



MINISTRY WITHIN THE OFFICE
OF THE PRIME MINISTER
(Responsible for Sustainable Development, Social Dialogue
and the Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



2019

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FOREWORD

Sustainable development has been an integral part of the Maltese Government's agenda for the past years, and much good work has already been done in this area across all sectors. It has indeed been mainstreamed in the Government's operations and policy formulation and we are one of the few countries having a specific Sustainable Development Governance model in place which is underpinned by the Sustainable Development Act.

We have made significant strides, while having strong foundations on which to build, but we know there is more to do. Indeed, the path towards a more sustainable future that satisfies our needs without jeopardising the prospects of future generations is far from easy. In order to get there, we need rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

At the international level, Malta has not only contributed to the negotiations that led to the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) but is also committed to their implementation. In 2015 Malta became a signatory to 2030 Agenda and work also started on the development of the National Sustainable Development Strategy with a horizon up to 2050. In this regard, in 2018 Malta published and presented its Voluntary National Review on the implementation of the 2030 agenda to the United Nations, where we shared our efforts with the rest of the world.

The Sustainable Development Report 2018 gives a description of the various policies and initiatives which were taken by the Government during the said year. The report encompasses all the important elements of sustainable development which include economic growth, social development, environmental protection, energy and climate mitigation, as well as research and innovation.

This Government's commitment is unrelenting, and we are confident that as time goes by, our performance will continue growing stronger, while our actions should be reflected in our performance.

Sustainable development requires us to think about future generations and not individuals, the immediate economic sector, or the social strata. A generation implies that we are all involved and are hence we are all expected to contribute to define our, and our children's future.

Hon. Carmelo Abela

Minister within the office of the Prime Minister

(Responsible for Sustainable Development, Social Dialogue and the Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto)



We have made significant strides and have strong foundations on which to build, but we know there is more to do.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Sustainable Development Directorate was previously part of the Ministry for the Environment and Climate Change portfolio from March 2013 till December 2019. As from January 2020, Sustainable Development forms part of Office of the Prime Minister's portfolio. This annual report fulfils the purpose of compliance with Part VI, Article 14 of the Sustainable Development Act (Chapter 521). This requires the Competent Authority to produce a Report to be submitted to the Minister responsible for sustainable development, delineating the activities carried out by the Competent Authority during the previous financial year. In terms of the Act, the Minister shall provide a copy of this Report to be presented to the House of Representatives for debate.

This Annual Report provides a national perspective of the measures which are currently being implemented by the Maltese Government to address and further mainstream sustainable development across all sectors. This approach assimilates the collaborative efforts of all Ministries and offers an integrated way to achieve a sustainable future for the Maltese Islands where no one is left behind.

This report is centred on the three dimensions of social development – economic development, social wellbeing and environment protection. It also aligns the measures being taken by Government with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs that were adopted by the UN in September 2015.

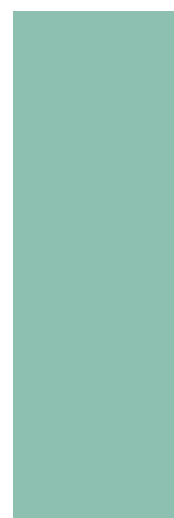
MALTA'S COMMITMENTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MEASURING TOOLS

The potential to measure data is crucial to identify the progress achieved in sustainable development and the related SDGs. The measurement of data provides the possibility to compare and analyse different situations, in our case on the performance in reaching particular SDGs, while providing a clear insight of how it is affecting the progress in reaching the set objectives. Indicators are used to monitor and rate the progress in reaching the SDGs, making it an important measuring tool in the field of sustainable development thus contributing for better transparency and accountability. Indicators can also be used as an important tool to guide policy makers in the development of policies over time.

Malta's achievements in the field of sustainable development, in particular in reaching the SDGs, are reported in two major tools:

- i. UN SDG Index and Dashboards Report;
- ii. EU SDG monitoring report



SDG INDEX AND DASHBOARDS REPORT

Data published in the 2018 SDG Index and Dashboards Report, tracking progress in achieving the SDGs across the UN Member States, placed Malta in 30th place out of 193 countries¹.

Comparatives with previous years is not possible. In fact part of the methodological statement of the report clearly states that “Due to changes in the indicators and some refinements in the methodology, SDG Index rankings and scores cannot be compared across the 2016, 2017 and 2018 editions of the report”. However the index does give a gauging of Malta’s performance when compared with other countries.

EU SDG MONITORING REPORT

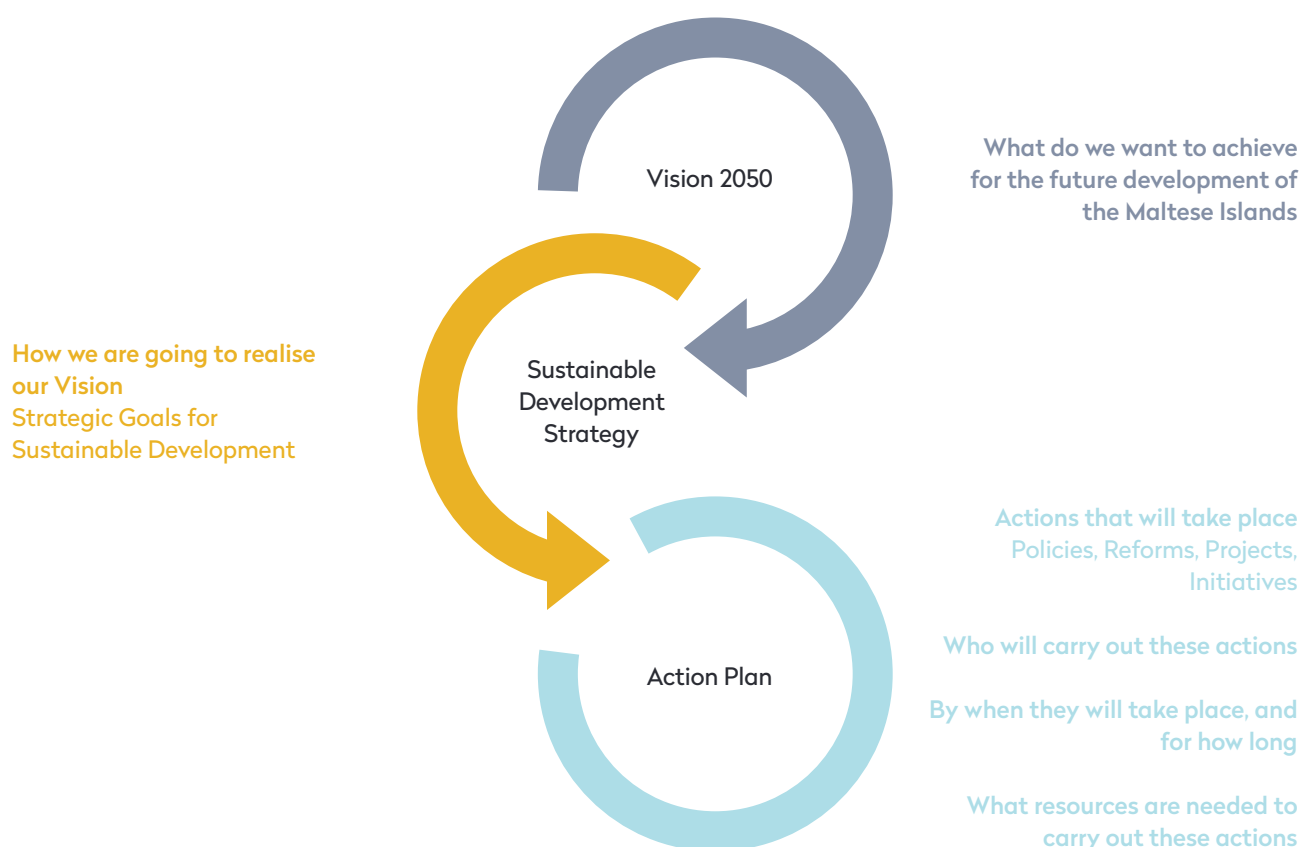
An SDG indicator set to monitor and assess the EU’s performance and progress in the SDGs was developed by Eurostat in 2017. Despite being developed in line with the globally binding UN indicator set, the EU SDG indicator set is not aimed to deal with all targets and topics of the SDGs or to reproduce entirely the UN set. It is rather aimed to deal with EU policies which are instrumental in achieving the 2030 Agenda. The EU SDG indicator set is made up of 100 indicators, of which 41 are multi-purpose indicators used to monitor more than one goal.

The list of indicators and Malta’s score for 2018 compare with the EU average is available in Annex 1.

A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Amongst the responsibilities emanating from the Sustainable Development Act, the Office of the Prime Minister as the Competent Authority for Sustainable Development is entrusted with the development and implementation of Malta’s Sustainable Development Strategy.

Given that several national, EU and international developments have taken place in various policy sectors during the last years, a new framework is being developed which will supersede the existing one. The proposed phases for developing Malta’s future Sustainable Development Framework is as follows:



MALTA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT VISION FOR 2050

During the period under review the Sustainable Development Directorate within MESDC developed a Vision Document which was subsequently presented in Cabinet on 11 September 2018. Following approval by Cabinet the Vision Document was launched for public consultation. The Directorate also collaborated with the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) where a series of consultation sessions addressing specific subjects were held:

- 18 September 2018: Education and Employment
- 10 October 2018: Environment Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- 11 October 2018: Urban Development
- 15 October 2018: Social Cohesion
- 25 October 2018: Financial Sector
- 26 October 2018: Core Group Meeting

Attendees included NGOs, Civil Society Representatives, Constituted Bodies, Academia, representatives from Ministries, Departments and other Government organisations and bodies.

The Sustainable Development Directorate has a leading role, however, ownership by the various Ministries is essential if the Strategy is to be truly holistic, effective and contributing to the SDGs. During 2018, the Sustainable Development Focal Points Network, consisting of representatives from all Ministries, met three times and amongst other issues discussions focused on the new Sustainable Development framework for the Maltese Islands.

NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Following the launch for the first time of a fund for Sustainable Development by MESDC in December 2017, the initial segment of the grant was presented to the NGOs which were selected in May 2018. The best three projects from the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) were selected after the evaluation process of seventeen project proposals which were initially submitted.

The Sustainable Development Fund has been established to provide funding for voluntary and NGOs which are actively involved in different economic, social and environmental areas and which through their work these organisations contribute to the aim of reaching the SDGs. This fund helps to ensure responsibility so that everyone's decisions and actions lead to sustainable development including the civil society.



The selected projects included:

i. The Ghost Fishing Project

This project, being implemented by the Emergency Response and Rescue Corps, aims at addressing issues caused by fishing nets that have been lost and abandoned at the bottom of the sea. Such nets remain active entangling marine wildlife. The project is aimed to reach this through a number of initiatives, namely:

- Informal Education Campaign
- Clean-up
- Hot-line
- Removal of Ghost Nets

More detailed information about the project is available on: <https://www.ghostfishingmalta.com/>

ii. Social Inclusion by means of Dedicated Mentoring

This project, being implemented by the Malta Federation of Organisations Persons with Disability, aims at providing mentoring services to vulnerable persons who are seeking a job. Through such mentoring social and emotional support is provided to these vulnerable persons with the aim of easing their inclusion into our society and the labour market.

iii. An Action Plan for Sustainable Communities

This project, being implemented by Flimkien għal Ambjent Aħjar, aims to compile data required to provide in-depth understanding of those factors directly affecting social and ecological sustainability of local communities. This information will be used to formulate a constructive and effective Action Plan to address the steps needed to achieve the SDGs.

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE POLICY AND A FRAMEWORK FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In response to the global trends and challenges identified in the 2030 Agenda, in 2017 the EU and its Member States jointly agreed to the adoption of the European Consensus on Development. The Consensus sets out the main principles which will guide the approach of the EU and the Member States to cooperate with developing countries, as well as a strategy for reaching the SDGs. The overarching goal is the eradication of poverty, by promoting good governance, human and economic development and tackling universal issues, such as fighting hunger and preserving the world's natural resources.

In 2018, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion launched Malta's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Implementation Plan in response to the adoption of the European Consensus on Development and the UN 2030 Agenda, setting the lines for Malta's Official Development Policy through to 2030. The ODA Implementation Plan was formulated in close consultation and partnership with relevant partners and stakeholders. Malta's ODA Implementation Plan caters for the co-funding of Official Development Assistance projects, capacity-building and scholarships, and humanitarian aid funding.

The ODA Implementation Plan can be accessed on: <https://foreignaffairs.gov.mt/en/PDF%20Documents/ODA%20Implementation%20Plan%20FINAL.pdf>

MALTA'S PARTICIPATION AT EU AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

During 2018 Malta continued to follow international developments in relation to sustainable development. In fact during 2018 Maltese delegates attended a series of EU Council meetings in Brussels in preparation for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF)² held in New York (9-18 July) and for the UN Environmental Assembly³ (UNEA-4) held in Kenya (11-15 March 2019).

During the HLPF Malta presented its first Voluntary National Review (VNR)⁴ on 18 July 2018. Malta's VNR was an

2 The HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the SDGs at the global level.

3 UNEA is the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment. The main outcomes of the UNEA provide the key environmental perspective of sustainable development during the meetings of HLPF.

4 Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20203Malta_VNR_Final.pdf

opportunity to share externally with the UN, our country's collective efforts in securing sustainable development, and contained an overview of national policies and initiatives that have been contributing to the attainment of the UN development goals. The VNR was a result of consultations with all the Ministries across Government as well as civil society.

EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Between 28 May and 4 June 2018, MESDC organised a series of events as part of the European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW). The ESDW is a European-wide initiative to stimulate and make visible activities, projects and events that promote sustainable development and the SDGs.

These events included:

i. Business Breakfast 'Gearing towards circular economy'

A business breakfast focusing on circular economy was held on 30 May 2018 and touched upon a number of issues including:

- The delivery of EU Circular Economy Package across EU Member States and the role of the business community
- The circular economy in Malta, its future outlooks and the Maltese Government's objectives in this regard
- Innovation for responsible and sustainable consumption and production
- The circular economy in the built environment



ii. Conference addressing Social realities in Malta

This conference held on 31 May 2018 aimed at raising awareness about the changing social realities of the Maltese society, targeting specific vulnerable groups. It was organised by the Guardian of Future Generations under the auspices of MESDC. The issues addressed in this conference included amongst others the new social realities in Malta, such as mental health and well-being issues as well as the phenomenon of migration.

iii. Awareness-Raising Event on Responsible Consumption and Production

This awareness-raising event was held on 2 June 2018 at the Upper Barrakka Gardens in Valletta. It addressed both the environmental and economical dimensions of sustainable development in Malta shedding light on the sustainable production and consumption of food in order to reduce unnecessary food waste. Information, advice and practical suggestions on how to introduce or reinforce good waste management practices, handling, storing and cooking with left-over food as well as information on the process of home composting were given to the general public who attended for this event.

iv. Exploring Dwejra and its surroundings

This public event was held in the area of Dwejra and its surroundings in Gozo on 3 June 2018. The activities mainly addressed the environmental pillar of sustainable development focusing on the factors that affect the geological features as well as the rich and diverse fauna, flora and habitats both on

land and at sea around Dwejra. A series of activities in relation to practices taking place in the area of Dwejra were held for those who attended.

These activities included:

- A ghost fishing activity highlighting the negative effects that any discarded or lost fishing gear leaves when it remains uncollected from the sea
- A clean-up of the area surrounding the sea where the aim was to increase awareness on marine pollution and the impact of waste littering
- Tours to the Ġebbla tal-Ġeneral and around Dwejra providing valuable information on this world heritage site

v. Students' Debate on a Sustainable Development Vision for 2050

This debate was held at the Grandmaster's Palace in Valletta on 4 June 2018. It was a simulation of a parliamentary debate on Malta's new long-term strategic vision for sustainable development. Topics discussed included:

- Waste Management and Biodiversity
- Reduced Inequalities
- Education, Skills and Jobs
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- Health and Wellbeing

Participants included third and fourth year secondary students from four different schools namely San Anton School, St Martin's College, St Catherine's College and St Michael's College.



01 ENABLING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Government is committed to sustaining economic growth and employment within the context of sustainable development.

The vision is that Malta achieves further sustainable economic development through:

- appropriate fiscal policy and structural reforms;
- human capital investment aimed towards more high-skilled and value-added jobs;
- adequate infrastructure for sustainable mobility;
- the greening of the economy;
- moving towards a digital economy;
- the promotion of circular production and consumption patterns;
- curbing greenhouse gases to move towards a low-carbon economy, and the diminishing of environmental impacts.

The Government's vision is to ensure that wealth continues to be generated in a socially just and inclusive manner whilst ensuring the natural resource base is not depleted.

The aim is to move towards a sustainable economic model focusing on the decarbonisation of the economy, promoting research and innovation, enhancing sustainable production and consumption patterns and creating sustainable employment. This approach supports efforts to achieve internationally agreed SDGs 4, 6-9, 11, 12 and 14.

