embark on this pilot project for the promotion of sports amongst the female gender. The project will provide a variety of team sports and will cater initially for girls between the ages of 9 and 14 years. The pilot project will bring together SportMalta and a number of National Associations.

✓ **Walking Bus project**

The Kunsill Malti għall-Isport in conjunction with the Health Promotion Unit has launched this project within the Siggiewi Primary School. Children are being encouraged to walk to school on a daily basis. Participation has been encouraging. Sport for All is a scheme targeting participants of all ages. It is more of a family-oriented activity. Sport for All is normally practiced in conjunction with sports organisations for the promotion of the sport itself and for participants to be active. This program is offered free to all participants and its principal objective is family participation. For some time, this program was held in collaboration with some Local Councils. The KMS assigned a number of Sports Leaders who organised sporting activities in different localities.

✓ **After School Sports Programme**

The Kunsill Malti għall-Isport has started this pilot project with St. Benedict College in conjunction with a number of sports associations. Children are being given the opportunity to practice one Sport after school hours.

✓ **Media programme**

In the past a considerable number of Sport Organisations complained about the lack of exposure available to them on the media. With the recent acquisition of a television station Education 22 transmitting on Cable television by the Ministry of Education, the Kunsill Malti National Strategy 2007-2010 25 Kunsill Malti għall-Isport għall-Isport is being given valuable air time which it can utilise intelligently and prioritise on sport programmes with an educational basis. The channel in question is targeted at a student audience –

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principally primary and secondary schools. These educational sport programmes should prove to be influential and beneficial.

✓ **Universities**

- **European Sport Leadership Programme (ESLP) – E+ project**

Three years project that seeks to increase sport participation on campus and to promote voluntary activity in sport. The aim is to provide new recreational activities for university students at each institution based on student demand. A total of 5 universities are involved in this project with five sporting disciplines having been selected by the ten ESLP Sports Leaders (Move to the Beat – dance and fitness-, tchoukball, beat the keeper -handball-, Ultimate Frisbee ad Runiversity -athletics-).<sup>87</sup>

✓ **MALTA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

- **Football for Life - Malta Football Association**

MFA has during these last years assisted clubs NGOs, and individual groups, albeit indirectly, to help society in general by financing the improvement in their infrastructure, and by providing the adequate equipment to give more opportunities for members of society to play football.

MFA also plays an active role in supporting the Gowl għall-Istrina, Puttinu Cares and I-Istrina initiatives. Currently, all these initiatives are being re-branded under one tag-line called **“FOOTBALL FOR LIFE”**.

Another programme from MFA is “Continuous Professional Development (CPD)”

✓ **European Projects**

- **Onside programme – EU funded**

A three-year project which seeks to explore and define, for the first time at the EU level, the generic competences, skills and knowledge expected of sport officials (umpires, referees, judges, etc) covering all sports and nations.

- **ESSA-SPORT – Erasmus + Key Action 2**

European Sector Skills Alliances call or also known as “ESSA” is a three years project that strives to deliver the first Europe-wide Employment and skills map for the whole sport and physical activity sector. Mainly a research and consultation project, giving the opportunity to identify the skills needed to ensure the on-going success of the sector.

- **ACTION: GovernAnCe Sport Codification Convergence. – E+ funded.**

Seeks to endeavour to review existing Codes of Good Governance in Europe and examine the facilitators and impediments of governance convergence in sports. Its main targets

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<sup>87</sup> <https://www.um.edu.mt/ipess/projectsandoutreach/projects>

are policy makers, civil servants, administration staff, public and local authorities related with sport and education sectors, Board Members of National Sports Confederations Federations and Associations, National Olympic Committees, Umbrella Sport Authorities, etc.

- **Erasmus+ Sport Programme**

Erasmus+ is the EU's initiative programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The Sport Chapter in the Erasmus+ Programme aims to support European partnerships on grassroots sport in order to pursue the following objectives:

1. Tackle cross-border threats to the integrity of sport, such as doping, match fixing and violence, as well as all kinds of intolerance and discrimination;
2. To promote and support good governance in sport and dual careers of athletes;
3. To promote voluntary activities in sport, together with social inclusion, equal opportunities and awareness of the importance of health-enhancing physical activity, through increased participation in, and equal access to sport for all.

Focus is to be given to grassroots sport. The Actions in the field of sport are expected to contribute to the implementation of the European Week of Sport, initiative launched by the European Commission to promote sport and physical activity in the European Union, in the light of declining participation levels.

