

Malta

[MALTA]

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[info sheet on page 127]

COUNTRY FACT SHEET

- **Population** 403,532 inhabitants (2008)
- **Area** 316 sq. km
- **Population density** 1,277 inhabitants per sq. km

- **System of government** Parliamentary Republic

On the administrative level, Malta is divided into 68 elected local councils (54 in Malta and 14 in Gozo), with each council responsible for the administration of cities or regions of varying sizes. Administrative responsibility is distributed between the local councils and the central government in Valletta. Elections are held every 3 years by means of the system of proportional representation using the single transferable vote.

- **European elections** 5 European parliamentarians

- **Social security and welfare system**

Malta's social security system, including pensions, unemployment benefits, family benefits and targeted social assistance programs, is contribution-based. The contributory system is supported by a non-contributory means tested welfare system. Overall responsibility of the Maltese social security system rests with the Ministry for Social Policy. Payments are administered through the Department of Social Security. All pensions and benefits, except sickness and unemployment benefits, are paid from the Department's Head Office.

- **Public health system**

Malta has both a public healthcare system, known as the government healthcare service, and a private healthcare system. Malta was ranked number 5 in the World Health Organisation's ranking of the world's health systems. Great Britain, the best of this group of larger comparator countries, was ranked at number 18, which is interesting in that the healthcare system in Malta closely resembles the British system, as healthcare is free at the point of delivery. Also, Malta has a strong general practitioner-delivered primary care base,

supplemented by secondary care and tertiary care provided by a number of public hospitals. There is both a medical school and a dental school at the University of Malta, as well as a nursing school. Malta has three major private hospitals.

- **Level of education**

20-24 years old who have completed secondary schooling 2008: 29,008 people
25-64 years old who have completed secondary schooling 2002: 18.4%

The adult literacy rate is 92.8% (2007): male: 92%, female: 93.6%. Malta has a high rate of persons without a higher level of secondary education (50.9% of the 20 to 24 year olds as at December 2004). The overall proportion of persons in the 20-24 age group with at least an upper secondary level of education went up to 49.1% in 2004, from 40.6% in 2001. The target set in the framework of the European Employment Strategy is that at least 85% of 22 year olds in the EU should have completed upper secondary education by 2010. Education is compulsory between the age of 5 and 16 years. Primary schooling has been compulsory since 1946 and secondary education was made compulsory in 1971. While the state provides education free of charge, the church and the private sector run a number of schools in Malta and Gozo. Most teachers' salaries in church schools are provided by the state. Education in Malta is originally based on the British educational system. Primary School lasts six years. At age 11, most students take an examination for entry to secondary level. Students sit for SEC O-level examinations at age 16, with passes obligatory in certain subjects such as Mathematics, English and Maltese. Students may opt to continue studying at sixth form level, or else at another post-secondary institution such as Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). The Sixth Form course lasts for two years, at the end of which students sit for the Matriculation examination. Subject to their performance, students may then apply for an undergraduate degree or diploma. Tertiary education at diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate level is mainly provided by the University of Malta (UoM).

■ **Immigration rate**

2008: 2.723%

The estimated net inflow (using data for 2002 to 2004) is of 1,913 persons yearly. Over the last 10 years, Malta accepted back a yearly average of 425 returning emigrants. During 2006, a total of 1,800 illegal immigrants reached Malta from the North Africa coast (most of them intended to reach mainland Europe). In the first half of 2006, 967 irregular immigrants arrived in Malta, almost double the 473 who arrived in the same period in 2005. Around 45% of immigrants landed in Malta have been granted refugee status (5%) or protected humanitarian status (40%). A White Paper suggesting the grant of Maltese citizenship to refugees resident in Malta for over ten years was issued in 2005. At present, the problem of illegal immigration has increased steadily, causing real or perceived strains on Malta's health, employment and social services, its internal security and public order and labour market. In 2005, Malta sought EU aid in relation to reception of irregular immigrants; repatriation of those denied refugee status; resettlement of refugees into EU countries and maritime security. In December 2005, the European Council adopted The Global Approach to Migration: Priority Actions focusing on Africa and the Mediterranean, but the deployment of actions has been limited to the western Mediter-

anean, thus putting further pressure on the central Mediterranean route for irregular immigration of which Malta forms a part. Political tension started developing as the EU persistently ignored Malta's precarious situation: member states party to the legally-binding Cotonou Agreement continued not to fulfil their obligations and East African countries, from which most central Mediterranean irregular immigration originates, were excluded from the Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development held 10-11 July 2006 in Tripoli.

■ **Growth rate**

2008: 0.407%

Birth rate per 100 population

2008: 1.033 births

Death rate per 100 population

2008: 0.829 deaths

■ **Employment rate**

15-64 years old

(total - male - female)

59.6% - 77.4% - 44.1%

55-64 years old

(total - male - female)

31.2% - 50.8% - 12.0%

■ **Unemployment rate**

15-64 years old

(total - male - female)

5.8% - 5.7% - 6.1%

SUPPORT BODIES	118	DEVELOPMENT POLICIES	131
1 Support measures (questionnaires and interviews)	118	1 Public incentives	131
2 Volunteer support centres	119	2 Civil society initiatives	131
2.1 Malta Resource Centre	119	2.1 Seminar: Towards the Increased Participation in Structural Funds	131
		3 Strategic goals	132
		4 European perspective (interviews)	132
FOCUS ON SUPPORT BODIES (questionnaires)	120		
Malta Hospice Movement	121	LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED	134
“Razzett Tal-Hbiberija” (Park of Friendship)	123	BIBLIOGRAPHY	135
Richmond Foundation	125		
Solidarity Overseas Service Malta	127	INTERNET RESOURCES	136
“Din l-Art Helwa” (This Fair Land)	129		

Glossary

1 DEFINITIONS

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1.1 VOLUNTEER

A person who dedicates time to work that benefits others.

1.2 VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

Volunteering is undertaken of a person's own free-will, choice and motivation, and is without concern for financial gain. It benefits the individual volunteer, community and society as a whole. It is also a vehicle for individuals and associations to address human, social or environmental needs and concerns.

1.3 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

Here follow the generally accepted criteria on what is considered a non-governmental organisation:

- NGOs are not created to generate personal profit.
- NGOs are voluntary.
- NGOs are distinguished from informal or *ad hoc* groups by having some degree of formal or institutional existence.
- NGOs are independent, in particular of government and other public authorities and of political parties or commercial organisations.
- NGOs are not self-serving in aims and related values. Their aim is to act in the public arena at large, on concerns and issues related to the well-being of people, specific groups of people or society as a whole. They are not pursuing the commercial or professional interests of their members. The term 'voluntary organisations' emphasises the choice to associate for a common purpose and some donation of one's time and labour, at least of the board members or organisers.

The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) has been set up to give a more effective voice to non-governmental organisations in Malta, in particular the main social partners. But MCESD also has a committee

that focuses directly on civil society. During Malta's EU accession process, NGOs were directly involved through a specific committee known as the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) which brought together NGOs with the negotiating team and the key government ministries and departments involved in the process. On several occasions their input helped to shape Malta's negotiating positions during negotiations. For instance, the insistence of one trade union led to Malta scaling down its requests to introduce EU social laws over a longer time frame. As a result, Malta only requested short transitional periods on just four EU social laws out of a set of around 50 laws. It must be said that the negotiating process itself has created a new space for non-governmental organisations that were formerly unknown and for new ones to be created. Some of these, such as the farming lobby, the hunting organisations and the Gozitan organisations have been especially active on EU issues.

1.4 VOLUNTEER SUPPORT CENTRE

Malta has no volunteer support centre *per se*. NGOs provide support and training to the volunteers who provide a service to the community within and through their respective organisation.

