

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



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Information sheet

BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF YOUTH

Malta



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1. Promotion and support of youth research

Is there a government strategy or programme for promoting and supporting research in the field of youth?

In 1992, following an approach from the Ministry of Youth and Sport the University of Malta set up an Institute of Youth Studies. This institute later developed into the Department of Youth and Community Studies within the Faculty of Social Well-Being. One of this department's main duties is to carry out research within the areas of youth and community studies.

Later, in February 2010 The Government of Malta issued Legal Notice 522 of 2010 as part of the Public Administration Act in the Laws of Malta that established [Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ as the Maltese National Youth Agency](#) intending to carry out functions related to youth affairs. The legal notice stipulates that the agency amongst other things “shall have the following functions: to undertake and co-ordinate research into specific issues aimed as assessing the state of play with respect to youth affairs.” In this regards, the agency operates on two main binaries one of which is policy mainstreaming and research.

2. Legal basis for an evidence-based approach to youth policy

Is there a reference to better knowledge on youth ensuring an evidence-based approach to youth policy in national legislation or policy strategies?

All National Youth Policy documents issued to date called for a better knowledge on youth ensuring an evidence-based approach.

The 1993 youth policy document called for research and analysis of the situation of young people through the then newly established the Institute of Youth Studies. In 1999 the National Youth Policy was revised, and it re-stated its commitment to make use of research, particularly those issued by the Department of Youth and Community Studies with the University of Malta in drawing up policies. In 2004 another National Youth Policy was issued, and it followed its predecessor's framework. The latest [National Youth Policy document](#) was issued in 2010 and it has youth research as one of the four principles that inform its mission, intending to seek accurate and up to date information on young people's needs, values and lifestyles.

In regard to policy evaluation, approximately every 4 years a Policy Review Team consults with stake holders in the field of youth such as public entities and civil society to regenerate a new policy document.

3. Structures and actors that play a role in gaining a better knowledge of young people

3.1. Departments in universities gathering knowledge on youth

The main actor is the Department of Youth and Community Studies within the Faculty of Social Well-Being.

Link: www.um.edu.mt/educ/youth

Other departments particularly those within the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Social Well-Being, both in the University of Malta, such as the Department of Psychology, Social Work, Criminology and Counseling amongst others, are also responsible for gathering knowledge.

3.2. Major public and semi-public bodies dealing with [youth research](#), public companies included

During 2012 there were 3 public bodies that conducted and published studies on young people, mainly Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, the Foundation for Social Welfare Services and the European Union Programme Agency.

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, the National Youth Agency this year published [Mirrors and Windows: Maltese young people's perception of themselves, their families, communities and society](#). As the title implies, the aim behind this study is to construct social and cultural characteristics of Maltese young people aged 13-30, their views, opportunities and also the difficulties encountered. Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ also published [Young people and Leisure](#). This study looks at how young people aged 13-30 spend their free time.

The Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), through one of its agencies 'Sedqa' published [ESPAD](#), a national Report on the 2011 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs. This report provides a scientific local picture regarding substance use, attitude and behaviour amongst 15-16 year olds in Malta compared with the reports of the past years. In turn this also thus provides us with a comparative picture on young persons' change in behaviour vis-a-vis substance abuse throughout the years.

The European Union Programme Agency (EUPA), this year published two studies. The first is European Voluntary Service – A Maltese perspective. This looks at how young Maltese people experience EVS. A second study deals with the role of young people in interreligious and cultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region entitled "Can we talk about this?" Young people passing from monologs to dialogues for the promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue in the Mediterranean.

3.3. NGOs gathering knowledge on youth

The major youth NGO's that have practical knowledge on needs and expectations of young people are the National Youth Council (KNŻ), Żgħażaġħ Azzjoni Kattolika (ŻAK), the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides.

3.4. Private companies dealing with youth research

NA

3.5. Statistical offices that collect statistics on youth

The National Statistics Office (NSO) is the executive arm of the Malta Statistics Authority. It is responsible for the collection, compilation, analysis and publication of a wide range of statistical information and related matters, amongst which are those related to young people.

Link: www.nso.gov.mt/

3.6. Directory of national youth researchers

Not applicable

3.7. National research networks on youth

Not applicable

3.8. Transnational networks on youth with relevance for national networks

Not applicable

3.9. Knowledge networks supporting youth policy

Is there a permanent national network for knowledge on youth linking all actors in the field (policy makers, researchers, young people and their organisations, NGOs)?

Agenzija Żgħażagħ, through its remit of youth policy mainstreaming, has developed a network, working both on a formal and informal manner, that links the various stakeholders in the field comprising both the entities from public and private sector.

Website: www.agenzijazghazagh.gov.mt

4. Promotion and support to youth researchers and other actors who work towards a better knowledge of youth

Not applicable

5. Publications and accessible data in the youth field/on youth

5.1. Data collections which provide updated statistics on youth (public and private)

The National Statistics Office (NSO) website hosts a significant amount of statistical information on young people ranging from Education, youth employment and unemployment, entrepreneurship, youth organisations, involvement in extra curricular activities living conditions ect.

Link: <http://www.nso.gov.mt/site/page.aspx>

5.2. Regular youth reports

On national level

[Mirrors and Windows: Maltese young people's perception of themselves, their families, communities and society](#)

This is the first issue of a National Youth report and it is intended to be issued every two years.

On regional level

[Young people in Gozo: A Study - 2](#)

5.3. National journals and reviews on youth research

Not applicable

5.4. According to publications and recent data collections: what are priority themes in the field of youth research in your country

The priority areas that emerged after analysing recent publications are minority issues and vulnerable young people.

6. IT dissemination of knowledge in the youth field

Is there a dissemination of knowledge on youth via dedicated internet portals or online publications?

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ's website hosts a section on youth research. In this section one can find both a database of studies by graduates from the Department of Youth and Community Studies and other studies published locally. The website is also in the process to start hosting links to various documents, statistical information and other scientific article on young people both local and European.

This website has both a Maltese and an English version and all its contents are freely accessible to anyone interested in the subject and it is update regularly by a Youth Information Officer.

Link: www.agenzjazghazagh.gov.mt

6.1. Web-Portals and online databases on a better understanding of youth

See above

6.2. Other

Not applicable

7. Good practice related to fostering a better knowledge of youth

Please describe methods and approaches for gaining a better understanding and knowledge of youth and for keeping it up to date.

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ launched Mirrors and Windows by organising a seminar for all local stakeholders in the field of youth. During this seminar there was the presentation of the findings and a chance to participate in one of four workshops that discussed in greater detail the key finding in particular areas.

The seminar gave the opportunity to professionals, practitioners and other stakeholders pertaining to different areas of the field of youth to come together and discuss. This also created the ideal setting for new ideas to spawn and projects to take off.