- **European Week of Sport**

Launched in 2015, the European Week of Sport was created in response to the worsening inactivity crisis. Despite sport and physical activity substantially contributing to the well-being of European citizens, the level of physical activity is currently stagnating and even declining in some countries. For six years, the European Week of Sports has helped tackle the inactivity crisis by encouraging Europeans to embrace a healthy and active lifestyle. The Week is for everyone, regardless of age, social background or fitness level.

- **European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)**

The mission of HEPA Europe is to provide a forum for the advancement of health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) research, policy and practice for better health and well-being across the WHO European Region. HEPA Europe is a WHO/Europe network, whose activities are based on WHO policy statements and corresponding documents from the European Commission, and are aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030.

HEPA Europe membership is open to organizations and institutions active at the regional, national or subnational level, who are willing to contribute to the goals and objectives of the network.



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In 2013, at an informal meeting in Turkey, WHO proposed an initiative for small countries within the HEPA. The small countries initiative agreed that countries in the WHO European Region with a population of less than 2 million people can share their knowledge on implementing Health 2020.

The 11 members of the initiative are:

- Andorra
- Cyprus
- Estonia
- Iceland
- Latvia
- Luxembourg
- **Malta**
- Monaco
- Montenegro
- San Marino
- Slovenia

The first high-level meeting of small countries was organized in July 2014, hosted by San Marino, to discuss how the countries could advance implementation of Health 2020.

These countries' commitment to implementing Health 2020 led to the formulation of the San Marino Manifesto and to an agreement to work on 4 key actions:<sup>88</sup>

1. document how to align national health policies to Health 2020;
2. develop joint capacity-building events and structures between WHO/Europe and participants in the small countries initiative to promote health and reduce health inequities;
3. create a supportive environment for Health 2020 through better engagement of the media as an implementation partner; and
4. create a platform for sharing experiences and mutual learning about Health 2020 implementation.

The second high-level meeting was held in Andorra, in 2015 and focused on policies to reduce health inequalities, and multisectoral and life-course approaches to health promotion and disease prevention.

Although the Sport History in Malta is relatively short comparing to other countries, the last two decades has been a big change. Laws, educational reforms, new sports federations, professionalization of staff members and improvement of high education has showed the motivation and commitment that Malta has with the Sport sector which will be improving in the upcoming years.

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## 11. *BARRIERS AND DRIVERS*

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There are various problems which are currently hindering sport associations and clubs in embarking on infrastructural projects further to re-build or enhance their facilities. These include: Availability of public land which is either misused or abandoned. Lack of ownership title of property, thus making it impossible for clubs and associations to kick off any infrastructural programme. Existing facilities within schools which are not suitable for use by clubs and associations because of space and / or availability after school hours.<sup>89</sup>

As identified on SWOT test done to beneficiaries, stakeholders and team members as well as online questionnaires done to beneficiaries and stakeholders, the sport sector has several strengths and opportunities that make it suitable to emerge as a reference for NEETs at a regional, national and international level. The main strengths and opportunities identified are as follow:

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/networks/small-countries-initiative>

<sup>89</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping\\_sports.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/reshaping_sports.pdf) , p.19.

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**Strengths:**

- Malta has a lot of clubs, and because of the size of Malta, all of them are relatively close to each other.
- Integrate people, and football particularly creates an union with all people all over the world.
- There is no separation in football (and in sports in general)
- Good impact of sport: keep people fit and mentally positive
- Experience, professionals.
- Logistics.

**Opportunities:**

- Sport sector attracts a lot of people and it could be an opportunity for funds and sponsors.
- Female introduction to different sports and increasing of their participation.
- Sport is open to everybody.
- Be active on Social Media could help (for example: tik tok, Instagram, etc)
- The Island is a tourist place in the area, which could be useful for events.
- Resumption of tourism erasing of sanitary measures.

However, the sport sector finds also main threats and weaknesses are:

**Weaknesses:**

- A lot of people still think that football is amateur (and sports in general)
- Infrastructure is limited, some are getting old and some don't exist for specific sports.
- Not very organised.
- There are a lot of pitches but most of them are from clubs, schools or private companies.

**Threats:**

- Lack of economic resources
- Lack of investment
- COVID19

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## 12. SUPPORTING MECHANISMS RELATED TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SPORTS SECTOR

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- Sportmalta set-up
- Ministry of Education

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- Ministry of Inclusion (which includes Parliamentary Secretary for Sports)
  - University of Malta: Faculty of Sports
  - MCAST: Sports Department
  - SkolaSport (secondary sports education)

The above institutions are the main institutions that are directly involved in skills development for the sports sector both on a local level as well on a national level.