2 VOLUNTEERS ON VOLUNTEERING (INTERVIEWS)

The question to the respondents about their ideas of volunteering in Malta teased out a number of issues which may at first seem conflicting and perhaps also provocative, albeit are food for thought nonetheless. For example, one respondent voices disquiet about the image of volunteering and underutilised skills associated with it. She contends:

"Of people going round with tins and collecting money, people going round. Volunteering mainly involves doing the most menial of jobs, doing the coffee. Some people might have other skills which could be very useful to the organisation. We have identified people

who can help set up projects, manage projects, putting claims to the government, all on a voluntary basis."

The ideas of volunteering for another respondent conjures up thoughts of the need for formal structures, the advantages of working together and networking which she argues is lacking among organisations in Malta, and the setting up of a database that is accessible to all NGOs: and all this for the common good of others. She points out:

"Volunteering means to engage and identify needs, especially common needs if volunteering is undertaken at community level, and to meet those needs. To identify the needs, we need formal structures that support volunteering, but there is no effort to collaborate with other groups, so there isn't much networking taking place. Very often I think that people responsible at local level do not believe in networking because when it comes to suggesting practical ways through which networking can take place nothing happens, e.g. something basic such as setting up a national database indicating what each commission is doing, very, very simple things like that, so that networking in volunteering is not only to learn what others are doing but networking in the sharing of experience and networking to see what plans are being formulated by others and also to see what other people's responses have been both locally and nationally."

Another respondent in the study points to what she sees as the ideal in volunteering: complementing the role of government without being exploited and expected to do the work for them.

Optimism about volunteering in Malta and how it functions is deciphered from the following response. Nevertheless, more government funding would be helpful.

"Many services in Malta are based on volunteering. We find many Maltese assisting shelters for the homeless, others for victims of domestic violence, even animal shelters... We have strong values that motivate us to do something good for others. The ideal is for many persons to dedicate a number of hours, feel it is not a burden, and contribute in a way that they expect nothing in return. Ideally, as

in any other thing, if there is more funding from the government, it would definitely help."

One particular respondent with many years of experience in volunteering suggests that the new legislation has raised awareness about volunteering in Malta, however, points to the lack of funding from government and "donor fatigue" suffered by the private sector. Her argument goes along these lines of thought:

"The Maltese are very well cared for by voluntary organisations but, until a short while ago, volunteering was not appreciated, it was taken for granted. We lacked both the human and financial re-

sources, but now the recent legislation has made more people aware of our existence, of our work and the necessity of volunteering and also awareness of the financial value that we provide to government, too, in the way of giving all this work for free, so now we are appreciated more. The chief problem for lots of volunteers is administrative powers and lack of skills. I think even the government needs to learn more about the volunteering and how it can help, in a small community like Malta, you do get 'donor fatigue' because how often can you go to the same people to provide you with the money all the time every time, year after year. So, if there is some form of backing to provide that financial gap that would be helpful."

Historical overview

1 THE BRIEF CENTURY: 1900 - 2000

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

Local voluntary involvement in certain sectors, such as in the social field, has been in Malta for quite some time, providing services for disabled persons, youth, older people, families, and poor people. More recently, other specific groups such as prisoners and refugees have also been included. Initiatives related to the labour market are less common (although the opening of Malta's first and only fair trade shop *L-Arka* in Valletta in 1997 has hopefully paved the way for similar voluntary projects). Other initiatives, such as those aimed at improving relations between generations, although common in Europe, are still not to be found locally. Many organisations would like to benefit from the new opportunities being presented to them through the various EU programmes. Participating in exchange visits is proving in most cases to be enriching both for the individuals concerned and for the organisations themselves.

2 WHERE WE STAND: 2001 - 2008

In Malta, the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) has been set up to give a more effective voice to non-governmental organisations in Malta, in particular, the main social partners. But MCESD also has a committee that focuses directly on civil society.

The Voluntary Organisations Act was published in 2007. The importance of the long overdue passage of this law for civil society in Malta, as well as for the NGOs themselves, cannot be overstated. It recognises both implicitly and explicitly the crucial role that civil society plays in a thriving democracy. For a long time, with the clear exception of those like *Din l-Art Helwa* and some others that first gave active recognition and focus to the important role of civil society in cultural heritage and other spheres, Maltese civil society was largely supine, content to leave it to the politicians. That this is no longer so is a healthy sign. NGOs are the bedrock of civil society, run by volunteers who, for the most part, are there for what they can give not what they can take. They attract dedicated members of society with the knowledge and expertise often matching, or even exceeding, those in government. They make an immense and largely free contribution to a whole range of activities from heritage and the natural environment to many other philanthropic causes.

3 VOLUNTEERING NOW (INTERVIEWS)

One particular respondent who has experienced volunteering in a number of different organisations over many years argues that voluntary work need not always involve the same basic tasks. The traditional custom to engage people in “menial jobs” may often result in the underutilisation of skills or the loss of potential volunteers who might get the impression that there is no place for them in the organisation. Her message goes along the following verbatim lines:

“Volunteering mainly involves doing the most menial of jobs. I am not belittling these jobs, but people might have other skills which could be very useful: project management, putting claims to government, doctors, architects... Instead, the jobs offered in the enrolment form are always the same e.g. cooking, driving...”

The other four respondents seem to consider the current role of volunteering in a positive light. Their replies are:

“I think there are a lot of people doing volunteering in politics and culturally.”

“I don’t think there is a void anywhere, many individuals help without any fuss or praise both locally and abroad. What is needed really is financial backing and administrative help that support the growth of organisation.”

The verbatim quotes all seem to be in agreement on what the

role of volunteering should be. They range from the need to have umbrella mechanisms that would encourage coordination rather than duplication of work to more accountability. The respondents contend that:

“I think the role of volunteering should be that of complementing what the government is doing and not the government depending on support groups to provide the after-care services. As NGOs, we can only give the benefit of our experience, not professional advice. This is where I believe government is wrong: they are depending upon NGOs to do the work for them; we are saving them a lot of time and a lot of money. I am sorry, it shouldn’t be like that!”

“The ideal would be for people to dedicate time to others selflessly. I know many people do it for their family and friends, but being selfless and doing it for the benefit of society in general is another thing. I think they should contribute to society in that way.”

“Volunteering should be given the value it deserves.”

“Malta is a country that lacks umbrella mechanisms. People in Malta are afraid of the work coordination because many believe that there is a lot of duplication, but duplication is healthy because it keeps us on our toes as we have to compete for funds and be accountable. In this way, end service users also have a choice where to go. We need an umbrella organisation that trains volunteers, that keeps a national database on what each NGO is doing. This creates networking and sharing of experiences.”

Legal framework

1 OVERVIEW OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

The Voluntary Organisations Act, published in 2007 is the most important law.

The new law defines what the basic criteria for qualifying as an NGO should be and ensures their proper regulation. It allows regulating voluntary organisations and their administration. The document is divided into 10 parts titled: Preliminary; Voluntary Organisations; Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations; Register of Voluntary Organisations; of Appeals and the Board of Appeal; Right of Appeal and Dispute Resolution; Offences; Council for the Voluntary Sector; Voluntary Organisations Fund; General.

Although most NGOs already operate within the correct parameters established by the new law, some have evolved without the proper statutes or structures in place and the transparency and accountability to their members which are so important to a well-regulated environment for voluntary help to work successfully. The new law defines what the basic criteria for qualifying as an NGO should be and ensures their proper regulation. In this crucial respect, it lays down that those existing organisations that are not independent of the government will be given four years within which to come into line. It is important now that NGOs should enrol under the law. This will give them proper legitimacy and also access to funding, especially EU funding, whose rules about the legal status of NGOs are rightly very tightly drawn. Closely following on their formal enrolment as NGOs under the law will be the establishment and composition of the NGO Council, whose key roles will be to assist the commissioner to provide a forum for voluntary organisations and to administer the Volunteer Organisation Fund.

