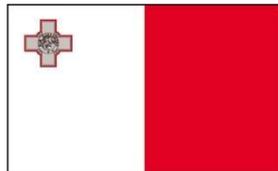


## Youth Partnership

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



# COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH POLICY IN MALTA



Last updated: November 2016

By: Jason Zammit

*Disclaimer: The content of this document, commissioned by the EU CoE youth partnership, is on the entire responsibility of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of either of the partner institutions (the European Union and the Council of Europe).*

# CONTENTS

1. Context and principles of national youth policy	2
1.1. Context of national youth policy	2
1.2. Principles of national youth policy	3
2. Statistics on young people	5
3. Actors and Structures	6
3.1. Public authorities	6
3.1.1. National public authorities	6
3.1.2. Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field	7
3.1.3. Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field	7
3.2. Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)	7
3.3. Non-public actors/structures and youth services with competencies in the youth field	8
3.3.1. Youth Councils	8
3.3.2. Youth NGOs	10
3.4. National network(s) for knowledge on youth linking all actors in the field (policy makers, researchers, young people and their organisations, NGOs)	10
4. Legislation	10
5. National Policy Programmes on youth	12
6. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth	14
7. European Dimension of youth policy	15
7.1. Council of Europe	15
7.2. European Union	15
7.2.1. Implementation of the Youth in Action programme	15
7.2.2. Follow up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level	15
8. Further sources of information on youth policy in Malta	17

## 1. Context and principles of national youth policy

### 1.1. Context of national youth policy

The first Parliamentary Secretariat for Youth in Malta was appointed in 1990. Two years later, in 1992, the [National Youth Council \(KNŻ\)](#) and an Institute for Youth Studies (now [Department of Youth and Community Studies](#)) at the University of Malta were set up. The former was established as a non-governmental organisation to represent the interests of young people through its member organisations while the latter was established to provide professional training for youth workers. During that same year the Parliamentary Secretariat was elevated to the level of a ministry and riding on that momentum it launched the first National Youth Policy in 1993. The document recognised the value of young people as a human resource and provided a framework and objectives for those working with young people. It highlighted youth information, education, employment, health, culture, family and mobility as policy priority areas.

The policy was revised in 1999 and increased the targeted cohort by including young people between the age of 14 and 30 years. The new document aimed to provide young people and policy makers with clear objectives in the political, social and economic development targeting a wide range of policy areas such as education, employment, health, housing, culture, intergenerational communication, sport, leisure and enterprise.

At this point Malta had representation on the European Steering Committee for Youth and this led to a successful application for a youth policy review by a group of experts appointed by the Council of Europe. The Review Team visited Malta in 2003, and later that year presented a report to the Parliamentary Secretariat for Youth. Following this report the National Youth Policy was revised and updated in 2004. The priority areas for this policy documents were Education; Employment; Health; Culture; Environment; Leisure; Mobility; Participation; Information Technology and Youth at Risk. The document also called for the establishment of a National Youth Agency that would eventually replace the Youth Services Department within the Ministry of Education in monitoring policy implementation.

Another policy revision was published in 2010. This was the first revision since Malta's accession to the European Union and as such it was rooted in and reflected European Youth Policy documents. The definition of youth was again extended to include young people between the ages of 13 and 30 years old. This document intended to target the holistic development of young people and highlighted a wide range of key areas, namely education, employment, health and wellbeing, youth justice, transition, culture and arts, community cohesion and volunteering, sports, leisure, environment and information technology. Most importantly it established an instrument for monitoring policy implementation – Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ – the National Youth Agency.

In 2014, the Parliamentary Secretariat for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport set up a youth policy advisory group to update the 2010 document and in 2015 a new youth policy document entitled “National Youth Policy – Towards 2020. A Shared Vision for the Future of Young People” was published. The document highlights priority areas such as education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, voluntary and community activities; arts and culture; and sports and recreational activities.

## 1.2. Principles of national youth policy

The current policy document sets out a road map for young people and policy makers up to 2020.

