

Table 2: Reporting table on national Europe 2020 targets

Description of the measures taken and information on their qualitative impact		
Progress on Implementation	List of measures and their state of play that were implemented in response to the commitment	The estimated impacts of the measures (qualitative and/or quantitative)
National 2020 headline targets		
National 2020 employment target (70%)	<p>The Free Childcare Scheme [formerly known as “Free Childcare Centres”]</p> <p>The Free Childcare Scheme is an initiative whereby the Maltese Government provides free childcare services to parents/guardians who are in employment or who are pursuing their education with the aim to help families achieve a work/life balance.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	As at end January 2018, a marginal increase was recorded and a total of 113 registered childcare centres were benefitting from the scheme. Since the start-up of the scheme in April 2014 until January 2018, a total of 12,718 children have benefitted from this service at one point in time.
	<p>Programmes outside School Hours [formerly known as “Afternoon School Programmes in the Community”]</p> <p>Klabb 3-16</p> <p>This measure provides an after-school care service within the school setting. Homework tutors are in place in all centres assisting the students.</p> <p>In order to make the Klabb 3-16 more diverse, the Foundation for Education Services (FES) has embarked on innovative programmes that include foreign language appreciation, IT and sports.</p> <p>Skolasajf</p> <p>The Skolasajf service is offered during summer and caters for school-age children aged between 3-16 years. It extends the hours usually provided by Klabb 3-16 to offer an educational experience for children during school holidays.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>Klabb 3-16</p> <p>The Klabb 3-16 service continued to increase in demand over the previous year, with 2,716 users as at end of scholastic year 2016/2017. It has to be noted that since its inception a constant increase of participants was recorded.</p> <p>Skolasajf</p> <p>During summer 2017, the Skolasajf service catered for over 11,000 users and out of these, 1,410 used the Klabb 3-16 service. In January 2018, FES embarked on a Klabb 3-16 market research in those schools not having the Klabb 3-16 service. Schools have to forward their requests by the end of 2018.</p>
	<p>Measures to curtail Abuse of the Unemployment Register and Informal Work</p> <p>Various initiatives are being carried out to curb undeclared work and encourage more people to enter the formal economy. These initiatives include inspections being carried out by the Law Compliance Unit (LCU) within Jobsplus and the Benefit Fraud and Investigation Department (BFID) within the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity (MFCS).</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>From the start of January 2017 until the end of January 2018, a total of 4,004 inspections were carried out by Jobsplus during which 2,719 law infringements were identified. In most cases, the law infringement was due to irregular employment. Between January and December 2017, Jobsplus registered 1,173 strike-offs from its Jobseekers Register.</p> <p>During the period January-December 2017, the BFID, through its Inspectorate, conducted 1,621 on-site inspections. As a result of the investigations conducted, 957 social benefits were revised and/or suspended. It is estimated that the operations of the Department during this period resulted in savings of € 4,057,311.</p> <p>During January 2018, the Benefits Compliance Directorate within the Compliance and Investigations Division (previously the BFID) conducted, through its Inspectorate, 98 on-site inspections. As a result of the investigations conducted, 47 social benefits were revised and/or suspended. It is estimated that the operations of the Department during this month resulted in savings of € 159,892.</p>
	<p>National Apprenticeship Scheme</p> <p>The Government is committed to help students further develop their skills and improve their employability prospects. In this regard, the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) will continue offering apprenticeship opportunities that would eventually prepare students to master occupational skills and achieve career success.</p> <p>Furthermore, in 2018, students engaged under the Apprenticeship Scheme will benefit from an additional payment equivalent to a pro-rata amount of the minimum wage.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	As at January 2018, there were over 51 courses at MQF Levels 3 and 4 that form part of the Apprenticeship Scheme. The number of apprentices and enterprises involved in the Apprenticeship Scheme has increased rapidly with 849 apprentices for the year 2016/2017 and over 1,000 enterprises interested to offer apprenticeship sponsorship. As from February 2018, new apprentices will be enrolled in the Apprenticeship Scheme for the academic year 2017/2018. However, the need to continue to invest in the development of a high-quality reform is essential in order to meet the requirements of industry and tackle the existing skills gap and skills mismatch.
	<p>MCAST Entrepreneurship Centre (MEC) [formerly known as “Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme”]</p> <p>The MEC was launched in October 2014, in collaboration with Malta Enterprise, with the aim of providing students and alumni with the opportunity to transform their creative and innovative ideas into profitable and sustainable business ventures.</p>	Since its inception in 2014, the MEC has reviewed more than 60 business ideas, of which more than 30 were endorsed to benefit from the continuous support of the MEC. 10 businesses are currently making use of MEC facilities, 7 of which are already trading, with 1 operating his business on a full-time basis.

	<p>Status: Ongoing</p>	
	<p>Breakfast Club</p> <p>The Breakfast Club service is open for primary students whose parents are in employment. The service is offered in every primary State school.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>During scholastic year 2016/2017, 4,373 students benefitted from the clubs – an increase of 30% over the 2015/2016 scholastic year. During scholastic year 2017/2018, as at January 2018, 3,852 applications were received. It has to be noted that registrations remain open during the scholastic year.</p>
	<p>Youth Guarantee/NEET Activation Scheme</p> <p>The envisaged target for the second cycle of the NEET Activation Scheme is approximately 150 NEETS per annum who will undergo training or further training, or training and work exposure. It is envisaged that until 2020, 600 participants will be trained and provided with personalised support.</p> <p>Outreach activities launched in February 2017 have continued. These activities include promotion on radio stations, TV programmes, newspapers and social media.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>225 participants were profiled in Malta and Gozo and thus offered training and personalised support. Until the end of January 2018, 21 training groups were completed and to date, 89 participants have finished their training while a total of 47 participants have completed both the training and the work exposure phase. Furthermore, payments to participants are issued on a regular basis.</p>
	<p>National Skills Survey</p> <p>This survey was conducted jointly by Jobsplus, the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) and Malta Enterprise and its objective was to collect solid evidence on skills shortages and demands.</p> <p>The final complete report was published jointly by Jobsplus, the NCFHE and Malta Enterprise in 2017.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The main findings of the survey were that the vacancies that were most difficult to fill were for clerical support workers (22.2%) followed by service and sales workers (15.3%). The main reasons for hard to fill vacancies were the lack of applicants with the required skills (56.2%) or the required attitude and personality (43.7%).</p> <p>39.4% of respondents to the survey stated that only basic level of qualifications (MQF Levels 1-3) are required; 33.8% expect MQF Levels 4 and 5, while 26.7% expect MQF Level 6 and higher.</p>
	<p>Helping Single Parents to enrol into Education</p> <p>With the new amendments to the Students' Maintenance Grants (Legal Notice 308 of 2016), a student who qualifies for these grants and is a single parent in receipt of social assistance in accordance with the Social Security Act, shall be also eligible for a grant ranging from € 200 to € 1,000 depending on the MQF level of the course taken.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>During academic year 2016/2017, 27 students showed interest in the scheme and were awarded a grant. In the academic year 2017/2018, as at January 2018, 50 students are in the process of being awarded the Single Parents' Grant.</p>
	<p>Access to Employment (A2E)</p> <p>The A2E Scheme provides employment aid to enterprises in Malta and Gozo to promote the recruitment of disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged and disabled persons who are either registered job seekers, unemployed or inactive.</p> <p>The wage subsidy for disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged persons is of € 85 per week and the subsidised period may be 26 weeks, 52 weeks or 104 weeks depending under which target group the participant is found to be eligible. The wage subsidy for registered disabled persons (RDP) is of € 125 per week for a fixed period of 156 weeks.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The aid programme enhances the participant's prospects to access the labour market, bridges the gap between labour market supply and demand and increases social cohesion.</p> <p>From the start of the scheme until the end of January 2018, the A2E Unit received applications from 1,203 participants, of which a total of 791 participants were still on the scheme.</p>
	<p>National Insurance (NI) Contribution Exemption and Fiscal Incentives for Employers employing Disabled Persons</p> <p>Through this measure, employers who employ disabled persons will be exempt from paying their share of social security contributions on behalf of the disabled employees. The employer can also be eligible to claim a fiscal incentive equivalent to 25% of the RDP's basic wage. The maximum credit cannot exceed € 4,500 for each disabled employee.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>With regard to the exemption of NI contributions, from January 2015 until the end of January 2018, Jobsplus received 1,177 applications in respect of 1,142 individuals. Out of these, 457 employers were found eligible and granted the exemption of the payers' share on contributions on behalf of a total of 20 eligible employees.</p> <p>Up to November 2017, the number of RDPs in employment was 3,499 (including both full-time and part-time).</p> <p>In respect of Fiscal Incentives, from January 2015 until the end of January 2018, Jobsplus received 207 applications of which 201 were deemed eligible. Until the end of January 2018, € 356,777.05 have been disbursed in respect of 183 applications. These relate to 67 different employers with employees registered as persons with disability.</p>
	<p>Revision of the Law regulating Industrial and Employment Relations</p> <p>The Legal Notice on the process of trade union recognition was published in the Government Gazette of 9th December 2016 while the Legal Notice on adoption leave was published on 10th October 2016.</p> <p>The Legal Notice for paid leave to employees who undergo the process of medically assisted procreation was published in the Government Gazette of 30th May 2017.</p> <p>Further proposals to amend Chapter 452 of the Laws of Malta and its subsidiary instruments are in the latter stages of adoption.</p>	<p>It is expected that these measures will have the following impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better and effective regulations governing the rights of workers; - a target review of the current Act, making it more relevant to today's needs; - Overtime Regulations; - amendment in relation to disciplined forces: to provide more protective rights and representation by Unions in support of collective bargaining for better working conditions; - with regard to adoption leave, it is expected that this will lead to a better quality of life while ensuring a smooth adoption process.

	Status: On Track	
	<p>The Employment of Persons with a Disability – [formerly known as “Implementing the 2% law”]</p> <p>The aim of this measure is to encourage the employment of persons with a disability as 2% of employees in a company (employing more than 20 employees) must be persons with a disability. Companies that do not comply will be asked to make an annual contribution of € 2,400 for each disabled person they should be employing on a full-time basis.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>As at January 2018, 142 companies have been issued with a credit note for the total value of € 419,200 whilst 419 companies have paid the amount of € 1,315,600 in contributions. It has to be noted that 135 companies have not yet settled the invoices issued for a total of € 423,600.</p> <p>A substantial increase in the number of persons with a disability in employment has been noted.</p>
	<p>Work Programme</p> <p>Jobsplus, in collaboration with the private sector, is assisting long-term unemployed individuals to re-enter the labour market via the Work Programme Initiative (WPI).</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>From October 2015 up to January 2018, the number of people who signed the Work Programme contract was 1,390.</p>
	<p>Engagement of Labour Inspectors and other Staff</p> <p>The Department for Industrial and Employment Relations (DIER)'s vision is to have a complement of 12 Employment and Industrial Relations Act (EIRA) Inspectors.</p> <p>Between April and July 2017, a selection process was initiated and concluded, through which 2 new EIRA inspectors were recruited.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>With the engagement of this additional staff, the DIER will be better equipped to monitor and ensure that workers' rights are being protected.</p>
	<p>Labour Market Research</p> <p>In order to update the employment services in Malta, Jobsplus has embarked on a research and forecasting exercise and has engaged labour market analysts to carry research.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>The Labour Market Analysis Unit within Jobsplus has been set up in the first quarter of 2016. A number of research initiatives are being implemented. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employability Index (finalised); - update of Labour Market Policy database (EU initiative) (ongoing); - monitoring of Council Recommendations (Youth Guarantee and Integration of Long-Term Unemployed) (ongoing); - National Skills Survey (finalised); - Employers' Satisfaction Survey (ongoing); - Jobseekers' Satisfaction Survey (ongoing); - Study on Duration of Foreign Workers (initiated). <p>Furthermore, the Labour Market Analysis Unit coordinates and facilitates access to research for private researchers and students, in line with Jobsplus' research policy and data protection provisions (ongoing).</p>
	<p>Investing in Skills [formerly known as “Funds for Training”]</p> <p>Following the success of the Training Aid Framework (TAF), funds for training have been allocated under the European Social Fund (ESF). The Investing in Skills aid scheme was launched in March 2017 with a budget of € 8 million.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Investing in Skills aims to promote the training of persons that are already actively participating within the Maltese labour market, with the objective of increasing productivity and enhancing adaptability. As at January 2018, 425 applications were received and 252 are still valid.</p>
	<p>Community Work Scheme</p> <p>Following examination of the former Community Work Scheme, this has been revised to ensure that eligible participants will be formally employed and active in the labour market.</p> <p>As from January 2018, Government improved the working conditions of employees in the Community Work Scheme by increasing their salary by € 200 per month.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Until the end of January 2018, the number of Community Work Scheme Enterprise Foundation (CWSEF) employees was 840, of which 668 were males and 172 were females.</p>
	<p>Document Management</p> <p>In Gozo, the private sector is being encouraged to employ people with a disability. Now that the operator of this scheme has been selected, a gradual process will be rolled out for the interviewing of persons with a disability to be employed in appropriate jobs.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>As at January 2018, there were 44 people with a disability in employment with the selected operator through this scheme and supported by the job coaches from the Lino Spiteri Foundation. As at the end of January 2018, the amount of € 921,191.47 was remitted for claims of payments related to document management tasks carried out by employed persons with disabilities.</p>
	<p>Card for the Construction Industry</p> <p>The purpose of the Skill Card is to have skills of construction workers certified and recognised and to encourage workers to further their training and also to enhance the public perception of the building industry whilst encouraging more youths to choose construction-related careers.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Up until January 2018, a total of 922 students have attended a health and safety awareness course in the construction industry and have been issued a certificate. Furthermore, a total of 421 Skill Cards have been issued.</p> <p>The discrepancy between those attending the H&S courses and the number of Skill Cards being issued is due to trade-testing examinations falling behind schedule. At the moment, Jobsplus is the entity empowered to carry out this trade testing, however other alternatives are being considered to speed up the process.</p>

		The first trades in which Skill Cards have been issued are tile layers, assistant electricians, plumbers and plasterers and painters.
	<p>Charter on Employees' Rights</p> <p>The objective of this measure was to publish a booklet which lists the rights and entitlements of employees when they are in employment. This Charter was published and distributed to all households in Malta and Gozo in April and May 2016.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	With the distribution of this Charter to all households, more people have become aware of their rights and entitlements when they are in employment and this could indirectly encourage unemployed persons to enter the labour market. Moreover, the Charter outlines the procedure of redress in cases of breaches of employment rights. Thus, the Charter is a useful tool for workers in precarious employment to take steps to redress their situation.
	<p>The Redevelopment of Ta' Qali Crafts Village</p> <p>The main aim of the redevelopment of the Ta' Qali Crafts Village is to assist entrepreneurs and SMEs operating within the village and others which are expected to set up their new business once the project is complete.</p> <p>The whole project should be completed by the end of this year.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	This measure should result in nurturing the growth potential of SMEs at a regional, national and international level through the provision of infrastructure, access to finance as well as supporting services and capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes.
	<p>Training for Employment</p> <p>This project aims to facilitate the access to developing the knowledge, skills and competences of the working age population. The scope behind it is to offer training assistance to jobseekers needing to improve their skills to enter the labour market.</p> <p>Another scheme, the "Training Pays Scheme" was launched in March 2017 and its aim is to assist individuals to develop their skills by participating in further off-the-job education and training.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The measure's objectives by the end of the project in 2020 are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to place 1,030 persons on the Work Exposure Scheme; - to place 1,470 persons on the Traineeship Scheme; - to place 150 persons on the Work Placement Scheme; - around 1,000 participants should benefit under the Training Pays Scheme. <p>Under this measure, from January 2016 until end of January 2018, Jobsplus has placed 589 trainees within the Traineeship Scheme, 530 trainees within the Work Exposure Scheme and 126 within the Work Placement Scheme.</p> <p>As at end of January 2018, under the Training Pays Scheme, Jobsplus received 61 applications, out of which 40 were eligible for the grant.</p>
	<p>The President's Trust Employment Initiative</p> <p>The Employment Initiative of the President's Trust is an ongoing initiative (under the umbrella of the President's Trust) to assist vulnerable young people falling out of existing safety nets to find employment. During 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Malta Association for Supported Employment and this initiative is now being implemented jointly.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	The aim of this measure is to assist, support and mentor vulnerable young people in order to get into employment. This shall be achieved through the assessment of their skills and difficulties, one-to-one mentoring and establishing individual goals in order to empower these individuals to aim for a brighter future. There are currently 25 participants under the age of 30 enrolled in this initiative. These participants are at different stages of the process, ranging from profiling to skills building to job matching.
	<p>New Childcare Centres</p> <p>In 2018, a new childcare centre will open its doors in Żebbuġ, Malta. 2 other childcare centres are planned to open in St. Julian's and Marsascula.</p> <p>In St. Julian's, construction works have been initiated and tenders for the continuation of works are in the drafting process.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	The free childcare services will be offered to parents/guardians who are in employment or are pursuing their education, with the aim to help families achieve a work/life balance for children from the age of 3 months to 3 years.
National 2020 R&D target (2% of GDP)	<p>Malta's National R&I Fund 2013</p> <p>The National R&I Fund is defined by 2 programmes under the FUSION branding: the Commercialisation Voucher Programme (CVP) and the Technology Development Programme (TDP). The FUSION programme is offering support to researchers and to micro enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to assess the commercial and market potential through the CVP, and subsequently, providing research aid through the TDP.</p> <p>In 2016 and 2017, the CVP continued to develop further interest. A total of 96 applications were received and 32 beneficiaries were funded through 2 calls per year for 2 years. 2 CVP calls will be launched in 2018. The first CVP call closed on 19th February 2018. A total of 12 CVP projects will be awarded funding. The second CVP call will open in May 2018 and will close in June 2018.</p> <p>The plans for 2018 are to increase both the number of CVP and TDP-funded projects.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The R&I Programme has a direct impact on the national R&I expenditure (GERD) since it funds R&D performed by both the higher education and the business enterprise sector. While the CVP will not contribute directly to Malta's R&D expenditure target, it will seek to make best use of R&D investments by helping to determine the commercialisation potential of proposed innovative solutions, thus ensuring that before actually undertaking any R&D, the applicant would already be aware of the possibility of protecting the idea through intellectual property as well as gaining awareness on the market potential and the economic wealth it can generate for the good of society at large.</p> <p>The impact of the CVP is expected to be twofold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation and better formulation of ideas to be feasible TDP projects: Throughout 2015, 2016 and 2017 there were 21 successful CVP projects that have been accepted into the TDP. 2. Effect on improving commercialisation chances post-TDP: To date, the R&I Programme has additionally supported beneficiaries of TDP through optional CVP vouchers. There have been 3 awards for Initial Patent Application and 1 award for Business Plan. These awards are examples of further commercialisation-preparedness support to the beneficiaries.
	<p>Centre to Strengthen Research on Business and the Self-employed</p> <p>The TAKEOFF incubator is specifically designed to help incubate/create successful STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Media), knowledge-based, start-up enterprises.</p> <p>Since its inception, the Master in Entrepreneurship (MEnt) programme has gone from strength to strength and 100 MEnt students graduated by the end 2017.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>TAKEOFF provides a broad range of services across the business community and, in 2017, managed the TAKEOFF Seed Fund Awards (TOSFA) and the Maritime Seed Award (MarSA) on behalf of the Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business (MEIB) and Malta Marittima respectively.</p> <p>TAKEOFF also trained and mentored applicants for the Social Impact Awards. Collectively, these 3 initiatives provided € 340,000 of seed funding.</p>