1.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

New coalitions and networks are being formed, providing an international perspective, and effectively participating in campaigns that would have been totally ineffective in isolation. For example, some environmental organisations, the SSCN, the Marine Life Care Group, Arbor and Verde, have decided to team up and make better use of human and other resources to present a united and stronger front as Nature Trust. Three development organisations, the Third World Group, Koperattiva Kummerc Gust and Kopin, are coordinating their work and furthering their aims together while respecting each organisation's distinctive characteristics through the Forum for Justice and Cooperation.

1.2 THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS ACT

All types of voluntary organisations enrich their societies in many ways and are encouraged and supported by governments through the enactment of legal frameworks.

Those organisations that provide public benefits receive further support through fiscal benefits such as tax exemptions, incentives for philanthropy, grants and permission for fundraising through public collections.

The following draws on the Voluntary Organisations Act, Chapter 492.

An enrolled organisation may

- Receive or be the beneficiary of grants, sponsorships or other financial aid from the Government, any entity controlled by the Government or the Voluntary Organisation Fund.
- Be the beneficiary of any policies supporting voluntary action as these may be developed by the Government.
- Receive or be the beneficiary of exemptions, privileges or other entitlement in terms of any law.
- Be a party to contracts and other engagements, whether against remuneration or not, for the carrying out of services for the achievement of its social purpose at the request of the Government or any entity controlled by the Government.

2 PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

In an effort to join forces, 23 non-governmental organisations have set up the first ever NGO Federation in Malta. The Statute was signed on 18th April 2007. The National Federation of NGOs of Malta (NFNM) aims to represent the interests of NGOs working in all sectors and to strengthen the role of NGOs within civil society. NFNM encourages all the NGOs in Malta to join the Federation. It works towards developing policies and practices to promote and assist NGOs and it also facilitates and promotes communication between NGOs and lobby on issues that are of concern to NGOs. Non Governmen-

tal Organisations play a vital role in developing an active civil society and thus enriching democracy in Malta. The needs and challenges of individual Maltese NGOs working in different sectors of the community are often shared. The Federation monitors the legal framework within which NGOs operate and it ensures that it adequately reflects the needs and practices of NGOs. The founding members of the Federation include *Arka* Foundation, *Din l-Art Helwa*, SOS Malta, Centre for Faith and Justice, BirdLife Malta, Oasi Foundation, Cana Movement, Friends of the Earth, Hospice Movement, *Razzett tal-Hbiberija*, Friends of the Sick and the Elderly in Gozo, Jesuit Refugee Services, Gozo NGOs Association, Gaia Foundation, Nature Trust, Malta Gay Rights Movement, Malta Society of the Blind, Malta Breastfeeding Organisation, Malta Archaeological Society, Moviment Graffiti, YMCA, Ramblers Association and the Eden Foundation. In parallel, the role of the Malta Resource Centre is to facilitate the process and the day to day administration: this means that the NGOs which are member organisations of the Federation can focus on the content and core work especially to influence policies and plans. This is a good opportunity for all the Maltese NGOs to develop further and to build synergy.

3 FISCAL POLICIES

Crucially, in Malta, foundations fall into the “voluntary organisations” category. Article 2 of the Voluntary Organisations Act defines a “voluntary organisation” as a foundation, a trust, an association of persons or a temporary organisation which is independent and autonomous. If the foundation is a social purpose foundation or is not for profit making, it can be registered as a voluntary organisation. Only philanthropic foundations are eligible for tax exemption, though some entities like political parties and band clubs have particular exemptions in the Income Tax Act, though these are rarely foundations but associations of persons.

As there are currently no fiscal benefits for organisations pursuing purposes beneficial to the public, other than tax exemptions rarely acceded to organisations’ own taxes and then only on a basis of Min-

isterial (Finance) discretion, such benefits are not likely to be part of the framework. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the tax regime is regressive and inconsistently applied. Some organisations are apparently taxed on gross income, others on net income. The basis for interpreting the rules is difficult to ascertain. Unsurprisingly, non-compliance with the system is rumoured to be significant. It should be noted that tax collection problems with all sectors of society feature regularly in the Maltese media. Legal and fiscal frameworks that support and facilitate voluntary organisation' development will undoubtedly take time, as well as patience and persistence on all sides.

There are no rules exempting donations and grants when received by voluntary organisations, but these are usually treated like capital and so do not attract taxation. It is expected that the income of voluntary organisations will not be taxed. In practice, income from grants or fundraising is not taxed as it is not treated as "income", but monies raised from activities are liable to tax, subject to specific exemptions in some cases, such as exemption from VAT.

From the donor's perspective, the system is very unfavourable and there are only a few rules supporting heritage organisations which allow deductibility of donations in the donor's tax return. No tax incentives are available for individual donors and, when allowed, only cash donations are deductible. The limit of tax incentive is 2,400 Euros. Donations to non-resident public benefit foundations are not tax deductible.

4 ROLLS AND REGISTERS

The Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations has recently been set up to regulate the voluntary sector. A publication dated 11 December 2007 states that there will be a Register of Voluntary Organisations which will be maintained by the Commissioner and will contain the following information fields: name of organisation; address; registration number (if registered as a legal person); names/addresses of the administrators of the organisation. For foreign/international organisations resident in Malta: name and address

of the representative of the organisation that is resident in Malta; a copy of the constitutive deed (and any amendments); a copy of the annual accounts for the last financial year; annual reports of the organisation; annual accounts of the organisation (including auditors report where legally applicable).

Voluntary organisations registered will be classified by their principle purpose (or, alternatively, how the Commissioner deems fit). A unique number is given to each organisation upon registration (starting "VO"); it is expected that this number will then be used consistently by the organisation on all its published materials, communications, etc.

Enrolment is an option which the Voluntary Organisations Act gives to all voluntary organisations.

A voluntary organisation will be enrolled with the Commissioner if it qualifies as a voluntary organisation under article 3 of the Voluntary Organisations Act. Article 3 requires that the voluntary organisation is

- Established by a written instrument.
- Established for a lawful purpose, that can be a social purpose or any other purpose which is lawful.
- Not for profit making.
- Voluntary.
- Independent of the state.

An enrolled organisation may receive or be the beneficiary of grants, sponsorships or other financial aid from the Government, any entity controlled by the Government or the Voluntary Organisations Fund. It can be the beneficiary of any policies supporting voluntary action as these may be developed by the Government and receive or be the beneficiary of exemptions, privileges or other entitlements in terms of any law. Also, it can be a party to contracts and other engagements, whether against remuneration or not, for the carrying out of services for the achievement of its social purpose at the request of the Government or any entity controlled by the Government.

It is beneficial for an organisation to enrol since that organisation will then qualify for certain privileges. If a voluntary organisation does

not enrol, it cannot make public collections without the permission of the Commissioner of Police, it cannot receive grants or enter into co-operation contracts with the Government of Malta and it will not be able to avail itself of the support of the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations or be a beneficiary of the positive policies which government entities are bound to provide in favour of enrolled voluntary organisations. A non-enrolled voluntary organisation will also not be able to use the “VO” status in its name or on its logos and letterheads.

Enrolment of a voluntary organisation under this Act shall not imply that

- The organisation has legal personality.
- It is a registered organisation, in terms of the Second Schedule

to the Civil Code.

- The liability of its administrators under applicable laws is affected in any manner.