**Policy aims:** The document aims to effectively support and encourage the young individuals in fulfilling their potential and aspirations while addressing their needs and concerns, and to effectively support young people as active and responsible citizens who fully participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural life of the nation and Europe.

**Policy vision:** Young people should be respected, valued and listened to and be supported and encouraged in building fulfilling personal and social relationships and in developing their innate abilities and talents for the benefit of themselves, their communities and society.

### **Policy values**

Respect for the individuality, worth and dignity of every young person regardless of their beliefs, ethnicity, physical or mental capacities, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation; gender, gender identity and gender expression; for the right to have their voices heard and to be informed on all issues that concern them; and for the right to determine their own future and happiness.

Recognition of the beliefs, culture, and shared experiences of the people of Malta and the rights and principles enshrined in the Constitution of Malta, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Sustained support for all young people in developing their physical, intellectual and emotional capacities, skills, talents, strengths and abilities; in promoting their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and in fulfilling their potential and aspirations and in meeting their needs.

Solidarity of young people, families and communities so as to ensure young people’s active participation, sense of responsibility and caring, and capacity to build quality and life-enhancing relationships with their parents, siblings, peers and elders in the home, school, workplace and

community.

### **Policy principles**

**Responsiveness:** Key stakeholders such as government, civil society, religious denominations and the public and private sectors, as appropriate, should respond to the needs and concerns of young people and act in their best interests with a view to maximising their human potential ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Access:** Young people should have user-friendly access to quality services and equality of opportunity with the aim of ensuring their active participation in the economy and society ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Participation:** Young people should be consulted and be involved in all planning and decision making as active participants in their own development and in that of the wider society ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Inclusion:** Barriers and impediments to young people's active participation in the political, educational, social and economic spheres should be addressed and positive steps taken to help ensure that young people are not directly or indirectly excluded ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Integration:** Key stakeholders such as government, civil society, religious denominations and the public and private sectors should co-operate and co-ordinate their efforts to ensure greater impact in supporting the development of young people and in helping them to realise their full potential ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Diversity:** The diverse backgrounds and identities of young people should be recognised and respected and the positive role they can play in their emotional, social, cultural and spiritual development acknowledged ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Empowerment:** Young people should be enabled to take control of their own lives and to take responsibility for their decisions and actions, to forge their own future and to bring about positive social change ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

**Equality:** Every young person is of equal value and should be given equal respect, dignity and opportunity, regardless of age, experience, beliefs, ethnicity, physical and mental capacity, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression ([National Youth Policy 2015](#)).

## 2. Statistics on young people

There are 85 340 young people between the age of 15 and 29 that make up 19.8% of the total population (National Statistics Office 2016)

Age	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of global population
15	2 245	2 185	4 430	1.0
16	2 406	2 284	4 690	1.1
17	2 574	2 321	4 895	1.1
18	2 727	2 417	5 144	1.2
19	2 787	2 455	5 242	1.2
20	2 810	2 570	5 380	1.3
21	2 969	2 744	5 713	1.3
22	3 121	2 867	5 988	1.4
23	3 168	2 985	6 153	1.4
24	3 251	2 992	6 243	1.5
25	3 262	3 182	6 444	1.5
26	3 362	3 107	6 469	1.5
27	3 204	2 969	6 173	1.4
28	3 283	2 859	6 142	1.4
29	3 288	2 946	6 234	1.5

Source: [National Statistics Office](#)

### 3. Actors and structures

#### 3.1. Public authorities

##### 3.1.1. National public authorities

Ministry in charge of youth: Ministry of Education and Employment

Website: <http://education.gov.mt/Pages/default3.aspx>

Parliamentary Secretary for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport

Hon. Chris Agius

E-Mail: [chris.agius@gov.mt](mailto:chris.agius@gov.mt)

Youth Department in the Ministry: Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ [www.agenzijazghazagh.gov.mt/](http://www.agenzijazghazagh.gov.mt/)

Main tasks: Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ (National Youth Agency) was established in December 2010 (L.N. 522 of 2010) and was officially launched in February 2011. The aim in establishing Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ is to mainstream youth-related issues and further develop youth services. It enables further investment in young people and helps them realise their potential. Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ's overall objective is to provide a coherent, cohesive and unified government approach to addressing the needs and aspirations of young people.