		<p>In addition, TAKEOFF makes its proven mentoring programmes available to the wider community, including charities and voluntary organisations. In 2017 alone, TAKEOFF and the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation (CEBI) will have undertaken in excess of 900 hours of mentoring, supporting around 90 enterprise founders.</p>																					
	<p>Set up an ICT Innovation Accelerator</p> <p>The ICT Innovation Accelerator acts as a hub to synergise the effort of various parties aimed towards ICT-themed Research and Technological Development (R&D), idea-generation, incubation and open-innovation. The day-to-day operation of this facility involves marketing activities, networking, mentorship, training and also the provision of logistical and brokerage support. Besides stimulating digital entrepreneurship, the Accelerator also serves as a showcase for locally nurtured innovations and locally developed ICT products and services.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The ICT Innovation Ecosystem Accelerator will contribute towards attaining Malta's target of 2% value-added as a percentage of national GDP invested in R&D.</p> <p>It is estimated that 50% of the € 22,000 pre-seed investment awarded to start-ups translates to effort invested in design, experimental development and testing of prototypes to be deployed to the market.</p> <p>This programme is expected to create the following qualitative impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the creation of a demand for disruptive and innovative ideas based on digital technologies; - the creation of new or innovative business models based on digital technologies; - contribute in creating a workforce that is more entrepreneurial and open; - attract foreign talent; - increase the number of business undertakings targeting specialised areas and niche markets globally; - the creation of new jobs in digital technology; - increase the demand for specialised skills and competences in digital technologies, entrepreneurship, management and marketing. 																					
	<p>Post-Doctoral Grants</p> <p>Selected post-doctoral research projects are being provided with a grant up to a total of € 200,000 per research project under the 'Reach High Scholars Programme – Post-Doctoral Grants'. The grant is aimed to cover stipends, travel, direct research support expenses and laboratory-based costs (if applicable) and other allowances. Individual research projects are for the duration of up to 3 years with a possibility of an extension of not more than 1 year, subject to availability of funds.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>All the 16 beneficiaries are progressing well and in line with the Post-Doctoral Grant Agreement. Most of them already participated and/or are participating in a number of prestigious conferences and meetings and presenting their research findings achieved so far. Every 6 months their academic mentor submits to the Reach High Project Leader a report confirming the progress, including feedback on the agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and research output of the researcher.</p> <p>1 beneficiary completed the research project by the end of Q2 of 2017 while all the other post-doctoral projects will be concluded in 2019.</p>																					
	<p>Set up of a Joint Innovation Centre (JIC)</p> <p>In April 2016, the Government of Malta and Huawei Technologies (Italia) signed an MoU for strategic cooperation with the focus area being 'Safe City'. The initial term of the MoU covers 2 years. A Government-owned company has been set up to run the JIC. In this regard, an MoU has been signed with the University of Malta (UOM) for academic research purposes and in fact, the Faculty of ICT is already considering research projects. Discussions with potential stakeholders interested in working with the JIC on a proof-of-concept related to public surveillance have also started.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure aims at contributing to one of the five EU 2020 targets which entails more R&D and innovation in the economy combined with more efficient resources, which make Malta more competitive and create jobs.</p>																					
	<p>Horizon 2020 (H2020) and other Schemes</p> <p>Through the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST), Government is assisting local researchers to obtain the support they need in their work through H2020 and by means of other financial schemes.</p> <p>As part of its operations, and in fulfilment of its role as H2020 National Contact Organisation, the MCST (through the H2020 Unit) provides support to researchers from both public and private entities by giving specialised advice and guidance about the Horizon 2020 Programme.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>By the end of 2017, 98 Maltese entities had participated in a total of 75 projects and received a total of € 16.9 million in EU funds as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1852 1251 2540 1562"> <thead> <tr> <th>Participants</th> <th>No. of projects</th> <th>Funding received in € million</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Higher education</td> <td>31</td> <td>5.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public</td> <td>32</td> <td>4.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private</td> <td>24</td> <td>5.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-research organisations</td> <td>3</td> <td>0.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>8</td> <td>0.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>98</td> <td>16.9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Participants	No. of projects	Funding received in € million	Higher education	31	5.9	Public	32	4.2	Private	24	5.8	Non-research organisations	3	0.7	Other	8	0.2	Total	98	16.9
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	<p>MCAST Research Framework</p> <p>To facilitate the active knowledge transfer between academics and students, MCAST introduced a Research Framework to improve the level of teaching through relevant research and co-operation between students and industry as well as between MCAST and industry.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>A Research Committee has been set up and as a result a number of conferences were organised. Furthermore, a number of academic papers have been published, some of which have been included in the recently published MCAST Research Journal.</p>																					
	<p>Maritime Proof of Concept</p> <p>This measure is helping researchers and entrepreneurs to drive forward innovative ideas closer to commercialisation, ultimately leading to the creation of new businesses and commercial opportunities in Malta.</p>	<p>7 researchers and entrepreneurs received between € 5,000 and € 20,000 each in order to enable them to take their maritime-related technology or business idea one step further towards commercialisation.</p> <p>During the first call, Malta Marittima awarded/distributed the sum of € 67,500 amongst 4 projects to the respective beneficiaries.</p>																					

	<p>The budget allocated for 2017 was € 100,000. There was a capping of € 20,000 per project idea (maximum 5). The same applicant was able to put forward more than 1 idea. 2 similar initiatives will be launched in 2018 and 2019 with an allocation of € 100,000 for each year.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The second call was launched on 5th September 2017. The surplus of € 32,500 from the first call was awarded/distributed amongst 3 projects to the respective beneficiaries.</p>																														
<p><i>Malta's Targets for Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A maximum increase of greenhouse gas emissions not falling within the scope of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme of 5% by 2020 (compared to 2005 levels particularly emissions from transport, (mainly road transport), industrial gases, waste, agriculture and fuel combustion in industry and commercial and residential buildings). 	<p>Energy Efficiency in Transport</p> <p>Further reviews of the public transport route network were undertaken in 2017 to better reflect travel patterns and to improve network coverage. Between June 2016 and September 2017, a further 61, 12-metre, new Euro VI buses were introduced.</p> <p>Moreover, the take-up of the tallinja card is considered to be quite high – up to January 2018 take-up was recorded at over 286,950.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>Passenger figures for 2017 indicate an increase of 11.4% when compared to the previous year.</p>																														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emissions Trading Scheme of 5% by 2020 (compared to 2005 levels particularly emissions from transport, (mainly road transport), industrial gases, waste, agriculture and fuel combustion in industry and commercial and residential buildings). 	<p>Implementation of Malta's National Strategy for Policy and Abatement Measures relating to the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions</p> <p>A Vision Document for the development of Malta's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) has been prepared which focuses mainly on identifying the strengths of where low carbon development shall be directed. The Vision Document was published for consultation in May 2017, which process was completed in July 2017.</p> <p>In parallel, a number of sector-specific studies and strategies are being undertaken by respective Ministries. These will eventually feed into the LCDS which is due in 2019.</p> <p>Significant resources are being invested into improving the accuracy of past emissions, future emissions and adoption of effective GHG emission reduction measures. This assistance includes tailor-made training and updating of the emissions modelling through the EU Commission and Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) financing.</p> <p>Status: On Track¹</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Malta</th> <th>2013 ESD target compared to 2005</th> <th>2013 ESD emissions data compared to 2005</th> <th>Relative gap 2013 vs ESD 2013 target</th> <th>2014 ESD target compared to 2005</th> <th>2014 ESD emissions data compared to 2005</th> <th>Relative gap 2014 vs ESD 2014 target</th> <th>2015 ESD target compared to 2005</th> <th>2015 ESD emissions data compared to 2005</th> <th>Relative gap 2015 vs ESD 2015 target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Percentage</td> <td>6.10%</td> <td>13.57%</td> <td></td> <td>5.94%</td> <td>17.25%</td> <td></td> <td>5.79%</td> <td>18.11%</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Annual Emission Allocation (tonnes CO₂ equivalent)</td> <td>1,168,514</td> <td>1,250,779</td> <td>-82,265</td> <td>1,166,788</td> <td>1,291,392</td> <td>-124,604</td> <td>1,165,061</td> <td>1,300,741</td> <td>-135,680</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Malta	2013 ESD target compared to 2005	2013 ESD emissions data compared to 2005	Relative gap 2013 vs ESD 2013 target	2014 ESD target compared to 2005	2014 ESD emissions data compared to 2005	Relative gap 2014 vs ESD 2014 target	2015 ESD target compared to 2005	2015 ESD emissions data compared to 2005	Relative gap 2015 vs ESD 2015 target	Percentage	6.10%	13.57%		5.94%	17.25%		5.79%	18.11%		Annual Emission Allocation (tonnes CO ₂ equivalent)	1,168,514	1,250,779	-82,265	1,166,788	1,291,392	-124,604	1,165,061	1,300,741	-135,680
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A commitment to achieve by 2020 a share of energy from renewable sources in gross final energy consumption of 10%. 	<p>Promotion of Uptake of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and Building Envelope Insulation</p> <p>The Government continued to implement a number of initiatives in order to achieve the target share of energy from renewables. In particular, the Government extended schemes on the purchase of solar water heaters (SWHs) and roof insulation and double glazing (maximum € 1,000 per dwelling) and extended the Feed-in Tariffs (FiTs) to promote the purchase of photovoltaic systems (PVs).</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>A total of 9,538 families have benefitted from the scheme of solar water heaters till end of 2017. A total of 1,830 families have benefitted from roof insulation and double-glazing schemes till end of 2017.</p>																														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A commitment to achieve by 2020 a target of 10% of energy consumed in all forms of transport from renewable sources. 	<p>Switching of Fuel from Liquid Fuel Oils to Natural Gas</p> <p><i>Delimara 4 (D4) project:</i> The new 215MW combined-cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power plant is technically completed and is being commissioned. The ancillary infrastructure, including the regasification unit and the jetty, have been completed. The Floating Storage Unit arrived in Malta in October 2016 and received the first gas in Q1 2017. D4 started operating in open cycle mode by the end of March 2017.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The higher plant efficiency together with the lower carbon emission factor of gas is expected to lead to significant cuts in GHG emissions.</p>																														
	<p>Biofuel Substitution Obligation</p> <p>The biofuel substitution obligation requires that importers and wholesalers of petrol and diesel must place a pre-determined amount of biofuel on the market, which during 2017 has to reach 7.5% (by energy content). This measure ensures that Malta remains on track to meet its 2020 RES-T (transport) target.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>Subsidiary Legislation 545.17 was updated by LN427/2016 in order to ensure more effective monitoring and implementation of the substitution obligation. Biofuels (Sustainability Criteria) Amendment Regulations 2017 was published by means of LN 265 of 2017 on 5 October 2017. The Regulator for Energy and Water Services (REWS) continues to monitor the compliance by operators with respect to obligations emanating from national legislation with the aim of reaching the 2020 target.</p>																														
	<p>Autogas Conversion Scheme</p> <p>The scheme has been extended in 2018; the grant amounts to € 200 which is given upon the conversion to autogas/LPG of a Category M1 vehicle (passenger car) or a Category N1 vehicle (commercial). € 50,000 have been allocated for this scheme.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will reduce local air pollution. During 2017, 220 vehicles have benefitted from this scheme, thus bringing the total of LPG conversions to 700 since 2015. Out of the 700 applications, 5 were for N1 commercial vehicles.</p>																														

¹ The status of such measure depends on whether the mobilisation of flexibility instruments is concluded in time as per Commission Implementing Decision 2016/2132. For 2013 and 2014 the flexibility instruments were used on time.

<p>Incentive for Use of School Transport</p> <p>Parents whose children attend private or Church schools are eligible for a tax rebate of up to a maximum of € 150 on the cost of the transport if they make use of school transport. This should encourage more parents to make use of school transport.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>During 2016, 1,946 taxpayers claimed this deduction in their tax return.</p>
<p>Energy Audits for Enterprises</p> <p>The Energy and Water Agency (EWA) and the Malta Business Bureau (MBB) have launched a scheme where enterprises are encouraged to enter into a voluntary agreement to implement various energy efficient measures.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>This measure contributed towards the setting up of a framework for energy auditor certification, guidance for the implementation of energy audits by non-SMEs and a quality verification system for energy audits by non-SMEs. To date, as a result of the energy auditor and energy manager courses, there are 72 registered energy auditors and 11 registered energy managers.</p> <p>It also contributed towards the promotion of energy audits in SMEs – in fact to date, 23 enterprises have entered this agreement. This is approximately 35% of the enterprises that are obliged to perform an energy audit under Article 8 (4) of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED).</p>
<p>New Scheme to promote Domestic PVs</p> <p>Following the July 2015 scheme, another scheme was launched in May 2016 and extended to 31 March 2017 by the publication of Government Notice 1425 of 2016. This was further extended to the end of December 2017 by the publication of Government Notice 340 of 2017. The scheme has been extended again till 29 June 2018 by means of SL545.27.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Beneficiaries for the 2015 PV scheme amount to 2,238. Beneficiaries for the 2016 PV scheme amount to 3,054. Total beneficiaries for both schemes 2015 and 2016 amount to 5,292.</p>
<p>Improvement in the Reverse Osmosis Plants</p> <p>Following the submission of an updated Financial Feasibility Assessment, the Water Services Corporation (WSC) now has informal consent from JASPERS regarding funding to implement this measure – thus bringing the measure back on track to achieve the targets on time, as stipulated. WSC is preparing the tender documents for the services required under 2 of the major components of the project.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The aim is to reduce significantly the dependence on electricity which shall consequently contribute to the achievement of the utility's financial and environmental objectives.</p>
<p>Solar Farm Partnership</p> <p>MoUs have been signed with two key stakeholders who will now proceed to establish a joint venture with the WSC to develop these solar farms on property owned by Government or its entities.</p> <p>In the meantime, the joint venture is working on the necessary Planning Authority (PA) permits and drafting the relative tenders for publication regarding the supply and maintenance of the PV panels.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The objective of this measure is to increase the share of renewable energy and contribute towards Malta's renewable energy target for 2020. These solar farms are expected to guarantee the generation of 1 megawatt of alternative energy per annum each for a period of 25 years.</p>
<p>Clean means of transport (Bicycle Grant)</p> <p>This scheme was renewed for 2018 by means of a Government Notice published on 5 January 2018 (Government Notice No 11). An indicative budget of € 200,000 has been allocated for 2018 for the grant scheme for individuals.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>During 2017, there were 1,928 applications (both manual and online applications), out of which 1,652 applications were paid and 159 are still being processed. 117 applications were rejected because they did not meet the requirements stipulated in the Government Gazette.</p> <p>As from 2018, all applications are being submitted electronically. During January, there were 170 applications, out of which 167 applications were paid and 1 is still being processed. 2 applications were rejected because they did not meet the requirements stipulated in the Government Gazette.</p>
<p>The Creation of Safe Public and Private Parking for Bicycles</p> <p>A grant of € 150,000 has been allocated to the initiative targeting private companies to invest, on a 50:50 co-financing, in having secure parking for their employees who use bicycles as the mode of commuting. A further € 30,000 has been allocated to initiatives targeting Local Councils to invest in initiatives to promote secure cycling within the local community. These will be financed through local funds.</p> <p>During Budget 2018, Government announced that the scheme will be extended for a further year.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>1 Local Council and 1 private company have completed their projects, while another Local Council is in the process of installing the bicycle racks.</p> <p>At present there are another 3 Local Councils which have applied or are in the process of applying for financing of similar projects.</p>
<p>To continue working on the Gas Pipeline Project which will connect Malta to the European Gas Network</p> <p>The basic design of the project was completed in June 2017 and identified the optimal 1.2km-wide offshore and onshore route corridor, landfall areas, connection points and sites of terminal stations in both Delimara (Malta) and Gela (Sicily) with the lowest environmental and socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>During December 2017, the Ministry for Energy and Water Management (MEW) received the terms of reference for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the necessary studies required for the necessary permits from both the Italian and the Maltese entities. A decision on the application for the attainment of EU funds under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) for the next studies was granted by the end of January 2018, whereby the project was awarded € 3.68 million for the financing of the studies to be undertaken in the next 2.5 years. These include the EIA/permitting studies, a preliminary marine route survey, front-end engineering design and financial engineering. The first tenders for specialised consultants were launched and awarded.</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will increase Malta's competitiveness by promoting the further integration of the internal energy market. The project also contributes to have a more reliable and more secure energy supply and contributes to the reduction of emissions from the shipping sector.</p>