2030 AGENDA RELATED GOALS



Diagram 1: Sustainable Development Goals⁵

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.

SDG 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.

Malta's economy in real terms has maintained its positive momentum, registering a 6.7% increase. Provisional estimates indicate that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018 amounted to €12,320.0 million, an increase of €1,006.5 million when compared to 2017.

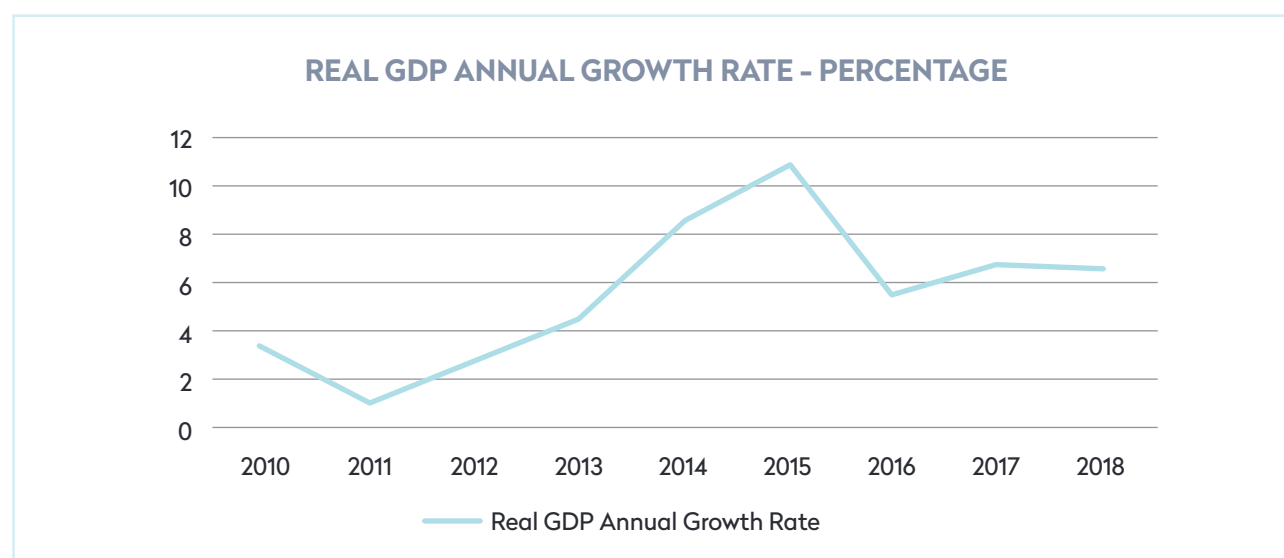


Figure 1: Real GDP Annual Percentage Growth Rate⁶

FISCAL CONSOLIDATION

During the last four years, Government managed to successfully consolidate public finances, turning a deficit of 3.5% of GDP in 2012 to a surplus of 3.5% of GDP in 2017. Moreover, in 2018, Government's fiscal surplus reached 2.0 per cent of GDP⁷. It is expected to remain in surplus over the following three years as stipulated in its Medium Term Fiscal Plan. The budget surplus allows more room for manoeuvre to address structural challenges including infrastructural bottlenecks such as roads and waste management and further investments in human capital and technology, thus further strengthening potential growth and supporting the process of convergence to higher living standards.

DOWNWARD DEBT TRAJECTORY

At the end of 2018, the General Government debt amounted to €5,664.7 million, or 46.0 per cent of GDP, a decrease of €17.8 million over 2017.⁸ Further improvements in the underlying debt dynamics are expected to be secured through an improvement in the primary surplus, positive growth prospects, sustained investor confidence, and an efficient and effective debt management system. It is indeed Government's fiscal policy to ensure that, as far as is reasonable and practicable, Government borrowing is used for productive purposes and the accumulation of capital assets, and not to finance recurrent expenditure.

⁶ GDP Growth Rate data available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tec00115&plugin=1>

⁷ General government deficit (-) and surplus (+) - annual data, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=teina200&plugin=1>

⁸ https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A2/Public_Finance/Documents/2019/News2019_082.pdf

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

As a response to the recommendations from the High Level EU Group on Sustainable Finance, an Action Plan on Financing Sustainable Growth was published on 7 March 2018. The Action Plan outlines ten reforms in three areas:

- i. Reorient capital flows towards sustainable investment, in order to achieve sustainable growth
- ii. Mainstreaming sustainability into risk management
- iii. Foster Transparency and long-termism in financial and economic activity

In this regard, the Commission established a Member State Expert Group so Member States can be involved in the political steer of this discussion. Both MESDC and the Ministry for Finance are members of this group, which started meeting in the second half of 2018, and had since had three meetings.

On 24 May, the Commission put forward three legislative proposals:

- on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment
- on disclosures relating to sustainable investments and sustainability risks and amending Directive (EU) 2016/2341
- on low carbon benchmarks and positive carbon impact benchmarks

In the second half of 2018, the Ministry for Finance also participated in the various Council meetings held under the two Council Working Parties on Sustainable Finance which were set up under the Austrian Presidency; one discussing the Taxonomy proposal and one discussing the benchmarks and disclosures proposal. These Working Party formations discuss the legislative proposals, and in this regard, the Ministry for Finance has carried out an external consultation with the MEUSAC on these proposals on 6 November 2018.

In 2018 MESDC commissioned a feasibility study on initiatives/instruments to assist in transitioning further towards a green economy. The ultimate goal of this feasibility study was to assess and prioritise those financial resources, public policy tools and innovative financing mechanisms required to make this leap in favour of greening the economy.

SUPPORTING AND REWARDING BUSINESSES

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

SDG 9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.

SDG 12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.

PROMOTING AND REWARDING BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS

During 2018, the Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Businesses launched the fourth edition of the Sustainable Enterprise Award. This Award is endorsed by the Cleaner Technology Centre within the University of Malta as well. This Award recognizes, promotes and rewards businesses that have made a significant contribution to the varying aspects of sustainable development.



The Award distinguishes Maltese enterprises, particularly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, or foreign enterprises operating in Malta, for their efforts to improve their practices with the aim of increasing economic, social and environmental sustainability. The 2018 edition was given to Knight Operations Ltd.

The Sustainable Enterprise Award initiative supports the efforts towards achieving internationally agreed SDGs namely 6-9 and 11-13. More details are enclosed in the following link: <https://economy.gov.mt/en/Awards/Awards%202018/Pages/Sustainable-Enterprise-Award-2018.aspx>

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

The Government is committed to continue to lead by example in environmental performance through sustainable public procurement practices.

Green Public Procurement (GPP) and sustainable procurement (SPP) were identified as pivotal in terms of contribution towards the achievement of SDG 12: Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. GPP is a market-based mechanism, which serves as a stimulus to drive the economy in an environmentally friendly direction with Government leading by example. The Government, as a whole entity, is the largest consumer of goods and services from the private sector and in this regard GPP is the right tool to increase the supply of green goods.

During 2018, the Department of Contracts, in liaison with the Directorate for Environment and Climate Change (DECC) within MESDC, embarked in a systems integration exercise in order to not only digitalise data collection methods concerning GPP Criteria but also to provide, through the electronic Public Procurement System (ePPS), a single data collection point for metrics concerning the named subject matter. Through these ePPS enhancements it is now much simpler and faster to have a realistic picture of the actual greening of Public Procurement projects.

Further ongoing digitalisation of processes, including but not limited to, the European Single Procurement Document, the Contracts Register and eCertis module will help the Government of Malta's drive to reduce reliance on printed media by substituting such reliance with digital processes that not only simplify and expedite the procedures involved but also maximise the output provide by current software systems in use.

In 2018, MESDC, continued to monitor the uptake of GPP (Green Public Procurement) together with quality assurance exercises that compared the data collected in each Ministry's GPP weekly report with the tenders published on the EPPS. Through this monitoring system, the contribution to sustainable production and consumption patterns is tracked by keeping tabs on the Government's procurement of products and services.

The below tables contain relevant statistical data on GPP collected in 2018. This is generic information which reflects how many tenders were greened during 2018.

TABLE 2: GPP COMPLIANCE BY NUMBER – 2018

Total number of tenders published	Total number of tenders screened by GPP coordinators	Total number of tenders under the scope of GPP	Total number of tenders compliant with GPP
2317	2054	719	502

Table 2 above shows the GPP compliance by number during 2018. It is important to note that the total number of tenders screened by GPP coordinators excludes tenders issued by the Medicines and Medical Devices team within Central Procurement and Supplies Unit (CPSU). This also applies to Table 3 with regard to the total value of tenders published.

TABLE 3: GPP COMPLIANCE BY VALUE – 2018

Total value of tenders published (€)	Total value of tenders under the scope of GPP (€)	Total value of tenders compliant with GPP (€)	% of GDP in terms of 'greened' procurement
1,054,666,417.5	395,524,985.48	235,674,117.04	2.1 ⁹

Table 3 above shows that for the data collected during 2017, Government expenditure amounted to €1,054,666,417.5 of which €235,674,117.04 were potentially 'greened'.

In terms of reaching the 50% target¹⁰, this transpires that Malta has exceeded the target for tenders including GPP by number (69.82%). Expressed as a function of tenders by value Malta is broadly in line with the 50% target, having achieved compliance of 59.59% of tenders under the scope of GPP.

⁹ Percentage of GDP in terms of 'greened' procurement, available at: https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/View_by_Unit/Unit_A1/National_Accounts/Documents/2019/News2019_038.pdf

¹⁰ In 2008, EU Member States agreed to a political indicative target of greening 50% of the procurement that falls under the scope of GPP by 2010.

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE COMPLIANCE FOR MANDATORY GPP PRODUCT GROUPS – 2018

Copying and Graphic Paper	Office IT Equipment	Textiles	Gardening Products and Services	Cleaning Products and Services
100	98.4	81	71.3	79.9

At sectoral level, as per results in Table 4, the 100% mandatory target has only been achieved for GPP product group 'Copying and Graphic Paper'. As for the non-mandatory criteria, the national target for 30% was achieved for the following product groups: 'Furniture', 'Construction', 'Hard Floor Coverings' and 'Windows, Glazed Doors and Skylights'. It is important to note that during 2018, no tenders fell under the scope of the non-mandatory GPP product groups for 'Mobile' and 'Combined Heat and Power'.

To further achieve the scope set out in the first GPP National Action Plan (NAP), the second NAP was drafted and published for public consultation. It aims at providing policy impetus to further implement sustainable procurement practices beyond the EU guidelines. Indeed, the key objective of this action plan to be achieved by 2025 is to increase the uptake of GPP product and service groups, having set the 1st NAP as a baseline with the aim of achieving the 90% target in the vision. The Plan also focuses on integrating the circular economy principles in the technical specifications of a number of product groups, hence making the public sector operations' more sustainable. Continuous engagement of economic operators, contracting authorities and other relevant stakeholders by providing necessary training through information sessions, workshops and established communication channels is another priority area as it creates more awareness and has a domino-effect on the wider economy.

DIGITAL ECONOMY

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.

SDG 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

SDG 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

Malta understands that it must find ways to address the severe shortage of digital skills. The key challenge in digital skills is the low number of STEM (science, technology and mathematics) graduates and open data. The improvement of digital skills is vital to enhance the integration of digital technologies at enterprises and digital public services.

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), through the eSkills Malta Foundation, embarked on various initiatives to support the digital economy sectoral skills. The aim of the trainee schemes and initiatives is to contribute to the expansion of ICT educational programmes and related formative initiatives, lead an ICT professionalism development programme, instigate further reform in the ICT educational offerings and contribute to capacity-building in the ICT education community.

In Malta, we are starting to focus on projects of added value and technical modernisation such as Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things. Business processes can be added value from emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, and IT professionals can learn how to incorporate such techniques in real business cases.

Artificial Intelligence can assist governments to boost public services such as the area of the management of traffic. This technology can also be applicable in the health care sector. AI can increase the availability of healthcare data and generate better usage of Big Data. The ability to tap into new technologies can enhance the education sector by streamlining everything from admissions to grading homework and measuring student responses.

The Maltese Government has signed an agreement with Microsoft, focusing on several technologies including blockchain, artificial intelligence and the internet of things. The agreement, part of a worldwide \$500 million investment, is aimed

at supporting the strategic themes of the National Digital Strategy in all three pillars, namely the digital citizen, the digital business and the digital government.

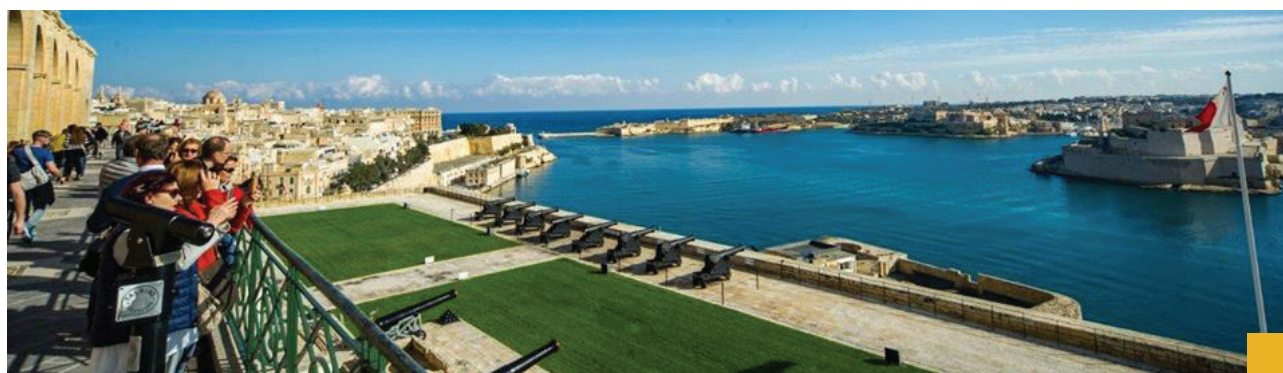
On July 4, 2018 the Maltese Parliament has officially passed 3 bills into law, establishing the first regulatory framework for blockchain, cryptocurrency and Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT). This makes Malta the first country in the world to provide an official set of regulations for operators in the blockchain, cryptocurrency and DLT space.

The first law, known as the Malta Digital Innovation Authority Act (MDIA Act)¹¹, establishes the Malta Digital Innovation Authority and certifies DLT platforms. This law focuses on internal governance arrangements and outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Authority.

The second law, known as the Innovative Technology Arrangement and Services Act (ITAS Act), deals with DLT arrangements and certifications of DLT platforms. This bill focuses on the setting up of exchanges and other companies operating in the cryptocurrency market. The third law, known as the Virtual Financial Assets Act (VFA Act), establishes the regulatory regime governing ICOs, cryptocurrency exchanges, wallet providers, etc.

Measures taken to improve quality of the public service included the launch of the first 21 mobile apps for government services and the setting up of the website servizz.gov.mt where about 800 services, and the related forms, may be accessed online. The website publicservice.gov.mt was also launched to disseminate information and news about the Public Service.

Servizz.gov – the one stop shop in local communities and the online guide to government services was selected as Best National Digital Solution for international World Summit Awards 2018. The World Summit Awards are a global initiative selecting digital innovation making positive impact on society.



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Malta's National Tourism policy (2015–2020) sets out a policy which focuses on the principles of sustainable development as a means of safeguarding the positive aspects of the country's attractiveness as a tourism destination for the benefit of visitors and the host population alike. Malta's National Tourism Policy (2015–2020) refers to the Vision for Tourism 2030 as Promoting and managing year-round tourism growth to the Maltese islands through the dual principles of competitiveness and sustainability. The policy focuses on destination management and on raising quality across the tourism value chain whilst reducing seasonality. Tourism is an important economic sector which is integrated with various sectors across the Maltese economy.

Projects coordinated by The Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) aimed at encouraging the private sector to invest in staff development and to reward the efforts of those employees who excel continued in 2018.

Public recognition of quality services is provided through schemes such as the Quality Assured Scheme currently available to Restaurants, Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and Visitor Attractions and the Eco Certification Scheme.

Actions undertaken to address investment in the human resource relate to the STAR Awards and the Erasmus + 'Improving the Digital Skills and Quality Performance' within the catering sector in Malta. The latter has been selected for a second time and has also been extended to DMCs and Visitor Attractions while The Star Awards Scheme which recognises persons who contribute to the hospitality industry has grown to boast 12000 nominations. In addition, two other projects are in place, Apprezza Campaign and Choice Programme, to try and entice the younger generation to take up careers in the hospitality industry. The former is for primary school students and the latter for secondary school students.

Management of cultural attractions is key towards practices adopted in favour of sustainable tourism development. The cultural assets located in the Maltese Islands play a critical role and in this regard capital investment is constantly taking place in support of our environmental and cultural resources. This includes amongst others the work undertaken during Valletta 2018-European Capital of Culture, work on the project to restore and introduce innovations in the Mediterranean Conference Centre, as well as a €25M EU-Funded project aimed at regenerating the Lower Valletta area. MTA is also participating in two EU-funded projects together with two NGOs, Din l-Art Helwa and Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti to restore five coastal towers which were built by the Knights of St John. These coastal towers will provide attractions for tourists in off-the-beaten track locations.