When registering under the Civil Code as a legal person, which is not mandatory but may be desirable in specific cases, the registration fees chargeable are reduced by 90% to only 10% of the normal registration fees.

5 LIST OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Voluntary Organisations Act, 2007.

Volunteers involving organisations

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 ORGANISATIONAL FORMS

The most popular form of not for profit organisations is a corporation. For most purposes, the law treats a corporation as a person, the same as any human being. It has its own name and the equivalent of a social security number. A corporation can enter into contracts, incur debts and hire and fire its own employees. The corporate form has many advantages. A corporation's debts are not the personal liability of its members. A corporation can have a perpetual existence, sue and defend suits, hold, use and transfer property and adopt assumed names for conducting business. A corporation can own or control other corporations. A not for profit corporation can even own one or more business corporations.

2 RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLIC SECTOR

2.1 OVERVIEW

Government and supranational bodies further demonstrate their appreciation of these publicly-beneficial organisations through including them in the policy-making and delivery process. They should at least be consulted at all stages of drafting legislation and regulation that affects them, according to the conclusions of a Council of Europe multilateral meeting. Many of the European Union institutions actively involve NGOs in the institutions' decision-making process to improve its effectiveness and to relay information back to the local level. The Commission extends this to policy delivery. However, there are some problems; actually it is difficult for organisations to navigate their way to being part of the policy-shaping or delivery process.

2.2 FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW (INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES)

All five interviewees seem to agree that the major needs of volunteer organisation move around financial resources, premises and volunteer commitment. The availability of funds would certainly make it possible for volunteer organisations to employ professional staff who would enhance image and their work on a professional level. Moreover, more funds would put organisations in a better position to apply for highly competitive EU projects. As one re-

spondent puts it: *"We always have big plans, but the problem is where to get the money."* More funds would also make it possible for organisations to purchase or rent their own premises where they would be able to meet and work together on a regular basis.

Serious commitment by volunteers is another key need for the organisation. One interviewee suggests that commitment comes with offering tasks that are compatible with the skills of each respective volunteer rather than the usual menial jobs usually offered to whoever wants to dedicate time to others.

The volunteers' response to the question regarding the relationship between volunteer organisations and the public sector seems to present a mixture of subjective feelings and experiences. At one end of the spectrum, the reply is: *"They're worlds apart"*, at the other end of the spectrum, the response is: *"It is going very well."* Most respondents suggested that the public sector should be looking at volunteer organisations as a source of information, complementing government initiatives. One fine example quoted by respondents is the work undertaken by Volserv volunteers at Malta's state hospital Mater Dei.

A similar initiative between government and volunteer organisations could happen in shelters for the homeless, in shelters for victims of domestic violence. The study participants contend there is substantial opportunity for collaboration between the public sector and NGOs where government would take a leading role in setting up projects and voluntary organisations would be responsible for project implementation. The respondents add that mutual trust is essential and that everything should be done above board. One respondent says: *"[in Malta] we have the value of solidarity, which I think helps."*

In questionnaires the relationship is seen limited and poor. It has potential but it is far from being fully developed. The public sector has excess human resources, so volunteering is seen by them as a threat. More public/private partnerships are required to create service agreements to reduce duplication in various sectors.

The participation of the voluntary sector in the definition of public policies is seen as extremely important, but very limited and minimal. All NGOs have a role to play and all can contribute but it is critical that civil society is represented in public policy.

Data overview

1 RESEARCH AND STATISTICS HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

During 2007, a survey was conducted by the National Statistics Office among 330 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Malta and Gozo. Membership and religious organisations comprised the largest group of NGOs, amounting to 153 units and accounting for 46 per cent of NGOs that were surveyed. There were 85 NGOs performing social work activities without accommodation, making up 26 per cent of the total. A total of 1,753 permanent residents were recorded; the majority being females and accounting for 63 per cent of the total (Table 1)

Table 1 Distribution of residents in NGOs by sex, age and type of residence

	Age group	Permanent residents	Temporary residents	Day care services
Males	0-17	112	279	286
	18-24	58	184	61
	25-64	277	333	174
	65+	206	4	14
	Total	653	800	535
Females	0-17	129	341	215
	18-24	22	134	47
	25-64	336	374	120
	65+	613	16	12
	Total	1,100	865	394
Total	0-17	241	620	501
	18-24	80	318	108
	25-64	613	707	294
	65+	819	20	26
	Total	1,753	1,665	929

Source: News Release 230/2008, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Nearly half the permanent residents were aged 65 and over. Temporary residents totalled 1,665 with 42 per cent within the 25-64 age bracket and quite balanced between male and female residents. Males tended to opt more for day care services than females. Most of the persons benefitting from day care services fell within the 0-17 age group, in fact, 54 per cent were in this age bracket. A total of 86,125 persons were members of an NGO; of these 81 per cent were paying members (Table 2).

Table 2 **Distribution of NGO members by type of membership and NGOs' main activity**

Main activity	Paying members	Non-paying members	Total
Human health activities	25,032	635	25,667
Veterinary activities	4,030	118	4,148
Social work activities with accommodation	812	713	1,525
Social work activities without accommodation	2,839	2,274	5,113
Membership and religious organisations	37,459	12,213	49,672
Total	70,172	15,953	86,125

Source: *News Release 230/2008*, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Membership and religious organisations had the largest number of paying members with 53 per cent of the total. Most of the non-paying members (77 per cent) were involved in membership and religious organisations. This was followed by social work activities without accommodation (14 per cent). Beneficiaries of services provided by NGOs totalled 76,101. Of these, 75 per cent were females. More than half of these beneficiaries fell into the 65+ group and 42 per cent were aged 25-64. Most of the NGOs operate with the help of voluntary workers, a total of 5,674 voluntary workers were reported. There were also 1,097 full-time and 762 part-time employees (Table 3).

Operational staff for full-time, part-time and voluntary workers accounted for the largest proportion of all workers at 62 per cent, 66 per cent and 58 per cent respectively. An estimated total of €31 million was spent by the 330 NGOs surveyed. Approximately half of this expenditure was reported as being attributable to staff wages and

salaries. Operational costs and donations emerged as the next major expense for most NGOs, accounting for 16 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. Social work activities with accommodation reportedly incurred the most expenses: expenditure attributed to these organisations accounted for nearly half the total expenditure of NGOs. A total income of €37 million was reported by the NGOs. Donations accounted for 44 per cent of this total income, according to the survey. Services provided by the NGOs generated 22 per cent of the total in-

Table 3 **Beneficiaries of services* provided by NGOs by sex and age**

Age group	Males	Females	Total
0-17	912	834	1,746
18-24	1,351	1,057	2,408
25-64	4,433	27,197	31,630
65+	12,147	28,170	40,317
Total	18,843	57,258	76,101

* excludes persons availing themselves of residential services only.

Source: *News Release 230/2008*, National Statistics Office, Malta.

come. Organisations performing social work activities with accommodation also generated most of the income, making up 46 per cent of the total income that was earned by all NGOs.

2 ECONOMIC AND STATISTICAL INDICATORS

Information is provided in the current tables.