	<p>The project was also re-confirmed as a Project of Common Interest (PCI) in the 3rd PCI list issued by the European Commission in November 2017.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	
	<p>Communal Solar Farms</p> <p>Work on the Government's first communal solar farm is at an advanced stage. All PV panels have been installed on the Fiddien Reservoir, the electricity substation has been built and switchgear and other equipment has been installed.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>A total of almost 1MWp of virtual PV capacity was made available for households and within a few days, the scheme was fully subscribed.</p>
	<p>Transport Links</p> <p>This measure entails the development of maritime transport that will connect the main arteries with Valletta in a sustainable manner via a Public-Private Partnership (PPP). This project has been approved by UNESCO, and is currently awaiting approval from the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will facilitate the achievement of 27% energy efficiency contributing to the achievement of 20% energy savings by 2020 by the EU. It will reduce vehicular traffic and provide an alternative means of transport in a more sustainable manner. It will also contribute to Malta's obligation to reach Malta's non-obligatory energy efficiency target in the transport sector.</p>
	<p>Green Public Procurement (GPP)</p> <p>The 2nd National Action Plan (NAP) on GPP 2018-2020 was compiled in 2017. It sets out targets for 14 product and service groups. These targets have been arrived at after extensive consultations were held with stakeholders.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>To date, Government has organised 22 training sessions and trained 398 public procurers. Training is ongoing and the goal is that these sessions will be completed by 2018, resulting in all procurement officials within the Ministries to be sufficiently trained in order to take on the additional obligations that the 2nd NAP proposes.</p>
	<p>Tallinja Card</p> <p>The measure introduced during 2017 whereby persons who turned 18 during the year could travel for free on scheduled public transport has been extended to 2018 to include persons between the ages of 16 to 20 years.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>Around 5,000 persons aged 18 years benefitted from the scheme during 2017. This measure is meant to further reinforce encouraging youths reaching the age of 18 years to use scheduled public transport as their mode of transport and to continue using this mode of transport past the age of 20 years. It is hoped that these young people will continue to use this mode of transport even after obtaining their driving license.</p> <p>Around 28,000 persons aged between 16 and 20 years are eligible to benefit from the scheme in 2018.</p>
	<p>Promotion of Electromobility 2017</p> <p>The scheme had the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) € 8,000 upon registering a new electric category M1 or N1 vehicle when scrapping a used vehicle; b) € 5,000 upon registering a new or used electric category M1 or N1 vehicle (without scrapping another vehicle); c) € 2,000 upon registering a new or used electric quadricycle (without scrapping another vehicle). <p>Range extender electric vehicles were also considered for this scheme and had to have a minimum of 80km range on pure electricity to qualify for the grants.</p> <p>Private individuals and NGOs were entitled to purchase 1 vehicle/quadricycle under this scheme. On the other hand, a registered company, partnership, cooperative society or a registered self-employed, as defined in Government Notice of 15th January 2016, were entitled to a maximum grant of € 200,000, which could be in the form of a combination of different types of vehicles.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>This measure aims to promote the use of clean and energy efficient vehicles and to remove older cars from circulation. By the end of 2017 € 437,000 were provided in grants, resulting in the registration of 73 electric vehicles – 56 by individuals, 16 by private companies and 1 by a Local Council/NGO.</p>
	<p>Grant Scheme on the Purchase of New Environment Friendly Vehicles 2017</p> <p>The scheme was subject to the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - € 900 grant when registering a new category M1 vehicle with CO₂ emission levels up to 100g/km, while at the same time de-registering a vehicle in the same category; - € 700 when registering a new category M1 vehicle with CO₂ emission levels between 101 and 130g/km, while at the same time de-registering a vehicle in the same category; - € 3,000 when registering a new category M1 plug-in hybrid vehicle with CO₂ emissions 1-50g/km, while at the same time de-registering a vehicle in the same category; - € 2,000 when registering a new category M1 hybrid vehicle with CO₂ emissions between 50-65g/km. <p>Each person was only eligible for 1 grant under this scheme.</p> <p>During Budget 2018, Government extended the scrappage scheme for another year.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will lead to an increase in the uptake of more environment-friendly new or hybrid vehicles, while scrapping conventional, more polluting vehicles.</p> <p>The sum of € 1,544,000 was allocated to vehicle owners when scrapping an old vehicle and replacing it with a new vehicle. Up to end of December 2017, 1,557 vehicles were scrapped and replaced with less polluting vehicles, while 128 were replaced with hybrid vehicles.</p>

	<p>Sustainable Transport Plan for Government Entities</p> <p>The Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects (MTIP) has developed an action plan which is aimed at launching voluntary schemes for employees within the Departments and public entities of the Ministry. This plan is being rolled out in the course of 2018, with the adoption of a Green Travel Plan by October as a pilot project which will include various voluntary schemes for employees. This will be followed up with an evaluation in early 2019.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>64 Government entities were identified, 5 of which stated that they have less than 50 employees. To date, 14 entities submitted their plan to the transport authority. It is expected that as a result of this measure, a number of employees will be making use of more sustainable transport, however this cannot be quantified at this stage.</p> <p>With regard to the pilot project, the ultimate aim would be to use the pilot project <i>per se</i>, and its resultant experience, as a way to design a toolkit for other Ministries to implement similar initiatives in their Ministries.</p> <p>Finally, the aim of the whole process is to analyse the commuting trends of the employees and launch voluntary schemes intended to encourage the use of alternative transportation other than the private car.</p>
<p>National early school leaving target (Reducing school drop-out rates to 10% by 2020)</p> <p>National target for tertiary education (Increasing the share of 30-34 years old having completed tertiary or equivalent education to 33% by 2020)</p>	<p>My Journey: Achieving through different Paths – Equitable Quality Education for All [formerly known as “Offering more Opportunities for Participation in Vocational Education”]</p> <p>In 2016 the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE), following the Framework for the Education Strategy 2014-2024, launched a school reform branded under the name ‘My Journey: Achieving through different paths’. The reform incorporates both comprehensive and inclusive education and shall be introduced and phased in scholastic year 2019-2020. In secondary schools all students will have the opportunity to select option subjects from the general/academic, vocational and applied subjects.</p> <p>Introduction of vocational subjects in Secondary schools</p> <p>In line with the Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014-2024, the education authorities re-introduced vocational programmes at Level 3 of the MQF in the final 3 years of compulsory schooling (Year 9 to Year 11) from ages 14 to 16.</p> <p>The national implementation of these vocational subjects took place during the scholastic year 2015-16. The take-up of VET subjects increased from 15% in State secondary schools, 14.5% in Church secondary schools, and 9.6% in Independent secondary schools in 2015-16, to more than 24%, 20% and 11% respectively in 2016-17. In 2017-2018, percentages have remained constant.</p> <p>EU funds and local funds have been awarded for the refurbishment of circa 70 VET laboratories in State secondary schools. This work will be completed by September 2019. New vocational subjects, including Hairdressing & Beauty; Textiles & Fashion, Retail and Media Literacy are planned to be introduced in schools in Q3 2019.</p> <p>The Alternative Learning Programme (ALP)</p> <p>The ALP is aimed at students who are reaching the end of compulsory schooling, but who clearly demonstrate that they will not attain the desired qualifications. This programme has a strong vocational component and students are expected to continue with their education or training in a full-time higher education institution or in other lifelong learning institutions on a part-time basis.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD)</p> <p>In 2013-14, the Personal and Social Development (PSD) programme was revised to include Career Education and was renamed as Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD).</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Introduction of vocational subjects in secondary schools</p> <p>The introduction of these vocational subjects generated a wider range of permeable and intersecting career paths. It also provided the opportunity for those with different learning patterns, interests and motivations to continue their studies beyond the compulsory age of 16. This measure was also intended to make education engaging and relevant to those students who are at risk of becoming early school leavers.</p> <p>This measure has been achieved in view that the development of a VET qualification delivery model suitable for local needs has been implemented. The MEDE intends to further develop subjects in VET area and to introduce another path of Applied Learning. Applied Learning will complement vocational education whilst providing more opportunities for learners to engage with their preferred way of learning.</p> <p>The Alternative Learning Programme</p> <p>The ALP+ was launched in 2016/2017. During the current scholastic year 2017/2018, the intake of ALP students is 200 and that of ALP+ students is 60.</p> <p>Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD)</p> <p>This measure has equipped learners with skills and competences related to careers that are currently available on the market.</p>

<p>Adult Learning Initiatives [formerly known as “Introducing Lifelong Learning in the Community through a Pilot Out-Reach Programme”]</p> <p>Adult Learning Provision</p> <p>The Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability offers around 400 courses in 100 subjects offered across 9 adult learning centres, 26 Local Councils and 18 NGOs.</p> <p>Schools as Community Learning Spaces Project</p> <p>The project ‘Schools as Community Learning Spaces’ is a programme that aims to increase the supply and the rate of participation in learning by low qualified parents, guardians and community members. The aim of this project is to enhance their basic skills and other key competences, enabling them to progress to a qualification at EQF Levels 3 or 4.</p> <p>Upskilling of Adult Educators</p> <p>Since 2015, the Directorate has offered a new study programme accredited at Level 5 for adult educators in an effort to improve adult learning provisions. The National Diploma in Teaching Adults is a comprehensive course that teaches the theory, skills and practice of adult education, including assessment, delivery, design and development and evaluation.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Adult Learning Provision</p> <p>The target is to reach 10,000 students annually. By September 2017, 8,000 learners enrolled in adult education courses.</p> <p>Schools as Community Learning Spaces Project</p> <p>In 2017, the project was piloted at the Valletta Primary School and will be further extended to other schools in 2018.</p> <p>Upskilling of Adult Educators</p> <p>The target is to reach 100 adult educators. In November 2017, around 120 participants successfully completed the study programme and were awarded the National Diploma in Teaching Adults.</p>
<p>Get Qualified</p> <p>In 2017, the Get Qualified scheme was transferred from Malta Enterprise to the MEDE. Furthermore, the scheme has been enhanced to include also financial support of vocational study programmes at MQF Levels 3 and 4. In this regard, the incentive is open to individuals following a course of studies at MQF Levels 3 and 4 vocational programmes and at MQF Level 5 to 8 qualifications. Upon successful completion, the student benefits from a tax credit, thus recovering part of the costs incurred.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>In 2017, 2,124 applications were received and processed. During the same year, 1,054 tax certificates were issued equivalent to € 2,241,022.</p>
<p>Tablets in Primary Schools for Teachers and Students</p> <p>Following the implementation of a pilot project involving 22 classes in State, Church and Independent schools in Malta and Gozo in December 2016, 6,027 tablets were distributed to all Year 4 students and educators in all State, Church and Independent schools.</p> <p>As part of the second phase, the previous cohort of Year 4 (2016-2017) students who are now in Year 5 (2017-2018) keep their tablet while the Year 5 teachers (new to the One Tablet per Child (OTPC) initiative) were trained during the summer and supplied with a tablet. The new cohort of Year 4 students (2017-2018) was given a tablet while their teachers have to keep their tablet from last year. New teachers to the OTPC project in both Year 4 and Year 5 were trained and given a tablet.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>During summer 2017, 511 Year 5 teachers and LSAs were trained. They were given a tablet for familiarisation during the summer recess.</p> <p>In the second phase of the project, during scholastic year 2017/2018, 4,960 tablets were distributed to Year 4 students and educators in State, Church and Independent schools.</p> <p>It is planned that during January-April 2018, parents will be invited in schools to either observe lessons with the use of tablets and/or attend parental meetings where they will be helped to understand the benefits and challenges in the use of tablets in the 21st century education.</p> <p>The last cohort of teachers and LSAs will be trained during July 2018. They will consist of Year 6 teachers/LSAs. The process is expected to commence in January 2018 by identifying the teaching grades who will be asked to attend for the compulsory In-Service Education and Training (INSET).</p>
<p>Alternative Learning Programme (ALP)</p> <p>The ALP has been designed to offer students who are exiting the compulsory school cycle without formal qualifications with an alternative pathway to access accredited learning pathways in various VET areas at MQF Level 1.</p> <p>During scholastic year 2016/2017 the ALP+ was launched. The ALP+ is a post-compulsory secondary level course wherein students receive a monthly stipend. Another programme entitled ALP Club is being proposed to cater for students who can attend evening classes.</p> <p>During scholastic year 2017/2018, 7 courses at MQF Level 3 were offered namely, Care Work and Customer Care, Hairdressing and Beauty Care, Hospitality and Customer Care, Automobile Engineering, Turnkey Services, Welding and Fabrication and Multimedia and ICT Applications.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>During scholastic year 2017/2018, the number of students who enrolled under the ALP was 260, while 60 students enrolled for the ALP+ programme. During the same scholastic year, 35 students participated abroad in Erasmus+ projects.</p>
<p>Design of Learning Outcomes Framework (LOF)</p> <p>Work was carried out to provide the learning outcomes of the Learning Areas, the Cross-Curricular Themes and the Learning and Assessment programmes. A total of 48 Learning and Assessment Programmes were developed with the collaboration of 200 local curriculum experts. A cohort of 70 educators was trained to provide professional development to other teachers.</p> <p>The project has been completed and the results emanating from the project are being implemented during the scholastic year 2018/2019.</p>	<p>This achieved a paradigm shift away from a prescriptive curriculum towards a framework based on learning outcomes which allowed for internal flexibility and attractiveness to lifelong learning. It facilitated a move away from standalone subjects to learning areas that form the entitlement for all learners towards inclusivity, citizenship and employability.</p>

<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Higher Priority to Mathematics, Science and ICT</p> <p>This measure involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning programmes for Science and Mathematics at primary school level have been reviewed within the LOF - this sub-measure has been completed. • An increase in the frequency of Science lessons in primary schools - this sub-measure is still in the pipeline. • The introduction of Digital Science in the primary sector - this is an ongoing sub-measure and until scholastic year 2016/2017, Year 4, 5 and 6 classes have been provided with digital Reusable Learning Objective (ROs) for Primary Science. • The organisation of science popularisation events at both primary and secondary levels. • The training of primary class teachers in Mathematics, Science and Digital Science teaching and learning. • Participation in the Little Scientists Project in collaboration with the MCST (including the training of a team of peripatetic teachers). <p>Since Q2 2016, the MEDE has participated in Scientix 3; participation will continue during 2018 together with a number of other EU funded projects related to Science and Mathematics, namely Systemic and Teach-Up. This participation is through membership in the European Schoolnet network.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>		<p>This measure aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decrease the percentage of students considered as low ability in the areas of Science and Mathematics; - enhance exposure to Science and Digital Science at primary level; - enhance scientific literacy among the young student generation in secondary level; - increase the number of students studying science subjects at secondary and post-secondary levels.
<p>Stipends for Repeaters</p> <p>Students are always encouraged to further their education as Government believes that whoever has a problem should be encouraged and not discouraged. For this reason, students who are repeating one year in their course are receiving their stipend. This measure came into effect on 1st January 2014.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>		<p>During academic year 2017/2018, 756 students were eligible for stipends for repeaters.</p>
<p>New Courses on Aviation</p> <p>The MCAST Advanced Diploma in Aviation Operations was well received by the aviation industry and MCAST received reassurance from the industry that they want a larger number of students.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>		<p>The courses were introduced in the 2015-2016 scholastic year as part of the MCAST prospectus. To this effect, they were also offered in scholastic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The number of students following the Advanced Diploma in Aviation Operations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12 students in academic year 2015 – 2016; - 13 students in academic year 2016 – 2017; - 28 students in academic year 2017 – 2018.
<p>Providing stipends for students undertaking veterinary courses</p> <p>In order to encourage more students to take up a veterinary career, the Government is providing additional financial support. The new stipend rate for applicants under the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme (MGUS) now stands at € 307.68 after 2017 pro rata Cost of Living Adjustment Increase (COLA) increase (this rate was € 302.10 during academic year 2015/16). In addition to this, a yearly grant of € 698.81 is awarded together with an extra one-time grant of € 698.81 for the first year. This rate applies to both new applicants under the MGSS scheme and past awardees who are still in training.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>		<p>In view that the veterinary course is not offered by a local institution, students have to enrol in foreign universities. Since the tuition fees are very high, many students find it difficult to cope with the expenses involved. Through this initiative students are more likely to opt to undergo studies and pursue a career in this field.</p> <p>During academic year 2017/2018, another 7 students have applied and are being paid Student's Maintenance Grants.</p>
<p>Further and Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework</p> <p>In line with obligations arising from SL327.433, a Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) has been set up with the remit of reviewing Level 7 and 8 qualifications prior to accreditation. The QAC acts as an independent review mechanism for quality assurance-related measures arising from accreditation processes.</p> <p>The QA Unit within the NCFHE is currently conducting the first External Quality Assurance (EQA) audits (after those of the UoM, the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) and MCAST). According to SL327.433, providers with a 5-year license need to undergo an NCFHE EQA before the renewal of their license. In the period 2017-2019, the QA Unit shall be conducting 62 of these audits.</p> <p>As part of the project 'Consolidating Quality Assurance and Validation in Higher Education in Malta', the QA Unit is also updating the National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education to incorporate, for instance, audit procedures for programmes, provisions of online learning and learning overseas, adapted audit processes for different categories of license and an audit follow-up structure, an updated description of the role of the NCFHE representative on the EQA review panel, and an update of the EQA timelines.</p> <p>The process leading to these updates include the key contributions of international (Bologna) experts and the re-convening of NET-QAPE consultation seminars and conferences. In fact, seminars were held in October and in December 2017; another two are planned for 2018.</p>		<p>On a longer term, the QA framework will create a culture of quality within education provision in Malta, leading in turn to more value added in the obtaining and holding of Maltese qualifications.</p>