The Valletta 2018 Foundation was crucial for driving cultural, social and economic regeneration in Valletta and the Maltese Islands through collaboration, exchange and innovative practice. It enabled social, economic, cultural and environmental growth that underlined Valletta's remarkable characteristics as a city. Its Cultural programme for Valletta as European Capital of Culture included educational programmes focusing on various creative skills as well as programmes aimed specifically at exploring and encouraging cooperation and interaction between different communities and minorities in the country.

The programme Culture Pass was continued during 2018. This programme is available from kindergarten up to school leaving age students. These experiences are instrumental for students to start appreciating art from a young age and help them in creative thinking.

Malta depends heavily on coastal and maritime tourism since it is an island state therefore it experiences added pressure in its coastal and maritime areas. During the period under review, efforts to protect our marine environment continued to be taken by the relevant

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

SDG 6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

SDG 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

SDG 7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

SDG 8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.

SDG 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

SDG 9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.

SDG 12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

SDG 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

SDG 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

SDG 12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

SDG 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimise their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

SDG 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

SDG 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

authorities. Key measures related to coastal areas included:

- the awarding of Blue Flag beaches and beach management by MTA,
- maintenance of coastal tourism zones,
- maintenance of the bathing water quality and,
- support offered towards management plans for Marine Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Natura 2000 sites

Smart innovation is another important step towards giving Malta's tourism product an improved competing edge. In this regard, in 2018 the Ministry for Tourism entered in a project to develop a Digital Tourist Platform. This aims to provide tourists with information about localities of interest such as museums and other visitor attractions. It will also study the preferences of tourists and will aim to guide tourists to less well-known localities in order to distribute tourists from congested to less well-known attractions. The project also includes an app utilising Augmented reality and Virtual reality to improve the visitor experience. This aims to improve the services provided to tourists. Artificial Reality and Virtual Reality are also being employed in the projects concerning Mediterranean Conference Centre and the Regeneration of Lower Valletta referred to above. These projects include the use of cutting-edge technology in the development of apps to provide a unique visitor experience.

02 EMPOWERING PEOPLE

This Chapter focuses on the social dimension of sustainable development, encompassing Government's measures aimed at ensuring a dignified life for the entire population, so that everyone is enabled to fulfil his or her potential within a healthy environment. In order to achieve this objective, throughout 2018 the Government continued to pursue coherent and effective measures that focus not only on income, but extend to other key dimensions of well-being, including equal rights and opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion, integration, education and training as well as good health.

In this regard, this Chapter highlights the measures and initiatives undertaken by Government which are linked to the 2030 Agenda namely SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

2030 AGENDA RELATED GOALS



Diagram 4: Sustainable Development Goals¹²

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

According to Eurostat, large part of the Maltese population (75.0%) reports to be in good health, above the EU-28 average (68%¹³).

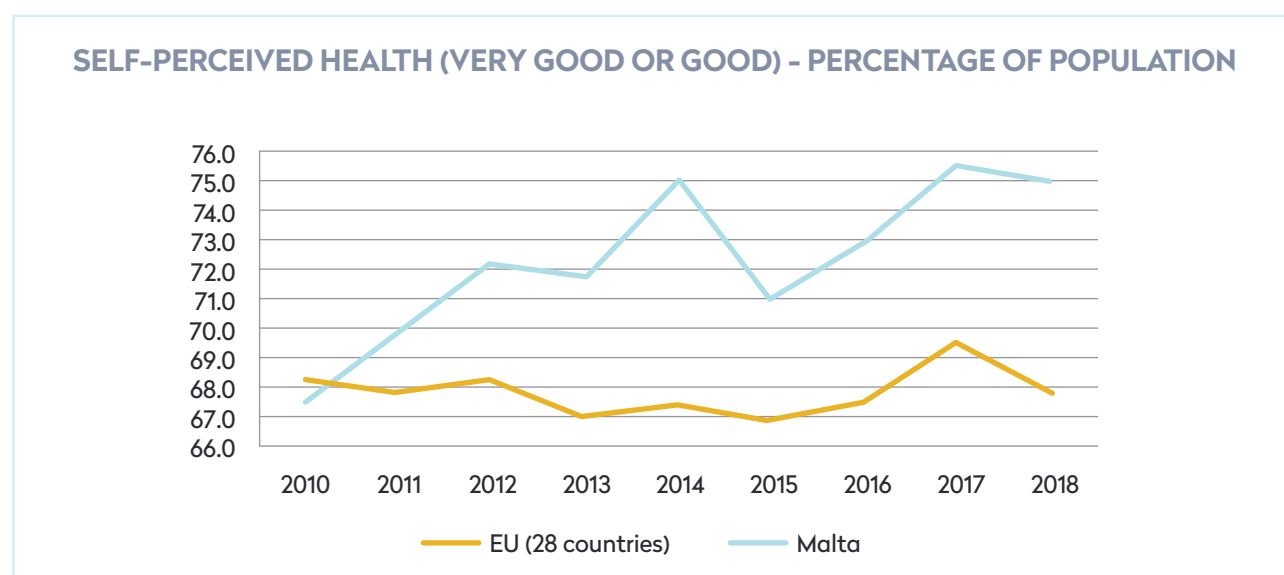


Figure 2: Self-perceived health (Very good or good)¹⁴

ADDRESSING NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and wellbeing.

SDG 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

SDG 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

Obesity prevention is a priority for the Government. Work done in 2018 included the development of Dietary Guidelines for Maltese Infants and Young Children along with the Toybox project for the prevention of obesity in early childhood. Furthermore, a number of campaigns aimed towards the prevention of obesity, cancer, the use of tobacco and drinking and driving were also held.

During the period under review, the Government continued working on the implementation of measures relating to the National Strategy for Diabetes (2016–2020). The provision of free glucose monitors and glucose-testing sticks for all insulin-dependent diabetics, was extended during 2018. Furthermore, new anti-diabetic medications were added onto the national formulary (namely, gliptins and repaglinide). A number of additional cancer medicines were also added to the government national formulary and several initiatives were taken to improve access to the recommended treatments for patients with rare diseases.

Following the launch of the National Cancer Plan in the previous year, during 2018 the Government continued to work on the reduction in premature mortality from non-communicable diseases and promotion of mental health and well-

¹³ This figure is a provisional estimate based on previous years as not all EU countries have submitted their data

¹⁴ EU SDG indicators available at, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>

being in this regard. The national cancer screening programme for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer continued to witness an expansion of age ranges of invited people for screening, while the frequency of invitation for breast cancer screening is increasing to approach the target of an invitation every two years. The response rates for attendance to screening showed noteworthy improvements for all the three programmes. Moreover, in December 2018, there was the launch of a national mental health strategy for consultation. This strategy will be finalised and implementation will commence during 2019. These initiatives contribute significantly to the achievement of SDG 3, especially 3.4.

Following the upgrading of renal machines the Government continued to invest in the upgrading of renal dialysis services.



ADDRESSING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES



Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, waterborne diseases and other communicable diseases.

SDG 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

Following the launching of the Vision document in August 2017 a national plan for the elimination of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) by 2025 was launched during 2018. This plan includes the widening of the entitlement to novel evidence-based medications indicated for the treatment of Hepatitis C.

Rapid HIV testing at the genitourinary clinic as well as in some private pharmacies was continued in 2018 while the availability of treatment for HIV continued to be updated. The introduction of mobile HIV testing clinics project is in a late stage of implementation.

Screening of all blood products for emerging viruses to ensure safety of blood products has also been updated.

ACHIEVEMENTS RELATING TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND MEDICINES

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.



In 2018, 470 establishments that provide services that may affect public health were inspected and licensed by the Health Care Standards Directorate, through 513 inspections. These included the licensing of 91 new establishments. Work on the establishment of standards for the provision of chemotherapy, guidelines for dental clinics and ambulances and National blood transfusion standards was undertaken.

Extensive consultations with a view to go out for public consultation were undertaken on eight different themes to develop a situation analysis and create a vision and objectives to improve environmental health. The themes addressed included:

1. Air Quality
2. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
3. Chemicals
4. Waste
5. Climate Change
6. Transport, Health and Environment
7. Environmentally Sustainable Health Systems
8. Noise pollution

A project aimed at reducing health inequities, 'Establishing a national platform to address Social Determinants of Health', funded partly through EU funds, has given way for the conduct of a large research study among the general population to collect data in this respect. Planning for a nationwide campaign to increase awareness of the social determinants of health reached an advanced stage and is due to be implemented in 2019.

A perinatal mental health project involving screening of pregnant women for mental health problems by midwives was started in 2018. This screening service which is provided by the Department of Health at Mater Dei Hospital offers support for women as well as their husbands or partners who are going through difficult emotional times. The service is provided during both the period of pregnancy and after the birth of the child.

The +70 Home Delivery Scheme managed by the Pharmacy of Your Choice Unit (POYC) was extended to all localities.

The Government continued to enhance the pharmaceutical sector where a number of initiatives were instrumental to further increase the number of operators registered with the Medicine Authority. The Maltese Medicines Authority, which is the regulator in the local pharmaceutical sector, took several steps to transform the pharmaceutical industry into an innovative and optimised sector which focuses primarily on the patient. In fact, there was a sustainable increase of fifty price reductions of medicines and the introduction of thirty new generic medicines introduced on the local market for the benefit of the patient, with a price difference of up to 73%. As a result, patients have access to more affordable medicines

that conform with the established European standards of quality, safety and efficacy. These actions contributed significantly to the achievement of SDG 3.8 and 3.B. Insert reference to the SDG

A committee which will be taking into consideration requests for medicines curing rare illnesses or conditions which are not on the Government Formulary List for such conditions and which often cost each patient thousands of money was set up.

Throughout 2018, the Government continued with its ongoing efforts to reduce waiting lists and initiatives to address backlog of patients awaiting elective surgeries.

The Government continued with its work to improve the health services as plans for the construction of a new block for outpatient services which will be better equipped than the existing one were announced. The new block will provide the possibility to extend the inpatient services to the present outpatient section. This project will also comprise the development of an underground carpark having approximately 500 parking spaces.

On 18 May 2018, a peripheral clinic (berġa) and blood donation centre was officially inaugurated in Xewkija, Gozo. The blood donation centre is instrumental to help promote voluntary blood donation by the general public.

Works which started in 2017 on the new project relating to the construction of the Paola Primary Health Care Southern Regional Hub are ongoing. This primary healthcare centre will provide its services mainly to the population of the south of Malta with plans to extend this model to the north of the country underway.

The new Health Centre in Kirkop, which is expected to be of service to 25,800 persons, was officially inaugurated on 14 September 2018. Works carried out on this project involved the conversion of the existing premises into a new, fully fledged, energy efficient Health Centre.

The Maltese Blood Bank will broaden its role by establishing a Centre for Blood, Tissue and Cells. The construction of this new centre is expected to start soon.

In November 2018 the Transgender Clinic within the Mtarfa Health Clinic was launched. The clinic has a multidisciplinary team taking care of patients. The team is composed of doctors, nurses, therapists, psychologists, and social workers. The services offered within this clinic range from primary care to hormonal and surgical treatment, gynaecologic and urologic care, reproductive options, voice and communication therapy, psychological support, psychiatric care, psychotherapy.¹⁵

The Chronic Disease Management Clinic (CDMC) was also extended to further Health Centres. Since the introduction of the CDMC in 2014, the clinic has provided a holistic patient centred approach with regards to patients with chronic diseases.

The demand for long-term care in elderly people homes is a major long-term challenge on which work continues to be carried out to deal with this issue. Every year the number of beds available in homes is increasing services for the elderly within the community are being strengthened.



A Movement and Physical Activity Programme launched in 2017 for the elderly with the scope of maintaining a person's strength, mobility and balance was continued with success during 2018. The programme is held at Birkirkara Health Centre. These classes help in keeping senior citizens mobile and active as well as enabling them to prevent falls which is a major health hazard. This measure contributes significantly to the achievement of both SDG 3 and 11.

During the period under review the Government continued in its efforts to ensure continuous improvement in the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce. The Malta Postgraduate Medical Training Centre (MPMTC) continued to evolve and provide more services to the medical postgraduate trainees in the various specialities. Examples of specific programmes include the procurement and introduction of new simulation equipment for training in patient trauma, gynaecological and laparoscopy techniques. Specialist Accreditation Committees for nursing and midwifery professionals were also introduced. The new committee for nurses will oversee 18 specialist registers in nursing while the committee for midwives will administer six specialist registers in midwifery.

In 2018, 60% of the Medicines Authority employees attained an academic qualification at MQF level 7 or higher, with 11% obtaining a Doctoral degree (MQF level 8). The Authority is also expanding its remit to cover innovative areas of regulation in medical devices and



cannabis for medicinal and research purposes. These activities are conducive to innovative growth and promote job-creating opportunities.

These initiatives will not only provide for better working environment for the staff but will offer a better experience to clients.

RIGHTS AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Government continued with its efforts to improve both maternal and child health and during 2018 there was the introduction of neonatal screening for congenital hypothyroidism. The heel-prick method is being used for this screening service.

A national programme for screening symptoms of autism in 18 month-old children was introduced jointly by the Ministry for Health and the Ministry of Education.

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

SDG 3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.

SDG 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

SDG 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

SDG 3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate.





The programme includes plans for a specialised clinic for autistic children, which should be located within the Marsa Primary School. This clinic is expected to provide Sensory Integration Therapy to autistic children who find it difficult to fully integrate in the education system.

Plans are underway to relocate the Children and Young People Services from St Luke's Hospital to another facility.

BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL

The Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2018, which as per normal procedure was given to everyone, including pensioners and persons receiving social benefits, amounted to a weekly increment of €1.75. This increment was based on the Retail Price Index statistics for September 2016, which uses a mechanism agreed upon by the social partners.

In 2018, the paid annual leave for every employee was increased by an additional 8 hours, meaning that all employees were entitled to 200 hours of paid leave.

In 2018 the employees who were on a minimum wage during the previous year received the €3 per week raise as stipulated in the National Agreement on the Minimum Wage. During 2019 an additional increase of €3 per week will be given upon completion of the second year of employment. Workers earning a salary that exceeds the minimum wage also gained a partial salary increment in 2018 and will gain another increment in 2019. The Agreement also stipulates that for the years 2018 and 2019, the weekly cost of living allowance is being supplemented by an additional €1 increase each year. This effectively means that between 2018 and 2019, the minimum wage will have been increased by €8.

Paid leave for prospective parents seeking medically assisted procreation was extended for the period under review.

POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

In 2018 it was estimated that 89,000 persons, equivalent to 19% of the Maltese population were at the risk of poverty. This percentage is below the EU average of 24.0%¹⁶ who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

16 This figure is a provisional estimate based on previous years as not all EU countries have submitted their data



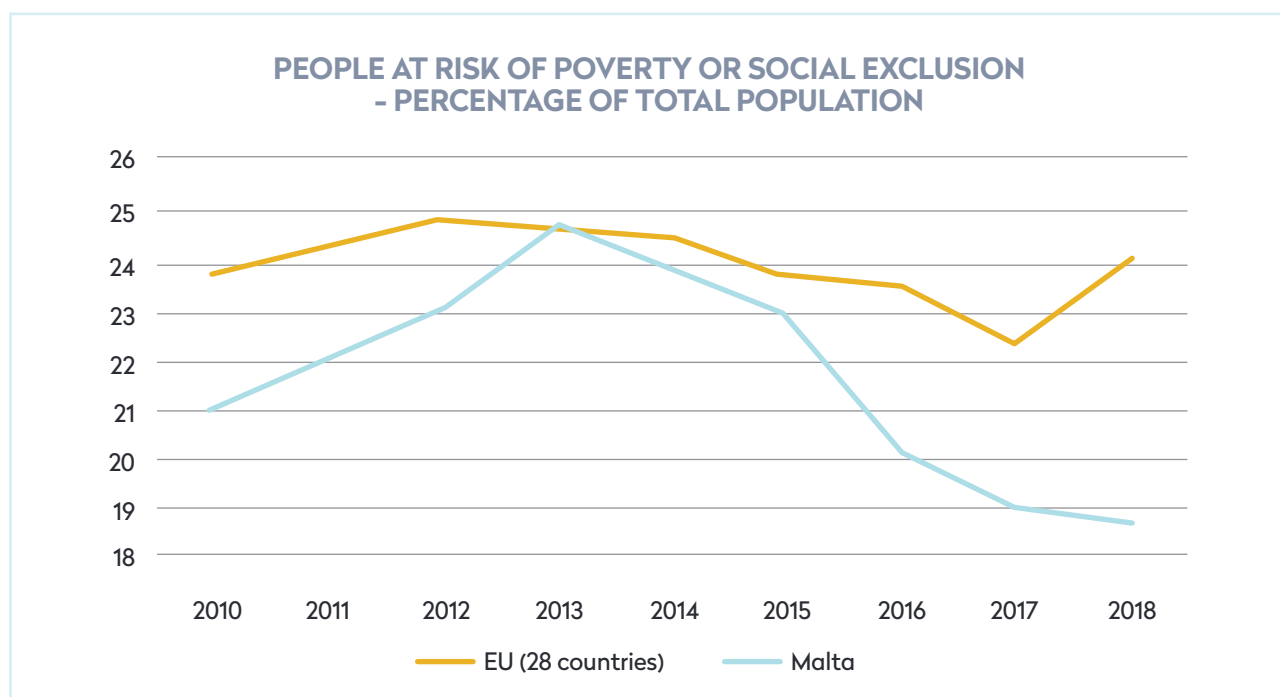


Figure 4: People at Risk of Poverty and Social Exclusion¹⁷

As from 2018, low-income families were able to enter the tapering programme while benefitting from the In-work Benefit Scheme and from other social benefits such as rent subsidies. These measures were crucial for the Government to achieve the highest historical rate of 71 per cent active workforce in Malta with a considerable reduction of people seeking a job and/or on social aid. People who suffered from physical limitations due to illness or disability and were not able to join the workforce, low-income families as well as the elderly were offered support. Thanks to this measure a significant decrease in poverty was recorded, as the percentage of families suffering from material deprivation stood at 8 per cent in 2017, down from 20 per cent in 2012. These measures contributed to the achievement of SDGs 1, 8, 10 and 11.