Table 4 Distribution of NGO members (paying and non-paying) by NGOs' main activity, sex and age

	Age group	Human health activities	Veterinary activities	Social work activities with accommodation	Social work activities without accommodation	Membership and religious accommodation	Total
Males	0-17	457	76	226	825	3,088	4,672
	18-24	984	165	80	206	6,302	7,737
	25-64	264	603	339	1,353	10,809	13,368
	65+	6,902	1,323	45	289	4,281	12,840
	Total	8,607	2,167	690	2,673	24,480	38,617
Females	0-17	206	30	112	333	3,305	3,986
	18-24	1,962	281	77	174	4,312	6,806
	25-64	681	505	434	1,520	12,075	15,215
	65+	14,211	1,165	212	413	5,500	21,501
	Total	17,060	1,981	835	2,440	25,192	47,508
Total	0-17	663	106	338	1,158	6,393	8,658
	18-24	2,946	446	157	380	10,614	14,543
	25-64	945	1,108	773	2,873	22,884	28,583
	65+	21,113	2,488	257	702	9,781	34,341
	Total	25,667	4,148	1,525	5,113	49,672	861,245

Source: *News Release 230/2008*, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Table 5 Recurrent expenditure and income distribution by NGOs main activity

	Human health activities	Veterinary activities	Social work activities with accommodation	Social work activities without accommodation	Membership and religious accommodation	Total
Total expenditure	4,813,252	804,652	14,886,521	5,773,623	4,443,476	30,721,797
Staff wage and salaries	3,052,472	0	9,373,209	1,135,535	1,552,415	15,113,631
Other staff costs	116,354	160,952	209,108	178,443	168,824	833,681
Maintenance and operational costs	556,747	393,425	2,382,056	368,534	1,109,181	4,809,943
Donations in cash or in kind	1,367	54,761	261,328	3,027,139	221,998	3,566,593
Other expenditure	1,086,312	195,487	2,660,802	1,063,972	1,391,058	6,397,649
Total income	4,994,183	2,163,325	17,032,499	7,961,423	5,217,426	37,368,856
Membership fees	120,521	69,389	60,852	15,487	368,544	634,793
Private donations; fund raising activities	1,573,203	1,584,944	6,156,962	5,391,892	1,819,409	16,526,410
Government subsidies and international grants	2,027,985	27,485	3,514,980	599,059	1,035,491	7,205,000
Income from services provided	960,001	254,622	4,958,662	1,200,828	710,810	8,084,924
Other income	321,474	226,884	2,641,043	754,158	1,283,171	4,917,730

Source: News Release 230/2008, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Table 6 Distribution of NGO employees by sex and type of employment

Type of employment		Males	Females	Total
Full-time	Director/managerial staff	57	36	93
	Administrative staff	39	76	115
	Operational/technical staff	163	514	677
	Elementary occupations	65	147	212
	Total	324	773	1,097
Part-time	Director/managerial staff	16	8	24
	Administrative staff	24	64	88
	Operational/technical staff	11	395	506
	Elementary occupations	42	102	144
	Total	193	569	762
Voluntary workers	Director/managerial staff	338	253	591
	Administrative staff	403	611	1,014
	Operational/technical staff	1,102	2,204	3,306
	Elementary occupations	312	451	763
	Total	2,155	3,519	5,674

Source: *News Release 230/2008*, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Table 7 Distribution of NGOs by main activity

Main Activity	Number	% Total
Human health activities	18	5.4
Veterinary activities	18	5.4
Social work activities with accommodation	56	17.0
Social work activities without accommodation	85	25.8
Membership and religious organisations	153	46.4
Total	330	100.0

Source: *News Release 230/2008*, National Statistics Office, Malta.

Voluntary involvement in certain sectors, such as in the social field, has been in Malta for some time, providing services for disabled persons, youth, older people, families and poor people. More recently other specific groups such as prisoners and refugees have also been included. Other initiatives, such as those aimed at improving relations between generations, although common in Europe, are still not to be found locally.

2.1 FUNDING

Tentative Programme on EU Funding Opportunities available to Maltese consists of seven sessions. First is the introduction to EU funding. Second is the written preparation for participation. Third is the main funding programme. Fourth is the writing of a proposal. This includes researching for a project idea, forming a partnership, organizing the actual writing of proposal, work plan, calculating and assigning a budget and collecting all necessary documents for submission. Fifth is about the situation after submission of the proposal. The topics are submission and evaluation, following the result, project implementation, coordination and technical management and financial management.

2.2 GROWTH TRENDS

Recent growth trends include many organisations that cooperate to share their skills and knowledge. The current major challenge for voluntary organisations is to become more efficient, more able to set goals and evaluate the work they are doing and better at generating and seeking funding, in other words, to become more professional. This professionalisation carries two inevitable risks: the risk of losing the characteristic value base and flexibility currently associated with voluntarism and the risk of being used as non-paid labour. These and other pitfalls can best be avoided by providing training for volunteers and investing in the capacity building of organisations. The NGO Fed-

eration in Malta works to develop skills of volunteers and capacities of the organisations. Once more, it is important to underline that the Federation monitors the legal framework within which NGOs operate and it ensure that it adequately reflects the needs and practices of NGOs. The NGOs which are member organisations of the Federation can focus on the content and core work especially to influence policies and plans. This is a good opportunity for all the Maltese NGOs to develop further and to build synergy.

Also, they can greatly influence government policies and negotiate equally by cooperating with each other. For example, in January 2004, a group of 20 NGOs formed a working group to push the process forward. By June, the group, now called the Non-Governmental Organisation Legislation Working Group (NGOLWG), drew up a Memorandum of Proposals for NGO Legislation, which was submitted to the Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity. Each meeting and communication was initiated by the NGOLWG. At each meeting, the group was assured that many of its points were "taken on board" in the White Paper and draft legislation, but was not allowed to verify this for itself by looking at the document.

3 OF VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANISATIONS (INTERVIEWS)

Motivations and barriers

Motivations for volunteering seem similar in that all the respondents feel an urge to do something good for others. The quotes are presented verbatim so as to enhance clarity in the voice of volunteers in the study.

"It's wanting to change something or want something to happen or we don't agree with the way it is happening, you feel you want to do something that needs to be done. In my case, instead of being angry or feeling depressed, I decided to right a wrong and that was my way of coping with the situation."

"Motivation is the urge we feel inside us to change the world. Volunteers want to change things to the positive."

"I started when very young, I don't know why, I just like people. I was also greatly influenced by Mother Theresa and her nuns who work all day every day with the poor and the sick and I said: 'What am I doing?' I feel that, if you have certain privileges like money, skills or intelligence, I think they have to be shared. Some people would like to help, but don't know how to set about helping."

"For me personally, I have always wanted to have meaning in life, that is how I derive meaning by giving support to others. I have always sought training in volunteering as otherwise I could create more problems than solving them. Training is important. I think many look for an avenue to socialise and find new friends and other might have a psychological problem which they think will be solved through volunteering in that particular area. Also for pure altruism, where one person wants to be of service to another without any agenda or reasons related to oneself."

"I am motivated by the feedback that I have done something good in someone's life. To me that is very motivating and makes it all worthwhile; but I think other people have other motivations and reasons for volunteering. Some start volunteering because they have time on their hands and volunteer because they know that when they don't feel like doing it they just don't go. People who choose volunteering to make a difference in people's lives are more competent and more committed, because they want to do it for others and not themselves. I think there is a big difference."

Obstacles to volunteering may be the result of a shortage of time, financial costs and lack of awareness of how to get started. The five respondents suggest the following reasons for some not to engage in volunteering.

"Time. I think many people would like to help, but when it comes to the crunch they cannot because they do not have the time. It is not a question of willingness but time."

"Because volunteering means spending a lot of time doing things that would not directly benefit your family, you're not getting paid, many would prefer finding a part-time job or after a day's work they would prefer to spend time with their family."

"Apart from family responsibilities, I think that people are afraid of financial expenses. Another de-motivator is the lack of contacts and not knowing how to go about it. But Mother Theresa would quickly tell them that charity begins at home: maybe your grandmother needs help, maybe your neighbour needs help, maybe the person down the road needs help, and that could be the leading road when you start giving of yourself and your time."

"I really don't know why people do not get involved in volunteering, I really don't know why. When I interview people for a job, I ask them whether they have ever volunteered or helped out in some way, because it is important and when they say no, I simply cannot understand."