Status: On Track		
	<p>Construction and Modernisation of Schools</p> <p>2 new schools in Dingli and Kirkop have been completed and have received their first intake of students in September 2016.</p> <p>In 2017, work commenced on the construction of the Marsascala primary school. Structural works on the construction of the St. Paul's Bay (Qawra) Primary School will commence in early 2018, while works on the Victoria Primary School and Msida Primary School are set to start in late 2018.</p> <p>An extensive programme of works, which includes the construction of extensions to various schools and the extensive refurbishment of schools, will be announced in 2018.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>A total of 1,000 students are attending the Dingli Senior School and the Kirkop Middle school. These students are benefitting from a modern, inclusive and accessible educational environment.</p>
	<p>The Introduction of the Provision of Paid Study Leave Scheme</p> <p>The Paid Study Leave Scheme provides officers in the education stream with the possibility of utilising either a period of up to 1 scholastic year of paid study leave (sabbatical) or shorter periods.</p> <p>Eligible officers pursuing doctoral studies have the possibility of spreading the paid study leave over a period of 4 years, provided that the officer concerned does not have classroom-teaching duties.</p> <p>During 2016 this measure was extended to educators in non-State schools.</p> <p>A similar provision is in place for officers benefitting from ERASMUS+/Council of Europe grants to attend short (up to 5 working days) in-service courses, seminars, workshops or conferences.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>As at 2017, 12 beneficiaries have completed the studies and to date 24 officers benefitted under the scheme.</p> <p>A fourth call for applications covering scholastic year 2018/2019 was issued and closed on 2nd February 2018.</p>
	<p>Stipends exempt from Income Tax</p> <p>Financial benefits in terms of students' maintenance grants paid to full time post-secondary, vocational and tertiary students as outlined in Subsidiary Legislation 308 of 2016 currently have no tax deductions and this irrespective of other income.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>As a direct result of this measure, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of students who work on a part-time basis whilst studying, however the exact amount is difficult to quantify. In line with the students' maintenance grants regulations students are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours weekly without forfeiting their rights for students' maintenance grants.</p>
	<p>Stipends increased yearly with a Percentage Rate of the established COLA Increase</p> <p>The objective of this measure is to increase the amount of stipend payable to students so as to reflect the established cost of living index on a yearly basis. As from February 2018, students who are eligible for stipends are receiving a stipend increase of 0.91%.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The pro-rata COLA adjustment is calculated as the multiple of the share of the weekly stipend to the weekly base wage (used to calculate COLA) and the announced COLA of € 1.75 per week.</p> <p>As from February 2018 stipends were revised upwards by 0.91%. This sets a stipend rate for a general course to € 88.44 – an increase of € 0.79 over last year's rate for general courses.</p>
	<p>Youth Village at Umberto Colosso, Santa Venera</p> <p>Following the opening of the Youth Village, in 2016, 500 youth leaders/youth workers, 2,145 young people and 75 teachers participated in the activities organised and in 2017, 722 youth leaders/youth workers, 3,568 young people and 845 teachers participated in the activities held in the Village.</p> <p>The plans for the Youth Residential Centre have been designed and it is envisaged that works will start in 2018.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will give a more focused, coordinated and cost-effective approach to meeting the needs and aspirations of young people.</p>
	<p>Youth Voluntary Work Scheme</p> <p>The Scheme addresses the placement of young people in voluntary organisations to work at a local community level and supports voluntary experience abroad (in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and South America) for young people through locally registered voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This helps young people to improve their skills and employment prospects by giving them an opportunity to take up volunteering as part of their non-formal and informal learning process while enabling them to discover the value of voluntary service and helps to foster a sense of community and active citizenship. It also supports voluntary organisations in attracting young people to volunteering, enabling them to enhance their capacity with new volunteers and fresh ideas.</p> <p>To date, 117 youths were placed in voluntary organisations locally while 45 have benefited from the Overseas Specific Priority Scheme. It is intended that in 2018 a further 50 youths shall benefit from the scheme locally and another 25 shall benefit from the scheme overseas.</p>
	<p>Life-long Learning Credits</p> <p>This measure strengthens the concept of lifelong learning. It ensures that people gain new and also upgrade their competencies, skills and knowledge without the impact of not having enough contributions paid which may affect negatively their entitlement to a retirement pension.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>More people will engage in lifelong learning, thus improving their income and their way of living.</p>
	<p>Extension of the Allowance given to Gozitan Students in Malta [formerly known as "Increase in the Allowance given to Gozitan Students studying in Malta"]</p>	

	<p>As from January 2017, the annual allowance of € 1,500 given to students resident in Gozo who are following full-time courses at the UOM, the ITS, and MCAST in Malta or are benefitting from an MGUS, has been extended to Gozitan students attending a private institution for higher education in Malta.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>3 students applied for the allowance in October 2017 (for academic year 2017/18). A payment of € 500 is to be effected every 3 months in January, April and July 2018.</p>
	<p>Higher Education Regulator</p> <p>The NCFHE is the official regulator of provision of education in Malta beyond compulsory schooling. In order to be able to function and carry out its roles in entirety as outlined in the Education Act, additional resources need to be made available so that the NCFHE builds up both its human resources capacity as well as its technical capacity.</p> <p>Therefore, the Commission's allocation is being increased in order to better fulfil its regulatory function in education.</p> <p>Status: On Track/Ongoing</p>	<p>The impacts of this measure are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pluralistic provision of education in Malta, which is a policy priority of Government, is seeing multiple providers, including an increasing number of public and private providers of study programmes which are level rated on the MQF. • By the end of September 2017, the NCFHE had approved/accredited 1,720 courses to be delivered in Malta, with another 50 courses currently pending accreditation. In 2017, the NCFHE also published guidelines for the accreditation of online (digital) and blended programmes. • Multiple routes of lifelong learning, including the validation of informal and non-formal learning, are also promoted in order to widen the certification of skills and competence in the workforce. • There are currently 7 Sector Skills Units (SSUs) up and running and the NCFHE is currently in the process of setting up 2 new SSUs. Currently, there are a total of 13 published occupational standards. The NCFHE is in the process of publishing 28 occupational standards at various MQF levels. • More than 320 persons have been accredited with certificates in the childcare sector, and currently the NCFHE is preparing to issue certificates following validation assessment in the building and construction sector, automotive sector and the hair and beauty sector. • In parallel, NCFHE needs to build a solid Quality Assurance Unit which will carry out regular monitoring and external reviews of licence holders as well as monitor the media for any illegal misleading advertising and to take corrective action. • The regulatory role of the NCFHE aims to equip prospective applicants and higher education providers to prepare the service users to enter the labour market and maintain progress in their career development, in order to continue contributing to the economic growth of the country.
	<p>Stipends for Maturity Clause Students</p> <p>Stipends are being awarded to mature and foreign students who are registered and accepted to follow a full-time day course in higher education institutions.</p> <p>As from academic year 2017/2018, mature students are no longer being assessed on the basis of income, but are automatically considered for eligibility.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>As at December 2017, there were 176 mature students who were enrolled at MCAST. These students were eligible to receive the Students' Maintenance Grants. There were another 304 mature students enrolled at the UOM.</p> <p>Till December 2017, 102 foreign students were deemed eligible to receive the Students' Maintenance Grant at the UOM and another 262 foreign students at MCAST.</p>
	<p>Arrangement with Cambridge University</p> <p>Government is sustaining the arrangement it has reached with Cambridge University to strengthen the use of English and encourage more children to choose to study languages through more attractive packages as was the case with the Subject Proficiency Assessment (SPA) programme for Italian. Government is also enhancing the learning of all foreign languages through the application of an SPA.</p> <p>A second training session for teachers in line with the arrangement with Cambridge University is being conducted during scholastic year 2017/2018. This is a 9-month training course which is accredited by Cambridge University.</p> <p>The SPA programme has been extended to all foreign languages including Italian, Spanish, French and German. A review of the Foreign Language Awareness Programme in the primary years was undertaken and has started to be implemented in Year 3 in 6 colleges during scholastic year 2017/2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The benchmark assessments in Year 5 and Year 10 in all 4 skills of the English language were enacted in 2016. A number of train-the-trainer sessions were held and a number of primary and secondary school teachers were trained through such sessions.</p> <p>The Foreign Language Awareness Programme in the primary years is expected to increase the love for languages at a young age.</p>
	<p>New Campus at MCAST</p> <p>Work on the second phase of the campus has commenced. This includes a new block for the Institute of Engineering and Transport (IET), the MCAST Resource Centre (previously referred to as the Library and the Learning Support Unit) and the new ICT Institute.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The new buildings are part of the new campus project that will offer tailor-made and purposely-built facilities for MCAST to further enhance the quality of its services to its students. The project's objective is to invest in educational infrastructure to provide education and training facilities for vocational education and training to reduce early school leavers as well as improve tertiary education attainment.</p>
	<p>Screening Programme</p> <p>The screening programme 'Lenti fuq l-lżvilupp ta' Wliedna' was formally launched on 27 October 2017 in an event hosted jointly by the MEDE and the Ministry for Health (MFH).</p>	<p>Through the first phase of this programme, all Maltese children from the age of 18 months are eligible for screening for signs of autism. This may contribute to decreasing the ESL rate due to timely support and intervention. The end result should also lead to reducing the overall health and education costs and to provide more holistic support to the identified children.</p> <p>For Phase 1, the targeted screening for autism is around 1,300/1,400 children per annum.</p>

	<p>Phase 1 commenced in January 2017, offering screening services for autism to Maltese nationals from the age of 18 months. Children found to be at risk are being offered the necessary support/intervention services by the appropriate departments within MFH and MEDE.</p> <p>Furthermore, additional funding is being sought through EU co-financing and the Norwegian Funds Programme. For the time-being national funds are covering the operational costs of the programme.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Statistics for 2017 are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - total number of children screened using M-CHAT-R questionnaire: 1,959; - number of children who scored low risk: 1,694; - number of children who scored moderate risk: 218; - number of children who scored high risk: 47.
	<p>National Skills Council (NSC)</p> <p>Malta launched the NSC in December 2016, bringing together the worlds of education and industry and creating better conditions and incentives for lifelong learners.</p> <p>In July 2017, the NSC set up a sub-committee with the remit of reviewing existing pertinent documentation and consulting with relevant players in the field, including stakeholders in the EU. The sub-committee has finalised its report and this was presented to the NSC in March 2018. This report will be used to steer education and industry stakeholders to ensure that the relevant skills are being developed in the Maltese labour force.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The NSC taps into studies carried out by different entities to assess the skills shortages on a national level and in particular sectors. It encourages and facilitates educational institutions building bridges with industry, to make sure that the skills gap is diminished.</p> <p>The NSC is also involved in the setting up of business-education encounters to facilitate the feedback to and from while at the same time seeking a slightly longer-term qualitative forecast by the key stakeholders in each sector.</p> <p>The NSC also aims to review the past and present available skills within Malta's labour work force and recommends policy changes to minimise the skills gap that exists in some sectors.</p>
	<p>The Gużé Ellul Mercer 16+ Learning Centre</p> <p>The aim of the Learning Centre is to decrease the number of students with limited qualifications. It is now accepting students with 3 SEC certificates or less.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>It is hoped that, by being offered another opportunity, less students will leave education without formal qualifications. Following the completion of this programme, students should be better equipped to further their education and to respond to the demands of the labour market.</p> <p>The second intake of 100 students that commenced in October 2016 have successfully completed the entire revision programme. A third intake of 100 students commenced in October 2017.</p>
	<p>Transdisciplinary Research and Knowledge Exchange (TRAKE) Complex [formerly known as "Post-Doc Centre"]</p> <p>Following the submission of the ERDF application, the tender for construction is currently being vetted by the Department of Contracts.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The UOM has felt the need for additional facilities to accommodate the increasing number of post-graduate and doctoral students. The new complex should incorporate these needs as well as business incubation facilities in one structure.</p>
	<p>Extension of the Mathematics and Physics Building</p> <p>The tender was issued but no bids were submitted. The tender is in the process of being re-issued.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This extension will offer more room to accommodate the increased demand brought about by the increasing number of students and staff members and to cater for specialised programmes of study.</p>
	<p>Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Educators</p> <p>The Institute of Education has developed a number of accredited courses and is offering them to educators after school hours.</p> <p>Furthermore, an MoU with MCAST, another with ITS and another with the National Literacy Agency has been signed to ensure further collaboration in the training of educators.</p> <p>In the meantime, the following courses are being developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a Bachelor and Masters degree in education to give the opportunity to supply teachers at different levels to gain the required qualifications to become eligible for the post of regular teachers as well as a Masters in Applied Leadership for educators who are at managerial level or aspiring to be at that level; - a 4-ECTS accredited online course explaining the psychosocial services which all staff in all State schools will be able to access to understand how to access these services and their benefits for students. <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>CPD contributes in assisting educators to upskill themselves to the dynamic changes that are occurring within the field of education. All educators from all sectors have the opportunity to access all the courses and enrol. Thus the self-sought hours agreed upon in the sectoral agreement are catered for by the Institute.</p> <p>26 educators have finished the adaptation course successfully and are now eligible for the position of regular teachers.</p> <p>The stand-alone modules at MQF Levels 6 and 7 are open for all employed educators. The take-up is variable as these courses are voluntary. The leadership programme is open for all Heads of School and 10 of these have applied and were accepted. 106 teachers have participated in the post-graduate course at MQF Level 7. 80 supply teachers have participated in the short courses at MQF Level 6. 450 LSAs and teachers have participated in the short courses at MQF Level 4.</p> <p>The participation in the non-accredited phase sessions is variable since managers and leadership teams can apply voluntary for these sessions.</p> <p>Around 3,000 educators participated in the in-service courses in July and September 2017.</p>
	<p>Improving Literacy</p> <p>The National Literacy Agency (NLA) launched several programmes, including family literacy programmes, with the aim to improve both child literacy and parental support skills.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	<p>The overall purpose of the National Literacy Strategy for All, which was launched in 2014, is to promote and enhance lifelong and life-wide, high quality literacy practices. It also strives to improve literacy outcomes, resulting in inclusive practices, higher educational qualifications, and better job prospects.</p>
	<p>Strengthening the Training offered to Employees working at the Medicines Authority</p> <p>The Medicines Authority has launched a traineeship programme which is intended to support bridging the gap between the theoretical knowledge gained in education and the skills and competences needed. Applicants are required to commit to register to a course leading to the Doctorate of Pharmacy or equivalent at MQF Level 8 or a Doctor of Philosophy with a commitment to carry out the research on the objectives of the Medicines Authority; to follow a Master of Science in Pharmacy, or equivalent at MQF Level 7; or to follow a Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Technology or a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting.</p>	<p>It is expected that with this measure, employees will be fully trained and competent enough to tap into new areas and activities being carried out both in and outside the EU. This will also help in attracting more specialised pharmaceutical companies to Malta.</p> <p>31 trainees have enrolled in this programme since 2014.</p>