Rental issues are high on the agenda and in this regard the Government issued a White Paper addressing renting as a housing alternative was launched for consultation. The White Paper¹⁸ proposed a number of measures addressing current problems in the housing sector which include:

- renting contracts to cover an established period of time
- registration of rent contracts to become obligatory
- to establish a minimum notice period for both property owners and tenants
- increase enforcement against irregularities and abuse
- improve efficiency in resolving disputes



¹⁷ EU SDG indicators available at, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>

¹⁸ More details on the white paper can be found on the following link: https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MFSS/Documents/White%20Paper%20Booklet.pdf

The Housing Authority is also working on the regeneration of Social Housing Areas through the funding programme ERDF.08.043. The aim is to increase the baseline for accessibility and to improve the state of living in social housing blocks and estates. The holistic aim of the project shall be achieved through the urban improvement of open spaces between estates which will contribute to the community regeneration of deprived families. The project makes use of energy efficient technologies thus reducing carbon emissions, promoting a cleaner air quality, and a healthier lifestyle.

Works on a dilapidated building in Marsa which will be refurbished and regenerated as part of the Marigold Place Project, also known as 'The Meeting Place', started in 2018. This project being implemented by the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity will support the integration of vulnerable persons within the community. The regenerated building should provide the adequate infrastructure for NGO's to provide therapeutic and mentoring interventions, as well as other informational and advice services in order to bring target groups closer to labour market.

During 2018 the first persons working on the 'Knowledge, Training, Communications and Support Measures in Support of Vulnerable Groups' project started to be assigned while the project got underway. This is an umbrella project which seeks to enhance active inclusion by creating equal opportunities for all. This project involves:

- Training of persons working with disadvantaged groups;
- Financial Literacy and Retirement Education, Awareness and Pilot Project;
- Research, Pilot Project and Awareness on Disability; and
- Enhancing the Social Security Services Support Measure.

All the interventions envisaged in this project seek to combat poverty and promote active inclusion through the involvement of all the relevant stakeholders within as well as external to this Ministry.

The 'INK: Person-focused inclusion project' being implemented by Aġenzija Sapport was officially launched in 2018. The €3.3 million European funded project is aimed at maximising the abilities of persons with disability, supporting their chances of inclusion in the labour market and strengthening their social engagement. It is being estimated that this project will be of aid to around 300 people with special needs along with 450 members of their family as well as to a number of employers.¹⁹ To achieve such aim and reach these targets the project focuses on the following main deliverables:

- Training and support, skills and site audits (firms/companies/departments);

- Certification and recognition;
- Research and innovative measures;
- Continuation of the National Database for persons with disability; and
- Transnational cooperation.

Six Independent-Living Training Centres are serving as facilities from which training is being provided further. An INK training placement scheme also serves to facilitate some beneficiaries to integrate into mainstream employment.

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.

SDG 1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

SDG 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

SDG 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.

SDG 1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.

SDG 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

SDG 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

SDG 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

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INK Project details, available at: <https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Information/Press%20Releases/Pages/PR180291.aspx>

SDG 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

SDG 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

SDG 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

SDG 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

VIOLENCE FREE SOCIETY

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

SDG 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

SDG 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

SDG 16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

The Government is committed to further prevent or curb domestic violence and gender based violence. During 2018, work continued to strengthen the fights against domestic violence in a concrete way mainly through the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act which was enacted in April 2018. This Act along with the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Strategy & Action Plan – Society's Concern which was launched in late 2017 gives force to the Istanbul Convention, which Malta along with other countries had ratified in 2014. Through this action, there are now far harsher penalties for aggressors, while ensuring that adequate and sufficient protection is available to victims of violence.

On 23 November 2018, the Commission on Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence, in collaboration with a number of public and voluntary organisations, launched 'Silence is not Golden', a nation-wide campaign spanning 16 days, during which various events took place. The Campaign which formed part of a wider international movement designed to raise awareness about domestic violence and violence towards women, culminated with a solidarity march from the Parliament to St. George's Square in Valletta on 9 December 2018.

During the period under review, an EU co-funded project 'Breaking the Cycle of Violence' was launched with a focus to raise awareness with young adults, involve men and boys in ending violence as well as raise awareness among vulnerable groups such as migrant women, women with a disability and LGBTI women. The main objectives of this project are:

- To identify the behaviours and attitudes of victims experiencing violence against women (VAW) which impede them from breaking free from the cycle of violence;
- To raise awareness among vulnerable groups of women with a focus on women with disabilities; migrants women; and lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (LBTI) women, and for them to be informed about support services and protection measures;
- To raise awareness among children and youths, and actively engage boys and men in the fight against VAW;



- To raise awareness and encourage victims, potential victims and witnesses to report VAW and seek help;
- To develop and implement a set of mentoring workshops for victims who experience VAW to instigate the behavioural changes required in breaking the cycle of VAW; and
- To develop and implement an educational programme for children and young adults on VAW prevention and spread a clear message of zero tolerance to VAW.

The project timeline spans from January 2018 – June 2020.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTEGRATION

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

SDG 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

In 2018, Malta retained its top ranking position, with a 91% score, on the 'rainbow map' of rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people (LGBTI), unveiled during the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. ILGA-Europe's Rainbow Index showcases the current state of play of the laws, policies and practices that affect LGBTI people in Europe today.

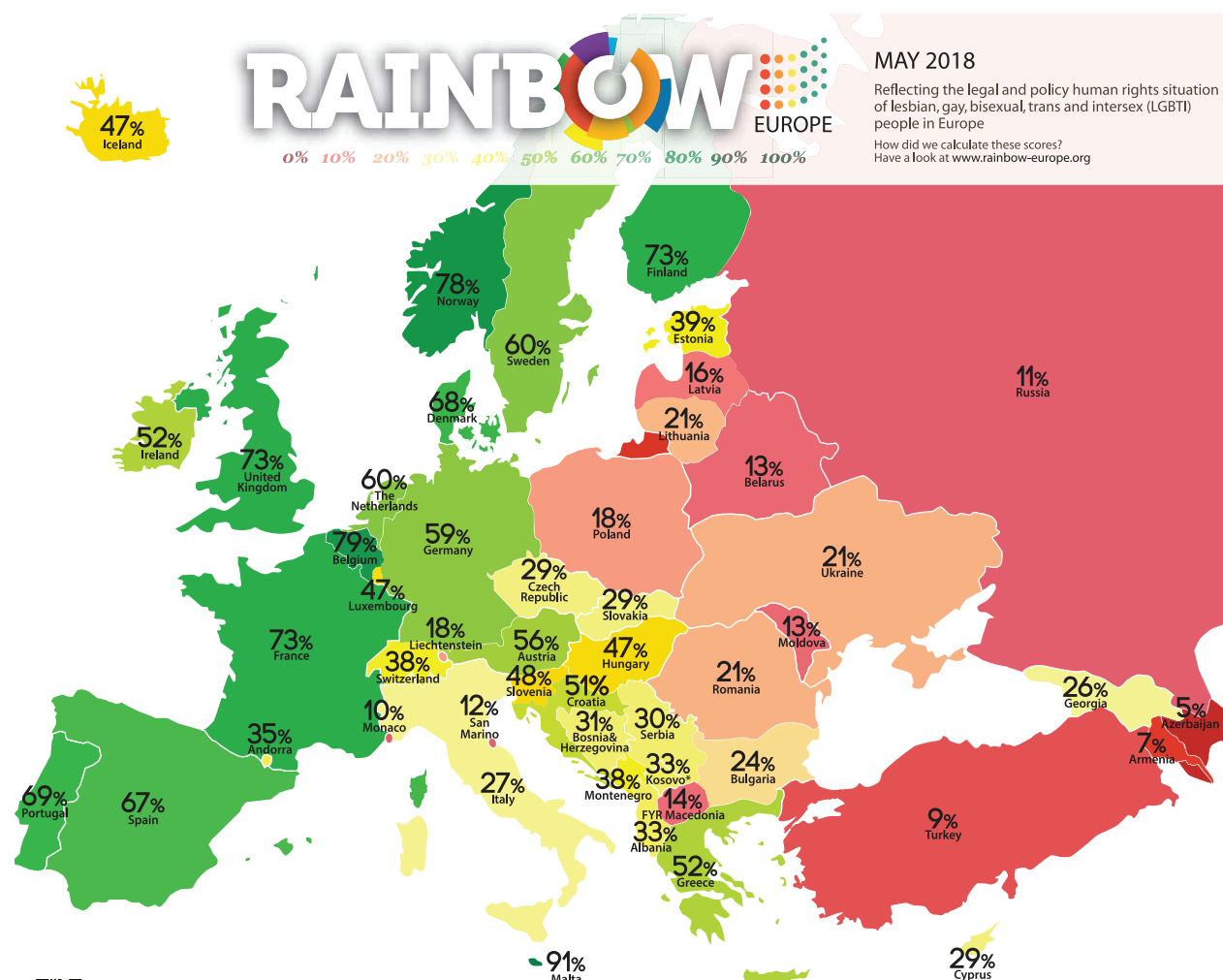


Diagram x: ILGA-Europe's Rainbow Index²⁰

In September 2018, the Minister for European Affairs and Equality launched the Government's LGBTIQ Equality Strategy and Action plan 2018/2022. This includes over 50 measures focused around 10 key themes, namely:

1. Right to equality and freedom from discrimination;
2. Right to education;
3. Right to health;
4. Equality in sport;
5. Right to private and family life;
6. Freedom from hatred;
7. LGBTIQ civil society;
8. Right to seek asylum;
9. Promotion of LGBTIQ equality on an international level;
10. Other LGBTIQ measures;

The Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (SOGIGESC) Unit was set up in June 2018 within the Human Rights and Integration Directorate. It assumed the responsibility for the day-to-day monitoring and implementation of the strategy and action plan serving as the main governmental coordinating body liaising with various entities, imparting information and feeding into ongoing processes impacting on LGBTIQ persons.

Legal Notice 44 of 2018 introduced the Fifth Schedule of the Social Security Act to include 'Gender Identity and Sex Characteristics Related Conditions' thus allowing for the inclusion of trans specific healthcare to be provided for free under the National Health Service. The Gender Wellbeing Clinic started providing its services to trans and gender variant persons on 14 November 2018.

In June 2018 parliament enacted amendments to the Embryo Protection Act removing any discriminatory provision on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity when accessing reproductive health services. IVF services were also made available to single persons. The provision came into force in October 2018. The Government also maintained its commitment towards meaningful dialogue with civil society through the LGBTIQ Consultative Council set up in 2013 and which is now being coordinated by the SOGIGESC Unit. The council met on a regular basis to participate and feed into consultation processes, provide feedback to and advise government and to monitor the implementation of the LGBTIQ Action Plan.

Malta today is a receiving country in terms of migration flows, and in turn is becoming increasingly diverse ethnically, culturally and linguistically. In 2018, Malta's first-ever Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan 'Integration = Belonging', which was launched in 2017²¹, entered into its implementation phase. This Migrant Integration Strategy creates a framework for

understanding successful integration through the level of the migrants' own sense of belonging to Maltese society and the space Maltese society allows for such integration in its different sectors and strata.

The process launched by this first Strategy is especially necessary as this diversity is expected to continue to increase in the years to come, especially in view of the projected labour market needs. A key initiative of the Strategy to ensure its effectiveness was the setting up of an Integration Unit within the Human Rights and Integration Directorate. This Unit will serve as the main Governmental coordinating body that imparts information, receives integration requests and follows migrants' progress on their integration in Malta.

The first National Conference on Integration was held, during which, an Action Plan on Integration at local level was published.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Responsible citizenship, critical thinking, digital literacy, lifelong learning and the pursuit for knowledge are buttressed by an inclination towards education for sustainable development (ESD) and global education (GE). The latter is delivered via a cross-curricular theme and a learning outcome framework across the different subjects taught at school. The Ministry for Education and Employment supports educators in developing student-centred learning strategies for effective teaching and in fostering a globalised world view and healthy and responsible lifestyles. Inclusive and quality education can thus be an effective channel to address socio-economic and cultural gaps such as the gender participation gap, wealth disparities and, ultimately, social justice; hence making education an effective social equaliser. The National Curriculum Framework (2012) promotes such an



²¹ Migrant Integration Strategy, available at, <https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/migrant%20integration-EN.pdf>

approach, thereby aiming for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Education as a form of reaching SDG 4. At a micro-level, frequent initiatives to promote environmental and social responsibility and sports, amongst others, are the main drivers for the Government's approach across schooling.

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

SDG 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

SDG 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

SDG 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

SDG 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

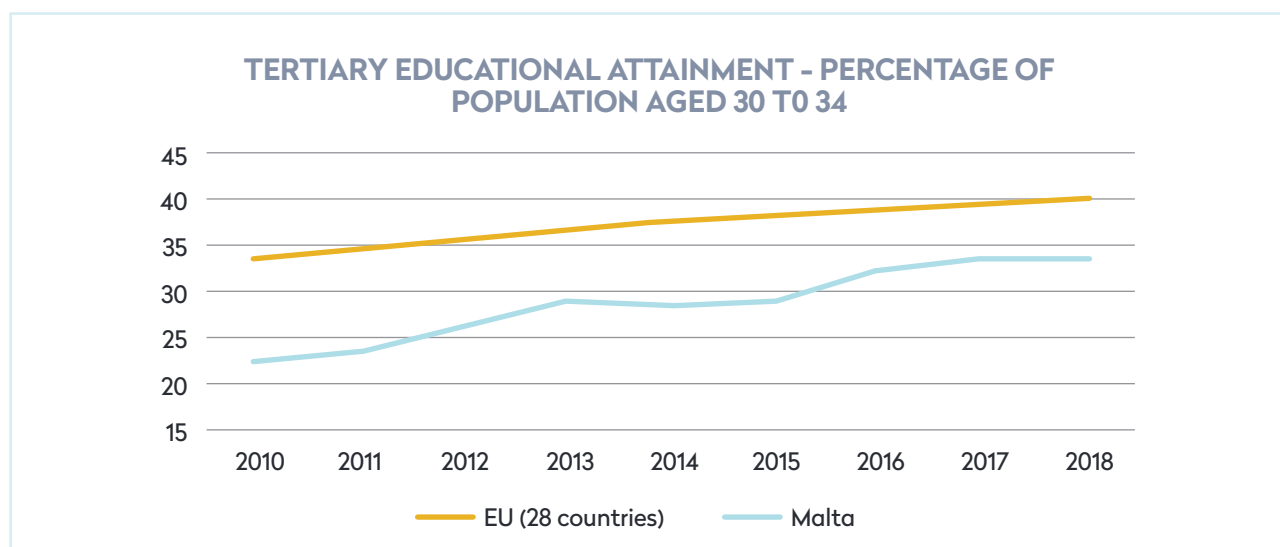
The scholastic year 2018-19 witnessed a total of 2,759 students for all five SEC vocational subjects in all state and non-state secondary schools namely Agribusiness, Hospitality, Health and Social Care, Information Technology and Engineering Technology. This was a 15.5% increase from the previous scholastic year.

In 2018, the Ministry for Education and Employment organised the 'I Choose - Nagħżel il-Karriera Tiegħi' event for the fourth consecutive year, where it was also held in Gozo for the third time. The March 'I Choose' Fair in Malta was held between 5th and 9th March whilst in Gozo it was held on 15th March 2018. The 'I Choose' Fair in July was held on 21st and 28th July 2018. In March, 1,573 Year 11 students attended the fair in Malta while 220 Year 11 students attended the fair in Gozo. In July, 220 one-to-one sessions with students and their parents/guardians were also held by career advisors and guidance teachers. A number of talks about different employment sectors took place during the July 2018 fair. 868 students and parents attended these talks. This event is another opportunity whereby students can explore further career options as they leave compulsory education.'