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## 13. Conclusions

To summarize all the content exposed during this research, we would like to conclude with some general ideas and support them with some of the recommendations done on the “Youth NEETs” research <sup>90</sup>

Firstly, we would like to point out that Malta has some characteristics that makes it unique: a small island with high population density, high migration: and it is in the scenario that NEETs should be addressed with a holistic view. Different realities, different causes, different solutions. Nationals and non-nationals have different realities.

- Although MALTA has a low percentage of unemployment, it has a lot of early school leavers = unskilled young people.
- Redefine the term NEET and develop different measures and programmes according to the kind of NEETs that are targeting.
- People who create the programmes and projects should ideally be professionals in their fields, with a particular attention to NEETS and their background and aspirations: social workers, educational psychologists, youth workers, etc.
- Give maximum and long-term value to education and employment.
- Educational Experience and Purpose of Education: engagement programmes in secondary schools addressed to those people about 16 that could become NEETs and by transforming learning to a more inclusive, comprehensive learning.
- Social engagement measures for youths related to sports, culture and adventure can also be very useful and are beneficial life skills, such as enhancing competitiveness, self-discipline, and motivation, just to mention a few indirect and direct benefits.
- The importance of the involvement of Youth Workers and Career Counsellors in the preventative measures and not only in activation measures. support and guide young people to know better themselves and take decisions accordingly.

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<sup>90</sup> [https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets\\_FINAL\\_REPORT\\_ETC.pdf](https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Neets_FINAL_REPORT_ETC.pdf) , p.88-95.

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- Awareness campaigns which will ensure that the population is informed about all the programmes that are already available for them. This is part of a good dissemination plan and making sure the information gets delivered.
  - APPRENTICESHIP focusing on learning and also working at the same time is also something we feel is important
  - Childcare: more focused information campaigns targeting NEETs are available, because childcare services are offered for free, and it is clear that most parents are unaware of it.
  - Career advisory services and job centres present in each locality should be provided.
  - Malta's economy depends on tourism and covid19 has affected it considerably.
  - High rate of unregistered people (migration) could hide the reality of unemployment.
  - Sport is currently not a priority when addressing NEETs in Malta on a national scale ; however the Malta Football Association is working and has worked in the past years to address this with a number of inclusive projects.

Football is very important in Malta, and this is a good opportunity for teaching SKILLS through football. But also other sports in Malta could be exploited and the opportunities created and disseminated and this could be a good method of getting young people involved in a sector that could motivate them a lot.

Football is an all-inclusive sport and can engage NEETs on and off the pitch in more than one way. This is not just about being or becoming good footballers but about teamwork, social networking, job diversification, fun and long-life education.

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## 15. ANNEXES

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1. **Annex 1.** SWOT Analysis
2. **Annex 2.** PESTLE Analysis



## 1. Annex 2. PESTLE Analysis

	External factors to consider	Factors affected within sports industry	Importance (High - Medium - Low)
<b>POLITICAL</b>	Government policy Political stability Industry regulations Global agreements etc.	TRADING POLICY ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL TRENDS GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT WITH SPORT (high obesity rate) EU commitment with Sport. COVID19 SITUATION (regulations and possibility of sports trainings/matches/events cancellations) SPORT NOT A PRIORITY with all the other consequences of the covid19.	HIGH
<b>ECONOMIC</b>	Globalisation, Interest rates, Employment or unemployment rates	LOCAL ECONOMY INTERNATIONAL TRADE ECONOMIC GROWTH that will affect on the creation of new employments. EMERGING MARKETS : EGAIMING  IMPACT COVID on companyies and industries that could not invest in the upcoming months/years on sports sector.	MEDIUM
<b>SOCIAL</b>	Lifestyle factors Career attitudes Work-life balance Population Demographics Education levels, Cultural trends, Attitude changes and changes in lifestyles	DEMOGRAPHYCS MIGRATION  HIGH DENSITY OF POPULATION but HIGH AMOUNT OF YOUNG STUDENTS THAT LEAVE SCHOOLS WITHOUT SKILLS. ONLINE WORK & SHOP	HIGH
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	Automation Innovation Social networking Upgrades Artificial Intelligence Security	ENERGY TRANSPORTATION COMMUNICATIONS (new apps, new social media, new ways of communication that require of	MEDIUM

	Changes in digital or mobile technology	knowledge and a communication team)	
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	CSR (Corporate social responsibility) Ethical sourcing Transportation Future pandemics Climate, Waste disposal and sustainability.	AWARENESS LAND CLIMATE WASTE DISPOSAL RESOURCES	LOW
<b>LEGAL</b>	Employment legislation Common law Local labour law Health and safety regulations	TAXATION MONEY LAUNDERING REGULATIONS	