	<p>The Medicines Authority has also strengthened the training of staff in specialised areas such as sterile manufacturing in order to enhance the competence of its people resulting in the expansion of its services.</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	
	<p>Upgrading of the existing Information Systems at the Medicines Authority</p> <p>The system was deployed in Q3 of 2017. The Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA), the Medicines Authority and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) are integrating the login process of the application with the corp process. Since Q4 2017, the system is being developed and tested.</p> <p>In October 2017, a delegation visited the HPRA to start preparations for the Inspectorate Directorate. Following the visit, the latter has started mapping the business processes, in preparation for deployment.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will ensure an effective and efficient communication between the Medicines Authority and its stakeholders. It is also expected that this upgrading will lead to better revenue-generating opportunities for the Authority.</p>
	<p>New Grant for the ITS Students</p> <p>With this measure, ITS students are being given a grant similar to what students in other post-secondary institutions are receiving. A grant of € 230 is offered once yearly in addition to the stipend which students receive monthly. The grant was given for the first time in December 2016 and is being given yearly to all entitled students.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The number of students that started a course at ITS for this scholastic year (2017/2018) is 653. There was an increase of 3.4% from scholastic year 2016/17. One of the factors which may have contributed to the increase in number of students may be the introduction of the grant scheme.</p>
	<p>New ITS Campus</p> <p>The process of land transfer between Smart City and the Government is in its final stages. The process of tender publication is expected to be completed by end of the first quarter of 2018.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The new campus will be used to upskill the tourism workforce in order to increase and ensure a higher quality in the services offered in the tourism sector and workforce. Additionally, the measure is intended to keep up with the demand and increase in the number of students that enrol in the tourism industry. This will also ensure an increase in the number of courses offered to the students.</p>
	<p>Recognition for Prior Learning</p> <p>In April 2017, the ITS launched this scheme whereby workers who are willing to further their studies, are being offered a skills and knowledge recognition process which will evaluate the learning obtained through their working years.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>With this measure employees already engaged in the industry will now be able to have their skills and experience taken into account when applying to further their studies. This will lead to more qualified employees engaged in the tourism and hospitality sector.</p>
	<p>Bachelor Degree with Honours in collaboration with International Entities</p> <p>During 2017, the ITS got the accreditation from the Malta Qualification Council of the said Bachelor degree. Applications opened in July 2017 and 142 applications were received. ITS accepted its first group of students for this course which started in September.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure will result in more students in the tourism sector continuing with their studies at tertiary level and have higher qualifications, thereby also improving the tourism product.</p> <p>132 students started their studies. The majority of these had already been ITS students and finished an ITS Diploma. From recent research, it was concluded that 53 of the 132 consider continuing to the second year. The others are planning to stop at the Higher National Diploma Level.</p> <p>10 other students started their studies in the second year as they had already finished a Level 5, Higher National Diploma. 8 are still attending the course whilst the other 2 dropped out.</p>
	<p>Infrastructure and WiFi Access in Schools</p> <p>Works on the new networks are ongoing and enhancements are in progress. WiFi in all Year 4 and Year 5 primary classrooms has been installed and this complements the 'One Tablet per Child' project to operate more effectively. Furthermore, WiFi will also be installed in Year 6 classrooms. It is planned that this service will also be provided in all secondary schools.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>As part of the 'One Tablet per Child' project, WiFi is an essential component to complement the project in providing connectivity to the students and educators on their tablets. Connectivity to network services and Internet (online content) would be accessed by the students and educators for a better teaching and learning experience.</p> <p>Furthermore, network services such as voice, video and data will provide the administration with a better work experience and such services are consolidated and managed centrally for a better return on investment.</p>
	<p>Replace older PCs</p> <p>Government is in the process of replacing all PCs which have been in use for more than 8 years. For this purpose, a tender was issued in order to replace the workstations in primary schools and ICT computer laboratories in middle, secondary and resource centres. Moreover, MEDE is revising the strategy for the provision of PCs within the primary classrooms.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>The impact of this measure will result in a better working environment and as a result, the utilisation of technology will be enhanced, thus contributing to positive learning outcomes.</p>
	<p>Social Fund for Students in Difficulty</p> <p>Government has set up a fund in order to improve the quality of life of students experiencing difficulties, not only to assist them in material living but also in the fields of culture and sport.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Since the launch of the scheme in 2017, a total of 901 students benefitted from a number of targeted benefits that addressed the students' personal needs. The number of students outnumbered the number that had been targeted at the beginning of the programme. The scheme was found to be of great help by the schools as it contributed to the enhancement of the caring environment.</p>

	<p>Primary School Extension in Rabat, Malta</p> <p>The present primary school in Rabat operates from 2 different buildings. This project involves the construction of an extension to one of the school buildings, making it possible for the school to operate from 1 building. The application to the PA was submitted in December 2017.</p> <p>This project is expected to be completed in the first half of 2019.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Education resources for primary education in Rabat Primary School will be gathered under 1 roof. This will result in more efficiency and better service to children attending the school. The school will cater for 400 students.</p>
	<p>Educational Facilities for Children with Disabilities who cannot attend Mainstream Educational Facilities</p> <p>A new San Miguel facility will be built in Bulebel, replacing the existing Resource Centre in Pembroke. The re-development of the Guardian Angel Resource Centre in Hamrun is at planning stage, that is, the PA application has been submitted.</p> <p>Both projects are expected to be completed in the second half of 2019.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will result in new and modern facilities for students with disabilities.</p>
	<p>Partnership with other foreign Universities for Training in the Pedagogy of Vocational Subjects</p> <p>An MoU has been signed between the Institute Haaga Helia University of Finland, the UOM, MCAST and ITS. Learning programmes are being reviewed by the foreign university.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will have the following impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - educators participate in relevant professional development; - collaboration with educational institutions to develop professional development that addresses the needs of the educators in the implementation of the Education Act and the aims as set by the Education Strategy. <p>The very long-term benefits of this measure should be the reduction of early school leaving and addressing of the skills gap, as advised by the Commission.</p>
	<p>Investment in Maritime Courses</p> <p>Government is investing in courses and services in the maritime sector in collaboration with strategic partners as well as in new resources for the Institute of Creative Arts.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will have the following impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upskilling of participants who are already in related or unrelated maritime employment by providing them with further possibilities to further their study; - participants gaining a qualification/certification in the maritime sector; - equip participants with new skills as to empower them to move from one sector to another.
	<p>High Quality Industry-based Apprenticeship</p> <p>The need to continue to invest within the development of a high-quality reform is essential in order to meet the requirements of industry and to tackle the existing skills gap and skills mismatch. Therefore, Government is developing vocational work-based competences and implementing new apprenticeship and work-based learning legislation.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>During academic year 2016/2017, 408 companies participated in the apprenticeship scheme and 849 students were on apprenticeship. In order to ensure that apprentices are acquiring knowledge, skills and competences which mirror the specific industry demands, MCAST, through the Apprentices and Work-based Learning Departments, has been developing vocational competences for each training programme on apprenticeship offered by MCAST. During January 2018, vocational competences have been developed in the Business and Commerce sector.</p>
	<p>Strengthening Services offered by the National Libraries and the NLA</p> <p>Malta Libraries carried out an evaluation process of the services offered in libraries in Gozo and a report was issued following the completion of this process. Dyslexia-friendly books have been placed in all Gozo libraries. A new space in the Central Public Library in Floriana was set up for the National Literacy Agency to hold interactive reading sessions and multisensory reading sessions for children with autism. 2 weekly multisensory sessions take place every Saturday morning at the Central Public Library.</p> <p>In April 2017, the NLA opened a new Nwar Family Literacy Programme centre in Santa Venera. In October 2017, another new Nwar centre started providing family literacy sessions in Marsascala.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>Since July 2017, 13 autistic children benefitted from the interactive and multisensory reading sessions held in the Central Public Library.</p> <p>As at January 2018, 14 pupils and their parent/guardian were attending the Santa Venera Nwar Centre and 9 pupils and their parents/guardian were attending the Marsascala Centre.</p>
	<p>National Curriculum Centre in Gozo</p> <p>The new Resource Centre in Sannat started operating in January 2017. It was equipped with over 1,700 books and resources. In 2017, both during the scholastic year and also during Summer, teachers and educators made use of the facilities in the Resource Centre. The NLA also runs the NWAR family literacy programme for children with literacy difficulties and their families.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>Through the opening of this new centre, Gozitan literacy educators and families of pupils in need of literacy support programmes now have greater access to literacy/educational books and resources.</p>

	<p>Eligibility for Supplementary Assistance</p> <p>As per Legal Notice 308 of 2016 and a Budget 2017 measure, the thresholds of student income were revised with respect to their eligibility for supplementary assistance in order to better assist families with low income and students facing social and other problems.</p> <p>The following are the revised thresholds for the granting of Supplementary Grants, as per Budget 2017 and applicable as from January 2017:</p> <p>€ 12,700 - Family Rate € 9,100 - Single Rate € 10,500 - Single Parent Rate</p> <p>The thresholds for Supplementary Grants were not revised for scholastic year 2017/2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure is further incentivising students from low-income families or students facing certain hardship, including disability, to further their studies to post-secondary and tertiary level.</p> <p>As at end March 2018, 2,501 applications for Supplementary Grants were submitted by students and to date 1,192 applications have been approved for payment.</p>
	<p>Stipends for students following the ALP+ course</p> <p>As from 2016, students who have turned 16 and continue their studies or training at the ALP in Paola at Level 3 of the MQF in Hospitality and Customer Care and/or Welding and Fabrication have become eligible for the award of stipend and grant.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>During academic year 2016/2017, 26 students applied for Students' Maintenance Grants under this institution. These students' applications were processed and approved from the beginning of the academic year as a further incentive to these students who are following these applied courses.</p> <p>Up to December 2017, during academic year 2017/2018, 59 applications have been received, 53 of which have been approved and confirmed for payment of stipends.</p>
	<p>University of Malta Capital Projects</p> <p>The construction of the extension of the Material Engineering Lab has been completed and the tender for the Mechanical & Electrical services is being vetted for publication.</p> <p>The tender for the construction of the Mathematics and Physics building was issued but no bids were received and a fresh tender is being vetted.</p> <p>The ERDF application for the TRAKE has been submitted and the tender for construction is currently being vetted by the Department of Contracts.</p> <p>It is to be noted that the renovation of the campus in Valletta has been completed.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure is expected to have the following impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material Engineering Lab extension - This is part of the whole Engineering Labs and TRAKE complex project which is envisaged to be partly funded through ERDF. The aim is to transfer the current labs to this facility and modernising the equipment. • Mathematics and Physics - Aims to provide further learning spaces and offices for staff to cater for the increased demand within the sciences sector. • TRAKE - This building and its facilities are targeted towards providing facilities for post-doctoral research and its support. • Renovation of the Junior College – The Junior College is in dire need of refurbishment. Therefore, Government has committed itself to such refurbishment.
<p>National poverty target (To lift around 6,560 people out of risk of poverty and exclusion)</p>	<p>Pensions Reform</p> <p>The Government set up a Pensions Strategy Group (PSG) to continue with the reform of pensions in Malta in order to continue strengthening the sustainability of the system and also to maintain adequacy.</p> <p>The report by the PSG was launched for a 6-week consultation in June 2015. Stakeholders submitted recommendations and a final report was finalised. The post-consultation report, including the final recommendations, was submitted by the Group for the attention of Government in September 2015.</p> <p>Many of the recommendations by the Pensions Strategy Group were implemented in the Budget of November 2015 including the provision of € 140 pensions on the national minimum pension and increases in pensions for those married couples who did not benefit from the € 140.</p> <p>The minimum pension for married persons living on 1 pension increased by an additional € 4 per week as announced in the 2017 Budget.</p> <p>For 2018, the following measures were introduced for pensioners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an additional increase of € 2 per week was awarded to all pensioners over and above the COLA increase of € 1.75; - a re-assessment of pension at age 65 for persons with a reduced pension who continue with employment after their pension withdrawal. <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Due to the pensions reform of 2007, the pension age for persons born between 1952 and 1955 went up to 62 for both genders, and the accumulation of contributions for a full pension entitlement increased from 30 to 35 years. As a result, the increase in number of new claims was lower than the year-on-year increases from previous years.</p> <p>Several proposals in the PSG report have been introduced through the 2016 Budget, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the gradual introduction of a Guaranteed National Minimum Level of Pension; 2. the introduction of contribution credits for persons with contribution gaps due to human capital development and lifelong learning; 3. the increase in the number of weeks awarded as contribution credits to parents taking career breaks for child rearing and family growth purposes; 4. the increase in the contribution record from 40 to 41 years for persons born on or after 1st January 1969; 5. the increase in rate from 5/6 to 6/6 for widows who although eligible for a retirement pension in their own right, receive a widows' pension because it is more beneficial; 6. the initial date of award of pension effective from the following day of retirement or widowhood instead of the first Saturday following retirement or widowhood; 7. persons deferring their pension entitlement will benefit from a percentage increase in their pension rates; 8. an increase of € 4 per week in the minimum pension to married persons living on one pension.
	<p>Strengthening Support Services to Jobless Households</p> <p>Community-Based Services</p> <p>Community-based projects continue to target teens and adults to enhance their skills and their integration in the community/society.</p> <p>LEAP</p>	<p>Community-Based Services</p> <p>Through these projects, residents are receiving skills training through a friendly and informal environment; this helps them increase their worth, helps them to take control of certain situations in their lives (e.g. intra-familial communication), to be more active in their community, and even have healthy ways of seeing leisure and recreation (strong element of prevention). The various community services target individuals who would benefit from the informal and non-formal skills training that is offered through the projects.</p> <p>LEAP</p>

<p>LEAP is operating from the following centres: Cottonera, Valletta, Qawra, Kirkop, Xewkija, Qormi, Msida, Gharghur, Marsascula, Santa Lucia and Mosta. Besides serving as a centre for food hamper distribution in March 2017, in June 2017 the Mosta centre was transformed to host a centre whereby material family needs could be collected following a professional referral. The material distributed consists mainly of clothing and footwear. This centre is open daily and serves as a referral point within the locality.</p> <p>As from 2017, further outreach was carried out through the implementation of State Funded Food Distribution (SFFD).</p> <p>As from 1st January 2017, the LEAP project has been specifically entrusted to incorporate in its operations the Supported Employment Service. During 2017 various meetings have been held both with Jobsplus and the Lino Spiteri Foundation to ensure that no duplication of work is carried out. Beneficiaries were referred to the appropriate entity and follow-ups were carried out to ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The distribution of food packages forms part of the European-funded project Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), led by MFCS and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) being the local partner organisation.</p> <p>7 distributions were held throughout this scheme: 4 distributions in 2016 and 3 distributions in 2017. With regard to 2017, the first distribution was carried out in February, the second one in July and the third was carried out in October/November. The upcoming eighth distribution commenced in February.</p> <p>During 2017, 10,715 families were notified to collect the food package/s in the 3 distributions throughout the year and 9,263 households claimed their entitlement. Home-bound beneficiaries had their package delivered at home – there were approximately 30 such cases in each distribution.</p> <p>A new scheme, the State-Funded Food Distribution (SFFD) has been introduced by the Government to reach out further to families considered also in need of material support. The cohort amounts to approximately 22,000 families. During 2017, 2 distributions were held whilst the third distribution is scheduled for end of March/beginning of April 2018. Families that will no longer fall within the set categories will no longer be eligible, whilst other families may become eligible during the tenure of the programme.</p>
<p>Subsidised Rental Schemes – Rent Subsidy in Private Rented Residences</p> <p>This is a scheme which provides subsidies to tenants on rents paid for their ordinary residence leased from the private sector. This scheme has been revised and changed from 'Scheme R' to 'Rent Subsidy in Private Rented Residences' (RSS) in March 2012. This scheme is still means-tested but a few conditions have been altered to support the beneficiaries in a more holistic way.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The Housing Authority (HA) is still paying subsidies under 'Scheme R' since beneficiaries under this scheme are entitled to a 5-year subsidy from the date of their application as per agreement signed and the conditions of this scheme.</p> <p>From 1st January 2017 till 31st December 2017, there were 1,494 beneficiaries and payments amounted to € 16,154 under 'Scheme R' and € 857,653 under 'RSS'.</p>
<p>Regeneration and Maintenance of Housing Estates</p> <p>Through this project, embellishment works are carried out in the surrounding areas of Government Housing Estates and maintenance works are carried out in these blocks' common parts. Please refer to the measure 'Embellishment and Maintenance Works in Housing Estates' for more detail.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>These projects are intended to promote community regeneration and the fight against poverty. Consequently, they will continue to improve the environment of families, children and the elderly by providing a safe and clean environment and increasing social inclusion.</p>
<p>Schemes to support Home Adaptation Works - (A) Schemes for Persons with a Disability</p> <p>This scheme provides financial aid and technical assistance to persons with a disability to carry out the necessary adaptations to their place of residence.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure aspires to improve the social inclusion prospects of individuals by encouraging independent living for disabled persons.</p> <p>From January till end December 2017, 146 new applications were submitted and payments amounted to € 379,717.</p>
<p>Schemes to support Home Adaptation Works - (B) Schemes for Repairs and Improvements</p> <p>This scheme provides financial assistance to tenants or owners to carry out repair or adaptation works in their residence.</p> <p>In view of an increase in demand, the maximum amount of grant that an applicant can benefit from in schemes for adaptation works was increased by € 3,000. After October 2013, this grant was made available to a new category of tenants who previously had not benefited from the initiative.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This scheme is designed to help those who cannot afford to pay for repairs and maintenance for their residences. This assistance helps to render premises habitable and up to an acceptable standard.</p> <p>From 1st January 2017 till 31st December 2017, 27 new applications under Scheme SSP and 316 new applications under Scheme ADP were submitted and payments amounted to € 465,062.</p>
<p>Residential Home for Youth</p> <p>The young girls of ages between 15 and 18 who used to live in this residential home moved into different community homes where they are being given more specialised attention with the intent to meet their needs and receive more individual attention. Currently 3 flats are being operated with 24/7 support.</p> <p>Discussions on the provision of bed nights at Dar Frate Jacoba (for adolescent boys) have been concluded and the agreement has been signed.</p> <p>Status (facility for adolescent girls): Completed Status (facility for adolescent boys): Completed</p>	<p>The young people are following a programme with the aim of dealing with their highly challenging behaviour while enhancing their independence and life skills.</p> <p>Liaison with the mental health sector is still ongoing to help these young people deal with their past and present traumas. Assessment tools are being used continuously to report on the residents' developments with the young persons' psychiatrist. Improvements have been noticed and some of the young persons have been engaged in the education system to further their studies.</p>
<p>Independent Living</p> <p>The main objective of this measure is to provide for an independent environment which will sustain a person's ability to live as independently as possible, either in their own home or in an accommodation with carers on site.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>In 2017 the amount of € 5,031.45 was issued to Caritas, covering rents from 4th January 2017 to 3rd January 2018.</p>
<p>Grant of € 300 to Elderly Persons over the age of 75 years</p> <p>The € 300 grant is given to those people over the age of 75 who are still living in the community.</p> <p>In the 2018 Budget, Government announced that it will extend this measure to 2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure encourages elderly people over the age of 75 to continue to live in their homes and in the community. The total number of beneficiaries for 2017 was 29,804.</p>