The Government's efforts for a more pertinent education system have yielded a steady decline in early school leavers since 2002, as evidenced by Eurostat, and an uphill trend for children in early childhood education, which is now at 98% (Eurostat 2016). This promotes a positive cycle whereby more educated citizens will be more mindful of their economic, environmental and social responsibility.

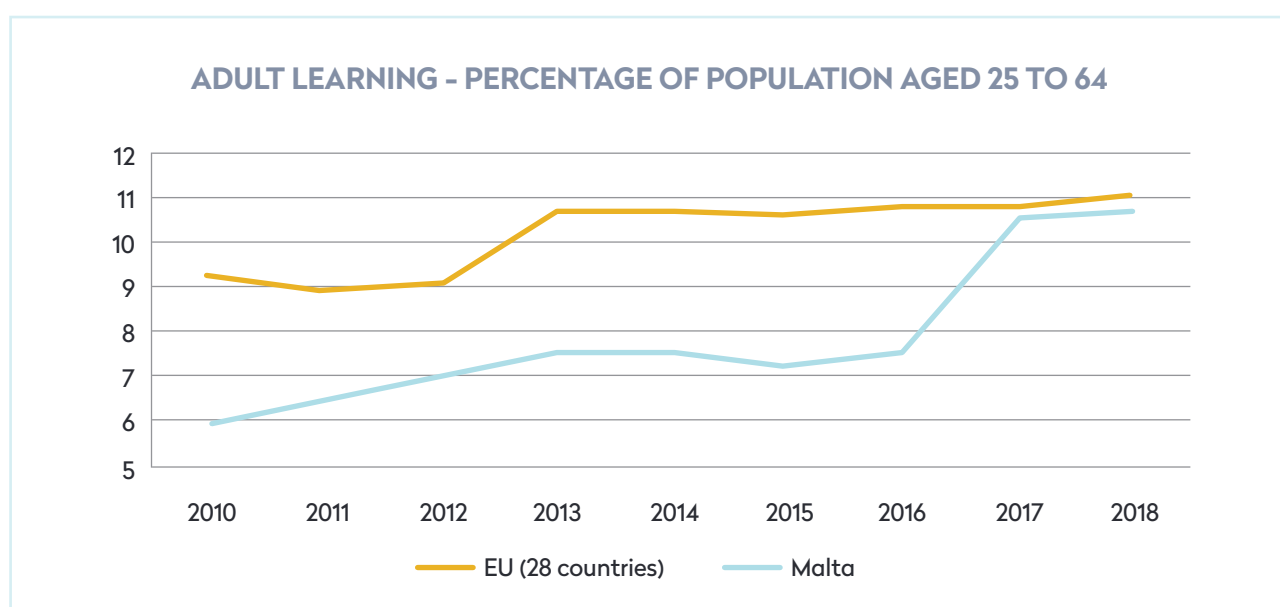
The share of 30 to 34 year-olds with tertiary educational attainment in Malta continued to increase in 2018 (34.2%).



Figure 5: Tertiary Educational Attainment²²

Adult participation in learning stood at 10.8% in 2018. This rate is up from 10.6% the previous year. In 2002, this percentage was trailing far behind other Member States at 4.4%.

Lifelong learning is also a core objective for the Government in compounding a holistic approach fit to reach the nation's objectives in education. An increase in adult learning initiatives was ushered in as a result of Malta's Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020. It comprises a push for consistent learning throughout one's life and a distancing from the conventional thought that education ends with schooling. The strategy in question provided guiding principles for the various institutions which provide learning programmes in tandem with the labour market's needs. To this end, provision of widespread lifelong learning is available via subsidised courses ranging from the provision of basic skills to continuous professional development by way of heralding inclusion as well. To this end, low skilled workers can attain the basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills necessary to become more competitive individuals. This, amongst others, is one of the specific targets outlined by the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability within the Ministry for Education and Employment, which happens to be the largest provider of adult learning programmes. As at end 2018, there are around 7,000 individuals enrolled across 400 different courses. These actions are instrumental for the achievement of SDGs 4, 8 and 10.

Figure 5: Tertiary Educational Attainment²³

22 Tertiary educational attainment by sex, age group 30-34; Source: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=t2020_41&plugin=1

23 Source: EU SDG indicators available at, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>

The employment rate of recent graduates has also risen to 94.8%, the highest in the EU²⁴, as a result of the increase in adult learning while NEET percentage is at 10.1%, one of the lowest amongst the EU member states, compared to the EU's average of 16.5%²⁵.

Further to this and in-line with Government policies and educational frameworks, the Institute for Education recognised the need for current supply and prospective educators to have access to flexible academic and practical training. Since 2017, the Institute has been offering over sixty accredited stand-alone courses and short programmes to support the continuous professional development of educators. In 2018, the Institute developed and launched several Bachelor and Master of Education programmes adopting a blended-learning approach. Subject areas offered included: Primary Education, Agribusiness, Hospitality, Humanities and Physical Education. Since then, the Institute has developed additional subjects for specialisation including: Engineering Technology, Fashion and Textiles, English, Sciences, Social Studies, European Studies and Religious Education. In addition to these programmes, in 2018 the Institute for Education developed and launched a Master in Applied Educational Leadership designed to support the development of individuals currently or aspiring to take on a leadership role within the education sector.

The Directorate for Learning and Assessment programmes has for the last few years promoted among local schools a broad vision of Global Education that supports students and educators gain deeper understanding of current and future global issues and engage in initiatives that also promote social sustainability towards a more inclusive, equitable, harmonious and just society. MEDE's membership in the GENE (Global Education Network Europe) programme in 2018 was instrumental in consolidating further efforts towards this vision.

The Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes in collaboration with GENE during the scholastic year 2018-19 coordinated a 16 hour training course in Global Education for educators across all cycles and sections and school Senior Management Teams.

A second GENE-funded training module entitled: Global Education for Social Justice is planned to commence in November 2019.

Furthermore, during 2018/2019 scholastic year, schools were invited to take an active role in GENE by planning and implementing school-based projects addressing one or more of the following themes: Human Rights, Global Citizenship, Multiculturalism and Interculturality and Peace and Conflict Prevention. Each project was allocated GENE funding for implementation. Participating schools presented their project outputs in June 2019. A total of 18 projects were selected for funding and implementation.

UNESCO Associated schools was also extended to its second year. At a national level, UNESCO Associated Schools granted membership to two new schools, namely Maria Regina, Dun Manwel Attard, Young Adult Education and Resource Centre, Wardija and Gozo College, San Lawrenz Primary. Students and educators at Dun Manuel Attard, Young Adult Education and Resource Centre focused on multidisciplinary learning experiences focusing on organic agriculture towards lessened land degradation and healthier lifestyles. Subsequently, hampers consisting of school cultivated produce were prepared and donated towards charitable causes; thus promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and social responsibility.

Learning experiences implemented at Gozo College, San Lawrenz Primary, on the other hand, addressed the appreciation of cultural identity as a stepping stone towards interculturality. Students within the school conducted research related to local heritage. Findings stemming from the students' efforts were subsequently disseminated with multinationals residing in Gozo.

In both scenarios, students participated in active learning experiences that lead to the nurturing of 21st century skills, competences and values towards active citizenship. The nature of these curricular opportunities is firmly aligned to the philosophy promoted by the National Curriculum Framework 2012 and the Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014 – 2024.

A total of 4 local schools are now members in UNESCO AS. It is envisaged that another 4 schools are granted membership by the end of 2019.

24 Employment rates of recent graduates (aged 20-34) not in education and training, 2018 available at, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Employment_rates_of_recent_graduates_\(aged_20-34\)_not_in_education_and_training,_2018_\(%25\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Employment_rates_of_recent_graduates_(aged_20-34)_not_in_education_and_training,_2018_(%25).png)

25 Young people (aged 20-34) neither in employment nor in education or training, by sex and age, 2018 available at, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Young_people_\(aged_20%E2%80%9334\)_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training,_by_sex_and_age,_2018_\(%25\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Young_people_(aged_20%E2%80%9334)_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training,_by_sex_and_age,_2018_(%25).png)

ENHANCING SKILLS

During 2018 the National Skills Council (NSC) worked mostly on trying to establish a qualitative base in the process of understanding the skills mismatch being perceived by industry. This brought the NSC to prioritize its actions towards enhancing the effectiveness of Work Based Learning and also kickstart the much needed upskilling pathways. It has also helped the NSC propose a development in its organizational structure to include a skills Assessment unit that will focus on trying to establish a national framework for this important issue.

Apprenticeship initiatives also feature heavily in the endeavours of the Ministry for Education and Employment. Linking education to industry has been a well-established practice in providing high quality training and streamlining education to make it as relevant to the industry as possible; thereby reducing skills mismatches. The Malta College of Arts and Technology (MCAST) has been striving to do so as local statistics suggest that its efforts were successful. MCAST doubled their apprentices and work placements from 2016 to 2018 and involved upward of 500 companies in such schemes. The National Skills Council (NSC), has also analysed the market's needs, its citizens' general collective skills and conducted regular business encounters by way of targeting better education.

To further consolidate its aims, the Ministry for Education and Employment introduced a bill in 2017 which regulates Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships within the context of a vocational education and training. In pursuit of this, additional measures were taken to include students who may not subscribe to an academic path towards employment. 'My Journey' constitutes a new direction in including vocational and applied subjects as a tangible measure to reduce early school leavers and, potentially, increase tertiary education attainment. 'My Journey' is being heralded as a driver for inclusion and equitable education for all students which makes it relevant to SDG 4 by way of economically involving individuals who previously would have potentially left school. Furthermore, higher education prospects of such students will be fulfilled as tertiary education courses have been certified to this end. This will make vocational students more competitive in both the local and international labour market.

Addressing the skills of the influx of migrants in Malta is also in line with this approach and is an important milestone for the Government and indeed the economy. Lifelong learning accredited courses are available to both Maltese and non-Maltese nationals and the Maltese and English languages are taught as foreign languages (MFL and EFL respectively). It is the objective of the Ministry for Education and Employment, in its provision of courses, to provide quality education aimed at upskilling the workforce, cultural integration, and fostering an inquisitive and critical outlook towards learning new skills.

Quality Assurance measures are being implemented. Contribution through such measures is instrumental for the achievement of SDGs 4, 8 and 10. Refer to the SDG

The Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes during this scholastic year coordinated a pilot project related to the GLOBE Programme implementation in the local context. GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is a worldwide community of students, teachers, scientists, and citizens working collaboratively in data collection to facilitate, sustain, and improve the Earth system and global environment. This programme also provides an opportunity to students to participate in level-appropriate, interdisciplinary activities and problem-solving investigations focusing on the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and pedosphere (soil) which have been developed by the scientific community and validated by teachers.

In this context, 8 pilot schools were identified to participate in the piloting of this programme during scholastic year 2018 /2019. Students within these schools participated in atmospheric data collection, readings from which were inputted in the GLOBE database. Additionally year 6 classes involved in the pilot project also completed a GLOBE field campaign addressing the Urban Heat Island Effect. The participating students also compiled related project posters covering various aspects pertaining to their investigation, including method, results, interpretation and conclusions. These project posters may be showcased during future GLOBE events in the local context.

03 PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

The Maltese Government is committed towards the transition to a green economy, sustainable use of natural resources and energy efficiency. The Government therefore continued with its ambitious and efficient green transition while at the same time ensuring jobs and competitiveness.

The Government continued to invest in incentives for the production and promotion of high quality local agricultural produce as well as measures to protect biological diversity and marine life. Another measure focused on the setting up of autonomous structures for the protection of the environment and our resources. These policies and measures support efforts to achieve SDGs 2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

2030 AGENDA RELATED GOALS



Diagram 6: Sustainable Development Goals²⁶

CLIMATE CHANGE

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.

SDG 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

SDG 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

SDG 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

SDG 13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilising jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalisation as soon as possible.

The year 2018 marked the shift from conceptualising a vision for Malta's Low Carbon Development to materialising that vision into a Low Carbon Development Strategy, where MESDC initiated the process of data analysis and drafting the Strategy. The process of developing Malta's Low Carbon Development Strategy is envisaged to involve the widest societal spectrum of stakeholders and implementing principles set in the Low Carbon vision for Malta. To achieve its scope, the Strategy will aim to create the appropriate governance framework through which Malta is able to react to the anticipated climate change scenarios that are likely to test its resilience at least up to 2050. It shall mainstream decarbonisation across all economic sectors reducing emissions in the process without hindering economic growth, at the same time addressing vulnerabilities through adaptation action. This is in line with achieving SDG 13.

Climate change governance is about the level of decarbonisation to be achieved by whom, and by when, and the entire set of systems and mechanisms that will control decision making. The Low Carbon Development Strategy will also present measures to be taken or that can be taken between now and 2050 within different scenarios. Within the context of a governance framework, quantitative and, or, qualitative targets and objectives are set, both at an overall national level and at sectorial level. The achievement of the goals set out in the Low Carbon Development Strategy can in turn be guided and monitored through the existing national institutional structure which includes, among others, Ministries and entities across Government, and civil society.

CLEAN ENERGY

In 2018, the Ministry for Energy and Water Management and the Energy and Water Agency in cooperation with relevant stakeholders and Ministries continued their work on the development of a holistic National Energy and Climate Plan covering the period 2021-2030, in line with the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union proposal and the respective commitments under the Paris Agreement. An Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (IMSC) set up in 2017 to oversee the drafting process has met up regularly during 2018. Malta's Draft National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)²⁷ was submitted to the Commission by the deadline established by the Governance Regulation of 31 December 2018.

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Draft National Energy and Climate Plan, available at, <https://meusac.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Presentation.pdf>

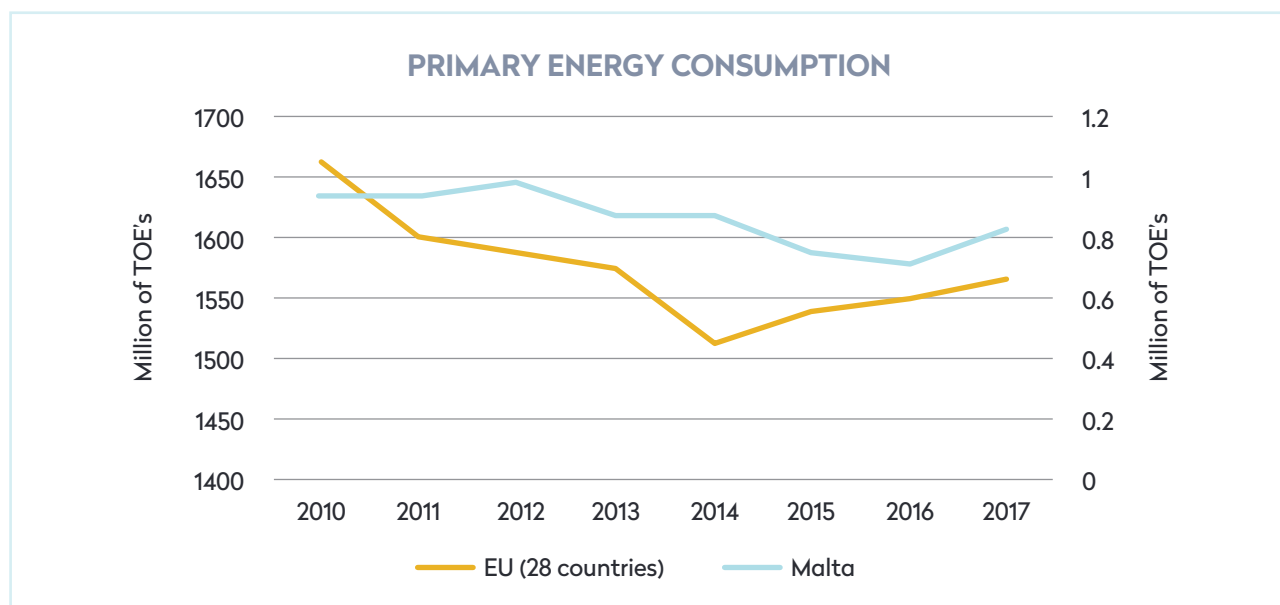


Figure 7: Primary Energy Consumption²⁸

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.