"The set-up of the organisation. It is very difficult to find ways of volunteering after office hours, that is one problem that a prospective volunteer might find when they have full-time employment. Another is lack of awareness by the organisation of each person's skills. Organisations are not open to getting to know in a clear manner what the skills of each individual are. They do not evaluate the skills of a volunteer. They say they need people to do coffee, but they might not be seeing the skills of volunteers who could be used elsewhere. I find that very lacking in organisations and I can see it in many organisations I have been involved in. There are skills that many NGOs can use and the volunteer is very willing to do, but the skills remain invisible and unknown."

Needs and challenges

To most respondents, the key needs are funds, premises and commitment by the volunteers. It is clear that a formal structure in the Third Sector of the economy is well overdue. The respondents point to:

"Premises. Then we could have a full-time employee and apply for EU funding and not have to rely on other methods for raising funds."

"Premises. Because we are growing, but premises cost money."

"It is always funding. We do not have a recurring budget so, as a voluntary organisation, we have to flog and work hard to raise funds and there is a lot of competition."

"Commitment from volunteers. We are lucky, because we have more volunteers on our books than we actually use, but the picture might change if we offer other services."

The lack of a formal structure and financial assistance by the state give rise to difficulties that NGOs must face on a daily basis. These include rivalry and reluctance towards cooperation and networking. For example:

"Lack of manpower, premises and funds."

"There are organisations which are at loggerheads. There is a kind of rivalry between groups of volunteers. If we all join forces and work as a team, we could do much more good."

"The mentality of people who do not understand why we do this work. Also there is the suspicion about the money and what we are doing with it. It is important to go back to the people and tell them how the money is spent."

"The image of volunteering in Malta has changed. There was a time when people would volunteer for many hours a week, but this is changing with more women going out to work, others are doing part-time courses. All these activities reduce the hours people have for voluntary work."

"Financial resources, as always! We always have big plans, but the problem is where to get the money. To be frank, we get assistance from the government as well, but it is never enough."

Representation and coordination bodies

1 THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF NGOS OF MALTA

The National Federation of NGOs of Malta (NFNM) aims to represent the interests of NGOs working in all sectors and to strengthen the role of NGOs within civil society. NFNM encourages all the NGOs in Malta to join the Federation. It works towards developing policies and practices to promote and assist NGOs and it also facilitates and promotes communication between NGOs and lobby on issues that are of concern to NGOs. Non-Governmental Organisations play a vital role in developing an active civil society and thus enriching democracy in Malta. The needs and challenges of individual Maltese NGOs working in different sectors of the community are often shared. The Federation monitors the legal framework within which NGOs operate and it ensures that it adequately reflects the needs and practices of NGOs.

2 NETWORKING (INTERVIEWS)

All respondents seem to suggest that organisations in Malta find it difficult to cooperate and work together. These verbatim quotes support previous responses that point to a culture where networking is outside the Maltese culture for reasons such as “being possessive” and “fear of being swallowed up”.

“In some cases, networking has worked, but sometimes we tried other things which did not work. I find that we have the problem of being possessive. We’re very jealous of the service that we give, which might be a good sign, after all, as we would improve the quality of the service.”

“There are organisations that would relish in collaboration and networking and other who are afraid of it because they are set in their own ways and are afraid of collaboration and do not want to do it. We collaborate with a lot of organisations, but it is not formalised.”

“Difficulties of networking because of the fear of being swallowed up, be taken over or lose identity. It is difficult to get through to big organisations that have made a name for themselves.”

“My experience is that we have to work mafia style but, yes, it is in the Mediterranean. Networking is not based on the heads and official channels, you must be familiar with the people involved, you must be on a friendly relationship and, of course, networking means establishing friendship with other organisations that will be helping you, not through formal channels, PR is very important.”

“We tried to amalgamate, but it did not work. It was like a hierarchy. We had problems trying to come together. The Federation was supposed to be that, but it just didn’t work.”

Support bodies

1 SUPPORT MEASURES (QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS)

Although networking and cooperation between voluntary organisations seem problematic in Malta, optimistic views are presented here with reference to the measures that support volunteering. For example, the respondents mention the NGO Liaison Unit, the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteer Organisations and the NGO Act.

"The NGO Liaison Unit is a government department within the Ministry for Social Policy and their job is to receive applications from NGOs and offer them support, financial or in some other way. I don't know whether they were set up because there wasn't any framework, but they give us financial assistance and check if the work we do is transparent and runs professionally."

"I think volunteering in Malta is strongly supported by government, even for the obvious reason that it costs government little or nothing. In Malta, we also have the Commissioner for Volunteers, so I think there is very strong support for volunteering and the structures and infrastructures, although they could be improved."

"Now that we have legislation, it has made people more aware of our existence, of our work, and the necessity of volunteering and also awareness of the financial value that we provide to government, too, in the way of giving all this work for free. I think even the government needs to learn more about the structure and how they can give us support."

"We now have new legislation, primarily on volunteer organisations, and there is a national structure now and the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteer Organisations which is engaging in public dialogue, to a limited extent, but it's dialogue with public sector bodies and policy makers and there is a National Council for Volunteer Organisations, made up of volunteers who represent the voluntary organisation sector, which is working on a number of initiatives. Foremost is the formulation of guidelines for the sector in the area of volunteering and managing volunteer organisations. These

are the measures which are the result of the direct impact of the legislation passed last year."

"We have the NGO Act but, unfortunately, not all NGOs are registered. We have a Commissioner, but it is all formalities right now. I don't think there has been any practical implementation of the Act. Above all, there should be proper training for volunteers, which up until now depends on the organisation. You could end up volunteering without proper training but, even if you are running around with a tea trolley, you need proper training because you are meeting clients who are in difficult situations. Some form of minimum training should be a prerequisite for volunteers."

Financial assistance both from government and the European Union are key measures that would support volunteering in Malta. Additionally, employer support by including volunteering in their corporate responsibility charters is also essential for the development of NGOs:

"More funding from the government would definitely help."

"The main problem for lots of volunteers is administrative powers and lack of skills. In Malta, we also have what is called 'donor fatigue' because everyone goes to the same people for sponsorships. We need some form of backing to provide that financial gap."

"At the moment, the major need is to tap EU funding but, if you are a public sector agency, the government will cover the course of training. For NGOs this is not possible. So, despite all the energy and services provided by voluntary organisations, they still cannot tap into these financial resources."

"Employer support by including volunteering in their corporate responsibility charters, government initiatives in assisting volunteers and having an NGO Commissioner helps a lot, as volunteering has to be regulated."

"Since the EU requires us to employ one permanent officer, government should provide that person on secondment with the organ-

isation. Financial support is a major problem, as we do not even have premises where to meet and we work from a garage."

2 VOLUNTEER SUPPORT CENTRES

2.1 MALTA RESOURCE CENTRE

In Malta, Malta Resource Centre (MRC) has fulfilled important roles to stimulate volunteer activity.

It is an organisation for civil society non-governmental organisations. It was set up in 2004 following Malta's membership in the EU. The main aim of MRC is to provide capacity building as a means to help NGOs and groups working for social change, development, health, environment, culture and the fight against poverty and social exclusion in becoming more effective and efficient and better equipped to operate and participate within the European

Union, specifically to influence policies and plans and access EU funds.

MRC seeks to engage the business sector in a corporate social responsibility approach to support its operations through sponsorship of projects.

MRC seeks to apply for funding through Government grants. MRC seeks to apply for EU funding to operate its projects.

The mission of MRC is the capacity building of the Maltese civil society non-governmental organisations involved in working for social change, development, and the fight against poverty and social exclusion, through sharing of information and best practices, consultations, training and research.