Director responsible for Youth: Ms Miriam Teuma

Email: [miriam.teuma@gov.mt](mailto:miriam.teuma@gov.mt)

Other national public bodies which are directly involved in youth policies

Office of the Prime Minister

Website: <https://opm.gov.mt/en/Pages/primeministerhome.aspx>

Ministry for Energy and Health

Website: <https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/default.aspx>

Ministry for Gozo

Website: <http://mgoz.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>

Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security

Website: <http://homeaffairs.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>

Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties

Website: <http://msdc.gov.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity

Website: <http://mfss.gov.mt/en/Pages/MFSS%20EN%20homepage.aspx>

Other national offices/departments

Jobsplus

Website: <https://jobsplus.gov.mt/>

Department of Youth and Community Studies Faculty of Well-Being, University of Malta

Website: [www.um.edu.mt/educ/youth](http://www.um.edu.mt/educ/youth)

Commissioner for Children

Website: [www.tfal.org.mt/aboutus.aspx?lid=1](http://www.tfal.org.mt/aboutus.aspx?lid=1)

National Commission Persons with Disability

Website: [www.knpd.org/](http://www.knpd.org/)

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)

Website: [http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/NCPE\\_Home.aspx](http://msdc.gov.mt/en/NCPE/Pages/NCPE_Home.aspx)

### **3.1.2. Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

There are no regional (or federal) authorities because Malta and Gozo have one central government.

### **3.1.3. Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

The local councils

Website: <http://lc.gov.mt/>

### **3.2. Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)**

The Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS)

Website: [www.fsws.gov.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fsws.gov.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx)

### **3.3. Non-public actors/structures and youth services with competencies in the youth field**

There are no non-public actors/structures and youth services with competencies in the youth field.

#### **3.3.1. Youth councils**

National Youth Council

Website: [www.knz.org.mt/](http://www.knz.org.mt/)

The National Youth Council (KNŻ) is a voluntary and autonomous NGO that aims to promote a cross-sectoral youth policy; influence youth policy at a national and international level; increase the participation of young people and youth organisations in society as well as the decision-making process; and promote the exchange of ideas and experiences, mutual understanding and equal rights and opportunities amongst young people.

Executive Committee:

President – Michael Piccinino

Vice-President – Naomi Bugre

Secretary General – Sean Ellul

Deputy Secretary General – Graham Sansone

Financial Officer – Martina Camilleri

PR Officer – Monique Agius

Public Policy and Youth Rights Commissioner – Sara Ezabe

Youth Services Commissioner – Adrian Dominic Ellul

National Officer – Jasmine Farrugia

International and EU Officer – Neil Smart Costantino

EU Presidency Officer – Kurt Vella

Gozo Regional Officer – Eman Borg

Gozo Liaison Officer – William Vella

The Gozo Youth Council

Website: [www.gozoyouthcouncil.com/](http://www.gozoyouthcouncil.com/)

The Gozo Youth Council is an umbrella organisation that gathers the young people and youth organisations present in the island region of Gozo. The council provides a forum of dialogue for young people and a channel of information and opinions between young people and decision makers. In all, it is a representative body of young people's interests and of Gozo and a strong voice on a regional, national, European and international level.

The mission of the Gozo Youth Council is to provide a national forum for young people and youth organisations in Gozo to effectively develop, promote and advocate youth initiatives and policy making in the youth field.

The Gozo Youth Council also tackles young people's challenges whilst living on islands, and empowers their active participation in the future of our global society. The Council also advocates society's connection with nature, the link between education and job opportunities, and the economical and entrepreneurial challenges that translate to opportunities.