SDG 7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

SDG 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

SDG 7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

RENEWABLE ENERGY



During 2018, the Government continued to implement a number of initiatives to further exploit renewable energy sources. In particular, the Government extended grant schemes on the purchase of photovoltaic systems (PVs) and extended the Feed-in Tariffs scheme to promote the purchase of photovoltaic systems (PVs). The Government also increased the subsidy for solar water heaters, providing a grant of 50 per cent of eligible costs up to €700. The support scheme for Heat Pump Water Heaters was extended and increased in 2018. An existing grant scheme for roof insulation and double glazing was revamped in 2018 to better encourage the use of systems that reduce the consumption of energy in the

domestic sector. These initiatives are contributing significantly in the progress towards the achievement of SDGs 7, 9 and 13. Detailed information on these schemes can be found on: <https://www.rews.org.mt/#/en/a/178-solar-water-heaters-and-collectors-scheme-2018-swh>

Malta's contribution to the EU's 2030 renewable energy target will require the extension of current policies and measures and the development of new initiatives tailored to local developments. These are outlined in Malta's draft National Energy and Climate Plan and will be further developed in the final draft which needs to be submitted to the Commission by December 2019. The Government intends to extend its current policy framework to cover the period from 2021-2030 and adopt new measures, where appropriate, and with consideration to the national specificities, with the goal of increasing the share of renewable energy sources.

Following the publication by the Planning Authority of the Solar Farms Policy in October 2017, the Energy and Water Agency launched a competitive bidding process for the allocation of support for a maximum capacity of 15MWp for PV systems having a capacity of at least 1MWp. During 2018, a second call was launched where the total capacity offered was increased to 35MWp.

During 2018, work on the Government's first communal solar farm project at the site Il-Fiddien was completed. A total of almost 1MWp of virtual PV capacity was made available for households and within a few days, the scheme was fully subscribed. Following the success of this project, the Government will encourage private enterprises and investors to adopt and refine the initial model which provides the possibility for consumers who do not have access to a private roof, and thus cannot install a PV, to participate in the shift towards renewable energy generation.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In 2018, the Government of Malta pursued the development of the gas pipeline interconnection with the European Gas network in Sicily. This has been identified as a Project of Common Interest (PCI 5.19) and once complete, shall deliver natural gas for electricity generation and other future market needs. The project is expected to support objectives of sustainability as it will contribute towards the reduction of GHG emissions by delivering natural gas more efficiently, whilst also acting as a back-up for renewable energy and contributing towards the diversification of Malta's energy sources. The plan is to obtain the necessary permits by 2020 and have the pipeline commissioned by 2024.



The Energy and Water Agency (EWA) and the Malta Business Bureau (MBB) have launched a scheme, 'Investing in Energy Project', where enterprises are encouraged to enter into a voluntary agreement to implement various energy efficient measures. The scheme was launched in 2016 and continued to be implemented throughout 2018. The aim of the project was to bring about an improvement in energy efficiency, promote energy awareness within SMEs and non-SMEs and to generate needed data and information to inform policy decisions and actions. This measure contributed towards the setting up of a framework for energy auditor certification, guidance for the implementation of energy audits by non-SMEs and a quality verification system for energy audits by non-SMEs. To date, as a result of the energy auditor and energy manager courses, there are 93 registered energy auditors and 11 registered energy managers. By end of 2018, 25 enterprises signed the Voluntary Agreement. This is approximately 35% of the enterprises that are obliged to perform an energy audit under Article 8 (4) of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED).

The Government of Malta is committed to lead by example in order to promote energy efficiency and achieve energy savings. For instance, during 2018, Government continued its efforts to roll-out energy efficient street lighting and it is expected that over 33,000 lamps will be replaced from the present lighting luminaries to LEDs.

An investment in an energy efficient system for St Vincent de Paul Residence with the aid of European funds (ERDF.PA4.069) also started. The objective of this project is to introduce smart, energy efficient equipment in St. Vincent de Paul Residence to reduce the carbon footprint produced by the generation of electricity for heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC), and lighting, as well as to contribute to the national targets on primary and final energy savings. While the energy efficient technology of the proposed HVAC system contributes to energy savings, it further generates renewable heat energy through heat pumps.

The Ministry for Gozo has obtained EU funds and embarked on a project with the aim of upgrading and retrofitting the Administration Centre, Victoria, Gozo. Interventions primarily consist in the double glazing of all external apertures, roof insulation, and the setting up of more energy efficient lighting, ventilation, cooling and water heating systems. Furthermore, the operation of these systems shall be automated and their performance monitored by a Building Monitoring System. Through these interventions it is envisaged that an estimate

123.59 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent shall be displaced annually as a result of the corresponding decrease in power consumption. During 2018, the main tenders were issued and awarded.

Through the Investing in Energy project, which is run by the Malta Business Bureau in partnership with other entities, energy audits were carried out in a number of medium-sized enterprises – particularly those within the manufacturing sector and the import, distribution and retail sectors. The project which was completed in December 2018 identified common challenges that SMEs face when it comes to energy management and potential solutions to address them.

In parallel to this project, the Energy and Water Agency launched a scheme to address energy audits in SMEs. Through this scheme SMEs were encouraged to carry out an energy audit, which identifies energy efficiency improvement areas within the enterprise's operation, whilst benefitting from a grant of up to Euro 5,000.

Additionally, in 2018 Malta Enterprise Corporation in collaboration with the Energy and Water Agency launched a scheme aimed at supporting undertakings in carrying out investments leading to improved energy efficiency. The assistance facilitated investments in technological solutions that provide higher energy efficiency and contribute directly towards a reduction in the energy requirements of the beneficiaries. The aid awarded through this measure was in the form of a tax credit that may be utilised against tax payable by the beneficiary.

A specific scheme was designed to identify vulnerable households, conduct home visits and provide advice on how to reduce energy and water consumption, and if merited replace the most inefficient appliance with a new model. From its inception till end of 2018, a total of 2,121 household visits have been carried out.

In the recent years, Enemalta plc embarked on an extensive program to ensure an efficient distribution system that minimises losses operating the system in an efficient manner. This included the upgrade and expansion of major nodes of the national electricity network to improve the quality of service. Enemalta plc has also installed 99% of its consumers with smart meters and has adopted a tariff system that favours prudent energy use and energy efficiency, with the aim of fostering such behaviour in its final consumers.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.

SDG 12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

SDG 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

SDG 12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.



Solid waste management is interlinked to a number of Sustainable Development Goals including SDG 11, and SDG 12 amongst others. During 2018, MESDC continued to monitor the implementation of Waste Management Plan for the Maltese Islands 2014–2020. In particular, work has been done on the Beverage Container Refund Scheme. The Scheme and parallel regulations were drafted during 2018, with public consultation taking place in the first half of the same year. This initiative encourages customers to return their used beverage containers

by applying a refundable deposit to beverage sales. Its aim is to increase recycling rates and reduce litter.²⁹

An awareness-raising campaign on sustainable waste management practices: “Don’t Waste Waste” was launched in April of 2016 and further continued in 2018 with communication on social media, print media and through broadcasting channels on TV and radio. This drive to improve on reaching out to communities on this topic was coupled with a revision of the relevant regulations and an increase in enforcement capacity with respect addressing illegal dumping of waste. This culminated with the update of the Abandonment of Waste Regulations (SL549.40), which redefined littering to include non-compliance with waste collection schedules. This regulation provided for all waste collection schedules in every locality with the newly-introduced organic waste collections taking place on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Regulation also introduced heftier fines up to double the amount of the older version with aggravating circumstances.

The Ministry rolled out on a national scale the ‘SORT IT OUT’ campaign to encourage more separation of waste at home, in particular the separate kerbside collection of organic waste, on 31 October 2018.

This was yet another milestone in improving Malta’s waste management and paved the way for significant changes in the way household waste is separated and collected. Initial results have shown a large decrease in the amounts of residual waste collected, with 400 tonnes of organic waste being collected in the first week. Moreover, four bins were distributed to each household for free. These bins have different lid colours to specify the different types of waste that have to be thrown in them.

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More detailed information on the scheme and regulations available at: <https://msdec.gov.mt/en/Pages/BCRS.aspx>

During the period under review, MESDC followed discussions at EU level on the EU Single Use Plastic Directive whilst at the national level a Strategy on Single-use Plastics was drafted. This Strategy aims at promoting better sustainable consumption patterns by providing incentives and disincentives to the market. It should provide measures to reduce consumption of single-use plastic (SUP) products, and increase the quality and quantities of Single-Use Plastic waste collected for recycling. These measures would be crucial to ensure environmental and health protection from plastic pollution. The Strategy document can be accessed on: <https://eracms.gov.mt/en/Documents/SUP%20Strategy%20-%20Public%20Consultation%20-%20Final.pdf>

WATER CONSERVATION

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

SDG 6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimising release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.

SDG 6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

Water demand in the Maltese Islands is estimated to stand at around 62 million m³ per year (Malta's 2nd Water Catchment Management Plan), or around two times the volume of water which can be sustainably sourced from our natural water resources. This highlights the need for water resources to be used effectively and efficiently in all water using sectors in order to ensure that we have sufficient resources to meet the national water demand. Moreover, management of

water resources under conditions of water scarcity calls for the development of innovative approaches. To this end, the Programme of measures in Malta's 2nd Water Catchment Management Plan (WCMP) was developed to address the island's water management. It provides an implementation framework to ensure the achievement of the Water Framework Directive's (WFD) environmental objectives for the water sector by 2021 whilst, addressing the increasing national water demand.

The WCMP advocates the broadening of the national water resource base, including through the development of non-conventional water resources such as water reuse, thus ensuring security of supply achieved through the conjunctive use of different water resources. Water reuse continues to be one of the main measures considered in the Plan. During 2018, work continued on the reservoirs of the South of Malta and on the extension of the distribution network in the North. Currently New Water is being produced by three polishing plants. These plants will be treating wastewater at a tertiary level to produce around 7 million m³ of highly polished reclaimed water (HPRW). These plants will therefore provide an alternative resource for agricultural irrigation and commercial sectors, thus contributing to achieving sustainable water use outcomes, in good part by reducing abstraction of groundwater.

Another project undertaken by the Energy and Water Agency, includes the optimisation of the monitoring capacity and the development of the structure necessary to enable a reliable assessment of the quantitative and qualitative status of all water resources in the Malta as well as a campaign to get the public to be sensitive to



the challenges related to water resources. The information acquired from this monitoring network will amongst other, provide the information necessary to enable the optimised implementation of future water management measures.

During 2018 work also continued on the National Campaign for Water Conservation, which will address all consumers and help them in adopting efficient practices in relation to water use. When it comes to public awareness, the Chadwick Lakes project involves the rehabilitation of the upper Chadwick Lakes area into an educational area and trekking trail, providing visitors with an educational experience on the important hydro-ecological role of valley systems in the Maltese Islands. During this same year, the Energy and Water Agency in collaboration with HSBC, launched a corporate social responsibility initiative providing training to employees in the corporate sector on how they can improve sustainability in their workplace, with a specific focus on water as well as energy use. In addition, the Government once again extended the scheme with regard to the restoration of domestic cisterns, to further encourage the harvesting and use of rainwater in the domestic sector. Moreover, through the Energy and Water Agency, households were provided with free energy and water audits aiming at helping families reduce their consumption.

The Water Services Corporation (WSC), embarked on a €150 Million major project titled 'Towards a Net Zero-Impact Utility' which is partly funded by the EU. This consists of a number of large separate projects each contributing to substantially increasing the quality of tap water, reduce carbon emissions, increase efficiencies and safeguard Malta's groundwater resources. This major project includes:

- The boring of a 9.5km 3m wide underground tunnel to convey water from the reverse osmosis plant in Pembroke to the Ta' Qali Reservoirs. This will allow the WSC to refine its water-blending and provide drinking water of a uniform quality across Malta. It will also increase energy efficiency by reducing pumping frictional losses.
- The upgrading of reverse osmosis (RO) plants to increase energy efficiency and production capacity. A new RO plant will also be commissioned at an already committed site at Hondoq Ir-Rummien, Gozo which will produce up to 9,000 cubic metres per day and ensure self-sufficiency in water production for the island.
- The extension of the potable water supply network to remote areas near Siġġiewi, Qrendi and Haż-Żebbuġ. This project will ensure that quality of water supplied to these consumers is improved and groundwater is further protected; upgrading of groundwater galleries to prevent saline infiltration.
- The extension of the sewer network to remote areas currently not connected to the network. These areas are mostly in the North, North-West and South-East parts of Malta. Areas with performance issues will also be addressed and advanced discharge monitoring introduced to increase the general efficiency of the system.
- The extension of the New Water distribution network to reach more farmers. In terms of sustainability, the WSC also worked on commissioning two new solar farms on the roof of unused reservoirs which are expected to guarantee the supply of 1 megawatts of annual alternative energy each for a period of 25 years.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

The National Agricultural Policy was finalised and issued in 2018. The Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands 2018–2028 is intended to provide a clear direction to all relevant stakeholders ranging from public entities involved with certification, permitting and decision making to private entities directly involved in the agricultural scenario who intend to invest or diversify their business. The following measures extrapolated from the National Agricultural Policy³⁰ are critical for the achievement of sustainability in agriculture:

- Increase capacity to implement effective actions that promote sustainable agricultural products and services with added value throughout the value chain whilst maximising the value of natural resources.
- Enhance the utilisation of land and farm resources by applying sustainable cultivation practices.
- Facilitate sustainable agricultural production through environmentally sound agricultural practices including integrated pest management and plant nutrition.
- Include sustainable soil utilisation practices within a sector-oriented educational and communication campaign to increase awareness of soil as a living organism.
- Promote and support innovation to assist the sector to migrate towards a more circular approach by transforming waste into resources.

On the spot inspections and reports by concerned third parties continued to be carried out during 2018 to oversee that agricultural operators are operating in conformity with the implementation of the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (SL549.66)³¹.

In 2018 the 2nd 'FOWARIM' (Fostering Water-Agriculture Research and Innovation in Malta) Summer School took place in Malta between the 2 and 6 of July. The aim was to demonstrate in a practical way the importance of technological innovation in agriculture towards a circular economy.³²

EU funds were secured for the project named 'Rehabilitation of Gozo's Valleys to Enhance their Rain Capturing and Soil Retention capabilities'. Around eleven valleys shall be cleared of alien material while rubble walls will be rebuilt. The project is still in its initial phases.

PARKS AND AFFORESTATION

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.

SDG 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.

SDG 15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

30 National Agricultural Policy, available at: https://agriculture.gov.mt/en/agricultural_directorate/Documents/nationalAgriculturalPolicy/napFinal.pdf

31 SL549.66 available at: <https://eracms.gov.mt/en/Pages/S-L-549-66-Nitrates-Action-Programme-Regulations.aspx>

32 Information on FOWARIM 2nd summer school, available at: <http://fowarim.eu/events/fowarim-2nd-summer-school-2-6-july-2018/>



Ambjent Malta was established in August 2018 taking over the remits of the Directorate for Parks, Afforestation and Countryside Restoration – P.A.R.K. and beyond. Ambjent Malta's responsibilities are to coordinate and support efforts related to the protection of the natural capital. Therefore, Ambjent Malta's responsibility is not limited for the upkeep and maintenance of national parks and other public spaces but also for the implementation of the management plans for the Natura 2000 Sites.

In 2018, Ambjent Malta carried out various restoration projects in existing public gardens as well as forestation projects and urban greening projects in a number of localities in Malta. Six urban greening projects were carried out in the local councils of Mdina, Pietà, Qormi, Sannat, Swieqi, and Żabbar where a number of trees and shrubs were planted in the urban areas of these local councils.

Reforestation and habitat restoration projects were carried out in Comino, Fort Madliena, Majjistral Park and Ahrax tal-Mellieha, various valleys and urban areas, where a total of 10,185 trees and shrubs were planted. Restoration projects in the gardens of Argotti and the picnic area in Ta' Qali have been completed while works are still going in Ġnien I-Għarusa tal-Mosta and the garden known as il-Foss in Haż-Żabbar. These restoration projects involve the planting of trees and shrubs as well as maintenance works and the installation of new facilities for the public. Argotti gardens have been converted to botanic gardens where around 192 trees and shrubs of 112 different species are being planted. Extensive restoration of the bastions that surround these gardens have been carried out. Works on St Philips garden, has also initiated.

The Life+ project in Buskett has been completed in 2018 where 3,000 indigenous trees and shrubs were planted. These were propagated from local stock at Ambjent Malta nursery in Ta' Qali. Intensive restoration of rubble walls, soil retaining walls and arched buttresses along

the watercourse in Buskett was also carried out and an existing room in Buskett was restored and converted to an information point for the general public.

The 34U initiative continued in 2018, with an additional new initiative to plant trees in valleys. Trees were planted in Wied il-Kbir, Wied ic-Cawlsli, Wied is-Sewda and Wied Hesri.

During 2018 the Valley Management section continued with the cleaning of the valleys as several restoration projects and maintenance work was carried out in the valleys.

Furthermore, Ambjent Malta has embraced 2 EAFRD projects, the restoration of valley features for the enhancement of Agri-Environmental values and small-scale restoration of a coastal site within the Nwadar Park. Moreover, Ambjent Malta has commenced a LIFE IP RBMP project. Through the Valley Management section, a Catchment Modelling will be created. This will involve the creation of a geodatabase of valley resources. This will help in the development of catchment-wide master plans and technical guidelines for the integrated management of valley resources.