	<p>Extension of the Home Help Service Scheme</p> <p>The Home Help Service is a domiciliary service which supports older persons or persons with a disability to continue living in the community.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>By end of December 2017, there were 2,657 households receiving Home Help service. The number of beneficiaries amounts to 3,640.</p>
	<p>Increase the number of Clients attending Day Centres by 200</p> <p>The following measures were implemented by Aġenzija SAPPOR, the Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disabilities and Active Ageing and MFCS (including the previous Ministry, MFSS) to increase the number of clients availing themselves of Day Centres:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The first measure that was implemented was an over-booking policy of 10 to 15% according to the Centre. This was to make up for the daily unattended clients slots due to, for example, sickness. A total of 45 places were created. Centre Gwardjola with a capacity of 40 was opened. Star 25 was opened in conjunction with Inspire for Profound Multiple Learning Disabilities clients. Capacity was initially 10 but has now been stepped up to 15. SPERO Day Centre for the visually impaired was also opened, with a capacity of 25. Learning Hub in Gozo: A total space for 50 clients was created to be used between Aġenzija SAPPOR and the then-Employment and Training Corporation (now Jobsplus). Clients may benefit from both entities. SKILLS SPACE was opened in Sliema with a capacity of 50 (please refer to measure below "A new Day Centre for Persons with a Disability in Sliema" for more details). The Mtarfa Day Centre will be extended for an additional capacity of 100 individuals. The plans have been approved and excavation works will commence shortly (please refer to measure below "Mtarfa Day Centre" for more details). <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Currently most of the places created have been filled up. A request to increase the headcount of the personnel working within the Day Centres has been made. The strategies adopted, together with the fact that the centres have been refurbished and modernised, has resulted in a great influx both in the popularity and demand of the service.</p> <p>The aims of the service are simply to provide a safe and improved environment where persons with a disability can learn, communicate and integrate in the community surrounding them. The programmes' aim is to enhance independent living skills through an individualised programme.</p>
	<p>Financial Support to First-Time Buyers</p> <p>A one-time exemption from the payment of duty on the first € 150,000 of the price of immovable property is being granted to first-time buyers acquiring such property. This measure started on 1st January 2014 and was expected to run up until December 2014. It was extended annually during Budgets 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The number of contracts for first-time buyers registered during 2017 and the first month of 2018 was 2,743.</p> <p>Since the measure's implementation in 2014, a total of 11,287 contracts were signed for 16,624 eligible first-time buyers.</p>
	<p>Relief from Income Tax on Minimum Wage and for Pensioners</p> <p>The Government is committed to exempt from taxes minimum wage earners. Thus, the present tax ceiling has been raised to take the COLA into consideration. In January 2016, Government has further reduced the income tax so that persons with an income from employment or pension not exceeding the minimum wage will once again not be liable to tax. Furthermore, pensioners whose pension does not exceed the minimum wage will also be exempted from paying income tax.</p> <p>This measure came into force as of 1st January 2014 and has been extended in Budgets 2015 and 2016.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>During 2016, 802 pensioner and 2,464 non-pensioner taxpayers were affected by this measure.</p>
	<p>Setting Up of a Commission for Human Rights and Equality</p> <p>A Commission for Human Rights and Equality will be replacing the existing National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).</p> <p>The setting up of the Commission on Human Rights and Equality is expected to be implemented in 2018.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Through the Human Rights and Equality Commission, adequate resources will be put in place to implement the measures as expressed in the related legislations, Directives and Regulations. Through the protection and promotion of equal rights, excluded individuals will be empowered to regain control of their lives.</p>
	<p>Housing for Persons with a Disability</p> <p>Through this project, the first 10 residential homes in the community for disabled persons have been/are being developed. Training has also taken place for all staff working with persons with a disability.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This is expected to reduce the number of disabled persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion.</p>
	<p>Appointment of Persons with a Disability on Government Boards/Committees/Commissions</p> <p>Public institutions, and in particular those that provide direct services to persons with a disability, need to have a structure in place that engages the users of the respective services in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of the programmes provided. Through this measure, the voice of disabled persons in the country's governance is strengthened while at the same time concrete activism is being promoted among disabled persons. This measure is currently being implemented across all Ministries.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>The law regulating persons with a disability to be statutorily seated on a number of boards was endorsed by the Maltese Parliament, and is currently in its implementation phase. The impact of this measure on persons with a disability is that now they are increasingly more in touch with policies that are continuously being developed in this regard.</p> <p>The Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) (ex-KNPD) now has a Commissioner for Persons with a Disability which takes on a more regulatory role.</p>

	<p>Repair and Embellishment Works on the Residences of Aġenzija Sapport</p> <p>Various embellishment projects have been completed in all the residences of the Agency. Considering that the Agency's clients have severe to moderate challenging behaviour, it means that such projects need to be ongoing since a lot of damages are incurred.</p> <p>It was also decided that the Vajrita Residences will be demolished and rebuilt under a new budget measure. Please refer to new measure below 'Demolition and Reconstruction of the Vajrita Building in Marsascula' for more details.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>These repair and embellishment works aim to decrease the health and safety risks inside the premises; increase the well-being of the residents; bring the residences in conformity with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD); and lead to better/practical use of space. These works have improved the quality of life of the 65 clients residing in them.</p> <p>Alternative residential placements have been identified but negotiations are still not finalised.</p>
	<p>Policy on Integration</p> <p>During 2017, the Human Rights and Integration Directorate finalised and published the Migrant Integration Strategy & Action Plan (Vision 2020), which was preceded by extensive consultation and Mind D Gap, a ground-laying project. An Integration Unit will be set up within the Directorate, and is expected to commence operations in 2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The national strategy will promote human rights, equal opportunities and obligations for all, and amongst other things, it will promote diversity as a basic value necessary to achieving greater social cohesion.</p>
	<p>Retirement Home in Gozo</p> <p>The tender for the construction of the old people's home has been awarded and construction works of the main part of the complex were completed.</p> <p>In view of the above, the following steps are envisaged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal application to modify the existing permit with the PA was filed in September 2017. The relative permit has been issued. • The alterations to the existing complex and building of the Dementia Unit are expected to be completed by May 2018. • An open public procurement procedure is envisaged for the tender for the completion of works – Mechanical and Electrical works, finishing, furnishings and the management of the complex. This is expected to be issued in April 2018. Relative works are expected to commence by July 2018 and are envisaged to be completed by May 2019. <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will address the needs of service beneficiaries and will provide family support to enable participation of family members in the labour market. The project will also create an extensive range of new jobs within the private sectors, especially for women.</p>
	<p>Cost of Living Increase Allowance</p> <p>With this measure the full COLA is being paid to pensioners every 4 weeks; two-thirds with the weekly pension rate and one-third as a separate payment every week but in same 4-weekly payments.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Latest data shows that 92,179 pensioners currently qualify for the full COLA rate.</p>
	<p>Full Widows' Pension</p> <p>A full widows' pension is being paid to those pensioners who were entitled to a retirement pension but had to renounce it on the death of their spouse. This measure is increasing pension income and will compensate for contributions paid by the surviving spouse. Amendments to the Social Security Act were carried out.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Widow pensioners are being paid the full retirement pension received by their late spouse and not 5/6 of it. Thus, widows will have more income, leading to a better quality of life and a reduction in the possibility that they fall into poverty. During 2017, 744 cases benefitted from this measure.</p>
	<p>Introduction of the Increased Carer's Allowance and Carer's Allowance [formerly known as "Revision of Carers' Pension and Social Assistance for Carers"]</p> <p>A new framework was introduced on the 1st of January 2017. In this respect the Increased Carer's Allowance is subjected to the high dependency of the patient by using the Barthel Index or the Mini-Mental State Examination. Moreover, this allowance is not means tested and married persons can also apply. The payment of the Increased Carer's Allowance is € 140 per week.</p> <p>On the other hand, the Carer's Allowance is subjected to the medium dependency of the patient by using the Barthel Index or the Mini-Mental State Examination. This allowance is means tested and paid at a maximum of € 90 per week.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>It is expected that the amalgamation of both benefits will result in an increase in the number of people who will continue to live in the community, thus reducing the possibility of being socially excluded.</p> <p>The mechanisms relating to this reform were successfully introduced during the first quarter of the year 2017. In fact, all applications were rolled out on the 1st January 2017. It is imperative to point out that all applications, following the normal practices carried out by the Department's assessors, are evaluated by means of a home visit by the Multi-Disciplinary Board as provided by Article 68 of the Social Security Act.</p> <p>Up to the 9th January 2018, a total of 1,071 Increased Carers' Allowance applications were received. A total of 983 applications were worked out and applicants were informed of the outcome. A total of 88 applications are awaiting a home visit. This means that 92% of all applications are worked out.</p>
	<p>Pension to be awarded from the first Day of Retirement or Death of Spouse in the Case of a Widows' Pension</p> <p>With this measure, pension is being awarded from the first day of retirement or death of spouse. This means that payment is being effected immediately and not from the following Saturday after either the date of retirement or death of the spouse.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>Beneficiaries are gaining from 1 to 6 days of pension, since the first pay date will no longer be on a Saturday. This will reduce the possibility that pensioners fall into poverty. A total of circa 4,685 beneficiaries benefitted from this measure in 2017.</p>

	<p>Embellishment and Maintenance Works in Housing Estates</p> <p>Embellishment and maintenance works are being carried out in 3 housing estates in Hamrun, Ta' Ġiorni and Pembroke. Progress until December 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs, upgrading and embellishment works at Okella Agius Building in Hamrun commenced in September 2016. Works have proceeded at a steady pace and are currently almost ready except for the shifting of consumer units. Project is at 99%. • Embellishment works in Blocks A, B, E and F at Ta' Ġiorni have been completed. • Embellishment works in Blocks A5-A11 in Pembroke are still ongoing and are currently at 67%. <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Extensive works have been carried out on the roofs and the common parts at the Hamrun and the Ta' Ġiorni blocks. Works in Pembroke include painting and plastering of façades, finishes and services in the common areas and renovation works in external areas around the blocks.</p>
	<p>Building New Housing Estates</p> <p>Several meetings have taken place between the HA, the Department of Contracts, Malita Investment plc, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), following which a loan of € 50 million with low rates of interest has been approved for this project with an agreement with the EIB.</p> <p>In the meantime, a new company, Housing Projects Management Unit (HPMU), has been set up to take over the responsibilities of the construction of these units. A tender for a framework agreement for excavation works of the sites involved has been issued and awarded. Excavation works on some of the sites will commence soon.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>This measure will see an increase in the number of HA units that will be used for social housing purposes.</p>
	<p>Guaranteed National Minimum Level Pension</p> <p>This measure guarantees a minimum level of contributory pension, including the cost of living bonus of € 140 per week, to those pensioners who have yearly average contributions of 50. A pro-rata contributory pension is paid to those who have less than 50 but over 20. Payment will be effected accordingly.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure will continue to strengthen the annual income of low to medium income contributory pensioners. The total number of beneficiaries is now circa 18,636.</p>
	<p>Child Credits</p> <p>This measure aims to increase the number of credited years' entitlement for pension purposes to those persons who had to stop working due to child/ren bearing and rearing reasons. This measure aims to reduce as much as possible the impact of career breaks taken for child bearing and rearing purposes. Amendments to the Social Security Act were carried out by April 2016.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>It is expected that more mothers will return to the labour market after career breaks. This measure will also encourage more mothers to be gainfully occupied.</p>
	<p>Other Pensions Measure</p> <p>This measure increased the rate of pension of those persons who used to pay a high rate of social security contributions when they were employed, but then became self-employed with a lesser income with the consequence of having a lesser rate of pension. Pension rates are assessed on the best income of a gainfully occupied person earned from employment rather than that earned from self-occupation, as long as these happen to be in the last 15 years before retirement age.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>This measure will contribute to a better quality of life since pension will be assessed on a higher income. Till the end of December 2016, 15 persons have benefitted from this measure but more are expected to benefit.</p>
	<p>Carer at Home [formerly known as "Live-in Carer – Pilot Project"]</p> <p>The scheme was launched in 2016 and implemented in January 2017. It has been renamed 'Carer at Home'. A series of amendments are being performed in response to the outcome of the pilot scheme.</p> <p>The scheme is now a stand-alone community service offered to dependent older persons (60+) who live in the community and who employ a qualified carer. Dependency level is confirmed through assessments performed by CommCare.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>An average of 20 new applications per month are received. Established targets have been achieved. Number of beneficiaries at the end of February 2018 is expected to stand at 170.</p>
	<p>Reform of the Methodology outlined in Chapter 368 of the Laws of Malta regarding the Transfer of a Vehicle where an Exemption of Registration Tax pertaining to Persons with a Disability was awarded</p> <p>The measure has changed the methodology used in calculating the residual tax to be settled in cases where a vehicle that was exempt from registration tax (disability exemptions) is transferred to a person not eligible for such exemption. The change saw a move from utilising fluctuating market values to establish tax due to an equal yearly apportionment of the tax.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The change was sought after a number of anomalies were observed where due to changing factors in market values, certain vehicles appreciated in value causing an unfair distortion in the tax payable upon transfer to a new owner. It is expected that no further anomalies or unfair situations arising in the case of transfer of vehicles that were exempted from registration tax will be reported.</p>
	<p>Incentives for Employers to set up Private Pensions</p> <p>Government is giving fiscal benefits to employers linked to voluntary private pension plans at the workplace. This measure was implemented on the 13th September 2017 through Legal Notice 228 of 2017.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an increase in the number of pension schemes. Data on take-up will be available late next year.</p>

	Status: Completed and ongoing	
	<p>Incentives for the Purchase of Property in Gozo</p> <p>Persons who buy residences in Gozo will benefit from a reduction in stamp duty, from 5% to 2%. This applies to those entering into a promise of sale agreement during 2017, registered with the Inland Revenue Department till the 31st December 2017, and where the final contract is concluded during the course of 2018.</p> <p>In Budget 2018, this measure was extended till the end of 2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	The number of persons that were affected by this measure up to December 2017 was 2,756 relating to 1,249 contracts.
	<p>Elimination of Gender Discrimination in Pension Rates</p> <p>Amendments to the computerised system have been carried out so that the same rates are paid to male and female pensioners.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	During 2017, 286 female pensioners benefitted from this measure.
	<p>Disability Pension Reform</p> <p>This reform has introduced a 3-tier payment system according to the degree of disability. Payments are now also issued to those falling in the first and third tier. It is imperative to point out that payment of the Increased Severe Disability Assistance (ISDA) (first tier) is of € 120 per week whilst the payment for the Disability Assistance (third tier) is means tested and can be up to € 76.60 per week.</p> <p>The mechanisms relating to this reform were successfully introduced during the first quarter of the year 2017. In fact, all applications were rolled out on the 1st January 2017. Applications for the ISDA, following the normal practices carried out by the Department's assessors, are evaluated by means of a home visit by the Multi-Disciplinary Board as provided by Article 27 of the Social Security Act.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>It is expected that with this measure there will be an improvement in the way of living of persons with a severe disability (first tier) that prevents them from working, thus reducing the risk of such persons falling into poverty.</p> <p>Up to 9th January 2018, a total of 705 ISDA applications were submitted and a total of 668, representing 95%, were worked out. Moreover, the number of applications received in respect of Disability Assistance up to 9th January 2018 totalled 144 out of which 122 were worked out, representing 86% of the applications received.</p>
	<p>Free Medical Aid for Disabled Pensioners</p> <p>This measure extends the renewal period of free medical aid from 3 months to 1 year to persons with a disability who qualify for such a benefit.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will lessen the hardship and distress caused by the fact that disabled pensioners are currently renewing their application every 3 months.</p> <p>This measure was completed during the first quarter of 2017. There were 846 beneficiaries up to 31st December 2017.</p>
	<p>Streamlining of the Means Test for free Medical Aid</p> <p>This measure has streamlined the capital threshold means test to be the same as the non-contributory benefits means test. It has increased the capital threshold for married and single beneficiaries, thus more persons are qualifying for such a benefit.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>This measure is expected to improve the lives of persons with low income who are in need of regular medicines. It was completed during the first quarter of 2017.</p> <p>Beneficiaries for the year 2016 totalled to 5,584 while during the year 2017 they totalled to 5,440. The decrease in the number of beneficiaries indicates the current wellbeing in a boosting economy.</p>
	<p>Domiciliary Respite Service for Carers</p> <p>Domiciliary respite was introduced in Q2 2017. 5 models of service provision were introduced to meet service user requirements. Considering that 5,500 hours were exhausted within less than 30 weeks since launch, new procurement was required to cater for the demand. Procurement for long-term service provision is complete, with projections for service utilisation based on 2017 data.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	2017 statistics indicate an average of 830 monthly hours of service provision. A total of 6,642 hours of services were rendered to 66 families by the end of 2017. Based on these figures it is forecasted that by the end of February 2018, a total of 88 informal carers would have benefited from 8,300 hours of 'Respite at Home' since the service was launched in May 2017.
	<p>Co-Parenting Skills Programme</p> <p>A pilot project was undertaken to help parents learn new ways on how to co-parent their children after going through separation. The aim of these groups was to help the parents process the loss of their relationship, adjust to parenting their children from separate households, identify ways how to co-parent effectively and also to understand what their children go through and what they need from them as parents. In this way, it is hoped that this programme will minimise the negative effects on the children's psychosocial development.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The evaluation carried out suggests that the sessions seemed to be very interesting for the participants. They found a space to share their experience with others who are in a very similar situation, or at least experiencing very similar thoughts and emotions. Generally, they felt listened to and understood. Having different perspectives also helped them understand themselves and the other parent more. Focusing on placing the child's best interest first also helped understand their children and their children's emotions better.</p> <p>All in all, participants seem to have found this programme valuable to them. Parents also reported a high level of positivity after attending the training. Most reported that they felt more equipped with both awareness about their role of parents and skills on how to deal with situations that may arise in the context of the relationship breakdown.</p>
	<p>A new Day Centre for Persons with Disability in Sliema</p> <p>In March 2017, a new Day Centre was opened in Sliema and officially inaugurated by the Government. The objective of this Day Centre is to meet the needs and offer service to a bigger number of persons with a disability. This centre is offering training to persons with a disability to better their prospects of entering the labour market.</p> <p>The project has been completed, the number of staff has increased and most of the clients are identified and undergoing the transition. The training has started and a number of parents and professionals have been trained.</p>	<p>Thus far, 22 services users are making use of the centre on a weekly basis. It is expected that at full capacity, 50 persons with a disability will be trained at the day centre. 150 individuals who care for those persons and other persons with a disability who are not attending the centres were scheduled for training within the centre. To date, 100 persons including families have received training within the skills space.</p> <p>At the moment, Government is still working on the recruitment of the remaining support workers and professionals. The transport for the centre has increased and now is being offered to the majority of service users. Only one further van is required which will be included in the new intake of service users.</p>