President – Marc Schembri

Secretary – Sabrina Portelli

Financial Officer – Damien Spiteri

Vice President – Eman Borg

International and EU Affairs Officer – Alan Cini

Events Officer – Christian Azzopardi

Policies Officer – Josmar Azzopardi

Youth Services Officer – Francesco Caruana

Members' Officer – Francienne Muscat

Local Youth Councils Officer – Josmar Saliba

Public Relations Officer – Shaun Azzopardi

## Youth Local Councils

The aim of the Youth Local Councils project is to encourage young participants to engage in research in an effort to discover the needs and aspirations of their local communities. An action plan and a budget are then prepared so as to explain how the youth local council intends to bring about the necessary changes. Young people are obliged to attend training seminars designed specifically for them. The first seminar provides a general overview of the project and what different roles within the Local Council entail. This is followed by a meeting in the respective local councils, where young people vote or agree on the roles that they will be assuming within the youth local council. The second training seminar focuses on providing young people with the skills needed for their respective roles. Following training, young people meet on a fortnightly basis in their respective local councils and discuss matters of interest between themselves.

Subsequently proposals are submitted and a committee appointed by the Organising Committee selects the best 10 projects. The whole process is facilitated by a youth worker who assists the young councillors for the duration of the project. Winning projects are awarded a maximum of €3 000, 80% being financed by Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ while the remaining 20% is financed by the respective local councils.

### **3.3.2. Youth NGOs**

The National Youth Council has 50 member youth organisations of which 41 are full members and nine are associate members.

3.4. National network(s) for knowledge on youth linking all actors in the field (policy makers, researchers, young people and their organisations, NGOs)

There are no such networks. However, since Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ has been set up it has been given the role of co-ordinating research and youth policy.

Contacts: Miriam Teuma – Chief Executive Officer: [miriam.teuma@gov.mt](mailto:miriam.teuma@gov.mt)

## 4. Legislation

The National Youth Policy has no legal foundation. However, it is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

There are no articles in the Maltese Constitution that explicitly concern young people.

In Malta there is one legislative act that defines youth work although there is no particular legislation on youth as a demographic group, as all legislation recognises laws for every inhabitant, with the following special laws for minors:

- 1) [The Youth Work Profession Act \(2014\)](#) makes provision for the regulation of the youth work profession.
- 2) [The Juvenile Court Act \(1980\)](#) sees to the setting up of a Juvenile Court and provides for matters relating to children and young persons under the age of 16.
- 3) [The Children and Young Persons \(Care Orders\) Act \(1980\)](#) makes provisions for the care of children and young persons under the age of 16.
- 4) [The Commissioner for Children Act \(2003\)](#) provides for the appointment of a Commissioner for Children with power to investigate any breaches or infringements of the rights of children. The Commissioner sees cases related to children under 18 years.

## 5. National Policy Programmes on youth

The National Youth Policy is implemented through two strategies. The first is [Youth work and services for young people](#) and the second is [Cross-sectoral support for young people](#). Each of these strategies comprise a number of Action Plans.

Policy strategy: The policy will be implemented through two specific but interdependent strategies that complement the two interrelated policy aims.

Each of the two strategies will have a number of designated Action Plans under which specific actions will be undertaken and implemented over the six-year timeframe 2015-2020.

Strategy 1 falls under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Employment and the Parliamentary Secretariat for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport will have overarching responsibility for implementing this strategic approach, while Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ will be responsible for strategic planning and day-to-day operational matters in implementing the strategy.

Strategy 2 will be co-ordinated by the relevant government ministries and entities. Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ will have overarching responsibility for promoting, co-ordinating and facilitating such cross-sectoral approaches. The focus will be on co-operation and mutual support and endeavour between relevant ministries and entities in providing programmes, projects and activities for the development of young people's potential, skills and competencies.

Strategy 1: Youth work and services for young people – services, programmes, projects and activities in support of young people and youth organisations.

Action Plan – New spaces at local community level for young people and youth organisations. Create new spaces and facilities at local community level to support the development of young people through their active involvement and participation in non-formal learning opportunities.