During 2018, the Malta Embellishment and Landscaping Project (MELP) carried out supervisory works on several embellishment projects in public gardens and soft areas along roads, implemented by the Environmental Landscapes Consortium (ELC).

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

SDG 14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

SDG 14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.

SDG 14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information

SDG 14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

SDG 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

SDG 15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.

SDG 15.a Mobilise and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.

THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

During 2018 ERA has undertaken a number of initiatives for the protection of the marine environment that contribute towards the achievement of Sustainable Development and the SDGs, in particular SDG targets 14.1, 14.2, 14.5, 14.7 and 15.5.

Malta's Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) network, through the successful actions of the LIFE BaHAR for N2K project, has been extended during the period under review. In total 35.5% of Maltese Waters (4,138km²) have now been designated as marine protected areas. A Government Notice (GN) was published (GN 682 of 2018) updating the list of sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation of International Importance and Special Protection Areas in accordance with the Flora,



Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations 2006. A number of consultation meetings with several stakeholders and entities were also held to identify approaches for the management of MPAs.

During 2008 there was the drafting and publication of the 'Terms of reference for the Management and Disposal of Dredged Material'. The scope of this document is to establish terms of reference that provide clear and consistent standards and criteria for the assessment of dredged material in order to facilitate and improve decision making for its management and disposal as part of the relevant permitting regimes. This document is accessible on the ERA website:

<https://eracms.gov.mt/en/Documents/Terms%20of%20Reference%20for%20the%20Management%20and%20Disposal%20of%20Dredged%20Material%20V.1.pdf>.

Throughout 2018 work at national level was continued on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive policy. The development and implementation of the marine monitoring programme enables information gathering which is used to address gaps and enable the updating of such policies and the initial assessment of environmental status throughout Malta's marine waters. The development of relevant Programme of Measures (PoMs) has ensured links with the Marine Protected Areas designated to date whilst contributing to connectivity across MPAs.

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) project 8.3.1 for 2014-2020 contributes to the effective management and sustainable use of marine resources through sustained environmental monitoring in marine waters. During the period under review three stakeholder seminars were held on the 6 April, 5 October and 11 December 2018. The scope was to update stakeholders with the implementation of the marine monitoring programme and the development of the marine database system as part of the project.

The National Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and related Codes of Good Practice were compiled in 2018 and issued for public consultation in the same year. Along with addressing the land environment, the strategy also addresses Invasive Alien Species of the marine environment. Likewise, the national State of the Environment Report, which was published in 2018, contains substantial relevant coverage on marine protection.

Datasets on designated areas were further updated throughout 2018, and all data incorporated into the Common Database on Designated Areas (CDDA) and the new environment Geoserver being developed by ERA during the same period. The Geoserver provides the backbone for the support of environmental assessment and information processes in relation to development and environmental permitting applications. More information on the CDDA can be found on: <https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Database-on-Designated-Areas-in-National-Law.aspx>

[org.mt/en/Pages/Database-on-Designated-Areas-in-National-Law.aspx](https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Database-on-Designated-Areas-in-National-Law.aspx)

An agreement between ERA and Nature Trust Malta was established to address the care of stranded, beached or otherwise dead terrestrial and marine protected species, including turtles and dolphins. This entails a 24/7 rescue service, veterinary care and releases of rehabilitated animals. In this respect, ERA and MESDC have also supported Nature Trust Malta in the development of an appropriate rescue centre, and the ERDF Project on Xrobb l-Għaġin was submitted in 2018.

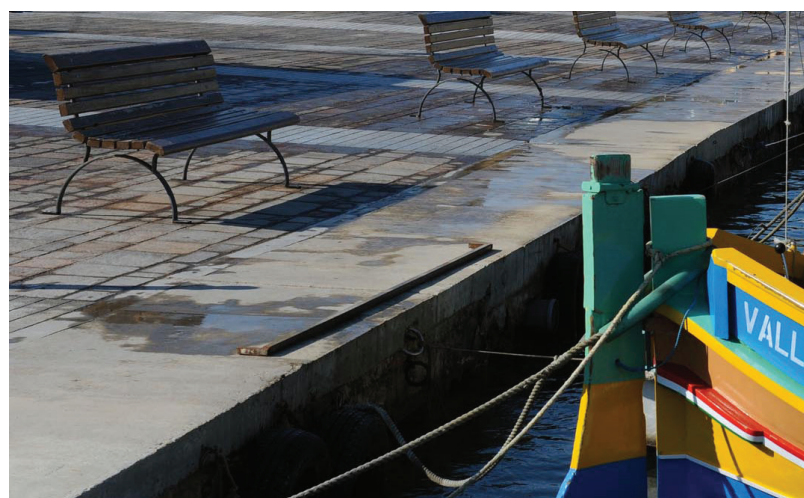
A new legislation which was drafted in 2018 (to be adopted later on in 2019) gives additional regulatory functions to ERA, including designation of areas for natural features, additional powers to issue Protection Notices, regulations pertaining to atmospheric pollutants, the control of invasive alien species and the deliberate release into the environment of GMOs. These regulatory functions all relate to the marine environment. For more information, refer to <http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/LOM.aspx?pageid=27&mode=chrono&gotoID=549>.

During 2018, a number of coastal and marine clean-ups were also organised in a bid to raise further awareness on the importance of marine protection.

Other ongoing work which was continued by ERA throughout 2018 includes:

- Work on Conservation Status Assessment of Marine Species
- Mapping and assessment of ecosystem services
- Works on the reinforcement and reintroduction of species
- Implementation of the SAP-BIO and various Regional Marine Action Plans under the Barcelona Convention
- Follow-up of other multilateral environmental agreements linked with the marine environment
- Ongoing work on environmental assessments and permitting

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE



During 2018, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DFA) within MESDC worked on a number of projects targeting the achievement of Sustainable Development and the SDGs, in particular SDGs 14 and 15, within the fisheries sector.

The Data Collection Multi Annual Programme (DC-MAP) is instrumental to achieve Sustainable Development within fisheries. The fisheries data provided by the DC-MAP database is used to assess the health of fish stocks and the marine environment and meet EU's objective of ensuring sustainable fisheries by 2020 at the latest.

During 2018, DFA within MESDC and ERA were actively involved in a number of ongoing projects from previous years. These projects were:

- LIFE BaHaR for Natura 2000 (N2K)
- Marine Protected Areas Network Towards Sustainable Fisheries in the Central Mediterranean (MANTIS)
- MedSudMed "Assessment and Monitoring of the Fishery Resources and the Ecosystems in the Straits of Sicily", a UN regional project with four participating countries (Italy, Libya, Malta and Tunisia)

Nineteen Primary schools, through their year 3 and year 4 students participated in the promotional campaign 'Nesploraw Flimkien it-Teżori tal-Baħar!' Mediums used to further promote the scope of this promotional campaign included a book in both English and Maltese languages along with online and social media disseminated information. An information leaflet was also distributed to every private household in Malta and Gozo. The project also included an open weekend activity at the Fish Market in Marsa where different stakeholders were invited to take part in this activity.

During the period under review a scientific study to improve Trawl Gear Selectivity was launched. The main objective of this study was to test a new and more selective trawling gear which could potentially lead to the reduction of catches under minimum landing size. The results achieved were presented to stakeholders during a ceremony that was held in December 2018.

A Fishing for Litter Scheme, aimed to collect plastic waste gathered by Trawling Vessels, was launched in 2018. The scheme shall provide bottom trawl fishers with financial compensation for retrieving plastic from the sea whilst conducting their routine bottom trawl operations.

A project named Biotechnologies for Human Health and Blue Growth (BYTHOS) was also launched. The BYTHOS lab is a joint space set up in Sicily and Malta where researchers and experts in biotechnology, business and industry will come together with local enterprise with the aim of increasing investment in innovation and research in biotechnology for human health and blue growth.

HARMONY, another project launched during the period under review, is an Interreg Italia-Malta initiative. It will focus on seafloor integrity and the presence, diffusion, and impacts of non-indigenous species on local marine ecosystem functioning in a cross-border context, whilst promoting stakeholder participation and involvement.

The Aquaculture Directorate within MESDC is the main responsible body for setting and implementing national aquaculture policies, the Aquaculture Strategy for Malta 2014-2025 and conducting research to increase the sector's competitiveness. Following the temporary relocation of tuna farms a process has been initiated with ERA to obtain the permits for a new identified aquaculture zone in the northwest of the island. The aim is to reduce the impact of tuna farming operations on the inshore.

The Aquaculture Directorate, through its research activities, has continued its efforts to diversify the aquaculture sector. Amongst other initiatives which were already ongoing from previous years trials in the culture potential of an amphipod species as a live feed species were also conducted.



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Key Sustainable Development Goal Targets

SDG 9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.

SDG 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

UPGRADING ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

In the roads sector, the first days of 2018 marked the opening of the completed Kappara project, which was inaugurated on 25 January 2018. The total cost of the project was around €33 million. The upgrading of this junction will contribute towards the elimination of bottlenecks and an improved traffic flow during traffic peaks which will result in time savings, reduction on daily fuel costs and vehicle maintenance costs. This is expected to have ripple effects on the journey time of public transport and hence may encourage more people to use this service instead of their private cars. According to CBAs (micro-modelling), TEN-T Kappara will contribute to a CO₂ emission reduction of 1,700 tonnes per year.

Work in relation to the Multi-Level Junction to remove a Bottleneck on the TEN-T Core Road Network, the Marsa-Addolorata Junction, continued in the course of 2018. The project is divided into three different stages. The first stage which included a number of studies on different impacts related to the project, stormwater and landscaping plans, and the demolition of factories was completed in the second quarter of 2018. Phase 2, which included mainly the reconstruction of Triq Aldo Moro and Triq il-Gvern Lokali along with other structural works commenced in February 2018 and was completed in the fourth quarter of 2018. The works for the third stage, which included the construction of columns to support the composite steel structures of the flyovers commenced towards the latter months of 2018 and are still ongoing.

Both the Marsa-Addolorata Junction project and that of the Kappara Junction address one of the three pillars of the 2019 Annual Growth Survey – 'Delivering high-quality investment and targeting investment gaps in research and innovation, in education, training and skills and infrastructure'.

Major works on the widening of the Hamrun bypass between the Santa Venera tunnels and the slip road leading to Hal Qormi commenced during the first quarter of 2018. Much of the works have been completed by the end of 2018 and the project is expected to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2019.

Other works included the maintenance and repairs on arterial and distributor roads as well as the asphaltting of new residential roads. Once complete, these projects will contribute towards the elimination of bottlenecks and an improved traffic flow during traffic peaks. These benefits will lead to time savings, reduction on daily fuel costs and vehicle



maintenance costs. This is expected to have ripple effects on the journey time of public transport and hence may encourage more people to use this service instead of their private cars.

Development of the TEN-T network and external links are crucial for Malta's tourism and export-oriented economy as well as to ensure the mobility of persons. The National Transport Strategy and the Masterplan now enables Government to propose future transport improvements within a defined strategy, providing both Government and industry with a clear project pipeline, thereby encouraging economies of scale.

ALTERNATIVE AND GREENER WAYS OF TRANSPORT

During 2018, the Government continued to invest in a greener transport system by launching and extending several incentives to reduce traffic congestion during peak hours by encouraging a modality shift to other forms of transport such as ferryboats and public buses.

During 2018 the Government continued to promote the upgrade of more environmentally friendly vehicles through various schemes in order to reduce emissions generated from road traffic and thus improving air quality. For instance, the grant scheme to incentivise vehicle owners to convert their vehicle to autogas was further extended with another allocation in 2018, as a result of which 142 vehicles benefitted from this scheme, thus bringing the total of LPG conversions to 861 since 2015. Out of the 861 applications, 5 were for N1 commercial vehicles. The scheme is expected to be extended for 2019 as well. The promotion of environment friendly vehicles remains an important priority for Government. During 2018, Government provided grants to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles and thus increase the fleet of electric vehicles, thereby improving Malta's air quality. These grants were intended to assist market entry of the new technology in the Maltese Islands and to assist private persons, Local Councils, NGOs and business undertakings to switch to cleaner vehicle technology, due to the high price of these vehicles. This scheme was successful in reaching its aims with the increase of 267 electric vehicles to our national electric vehicle fleet and 185 pedelecs. Detailed information and figures on the conditions and grant composition can be found on: https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Table_2_NRP2019.pdf

This scheme had the original budget of €500,000 which was consumed by the end of May 2018. The scheme was extended for the second time with a further €500,000 which was all exhausted by the end of September 2018. Another extension request was made and the total of €1,434,100 was disbursed in grants by the end of 2018.

The Grant Scheme on the Purchase of New Environment Friendly Vehicles was extended twice for 2018. This scheme had a successful outcome with the total of 1,676 beneficiaries. More details on the conditions and grant



composition can be accessed on: https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Table_2_NRP2019.pdf

A new grant for the upgrading of Electric Vehicles and new Plug-In Electric Service Garages of Vehicle Importers and Vehicle Leasing Operators along with training of their staff was launched in 2018. The scheme is intended for established importers of new vehicles and their current service garages, as well as operators of vehicle leasing companies and their currently licensed public service garages, to cater for the maintenance of new or leased electric vehicles, plug-in electric, plug-in hybrid, range extender vehicle models currently on the Maltese car market as well as new vehicles which are intended to be introduced in the future. More details on this grant can be accessed on: https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Table_2_NRP2019.pdf

In January 2018, Government launched a scheme whereby companies which purchased bicycles or pedelec bicycles and offered such bicycles for hire may apply for a grant on the purchase price of bicycles. A total of 1,766 applicants benefitted from this grant in 2018. More details on this scheme can be seen on: https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Table_2_NRP2019.pdf

The tax rebate for parents making use of school transportation during the scholastic year 2017-18 was also extended. Furthermore as from the scholastic year 2018-19, school transportation was offered for free to all students in both public and private schools. Around 28,000 students are benefiting from the incentive, while also making a positive contribution to the environment

by reducing the number of cars and congestion on the road. This initiative has reduced approximately 15,000 vehicles from the roads in peak hours.

In order to incentivise the use of alternative green means of transport while, at the same time, encouraging physical exercise and a healthier lifestyle. Government has set up a fund to cover the expenditure incurred by local councils and enterprises to install bicycle racks and ancillary facilities. In 2018, 5 applications were submitted: 3 applications from local councils, 1 from a company and 1 from a non-profit organisation.

Following collation of feedback, a 2019 Action Plan for the Green Travel Plan started being put together in 2018. The idea is for the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Capital Projects (MTIP) to pilot the Green Travel Plan with a vision that its reach can be widened if the pilot is successful. With regard to the pilot project, the ultimate aim would be to use the pilot project per se, and its resultant experience, as a way to design a toolkit for other Ministries to implement similar initiatives in their Ministries. Finally, the aim of the whole process is to analyse the commuting trends of the employees and launch voluntary schemes intended to encourage the use of alternative transportation other than the private car. The Green Travel Plan is planned to be rolled out in 2019.



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

During the year 2018 public transport carried over 53.5 million passengers, an increase of 11% on the previous year. The take-up of 'tallinja card' in 2018 is considered to be quite high where up to December 2018 take-up was recorded at over 317,626.

Furthermore, in an effort to encourage more people to use public transport instead of their own private vehicle, the measure introduced during 2017 whereby persons who turned 18 during the year could travel for free on scheduled public transport was extended in 2018 to include persons between the ages of 16 to 20 years. Through this measure every individual would benefit from a maximum of €312 per year.

Discussions are underway with the relevant agencies in order to see how free scheduled public transport can also be extended to persons with disability. As a result some 28,000 persons aged between 16 and 20 years were eligible to benefit from the scheme in 2018. Up till the end of December 2018 there were just over 24,000 persons who benefitted from this scheme, that is, fewer than 86% of eligible persons took up the scheme.

A number of measures were undertaken to further encourage a modal shift from private to collective and sustainable transport. The bus shelter installation programme was initiated in 2018. This entailed the installation of new shelters where previously there were none and the replacement of old bus shelters which required replacement. The programme will continue during 2019.

The concept of Sustainable Multi Intermodal Transport Hubs to smaller local urban centres underlies a project currently underway, via which the local transport hubs shall be strategically located in urban areas in Malta and Gozo and offer a choice of modes designed to suit different transport needs and user profiles. The basis of the local transport hubs is the current bus transport network. Therefore, each local transport hub will offer access to scheduled bus services. Certain local transport hubs shall also be connected through safe cycling routes. Ferry services shall also be offered from local transport hubs where these coincide with ferry landing sites. Each hub will be supplied with Intelligent Transport System (ITS) services and infrastructure such as real time information on all modes and real time journey planners to integrate into one platform all modes of transport.

In addition, the project is expected to develop a network of Safe Cycling Routes, based on the Sharing the Road Concept. These safe cycling routes will have inbuilt traffic calming measures, reduced vehicular speed limits, ITS infrastructure and enforcement mechanisms to provide more peace of mind to cyclists and users. An information campaign is also planned in order to promote a behavioural shift to sustainable transport practices.