	Status: Completed	
	<p>Increase in the Rent Subsidy and widen the Criteria on Eligibility on Rent Payable by Tenants to Private Landlords</p> <p>With effect from 1st January 2017, the maximum rent subsidy given by the Authority has increased from € 1,000 to € 2,000 per annum. Whilst the maximum income earned by an applicant to qualify for this subsidy was of € 18,514.80, under this new scheme the maximum income was increased to € 23,000 per annum. The maximum assets applicants should possess were also increased from € 10,000 to € 23,300. Applicants have to be the recognised tenants of the property being rented as their ordinary residence.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>This scheme will help tenants with low income to finance the payment of the rent being paid to private landlords. It is also envisaged that this measure will decrease the demand for social accommodation. An additional 1,400 households are expected to benefit from this initiative.</p> <p>Until the end of December 2017, 1,176 applications were received under the new scheme. The total amount of subsidy payable under this scheme between 1st January 2017 and 31st December 2017 amounted to € 731,213.</p>
	<p>Revision of Minimum Rent on Government/HA-rented Housing</p> <p>With this measure, the social housing minimum rent for the renewal contracts has not continued to increase automatically every 3 years as per the Rent Civil Code established in 2009. Furthermore, eligible beneficiaries have been refunded the 'overpaid' rent from 2013 till 2016. Social housing residential units will no longer be treated as privately-rented apartments due to the social environment that such tenants live in.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>By means of this measure all tenants are in conformity with the rent amounts established in 2013. HA leases which have been affected by this measure were revised and adjusted, and the respective overpaid rents were refunded.</p> <p>1,364 social tenants were affected by this measure.</p>
	<p>Consultations with the Social Partners on the Introduction of Paid Special Medical Leave to Employees diagnosed with Cancer</p> <p>Consultations with the social partners are being proposed with regard to the introduction of paid special medical leave, in addition to the statutory sick leave, to employees who are diagnosed with cancer and who are undergoing treatment or some form of cancer therapy.</p> <p>Between January and February 2017, internal consultations were initiated both with the Department of Health and with relevant associations. During March 2017, concrete proposals were drafted based on the internal consultations. These proposals have been presented to the Employment Relations Board (ERB) and subsequently they have been presented for political consideration.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>After the consultations and study would have been concluded, recommendations would be formulated and presented to Cabinet.</p>
	<p>Automatic Access to Maintenance Grants, including Supplementary Grants, for Students with Disabilities and those living in Homes</p> <p>Students with disabilities as well as students residing in Church homes and conservatories, among others, are automatically eligible for maintenance grants, including the supplementary assistance under Legal Notice 308 of 2016. Therefore, such persons would benefit from increased financial aid if they decide to further their education.</p> <p>Status: Completed and ongoing</p>	<p>At Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, by the end of academic year 2016/17, 155 students benefitted, and all the students were eligible for the Supplementary Maintenance Grant. During academic year 2016/2017, 51 students with a disability living in Church homes and conservatories were receiving payments of Supplementary Maintenance Grants.</p> <p>During academic year 2017/18, 43 applications were received from students with disabilities and a further 13 from students residing in conservatories and Church homes. As at mid-February 2018, a total number of 130 students attending Aġenzija Żgħażaġh benefitted under this scheme.</p>
	<p>Government Savings Bonds for Pensioners</p> <p>This budget measure was completed in September 2017 when the Treasury issued € 70 million (€ 50 million plus an over-allotment option of € 20 million) in the 62+ Malta Government Savings Bond for individuals born in 1955 or before. The 62+ Malta Government Savings Bonds issued in September and October 2017 are non-negotiable debt instruments maturing in 2022 offering a coupon of 3%.</p> <p>On the 28th September 2017, the Treasury announced the issuance of a second tranche of the 62+ Malta Government Savings Bond with similar terms and conditions to the one offered in September. In the second issuance, the Treasury offered € 30 million worth of 62+ Malta Government Savings Bond. The prospectus was published on 3rd October 2017 and the issuance opened and closed on 16th October 2017.</p> <p>The second issuance was specifically opened for applicants who did not participate in the first issuance (September issuance) and for applicants whose application was not accepted in full in the first issuance because the value of applications received exceeded the amount on issue.</p> <p>The refunds in respect of unallocated monies were issued on 27th October 2017 and 1st November 2017.</p> <p>As announced in Budget 2018, a similar bond will be issued during 2018.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	<p>The September issuance was oversubscribed on the first day with Treasury receiving 12,305 applications whilst the total amount applied for amounted to just above € 107.1 million.</p> <p>In the second issuance, the Treasury received (i) 3,974 applications from new applicants amounting to a nominal amount of € 31,194,800 and (ii) 8,954 applications amounting to a nominal amount of € 33,115,800 from applicants who applied in the September 2017 issue, but whose application was not accepted in full.</p>
New/updated commitments in relation to the 2020 targets (per target)		
Employment	Enhancing the 'Get Into Programme'	

	The 'Get Into Programme' provides opportunities to vulnerable young persons to gain work experience in order to strengthen their employability prospects.	It is expected that young people following the programme would reliably demonstrate increased employability skills, hence increasing the proportion of school leavers gaining paid employment within 1 year.
	Extension of the In-Work Benefit Scheme This measure sets to increase the rate of this benefit (from € 350 to € 450 per child) payable to couples where only 1 person is in employment, and thus when both persons are working, they will qualify for a much better rate of the In-Work Benefit.	The extension of this scheme shall encourage more persons to enter the labour force, hence gradually phasing out the dependence on social benefits and also reducing their chances of falling into poverty.
Energy	Lower VAT Rate on Bicycle Rentals Government is lowering the VAT rate on bicycle rentals from 18% to 7%.	This measure should further encourage the use of bicycles as a means of transport, even by tourists. It may lead to a reduction in the number of cars on the roads.
	Free Transport for Church and Independent Schools Government will be consulting with all stakeholders involved in school transport so that a strategic plan will be set in place in order for children from Church and Independent schools to enjoy free transport. It is being envisaged that this measure comes into effect from the next scholastic year.	This measure should result in more coordination and efficiency of transport routes, leading to a reduction in traffic congestion.
	National Energy and Climate Plan for 2021-2030 The scope of the National Energy and Climate Plan is to set out the direction of national energy and climate objectives and policies with a view of delivering on the commonly agreed objectives of the Energy Union, particularly the 2030 targets agreed by the European Council in October 2014. Member States are requested to prepare a draft Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan by 31 December 2018 and a final version by 31 December 2019. ² An Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (IMSC) was set up and its first meeting was held on 11 December 2017. A follow-up IMSC meeting was held on 22 January 2018. 2 technical working groups were also set up with the objective of discussing technical matters related to the plan. Existing energy and climate models are being assessed, and where necessary, further developed, so as to ensure that the models cater for the requirements of the 2030 National Energy and Climate Plan.	The Plan will map out how Malta intends to achieve the national binding target of -19% level of greenhouse gas emission reductions in 2030 below 2005 levels and Malta's national contribution towards the EU-level targets for 2030 in relation to renewable energy and energy efficiency.
	Energy efficient Support: Home Visits The aim of this measure is to provide standard home visits to any household interested in advice on energy and water efficiency.	This scheme will allow families to reduce consumption costs and generate savings which count towards Malta's energy efficiency targets.
	Grant Scheme to promote Energy efficient Appliances targeting vulnerable Families This measure will seek to replace old inefficient appliances in vulnerable households by new, more energy efficient appliances. The main devices considered are refrigeration, clothes washing machines and air conditioning. The EWA, in consultation with officers from LEAP under the MFCS, has identified vulnerable households. Following the visits, the tendering procedure for the purchase of appliances was concluded. It is expected that by end of March 2018 the appliances will be distributed. An exercise comparing consumption before and after the change of appliances will also be carried out.	This scheme will allow vulnerable families to reduce consumption costs and generate savings which count towards Malta's energy efficiency targets.
	Solar Farms on Reservoirs of the WSC The objective of this measure is to invest in renewable energy aimed at assisting the Government in facing the challenges of sustainable economic development, environmental protection and climate change by expanding its capabilities to produce affordable solar electricity. The Power Rating Capacity on these reservoirs will be of 2MWp. A total of approximately 7,200 solar panels and 55 inverters will be installed. The measure is expected to be completed in Q1 2019.	Through this measure, WSC together with its partners, is expecting to generate about 3,200,000 kWh/year of alternative energy through maximisation of its assets. This will help to reduce CO ₂ emissions and increase generation from RES.
	Promotion of Electromobility 2018 The 2018 scheme has the following conditions: a. € 7,000 upon registering a new electric category M1 or N1 vehicle when scrapping a used vehicle; b. € 6,000 upon registering a new electric category M1 or N1 vehicle (without scrapping another vehicle); c. € 4000 upon registering an imported second hand electric M1 or N1 vehicle; d. € 2,500 upon registering a new or used electric quadricycle (without scrapping another vehicle); e. € 400 when purchasing a new pedelec;	The scheme aims to: a) assist market entry of the new technology in the Maltese Islands; b) assist private persons, Local Councils, NGOs and business undertakings to switch to cleaner vehicle technology, especially electromobility, due to the high price of these vehicles; c) increase the national electric vehicles fleet so as to contribute to Malta's national targets with respect to energy efficiency, climate change and air quality;

² These timeframes are in line with the revision of the proposal for Governance of the Energy Union as agreed during TTE on 18 December 2017.

	<p>f. € 400 upon registering a new electric motorcycle/moped/tricycle falling under categories L1e, L2e, L3e or L5e.</p> <p>The grant above for (a) applies only in conjunction with the de-registration/scrapping of another internal combustion engine-propelled vehicle of category M1 or N1 which is at least 10 years old from the year of manufacture. For (d), the second-hand vehicle must not be older than 24 months and must not have clocked more than 12,000km. For (c), the second-hand vehicle must not be older than 36 months and must not have clocked more than 15,000km on the odometer.</p> <p>Range extender electric vehicles are also being considered for this scheme and must have a minimum of 80km range on pure electricity to qualify for the grants. Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) are also regarded as part of this scheme; these vehicles must have a minimum of 30km on battery autonomy and must be charged to the national electricity grid.</p> <p>Private individuals are entitled to purchase 1 vehicle/quadracycle/pedelec/motorcycle/moped/tricycle under this scheme. On the other hand, a registered company, partnership, cooperative society or a registered self-employed, as defined in Government Notice of 15th January 2016, is entitled to a maximum grant of € 200,000, which can be in the form of a combination of different types of vehicles. Local Councils, NGOs and businesses are entitled to purchase a maximum of 10 new pedelecs and 10 new electric motorcycles/mopeds/tricycles under this scheme.</p>	<p>d) promote sustainable mobility and other modes of transport.</p> <p>The scheme also aims to reduce the number of older conventional Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) motor vehicles from the road.</p>
	<p>Grant for the upgrading of Electric Vehicles and new Plug-In Electric Service Garages of Vehicle Importers and Vehicle Leasing Operators and Staff Training 2018</p> <p>The scheme is for a grant intended for established importers of new vehicles and their current service garages, as well as operators of vehicle leasing companies and their currently licenced public service garages, to cater for the maintenance of new or leased electric vehicles, plug-in electric, plug-In hybrid, range extender vehicle models currently on the Maltese car market and new vehicles intended to be introduced on the Maltese new car market.</p> <p>The scheme has the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a maximum grant of € 25,000; • a full justification and description (including technical literature) of the intended investment is to be presented; • the engagement of the applicant into an effective market penetration (making available for sale or leasing) of electric vehicles; • the expenditure of a minimum of € 10,000 by the applicant on the same upgrade of the service garage; • staff training may be included in the project; • the applicant would have to commit that funds allocated are committed by 31st December 2018; • the allocated grant is in conformance with State Aid Rules; • applicant is to pre-apply with the Authorities before claiming any expenses to verify State Aid declaration; • car importers will have to commit to the introduction of new Plug-in Electric Vehicle models on the Maltese market which will be imported, introduced and placed for sale in Malta by not later than January 2019; • vehicles' lease operators should commit themselves to have a minimum of 10 electric vehicles or PHEVs registered on the same company as part of their leasing fleet; • applicants have to ensure that they do not exceed the De Minimis Regulations. <p>Every eligible company shall be entitled to only 1 grant under this scheme.</p>	<p>The scheme aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assist market entry of the new plug-in electric vehicles in the Maltese Islands which are not yet available on the national market. Assist car importers and operators of vehicle leasing companies to start offering support servicing on their sold or leased EVs. This will prompt private persons, undertakings and NGOs to switch to cleaner vehicle technology, especially since with such a scheme, vehicle servicing can be done locally. Increase the national electric vehicle fleet so as to contribute to Malta's national targets with respect to energy efficiency, climate change and air quality.
	<p>Feasibility Study on the availability of Financial Instruments to transition towards a Green Economy</p> <p>The Green Economy Action Plan builds on the National Environment Policy which highlights the need to draw up a Green Economy Strategy as one of its 6 objectives. This would translate in the maintenance and upgrade of Malta's environment.</p> <p>Following consultations carried out as a review to the Action Plan, one of the major lacunas resulted in the area of greening financial instruments for green investments. In this regard, currently a contract for a feasibility study on this matter is in the process of being awarded further to a tendering process that has been carried out. Such study will be the building block for further work which will ultimately result in recommendations as to how the Maltese financial system can cater in the most effective and efficient way for green investments.</p> <p>Status: On Track</p>	<p>Ultimately the results emanating from these actions should result in an expansion in the amount of jobs that are considered to be green in nature, while developing an economic system that moves away from the so-called traditional methods of production and fostering further green growth. From a recent study carried out, it was determined that the amount of green jobs based on 2016 data was of 3,461. The actual study was an update of a previous study published by the then-Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) on this subject.</p> <p>The deliverables of this Action Plan will be to instil a deeper sense of environment-friendly practices that will be tied further to economic progress in order to ensure sustainable growth in all economic sectors. Keeping this in mind, the under-tapped potential of the green economy to generate jobs and growth is also another key aspect that is being worked upon through the implementation of this Action Plan.</p> <p>With respect to the planned feasibility study on the assessment of current market financial instruments that would enable the transition to the green economy, the final document should provide a list of recommendations and options that would enable Government to have adequate market information on the current state of play of this action point which would also see the highlighting of drawbacks that are impeding the sector to grow. Ultimately Government's aim is to use this document as a guide for future policy drafting.</p>
<p>Education</p>	<p>Encouraging more Individuals to pursue a Post-Graduate Course</p> <p>Whilst retaining scholarship programmes, those individuals who are not yet 40 years old and who pursue a post-graduate course equivalent to MQF Levels 7 and 8, that is a Masters or a PhD, will not pay any income</p>	<p>This measure should result in more individuals pursuing a post-graduate course.</p>