Its 2004-2007 objectives:

- Networking NGOs and information for NGOs through a website.
- Capacity building - Training and resources.
- Volunteering systems.

Focus on support bodies

(Questionnaires)

Malta Hospice Movement

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The Malta Hospice Movement is a voluntary organisation that helps persons suffering from cancer or motor disease and supports their families.

The Hospice Movement exists to promote the highest standards of palliative care, to improve patients' quality of life and to support their families. Palliative care is provided through a professional multi-disciplinary team trained and specialised in palliative care with backup of trained volunteers.

It is considered an achievement when a patient passes through a good death, e.g. patient and family were prepared for the process of bereavement.

Member of the European Association of Palliative Care.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Malta Hospice Movement

-
- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| ▪ Territory covered | Malta and Gozo |
|---------------------|----------------|
-
- | | |
|--------------|-----|
| ▪ Volunteers | 176 |
|--------------|-----|
-
- | | |
|---------|---|
| ▪ Staff | 17 full time and 13 part time for volunteer support and development |
|---------|---|
-
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ▪ Volunteering support activities | TRAINING
INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION
COMMUNICATION
PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES |
|-----------------------------------|--|

“Razzett Tal-Hbiberija” (Park of Friendship)

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Razzett Tal-Hbiberija (Park of Friendship) is a local charity that provides recreational and therapeutic services to people with disabilities, free of charge. Its mission and goals are to provide free of charge quality services to over 1000 disabled children and adults in an inclusive environment. The activities implemented are: therapeutic services including physiotherapy and occupational therapy; multisensory therapy and hydrotherapy; recreational activities; health and fitness; horse riding for the disabled; creative therapies; social activities and personal development activities. It has state-of-the art facilities unique in Europe, with a range of services under one roof that is unequalled. Self-sustainable without government or statutory funding.

Member of NFMN - National Federation of Maltese NGOs.

QUESTIONNAIRES

“Razzett Tal-Hbiberija” (Park of Friendship)

▪ Territory covered	Malta	
▪ Volunteers	25	
▪ Staff	1 full time for volunteer support and development 23 full time and 20 part time for other activities	
▪ Activities	HEALTH	Rehabilitation
	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Support, relation, animation activities Re-education/reintegration
	ENVIRONMENT-NATURE-ANIMALS	Animals protection
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Work orientation
	SPORTS	Promotion of sports practice
▪ Volunteering support activities	TRAINING	Courses (with or without stage) Individual classes or seminars

Richmond Foundation

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Richmond Foundation mission and goals are to endeavour to provide optional community mental health services that address the promotion, prevention and care for good quality of life. Its activities are the provision of community services. The Foundation is a non-governmental and not for profit making organisation (VO/0017), in terms of the laws of Malta. It is a leading local NGO in the provision of community services for persons with mental health difficulties and in the promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental illness amongst the public. Hundreds of service users and clients use the services of the Foundation on an annual basis, some of whom use the services of the Foundation in a direct and intensive way, whilst others less intensively depending on their needs. In order to achieve its mission, Richmond Foundation aims to provide residential and day, community-based, rehabilitation facilities; provide opportunities for housing with support; assist persons with mental health difficulties to remain in the community and to live as full a life as possible; provide opportunities for training, employment and support at the work-place; provide services which will prevent mental health problems in the work-place from developing; promote the development of self-help in the field of mental health; assist in the promotion of good mental health within the general public/population; promote positive public awareness of mental health issues; provide training to staff within the organisation and also assist in the training of other professionals from other agencies in the mental health and other caring fields; offer psycho-social support for children with challenging behaviour, within a residential setting; offer education and assistance in Information Technology that increases the employability and enhances personal development.

Richmond Foundation is a member of

- The Global Alliance of Mental Illness Advocacy Networks–Europe
- The European Anti-Poverty Network
- The Malta Federations of NGOs
- The Malta Health Network

QUESTIONNAIRES

Richmond Foundation

▪ Territory covered	Malta	
▪ Volunteers	30	
▪ Staff	40 full time and part time	
▪ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Practical and emotional support
	HEALTH	Rehabilitative care Information and brief interventions Psychosocial education on mental health Mental ill health services Care and related issues
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Opportunities to enhance personal, social and leisure skills

Solidarity Overseas Service Malta

[CONTACT]

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SOS Malta, a Maltese registered NGO set up in 1991, aims at aiding people experiencing times of crisis and empowering them by providing support services and opportunities to implement development and change in their country to ensure a better quality of life. It encourages advocacy on behalf of social causes, as well as promotes models of good care and practice. In all its operations in Malta and overseas, SOS Malta also promotes volunteering for effective sustainable development. The organisation is a source of knowledge and advice about the role and contribution of volunteering and the benefits of civic engagement. SOS Malta assists all peoples through projects of a social and charitable nature, provides assistance to the poor helping them to improve quality of life, helps to enhance the knowledge and skills of those it serves, advocates on behalf of the poor, promotes models of good care and practice, works with local and international NGOs in order to achieve its aims. SOS Malta has promoted volunteering from the moment of its inception. The philosophy behind the organisation has always been one of volunteering. The philosophy was initially applied to the organisation's work linked to overseas development, emergency relief and livelihood programmes.

In more recent years, SOS Malta enhanced the promotion of volunteering even locally. SOS Malta believes that volunteers should be a key element in the implementation to all social programmes. The rich mix of skills which volunteers bring with them enlarges the scope of social programmes, but most importantly enlarges and reinforces the dimension of community support.

SOS Malta also believes that volunteers add diversity to any organisation, impact on social isolation, increase efficiency and increase enjoyment for paid staff. Currently, SOS Malta runs a national volunteering project linked to health called VolServ. This is one of the four pillars on which SOS Malta was formed and is run to-date.

Member of

- EAPN Malta - European Anti-Poverty Network Malta
- NFNM - National Federation of NGOs of Malta
- SOLIDAR - European Network of NGOs
- EUROCARERS - European Association Working for Carers
- CEV - the European Volunteer Centre
- EUNet - European Network

QUESTIONNAIRES

Solidarity Overseas Service Malta

▪ Territory covered	Malta and developing countries	
▪ Volunteers	YES	
▪ Staff	4 full time and 3 part time for volunteer support and developmen	
▪ Volunteering support activities	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE TRAINING INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION COMMUNICATION	Volunteers recruitment and co-ordination Development Volunteering Social solidarity

“Din l-Art Helwa” (This Fair Land)

[CONTACT]

Din l-Art Helwa

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This Fair Land is active in preservation, conservation and environment beside historical and cultural heritage. Its mission and goals are to promote interest in preservation and protection of historic building and monuments of places of beauty and national heritage. The organisation carries out the following activities: fundraising activities in order to look after properties held in trust under a Deed of Guardianship, and various churches dating back to the 16th century belonging to the Church. Its main achievements are restoring buildings and managing them and protecting the environment, e.g. protests against golf courses, setting up of a park in the north west of Malta.

Member of

- Europa Nostra
- INTO - International/National Trust Organisation

QUESTIONNAIRES

“Din I-Art Helwa” (This Fair Land)

▪ Territory covered	Malta and Gozo	
▪ Volunteers	150	
▪ Staff	4 part time for volunteer support and development	
▪ Activities	ENVIRONMENT – NATURE – ANIMALS	Surveillance of the environmental heritage History and architectural heritage
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Cultural promotion Surveillance in museums and art/historic sites
	HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION	

Development policies

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 PUBLIC INCENTIVES

In Malta, the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) has been set up to give a more effective voice to non-governmental organisations in Malta, in particular the main social partners. But MCESD also has a committee that focuses directly on civil society. During Malta's EU accession process, NGOs were directly involved through a specific committee known as the Malta-EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) which brought together NGOs with the negotiating team and the key government ministries and departments involved in the process. On several occasions their input helped to shape Malta's negotiating positions during negotiations.