Action Plan – Awareness raising, listening to and supporting the voice of young people. Create initiatives and opportunities that enhance young people's social and political awareness and that enable their voices to be heard on issues that impact on their lives.

Action Plan – Initiatives for the active engagement, empowerment and participation of young people and youth organisations. Develop and implement initiatives, programmes and activities that actively involve young people and youth organisations in developing young people's competences and skills that enhance their future learning and employment prospects.

Strategy 2: Cross-sectoral support for young people – Cross-sectoral support for young people that enhances their social participation and their learning and employment prospects.

Action Plan – Education and training. Develop and implement initiatives that utilise both formal education and non-formal learning, as mutually reinforcing agents, with a view to enhancing young people's educational attainment levels and progression.

Action Plan – Health and well-being. Develop and implement initiatives that seek to improve the physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of young people and address issues that impact negatively on such well-being.

Action Plan – Employment and entrepreneurship. Develop and implement initiatives with a view to enhancing young people's participation in the labour market and their future employment, occupational or professional prospects.

Action Plan – Arts and culture. Develop and implement initiatives with a view to enhancing young people's artistic gifts and promoting cultural and artistic awareness and participation in and attendance at cultural and artistic pursuits and events.

Action Plan – Social inclusion. Develop and implement initiatives with a view to the active participation of young people with fewer opportunities and those from a migrant background.

Action Plan – Voluntary and community activities. Develop and implement initiatives to enable young people to be active members of their local communities and take responsibility for the quality of community life and the local environment.

Action Plan – Sport and recreational activities. Develop and implement initiatives to support young people's active participation in sports that enhance their physical and mental well-being, competitiveness and social relationships.

## **6. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth**

National level

In 2016 The National Youth Agency was allocated €1 250 000. Another €1 500 000 was used to develop the Youth Village.

This funding excludes all the other funding from other ministries and entities described before that offer services to young people.

Regional level

Malta has no regional authorities.

## **7. European dimension of youth policy**

This section should outline how European strategies, policy commitments and programmes are implemented at the national level.

### **7.1. Council of Europe**

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ is responsible for Council of Europe activities such as strategies, policy commitments and programmes. It is present in European Steering Committee For Youth (CDEJ) meetings and contributes to the European Youth Foundation (EYF). It makes sure that representatives of the NGO sector are present in the Council of Europe events, endorses policies such as the No Hate Campaign and contributes to Perspectives and Partnership activities.

### **7.2. European Union**

#### **7.2.1. Implementation of the Youth in Action programme**

Briefly explain how the Erasmus programme is implemented in your country and provide a link to the institution which implements this programme (national agency or other).

Please also refer to European action in the field of youth information (national website of Eurodesk).

#### **7.2.2. Follow-up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level**

EUPA (European Union Programme Agency) is in charge of the Erasmus+ Programme, and Eurodesk.

Websites: EUPA [www.eupa.org.mt/](http://www.eupa.org.mt/)

Eurodesk: <http://eurodesk.eupa.org.mt/>

#### **7.2.3. Follow-up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level**

The National Youth Policy Towards 2020 was drafted based on the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) and Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ's main units, i.e. the Empowerment Unit, the Policy Mainstreaming and Research Unit and the Outreach Unit were set up to implement the Maltese National Youth Policy and follow up the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018). A National Working Group which coordinates the Structured Dialogue with young people has also been set up through Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, the National Youth Council, the Maltese Association of Youth workers (MAY) and the European Union Programme Agency (EUPA).

## **8. Further sources of information on youth policy in Malta**

Commissioner for Children

Ministry of Education and Employment

Parliamentary Secretariat for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sport

Department of Youth Studies, University of Malta

The Foundation for Social Welfare Services

National Youth Council

European Union Programmes Agency

Gozo Youth Council

National Youth Agency

[www.agenzjazghazagh.gov.mt/Categories/803/Youth\\_Policy/](http://www.agenzjazghazagh.gov.mt/Categories/803/Youth_Policy/)