	<p>tax on an income up to a maximum of € 60,000 up to 1 year and 2 years respectively from when they graduate and enter into employment.</p> <p>This benefit, subject to certain conditions, will be given in full through tax credits to those individuals pursuing the course on a full-time basis while those on a part-time basis will benefit from this tax deduction pro-rata. It will come into force for those who commence their course from this academic year 2017/2018 onwards.</p>	
	<p>Waiver of the MATSEC and SEC Examination Fees</p> <p>The MATSEC and SEC examination fees for 2018 shall be partially waived to half the price that used to be paid by students undertaking the examinations while they will be completely waived for students sitting for the 2019 sessions.</p> <p>Thanks to this measure, many obstacles would be removed as students would be given the opportunity to sit for as many exams as they see fit without putting a financial burden on their respective families.</p>	<p>Besides the measure's financial benefits, it is being envisaged that the number of early school leavers would continue to decrease. This should come about by facilitating the educational assessment for students, hence further encouraging them to continue their studies beyond compulsory education.</p>
	<p>Enhancing the Teaching Staff Grades</p> <p>Government is committed to improve the working conditions and offer more opportunities to all teaching grades.</p> <p>Therefore, Government has agreed to a new sectorial agreement to the benefit of all teaching grades.</p>	<p>The new sectorial agreement (2018-2022) strengthens the Government's strategy to have an educational system which is attractive, practical and relevant to today's changing environment and future challenges.</p> <p>The agreement focuses on and rewards the professional development of the teaching grades. Also, the agreed financial and progression packages offered in the agreement should attract students into the teaching professions. Currently, around 7,000 teaching grades will be impacted by this measure.</p>
	<p>Stipends for Students who downgrade the MQF Level Studies</p> <p>Government will give stipends to students who were unsuccessful in their studies and decide to pursue studies at a lower MQF level.</p>	<p>Students who downgrade the MQF level are not automatically deemed non-eligible but are re-assessed for eligibility to reflect the newer criteria.</p>
	<p>Setting Up of the National Board for Compulsory Education</p> <p>Government shall establish the National Board for Compulsory Education which will be a consultative body. The Board will include representatives of the State, Church and Independent schools, the Malta Union of Teachers (MUT), the Council of the teaching profession, guardians and industry.</p>	<p>The setting up of this Board will support the implementation of the national reform.</p>
	<p>Connecting Education with Industry</p> <p>Sector-specific education and economic stakeholders are very often working in parallel without a common understanding or exchanges of where the sector is going, which skills are more in demand and which skills or roles are going to decline.</p> <p>Therefore, the Connecting Business and Education Initiative aims to bridge the gap between the worlds of education and industry. Each month, key stakeholders hailing from different sectors would be invited to meet and discuss the main issues that both sides are facing, with the aim of creating workable outcomes so as to address any skills gaps. The fora are consultative in nature and any recommendations are then presented to the policymakers for their consideration. The presence of policymakers will also allow for grassroots feedback to be available in a very immediate manner to the same policymaker.</p>	<p>The generation of such information will inform the drafting of curricula and the design or review of study programmes in line with what industry is gearing towards.</p> <p>These encounters should also serve as a means to bring stakeholders together to identify possible collaborative actions between education and industry. Hence, these sectoral meetings would generate policymaking recommendations that would eventually be channelled to the policymakers.</p>
POVERTY	<p>National Agreement on the Minimum Wage</p> <p>On the 28th April 2017, an agreement on the minimum wage was reached between the Government, the Opposition and the social partners represented on the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD). The measures agreed upon are purposely designed to preserve wage relativities and industrial relations, while addressing social inequalities.</p> <p>Employees on a minimum wage will, upon completion of the first year of employment with the same employer, be entitled to a mandatory increase of € 3 per week in the second year of employment and upon completion of the second year to an additional € 3 per week. Employees earning more than the basic minimum wage will still be entitled to the portion of the increase mentioned above during the second and third year of employment. For the years 2018 and 2019, the weekly cost of living allowance will be supplemented by an additional € 1 increase each year.</p> <p>The Legal Notice giving effect to the increases mentioned above entered into force on the 17th May 2017.</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will reduce the number of persons on the current minimum wage and will minimise the period a person in employment may spend on the minimum wage. By virtue of this measure, between 2018 and 2019, the minimum wage will be increased by € 8.</p>
	<p>Increase in the Pension Tax Exempt Capping</p> <p>During 2017, fiscal reform was introduced to exempt pensioners from paying tax on income received from pensions. Over 22,000 pensioners benefitted from this measure of whom 9,000 pensioners stopped paying tax altogether.</p> <p>As was announced in the previous Budget, this reform will continue during 2018. Furthermore, the ceiling on which income from pension is tax exempt will increase to € 13,200.</p>	<p>More pensioners will benefit from an increase in tax exemption.</p>
	<p>Stamp Duty Reduction for Second-Time Buyers</p>	<p>This measure will result in stamp duty reduction for second-time buyers.</p>

<p>Circumstances do arise where a family has to sell its home and buy a bigger or smaller one as necessary. In these circumstances, where a person is selling his/her home to buy another residential home, households can start benefitting from a stamp duty refund of up to € 3,000. Those eligible must not have any other property.</p> <p>In the case of a buyer with a disability, this refund will be paid by cheque up to the value of € 5,000. Parents who purchase a property suitable for a disabled person can also benefit from this scheme under certain criteria.</p>	
<p>Launching of the National Strategy for Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>Government will publish a national strategy on the voluntary sector.</p>	<p>The expected outcomes of this measure are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improvement in the relationship between stakeholders, namely the voluntary organisations, the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS) and Government; - clear working procedures between the same stakeholders; - promotion of more transparent and accountable operations with the general public.
<p>Training Course for Administrators of Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>Training will be provided to the administrative staff and volunteers of voluntary organisations.</p>	<p>The expected outcomes of this measure are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support to voluntary organisations in the management of the same organisations; - professional improvement in the capacity of voluntary organisations; - formal recognition of the work carried out by the administrators of voluntary organisations; - promotion of good governance across the voluntary organisation sector.
<p>Contributions paid by gainfully occupied Pensioners</p> <p>Currently those pensioners who are still gainfully employed (and thus are paying NI contributions), but do not have enough contributions paid prior to their pensionable age, receive a reduced rate of pension.</p> <p>As from 2018, when a gainfully employed pensioner reaches the age of 65, his/her pension will be re-estimated, taking into consideration also the number of contributions paid subsequent to his/her pension age, and thus increasing their pension rate according to the number of NI contributions paid up to 65 years.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an increase in the income of pensioners who are still gainfully occupied.</p>
<p>Demolition and Reconstruction of the Vajrita Building in Marsascala</p> <p>The current building is in a bad state of repair. Therefore, it will be reconstructed in order to decently accommodate persons with a disability.</p>	<p>The reconstruction will provide a state of the art building which is suitable to all persons with a disability.</p>
<p>Mtarfa Day Centre</p> <p>The Mtarfa Day Centre will be expanded and refurbished in order to improve the delivery of services offered to persons with a disability who avail themselves of such services through this centre.</p>	<p>This measure will result in the provision of a more decent place for persons with a disability.</p>
<p>Increase in Pensions</p> <p>This measure will award every pensioner an increase of € 2 per week besides the cost of living adjustment.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an increased income for pensioners, hence improving their way of living and decreasing the risk of falling into poverty.</p>
<p>Increase in Rent Subsidy</p> <p>This measure is widening the qualifying thresholds of rent subsidy for those who are renting their residence from the private sector. Elderly people over 65 years of age will enjoy more benefiting thresholds and subsidies.</p>	<p>The increase in subsidy will help tenants to financially manage their rent and thus reduce the requests for social accommodation from the HA. The positive impacts will come about through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more tenants qualifying for rent subsidy; - beneficiaries enjoying higher rent subsidies and; - elderly people over 65 years of age enjoying more privileged rates of rent subsidies and thresholds.
<p>Increase in the Drug Addicts Allowance</p> <p>The weekly rate of this benefit shall increase from € 30 to € 40.</p>	<p>This measure will help and encourage drug/alcohol addicts to enter a rehabilitation programme by increasing their income.</p>
<p>Increase in the Foster Care Allowance</p> <p>This measure will increase the income of persons who opt to foster children.</p>	<p>It should encourage more persons to opt for child fostering and thus giving these children a chance of having a better way of living.</p>
<p>Increase in the Orphans Allowance to those Orphans who are in the Labour Market</p> <p>To date, orphans who are employed get a reduced allowance than those who do not work. In order to enhance their way of living and encourage them to remain in employment, all orphans who reach working age will benefit equally from the higher rate.</p>	<p>This measure shall eliminate discrimination and encourage them to work, hence earning a higher income.</p>
<p>Increase in the Rate of Increased Severe Disability Assistance</p>	

<p>This measure will increase the rate of severe disability assistance for persons who cannot be in a gainful occupation due to their disability. This will be done in a gradual manner from a weekly rate of € 120 to a weekly rate of € 140.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an increased income for severely disabled persons, hence improving their way of living and decreasing their risk of falling into poverty.</p>
<p>A Just Society Project</p> <p>This project aims to construct a further 3 residential homes for adults with a disability, one in Żabbar, one in Żurrieq and one in Qrendi.</p>	<p>It is expected that this measure will provide residential places for 22 persons with a disability (8 in Żabbar; 6 in Qrendi and 8 in Żurrieq). In addition, these projects will generate around 55 places of employment over a period of 1½ years.</p>
<p>Nikru biex Nassistu</p> <p>A new scheme has been issued whereby the HA will lease a number of residential units from private owners for a period of 10 years which will then be rented at subsidised rates for social housing purposes. This scheme is a quick way of increasing housing stock in view that it takes a number of years to build new apartments.</p>	<p>This measure shall further release more property for social housing whilst utilising readily-available vacant property from the private sector, hence reduce the waiting list for alternative accommodation. It is expected that this will address the impact of the increase in prices of privately-rented residential properties.</p>
<p>Personal Assistance for Persons with a Disability</p> <p>This scheme will assist adult persons with a disability (from 18 to 60 years) when they employ a personal assistant to meet their needs. It is being modelled on a similar scheme offered by the Independent Living Institute in Sweden. The costs shall be co-financed by the Government.</p>	<p>It is expected that 40 persons will benefit from this measure.</p>
<p>Free Medical Aid (Pink Form)</p> <p>Persons who receive/forward maintenance from/to their ex-spouses are currently being rejected when applying for this benefit since the maintenance amount is taken into consideration for the means-test, thus exceeding the ceiling.</p> <p>As from this year, the amount received/forwarded as maintenance will not to be considered for means-testing purposes.</p>	<p>As a result of this measure, more persons will be entitled to Free Medical Aid.</p>
<p>Strengthening of the REACH Project through the Inclusion of more Services and greater Collaboration between Entities</p> <p>This project incorporates semi-independent living arrangements and is designed with a special social benefit in mind, intended for improved quality of life. The project will be entirely accessible to all users.</p> <p>More specifically, the project will support the integration of vulnerable persons within the community through public infrastructure by providing them residential and employment opportunities. Vulnerable persons will be brought closer to the labour market through support and training offered at the community centre and workshops, further promoting social inclusion and reducing the risk of their exposure to poverty. Apart from equipping persons with a disability with independent living and employability skills, the project will provide improved social services including respite, therapeutic treatments, physiotherapy area, gym, pool and other amenities.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an infrastructural investment to integrate vulnerable groups (including persons with a disability) within communities through employment. It is also expected to reduce poverty through addressing social needs in communities.</p>
<p>Rehabilitate to Lease</p> <p>Government will be launching a scheme whereby owners of vacant residential properties will be given a grant of up to € 25,000 in order to rehabilitate their property within 6 months.</p> <p>The rehabilitated property will then be leased to the HA at a reduced rent for 10 years for the purposes of social accommodation.</p>	<p>This measure will result in the rehabilitation of 100 vacant/dilapidated units and will also increase the number of units to be used for social housing purposes by 100 for a period of 10 years.</p>
<p>Service Pensioners</p> <p>This measure will increase the amount of service pensions, whereby another € 200 shall not to be taken into consideration in the computation of the social security pension.</p>	<p>This will result in an increase in the income of service pensioners, which will improve their way of living and lower their risk of falling into poverty.</p>
<p>Sickness Benefit to Widows Pensioners</p> <p>To date, widow pensioners who receive the contributory pension and are in gainful employment are not granted sickness benefit.</p> <p>In order to enhance their way of living, they will be granted this benefit. The sickness benefits are being granted to those who have dependent children aged below 23.</p>	<p>Widow pensioners who are in a gainful occupation will be paid sickness benefit, so as to improve their standard of living.</p>
<p>Tapering of Benefits</p> <p>This measure shall encourage more beneficiaries to enter the labour force by decreasing the qualification period for social assistance from 2 years to 1 year.</p>	<p>This measure will encourage more persons to enter the labour market, hence reducing their chances of falling into poverty.</p>
<p>Launch of Enforcement Unit to safeguard the Rights of Persons with a Disability and their Families</p> <p>With the increase in areas covered under the Equal Opportunities Act and the additional work received due to complaints made under articles in the UNCPRD, the Enforcement Unit will be launched. This Unit shall work alongside the Equal Opportunities Compliance Unit and the Accessibility Team to tackle complaints made by persons with a disability and their families in areas of discrimination on the grounds of disability, thus ensuring that their rights are protected.</p>	<p>This measure will result in an improvement in the efficiency of complaints-handling and the resolution of older claims already in process.</p>
<p>Enhancing the Increased Carers' Allowance</p>	

	An additional increase of € 8.15 per week will be awarded for any additional person in the family composition, besides the beneficiary, if the married person loses his or her right to another social benefit when entitled to the Increased Carers' Allowance.	This measure may encourage more people to take on the role of carer by increasing the carers' income. Furthermore, it should encourage elderly people to continue living in the community.
	<p>Regeneration of Housing Estates</p> <p>The HA, with the financial assistance of funding from the EU, commenced works forming part of an important project towards the last quarter of 2017. The first works will commence towards the beginning of 2018 and the last project is estimated to be completed by mid-2022.</p> <p>The HA aims to increase the baseline for accessibility and to improve the state of living in social housing blocks and estates. The main infrastructure will consist in the retrofitting of energy-efficient lifts to increase vertical mobility. In conjunction with the alterations for the lift, the common parts will be refurbished and embellished to ensure a safer environment and an improved standard of living. Works in the common parts will include in particular, the installation of new energy-saving light fittings, an intercom system including any door closure, repairs to apertures, and new decorative works to walls, ceilings and railings.</p>	<p>The implementation of this project shall comprise the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - installation of lifts in a minimum of 109 social housing blocks to help residents with limited mobility, to the benefit of approximately 2,350 residents, including 660 elderly individuals, and 101 persons with a registered disability; - refurbishment and embellishment of common parts of these blocks to encourage the residents to take care of the common parts and also to reduce crime; - embellishment and landscaping works in 4-6 social housing estates where blocks are participating in the project which will thus reduce crime and significantly improve the areas surrounding the blocks for a better environment for living.
	<p>Social Loans</p> <p>The HA, in conjunction with the FSWS, will enter into an agreement with Bank of Valletta (BoV) whereby the Government will guarantee 10% of the loan value to the bank. In return, BoV will fund the full 100% loan whilst the HA commits itself to make a monthly part-payment of the applicants' instalments.</p>	It is expected that the number of applications for social accommodation and those benefiting from rent subsidy will decrease. Also, more persons will become home owners.
	<p>White Paper: Towards a Fair and Sensible Private-Rented Sector</p> <p>A policy and research team is engaged in thorough desk-based and field research to confirm or otherwise generic perceptions of the rental market in Malta and to investigate further the role of private rentals. Meetings were carried out with 47 stakeholders and representatives from local Government organisations, not-for-profit organisations and commercial organisations. Furthermore, questionnaires, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were carried out with landlords, tenants, employees and employers from various sectors.</p> <p>Drafting of the White Paper is next to completion. The policy and research team will continue researching the subject further and holding seminars with various local and international speakers and stakeholders.</p> <p>Upon receiving direction on the White Paper content, the team will finalise the document and proceed to public consultation phase. The team, together with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Social Accommodation, will be developing a public consultation media outreach campaign.</p> <p>It is expected that the whole process, including the legal drafting, will be completed by December 2018.</p>	A housing solution is needed for a new economic and social reality. The recent years have seen a fundamental change in the role of the private-rented sector (PRS) in Maltese society. Renting is no longer a necessarily short-term tenure nor a tenure exclusive to the lower-income categories. The robust year-on-year growth of the Maltese economy has shifted the traditional housing structure abruptly, therefore challenging the established beliefs about the management of the housing market, particularly the PRS.
	<p>Dialogue between the Pharmaceutical Industry and Government to decrease the Prices of Medicinal Products</p> <p>By means of its branch of Medicines Intelligence and Access Unit, Government will be in dialogue with the industry sector to decrease the prices of medicinal products in favour of the consumer. For such purpose, the Office for Consumer Affairs shall engage with the respective importer whenever a local recommended retail price exceeds the calculated reference value.</p>	Consumer access to affordable medicines is fundamental for public health, social equity and economic development. Hence, this measure will aim to reduce the retail prices of medicines in favour of the consumer.
	<p>Reduction in Income Tax of Employees earning less than € 60,000</p> <p>All those individuals who are in employment, whether in full- or part-time work, and who earn less than € 60,000, shall receive a cheque varying between € 40 and € 68. This will apply even to those who do not pay tax on employment income.</p>	It is envisaged that 200,000 persons will benefit from this measure.

The following measures have been completed. However, given that they are still ongoing they are not being included along with the other measures which are still being implemented. Instead, they are being listed below for reference purposes:

- Increasing the maternity leave benefit rate.
- Increasing the maternity benefit rate for self-occupied women.
- Extending maternity leave benefit in cases of adoption of children.
- Measure to assist the spouses of residents in State-Financed Residential Services.
- Full pension for employed widows.
- Pensioners whose pension does not exceed the national minimum wage will not be taxable.
- Paying of missing social security contributions.
- Full disability pension.
- Eliminating Tax on transfer "causa mortis" for disabled persons
- In-Work Benefit
- Tapering of Social Security Benefits for Single Parents
- Supplementary Allowance
- Tapering of Social Benefits after Marriage
- Compensation for Paid National Insurance Contributions
- Disability Pension
- Changes in the Means Testing for Social Assistance Purposes and Entitlement
- Extension of Sickness Allowance
- Drug Addicts Allowance

- Reduction in Income Tax for Unemployed Women who are over 40 years of age
- Provide Training and/or Employment to Employees who are between 45 and 65 years of age
- Self-Employment Transition Scheme
- Tax Deduction for Entrepreneurs who offer Apprenticeship Placements
- Tax Deduction for Entrepreneurs who offer Work Placements
- Tax Deduction on Hybrid/Electric Vehicles
- Reduction in VAT when buying Digital Books
- Tax Exempt Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) on Minimum Wage and Pensions which are currently not taxed
- Fiscal Incentives for Trusts and Foundations set up to help Disabled Persons
- Donations to Malta Community Chest Fund
- Making VET Education More Relevant and Attractive
- Measures related to Small Motorcycles
- Employment and Training Schemes in Gozo