Especially worrying is that the MFSS is responsible for legislation and regulation pertaining to voluntary organisations. Additionally, if these units designated as NGOs will be competing with independent NGOs for the public support, the latter will find sustainability all the more difficult.

2 CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

2.1 SEMINAR: TOWARDS THE INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN STRUCTURAL FUNDS

The most recent and important seminar that Malta Resource Centre at SOS Malta organised was entitled: Towards the Increased Participation in Structural Funds. Over fifty representatives from various civil society organisations, local councils and public bodies attended a seminar which the Malta Resource Centre at SOS Malta organised on Wednesday 25th of June 2008 at the Mediterranean Conference Centre. The seminar provided a forum for discussion about training, technical assistance and capacity-building needs of Maltese civil society organisations with regard to EU Structural Funds. The event was part-financed by the Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006 (European Social Fund co-financing 75%). It was organised as part of The Structural Funds Training and Technical Assistance Programme for NGOs and Civil Society Organisations 2007, a sub-project which the Malta Resource Centre implemented within the scope of the European Social Fund's Technical Assistance.

In an effort to increase the participation of the third sector in the European Social Fund, the pilot programme implemented by the Malta Resource Centre last year aimed at training civil society organisations about the project mechanisms of Structural Funds. The training programme consisted of a total of fifty training hours, spread over eight workshops held in August, September and October 2007.

During the seminar on 25th June 2008, SOS Malta presented the main outcomes and recommendations emanating from the pilot training programme. She explained that, within the spirit of the partnership principle, further training and capacity-building initiatives will need to be undertaken to ensure that the participation of Malta's third sector in projects financed through the European Social Fund is enhanced. She also referred to the sense of ownership which the sector needs to adopt towards the Structural Funds process in general and listed various measures which could be undertaken towards this end.

The Cohesion Policy at the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division explained that Technical Assistance plays a critical role for the efficient implementation of Structural Funds. In the case of Malta's Operational Programme II (European Social Fund), there is a financial allocation of Euros 5,604,705 for Technical Assistance during the seven year period 2007-2013, of which 85% will be funded by the European Community. This financial allocation is aimed at supporting the main horizontal stakeholders implementing the European Social Fund in Malta, including those public bodies which relate to the goal of enhanced participation by socio-economic partners and NGOs. A training programme will be implemented by the Malta Resource Centre as a good practice which should be followed by similar initiatives in the upcoming years.

The seminar also provided an opportunity for practical accounts to be given by Maltese civil society organisations having experienced the application and implementation processes involved in European Social Fund projects. All participants were provided with a publication which the Malta Resource Centre produced at the end of the training programme. The publication included various recommendations for future training and capacity-building initiatives for the third sector.

3 STRATEGIC GOALS

Transparency, accountability, improvement in organisational skills and collaboration will enhance the effectiveness and the public image of Maltese voluntary organisations, of all forms and purposes.

The Government can aid this process of capacity-building by enacting positive legal and fiscal frameworks, by making information easily accessible, by following the Commission's example of involving NGOs, and not just the social partners, in all stages of policy-making and delivery and by not monopolising the voluntary sector. The voluntary organisations can help themselves by becoming aware of changing trends in the global voluntary community and building cross-sectoral networks with other organisations within and beyond Malta. The public at large can also lend its support by taking interest in the development of the sector, upholding the Maltese tradition of generosity, and by holding both organisations and the Government accountable for their actions and use of public organisations to a civil society characterised by trust and collaboration. This is bound to be slow and often frustrating, but is the alternative, maintaining the status quo, viable?

4 EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE (INTERVIEWS)

Most respondents had very little to say about volunteering in other European countries. For example, their replies to the question were:

"Not an awful lot. We did have an Italian who approached us through the Federation. They were supposed to give us some information, but we never heard from them once they went back to Italy."

"I have never been involved in volunteering abroad."

"I don't know much about what goes on in other countries, except what I see on television."

One respondent who has worked as a volunteer abroad on several occasions was quick to reply: *"It has always been great fun working with the locals, lay and religious people, and also with governments."*

Another reply reflects the experience gained by one study participant who said: *"Other countries have mechanisms to encourage volunteering and to facilitate it, e.g. Britain has a system of volunteer bureaus where people can go and match their area of interest with the organisation that requires such services. Others prepare*

volunteers who want to work overseas with other aid agencies and formal courses are provided. These practices could be adopted in Malta too."

Although all respondents but one contend that they have no experience with volunteering outside Malta, a European initiative is seen as a plus for raising the profile of voluntary organisations and increasing the skills and experience of the persons working within the field.

"We could always benefit with the experience of other countries which we lack very much because we are insular. Good contacts with different countries, and not only with one, could help the organisation choose which models of volunteering would suit it best."

"The European Union gave a great boost to volunteering and Malta has profited from it. Perhaps co-financing need not be so difficult and the paper work and budget system are so complicate that it is difficult to come up with a good project in the right time, if you want to do things well."

"Any European initiative could help raise the profile of volunteering in Malta and perhaps encourage young people to contribute even more."

Thirst of knowledge about what goes on in other European countries for the sake of enhancing Malta's NGOs is what would stimulate the respondents to engage in projects with European volunteer involving organisations.

"If we could learn from each other and enhance each other's countries and collaborate closely with each other; that would be very stimulating."

"I suppose if I thought there was something in it for Malta..."

"First of all, to obtain the knowledge and skills that volunteers in other countries have and which I don't know about."

"If we can link up with other organisations with their expertise, experience and volunteer training, imagine what we can do with that!"

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Lilian **Miceli Farrugia**

Chairperson of SOS Malta. She has been involved in volunteering since her schooldays and has acquired extensive experience through her voluntary work in Albania, Kosovo, Korca and Malta. Her motivation to give up her time for others was and remains Mother Theresa who had asked her to be the Chair of her co-workers.

Jacqueline **Azzopardi**

Volunteer as local councillor in Dingli responsible for police affairs, gender, tourism and SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) and is also President of the Primary School in Dingli. Her motivation to volunteer is to bring a change in the lives of people living in the little village of Dingli.

Tessa **Anastasi**

Founder of the ADHD Support Group and is currently its PRO. She is also a member on the Malta Federation of Organisations for persons with disability and also sits on the *Kunsill Nazzjonali Persuni b'Disabilita*. Her motivation to start a support group started when a member of her family was diagnosed with ADHD. At the time, there was

no awareness about the subject and she felt that she needed to reach out to others with the information she had acquired through her own initiative.

Nora **Macelli**

Chief executive officer of the St Jean Antide Foundation. Her field of specialisation is community development. She has also worked for Caritas Malta and for 10 years was involved as a full time volunteer with other organisations overseas. She strongly believes that a person is not really fulfilled without the satisfaction of working on a voluntary basis and that all should offer their services to others less advantaged than ourselves.

Miriam **Muscat**

Volunteer for 20 years. She serves at the Malta Hospice Movement, sits on the Board of the MMDNA (Malta Memorial District Nursing Association) and also offers her free service with Volserv at the State general hospital Mater Dei. Her involvement in volunteering started after the death of a family member: she says that she wants to provide the support she did not find at a time when she was in need.

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www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/publications/freeguides.htm

INTERNET RESOURCES

e-Volunteerism

The Electronic Journal of the Volunteer Community.

www.e-volunteerism.com

[English]

Malta Resource Centre

www.mrc.org.mt

[English]

Malta in:
Volunteering across Europe. Organisations, promotion, participation.
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