Maritime transport connecting the main arteries with Valletta in a sustainable manner is being developed via a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Concurrently, the Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects (MTIP) is currently working on a Regeneration Study for the Valletta Grand Harbour. This measure will facilitate the achievement of 27% energy efficiency contributing to the achievement of 20% energy savings by 2020 by the EU. Furthermore, it will reduce vehicular traffic and provide an alternative means of transport in a more sustainable manner.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

During this year there has been an endless effort in adopting sustainable development related measures.

Sustainable Governance is an intriguing yet challenging task to implement successfully. We are living in a world which is experiencing rapid change, where the ability of social structures to integrate, strengthen, and rearrange competences along with resources increases the challenges which are already being faced. It is therefore critical for all types of institutions to keep renewing mainly by keeping in consideration alternative scenarios, long-term and transformative decision-making and implementation along with the reconciliation of future challenges and opportunities.

It is important to ensure coherence and uniformity between the various sectors which include the economy, trade, environment, ecosystems and biodiversity, agriculture, fisheries, energy and climate change, national security, foreign affairs, social affairs, education, employment, research and innovation, and healthcare. Coherence and uniformity between such sectors is instrumental to achieve Sustainable Development.

The promotion, implementation and achievement of national and international sustainable development commitments is a long-term process which needs an adaptable follow-up, review and development mechanism.

The Sustainable Development Annual Reports act as a self-assessment tool for the Government while it also enhances its accountability towards the Maltese society with regards to Sustainable Development matters.

The debate on national Sustainable Development issues and the progress achieved in the 2030 Agenda implementation in Parliament is vital for ensuring policy coherence and full responsibility.

Effective stakeholder participation and communication along with the right conduct and actions are crucial for successfully implementing Sustainable Development policies and initiatives.

It is imperative that everyone, from the Government to the general public, pulls in the same direction to achieve the set targets in relation to Sustainable Development. Such cohesion would ensure the necessary shift towards an improved socio-economic development while respecting the environmental limits and utilising the necessary resources efficiently.

NEXT STEPS

The Sustainable Development Directorate within the Office of the Prime Minister is currently embarked on the development of a new National Sustainable Strategy. Following the issuance and public consultation of a vision document with a timeline of up to 2050 during the period under review, in the coming year work will focus on the actual strategy document.

ANNEX I

EU INDICATORS

(2017-2018 DATA)

SDG	CODE	INDICATOR	EU-MS 2017	MALTA 2017	EU-MS 2018	MALTA 2018	PROGRESS
	SDG_01_10	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion (%)	22.4	19.3	21.9	19	↑
	SDG_01_20	People at risk of income poverty after social transfers (%)	16.9	16.7	17.1	16.8	→
	SDG_01_30	Severely materially deprived people (%)	6.6	3.3	5.8 ¹	3	↑
	SDG_01_40	People living in households with very low work intensity (%)	9.5	7.1	8.8	5.5	↑
	SDG_01_41	In work at-risk-of-poverty rate (%)	9.4	5.7	9.5	6.4	↓
	SDG_01_60	Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames of floor by poverty status (%)	13.3	8.4	13.9 ¹	7.1	↑
	SDG_03_60	Self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care by sex (%)	1.7	0.2	2.0	0.2	→
	SDG_06_10	Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household by poverty status (%)	2.0	:	1.7 ¹	:	●●
	SDG_07_60	Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status (%)	7.8	6.3	7.3	7.6	↓
	SDG_11_10	Overcrowding rate by poverty status (%)	15.7	3.0	15.5	3.4	↓
	SDG_02_10	Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI) (% of population aged 18 or over)	52	62.2	:	:	●●
	SDG_02_20	Agricultural factor income per annual work unit (AWU)	125.56	63.75	120.88	81.02	↑
	SDG_02_30	Government support to agricultural research and development (Million euro)	3198.2	0.267	3137.9 ¹	0.981	↑
	SDG_02_40	Area under organic farming (% of utilised agricultural area (UAA))	7.03	0.35	7.50	0.41	↑
	SDG_02_50	Gross nutrient balance on agricultural land by nutrient	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_02_60	Ammonia emissions from agriculture (Tonne)	3635852	1065	:	:	●●

	SDG_06_40	Nitrate in groundwater	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_50	Estimated soil erosion by water - area affected by severe erosion rate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_60	Common bird index by type of species - EU aggregate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_03_10	Life expectancy at birth by sex (years)	80.9	82.4	:	:	●●
	SDG_03_20	Share of people with good or very good perceived health by sex (% of population aged 16 or over)	69.7	75.4	69.2	75	→
	SDG_03_30	Smoking prevalence by sex (% of population aged 15 or over)	26	24	:	:	●●
	SDG_03_40	Death rate due to chronic diseases by sex (number per 100 000 persons aged less than 65)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_03_41	Death rate due to tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis by sex	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_03_60	Self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care by sex (% of population aged 16 and over)	1.7	0.2	2.0	0.2	→
	SDG_02_10	Obesity rate by body mass index (BMI) (% of population aged 18 or over)	52	62.2	:	:	●●
	SDG_08_60	People killed in accidents at work (number per 100 000 employees)	1.65	0.45	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_20	Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status (% of population)	17.5	24.9	18.3	28.2	↓
	SDG_11_40	People killed in road accidents	4.9	4.1	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_50	Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter (µg/m3)	14.1	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_04_10	Early leavers from education and training by sex (% of population aged 18 to 24)	10.6	17.7	10.6	17.4	↗
	SDG_04_20	Tertiary educational attainment by sex (% of population aged 30 to 34)	39.9	33.5	40.7	34.7	↑
	SDG_04_30	Participation in early childhood education by sex (% of the age group between 4-years-old and the starting age of compulsory education)	95.4	96.5	:	:	●●
	SDG_04_40	Underachievement in reading, maths or science (% of 15-year-old students)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_04_50	Employment rates of recent graduates by sex (% of population aged 20 to 34 with at least upper-secondary education)	80.2	93.7	81.7	94.8	↑
	SDG_04_60	Adult participation in learning by sex (% of population aged 25 to 64)	10.9	10.6	11.1	10.9	↗
	SDG_08_20	Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex	13.4	8.8	12.9	7.3	↑

5 GENDER EQUALITY 	SDG_05_10	Physical and sexual violence to women experienced within 12 months prior to the interview by age group (% of women)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_05_20	Gender pay gap in unadjusted form (% of average gross hourly earnings of men)	16	12.2	:	:	●●
	SDG_05_30	Gender employment gap (%)	11.5	24.1	11.6	21.9	↑
	SDG_05_40	Inactive population due to caring responsibilities by sex (% of inactive population aged 20 to 64)	21.4	32.0	22	38.0	↓
	SDG_05_50	Seats held by women in national parliaments and governments (% of seats)	29.8	14.5	30.6	14.5	→
	SDG_05_60	Positions held by women in senior management positions (% of positions)	25.3	8.4	26.7	9.5	↑
	SDG_04_10	Early leavers from education and training by sex (% of population aged 18 to 24)	10.6	17.7	10.6	17.4	↗
	SDG_04_20	Tertiary educational attainment by sex (% of population aged 30 to 34)	39.9	33.5	40.7	34.7	↑
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	SDG_04_50	Employment rates of recent graduates by sex (% of population aged 20 to 34 with at least upper-secondary education)	80.2	93.7	81.7	94.8	↑
	SDG_06_10	Population having neither a bath, nor a shower, nor indoor flushing toilet in their household by poverty status (% of population)	2.0	:	1.7 ¹	:	●●
	SDG_06_20	Population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment (% of population)	73.9 ¹	14.9	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_30	Biochemical oxygen demand in rivers (mg O2 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_40	Nitrate in groundwater (mg NO3 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_50	Phosphate in rivers (mg PO4 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_60	Water exploitation index by type of water source (% of long term average available water (LTAA))	16.3 ¹	51.2	:	:	●●
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	SDG_14_40	Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality	14,935	87	15,009	87	→
	SDG_07_10	Primary energy consumption	1,562	0.81	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_11	Final energy consumption	1,122.77	0.63	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_20	Final energy consumption in households per capita (kg of oil equivalent)	563	186	552	183	↗
	SDG_07_30	Energy productivity	8.3	3.4	8.5	3.4	→

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	SDG_07_40	Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector (%)	17.479	7.27	17.985	7.98	↗
	SDG_07_50	Energy import dependency by products	55.122	102.801	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_60	Population unable to keep home adequately warm by poverty status (% of population)	7.8	6.3	7.3	7.6	↓
	SDG_13_20	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption	86.5	62.9	:	:	●●
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	SDG_08_10	Real GDP per capita	27,780	20,940	28,280	21,630	↑
	SDG_08_11	Investment share of GDP by institutional sectors (% of GDP)	20.65	21.11	20.87	:	●●
	SDG_08_20	Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex (% of population aged 15 to 29)	13.4	8.8	12.9	7.3	↑
	SDG_08_30	Employment rate by sex (% of population aged 20 to 64)	72.2	73.0	73.2	75.5	↑
	SDG_08_40	Long-term unemployment rate by sex (% of active population)	3.4	1.6	2.9	1.1	↗
	SDG_08_60	People killed in accidents at work (number per 100 000 employees)	1.65	0.45	:	:	●●
	SDG_01_41	In work at-risk-of-poverty rate (% of employed persons aged 18 or over)	9.4	5.7	9.5	6.4	↓
	SDG_05_40	Inactive population due to caring responsibilities by sex (% of inactive population aged 20 to 64)	21.4	32.0	22	38.0	↓
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	SDG_12_20	Resource productivity and domestic material consumption (DMC)	2.0718	1.768	2.0437	2.0593	↓
	SDG_09_10	Gross domestic expenditure on R&D by sector (% of GDP)	2.07	0.58	2.12	0.55	↓
	SDG_09_20	Employment in high- and medium-high technology manufacturing and knowledge-intensive services (% of total employment)	45.8	50.0	46.1	51.0	↑
	SDG_09_30	R&D personnel by sector (% of active population)	1.2949	0.6822	1.3578	0.5794	↓
	SDG_09_40	Patent applications to the European Patent Office	54,648.82	6.63	:	:	●●
	SDG_09_50	Share of busses and trains in total passenger transport (% of total inland passenger-km)	16.7	17.5	:	:	●●
	SDG_09_60	Share of rail and inland waterways in total freight transport (% of total inland freight tonne-km)	23.3	N/A	:	N/A	●●
	SDG_12_30	Average CO2 emissions per km from new passenger cars	118.5	111	120.4	105.9	●●

	SDG_10_10	Purchasing power adjusted GDP per capita	30,100	29,100	31,000	30,400	↑
	SDG_10_20	Adjusted gross disposable income of households per capita	22,153	:	22,850	:	●●
	SDG_10_30	Relative median at-risk-of-poverty gap (% distance to poverty threshold)	24.1	17.5	24.6	17	↗
	SDG_10_41	Income distribution (Quintile share ratio)	5.08	4.21	5.17	4.28	↓
	SDG_10_50	Income share of the bottom 40 % of the population (% of income)	21.1	22.3	21.0	22.1	→
	SDG_10_60	Asylum applications by state of procedure (number per million inhabitants)	1,279	3,440	1,145	4,199	↓
	SDG_01_20	People at risk of income poverty after social transfers	16.9	16.7	17.1	16.8	→
	SDG_17_20	EU financing to developing countries by financing source	155,224	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_17_30	EU imports from developing countries by country income groups (million EUR)	957,870	700	1,013,981	753	↗
	SDG_11_10	Overcrowding rate by poverty status (% of population)	15.7	3.0	15.5	3.4	↓
	SDG_11_20	Population living in households considering that they suffer from noise, by poverty status (% of population)	17.5 ¹	24.9	18.3	28.2	↓
	SDG_11_31	Settlement area per capita (m2 per capita)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_40	People killed in road accidents	4.9	4.1	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_50	Exposure to air pollution by particulate matter	14.1	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_60	Recycling rate of municipal waste (% of total waste generated)	46.2	7.1	47.0	6.5	↓
	SDG_01_60	Population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation or rot in window frames of floor by poverty status (% of population)	13.3	8.4	13.9	7.1	↑
	SDG_06_20	Population connected to at least secondary wastewater treatment (% of population)	73.9 ¹	14.9	:	:	●●
	SDG_09_50	Share of busses and trains in total passenger transport (% of total inland passenger-km)	16.7	17.5	:	:	●●
	SDG_16_20	Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status (% of population)	12.0	10.0	12.7	12.5	↓

	SDG_12_10	Consumption of chemicals by hazardousness - EU aggregate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_12_20	Resource productivity and domestic material consumption	2.0718	1.768	2.0437	2.0593	↓
	SDG_12_30	Average CO2 emissions per km from new passenger cars (g CO2 per km)	118.5	111	120.4	105.9	↑
	SDG_12_41	Circular material use rate (% of material input for domestic use)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_12_50	Generation of waste excluding major mineral wastes by hazardousness (kg per capita)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_12_60	Recycling rate of waste excluding major mineral wastes (% of total waste treated)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_10	Primary energy consumption	1,562	0.81	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_11	Final energy consumption	1,122.77	0.63	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_30	Energy productivity	8.3	3.3	8.5	3.4	→
	SDG_07_40	Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector (%)	17.479	7.27	17.985	7.98	↗
	SDG_13_10	Greenhouse gas emissions	78.3	112.2	:	:	●●
	SDG_13_20	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity of energy consumption (index (2000 = 100))	86.6	62.9	:	:	●●
	SDG_13_30	Mean near surface temperature deviation (degree Celsius)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_13_40	Climate related economic losses by type of event (million EUR (current prices))	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_13_50	Contribution to the international 100bn USD commitment on climate related expending	14,924.63	0.16	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_10	Primary energy consumption	1,562	0.81	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_11	Final energy consumption	1,122.77	0.63	:	:	●●
	SDG_07_40	Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption by sector (%)	17.479	7.27	17.985	7.98	↗
	SDG_12_30	Average CO2 emissions per km from new passenger cars (g CO2 per km)	118.5	111	120.4	105.9	↑
	SDG_14_50	Mean ocean acidity	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_14_10	Surface of marine sites designated under NATURA 2000 (km2)	532,417	3,490	551,899	4,142	↑
	SDG_14_21	Estimated trends in fish stock biomass in North East Atlantic	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_14_30	Assessed fish stocks exceeding fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield (FMSY) in North East Atlantic	:	:	:	:	●●

	SDG_14_40	Bathing sites with excellent water quality by locality	14,935	87	15,009	87	→
	SDG_14_50	Mean ocean acidity	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_10	Share of forest area (% of total land area)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_20	Surface of terrestrial sites designated under NATURA 2000 (km2)	790,213	41	784,252	42	↗
	SDG_15_41	Soil sealing index	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_50	Estimated soil erosion by water - area affected by severe erosion rate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_60	Common bird index by type of species - EU aggregate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_15_61	Grassland butterfly index - EU aggregate	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_30	Biochemical oxygen demand in rivers (mg O2 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_40	Nitrate in groundwater (mg NO3 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_06_50	Phosphate in rivers (mg PO4 per litre)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_11_31	Settlement area per capita (m2 per capita)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_16_10	Death rate due to homicide by sex (number per 100 000 persons)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_16_20	Population reporting occurrence of crime, violence or vandalism in their area by poverty status (% of population)	12.0	10.0	12.7	12.5	↓
	SDG_16_30	General government total expenditure on law courts (Million Euro)	51,027	29	:	:	●●
	SDG_16_40	Perceived independence of the justice system (% of population)	55	50	56	45	↓
	SDG_16_50	Corruption Perceptions Index (source: Transparency International) - score scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean)	64.6 ¹	56	64.7 ¹	54	↓
	SDG_16_60	Population with confidence in EU institutions by institution (% of population)	45	54	48	55	↗
	SDG_05_10	Physical and sexual violence to women experienced within 12 months prior to the interview by age group (% of women)	:	:	:	:	●●
	SDG_17_10	Official development assistance as share of gross national income (GNI)	0.50	0.21	0.48	0.23	↗
	SDG_17_20	EU financing to developing countries by financing source (million EUR (current prices))	155,224	:	:	:	●●

	SDG_17_30	EU imports from developing countries by country income groups (million EUR)	957,870	700	1,013,981	753	↗
	SDG_17_40	General government gross debt	82.1	50.3	80.4	45.8	↑
	SDG_17_50	Shares of environmental and labour taxes in total tax revenues (% of total taxes)	6.18	8.4	6.12	8.2	→

¹ EU data is provisional – average taken on the basis of the data available from the 28 EU MS

- • No comparison possible due to unavailability of data
- Stagnating progress
- ↗ Slightly to moderately improving
- ↑ On track or improving progress towards SDG achievement
- ↓ Declining progress



MINISTRY WITHIN THE OFFICE
OF THE PRIME MINISTER

(Responsible for Sustainable Development, Social Dialogue
and the Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto)