



Youth Guarantee

Implementation Plan

Malta

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01

Labour Market Situation of Young People

RATIONALE

Youth have been a priority on Malta's political agenda for a number of years. At a time of unprecedented unemployment spells particularly affecting the young generation, Malta welcomes the European Union's initiative to focus on guaranteeing opportunities to its youth. Indeed, in 2012-2013 before the Council Recommendation was even endorsed, the Maltese Government had announced its commitment towards implementing the Youth Guarantee model in the subsequent years; a model centred on investing in youth, bridging the transition from education to employment, and creating an enabling social fabric for young people to thrive.

The phenomenon of youth unemployment is multifaceted. Acknowledging that youth are not a homogeneous group and that their paths are impacted by a number of macro- and micro- constraints is particularly important to ensure that such a strategic plan yields positive returns in both the short-term and the long-term. The risk factors of ineffective intervention are considerable individual, social and economic costs.

To this effect, the Maltese authorities recognise that a comprehensive plan targeted at youth is to take into account different variables. These include:

- Economic conditions.
- Demographic changes.
- Technological advancements.
- Human capital, including willingness to learn and skills level.
- Demand factors.
- Socio-economic factors, including family background.
- Personal outlook towards education, employment and society.
- Job search and career counselling.

As stated in the Council Recommendation, adequate and quality policy responses addressing youth unemployment are to be centred on the mutual obligation principle where society is endowed with the necessary instruments that guarantee opportunities and protection, and where individuals understand their contributory role within society.

‘When designing such a Youth Guarantee scheme, Member States should consider overarching issues such as the fact that young people are not a homogeneous group facing similar social environments, as well as principles of mutual obligation and the need to address the risk of cycles of inactivity.’

Council Recommendation (2013/C 120/01)

Defined in practical terms, this entails providing opportunities for education, training and employment; tackling the obstacles hindering the transition from education, inactivity or unemployment to employment; safeguarding the choice architecture of individuals to design their future; and providing a welfare safety net for those who require protection and assistance, but in return expecting individuals to participate in employability programmes and actively seek education and employment prospects.

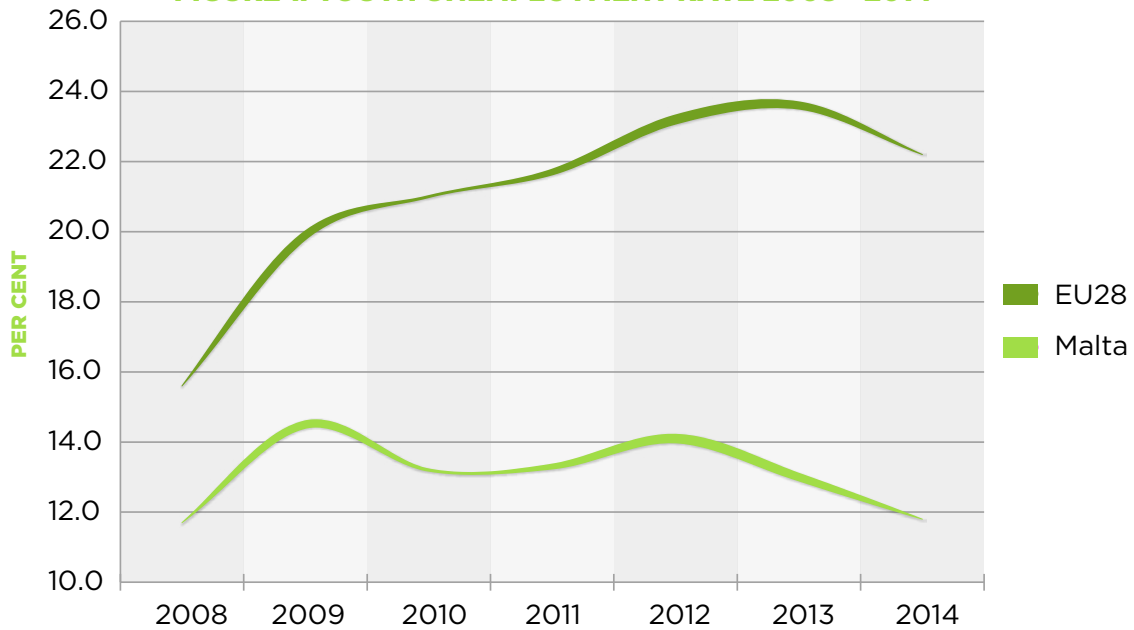
The phenomenon of youth unemployment is multifaceted. Acknowledging that youth are not a homogeneous group and that their paths are impacted by a number of macro- and micro- constraints is particularly important to ensure that such a strategic plan yields positive returns in both the short-term and the long-term. The risk factors of ineffective intervention are considerable individual, social and economic costs.

CONTEXT IN FIGURES

Unemployment:

According to official statistics, the population of youth in 2014 amounted to 53,878 (NSO, News Release: World Population Day, 2015), representing a share of 12.5 per cent of the total population. The youth unemployment rate for 2014 stood at 11.8 per cent (13.8 per cent for males and 9.6 per cent for females), which is equivalent to the 2008 pre-crisis rate and registering a significant decline from 2009 onwards. Translated into actual figures, an 11.8 per cent unemployment rate signifies 3,300 unemployed youth (2,000 males and 1,300 females), which is slightly lower than the 13.7 per cent 2008 rate which represents 3,500 youth (2,100 males and 1,400 females). June 2015 unemployment figures indicate that Malta’s youth unemployment rate was 10.0 per cent, signifying approximately 3,000 youth. With an EU youth unemployment rate of 20.7 per cent (June 2015), Malta is placed among those countries with the lowest youth unemployment rates within the European Union.

FIGURE 1: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 2008 - 2014



Source: Eurostat

The number of youth registering with Malta's Public Employment Service (PES) has recorded a significant decline in the same reference period. Where as in 2008 there were 1,311 youth who were registering, in December 2014 this amounted to 809. In June 2015, the number of youth registering with Malta's PES amounted to 602, which means that approximately 20.0 per cent of youth looking for employment are registering with Malta's PES.

Eurostat figures indicate that the unemployment rate for Maltese youth with ISCED 0-2 stood at 22.2 per cent in 2014, whereas the unemployment rate for Maltese youth with ISCED 3-4 was recorded at 8.0 per cent. In 2008, the figures were 17.4 per cent and 8.3 per cent respectively. Due to low reliability, no figures are available for youth with ISCED level 5-8. These figures are indicative of the employment trends of the Maltese labour market which suggests that demand for low qualification jobs will decrease, whereas demand for medium qualification and high qualification jobs will continue to increase.

TABLE 1: -EMPLOYMENT TRENDS BY QUALIFICATION, MALTA

	Levels (000s)				Change (%)		
	2008	2013	2020	2025	2008-2013	2013-2020	2020-2025
High qualification	41	49	56	62	19.5%	14.3%	10.7%
Medium qualification	36	43	51	56	19.4%	18.6%	9.8%
Low qualification	85	78	67	60	-8.2%	-14.1%	-10.4%
All qualifications	85	170	174	178	4.3%	2.4%	2.3%

Source: Cedefop | Skills Forecasts | Data published in 2014

Young People not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs)

Eurostat revised figures indicate that Malta's NEET rate in 2014 was recorded at 10.5 per cent, which is at par with the 2012 rate (10.6%). The EU28 NEET rate in 2014 stood at 12.5 per cent. It is worth noting that the margin of error when calculating the NEET rate in Malta stands at $\pm 3.5\%$, explaining the fluctuation of the figures presented. Actual figures suggest that the number of Maltese youth not in employment, education or training is 5,653 which is marginally lower than the figure of 5,820 in 2012. Eurostat figures suggest that for those with an education level ISCED 0-2 (less than primary and lower secondary education) the NEET rate registered a decrease from 7.1 per cent in 2012 to 6.7 per cent in 2014. An increase was registered for youth not in employment, education or training with an educational attainment of ISCED level 3-4 (upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education), where a 0.6 percentage point increase was recorded from 2.8 per cent in 2012 to 3.4 per cent in 2014. For those young people aged between 15 and 24 with an educational attainment of ISCED level 5-8 (tertiary education), the NEET rate declined from 0.7 per cent in 2012 to 0.4 per cent in 2014. The EU28 figures in 2014 were recorded at 5.4 per cent for ISCED level 0-2 and 6.0 per cent and 1.0 per cent respectively for the ISCED level 3-4 and 5-8, reflecting a contextual divergence from the Maltese scenario.

Early School Leaving

In the past years, Malta's Early School Leaving (ESL) rate declined, from 27.2 per cent in 2008 to 20.4 per cent in 2014. The EU28 rate in 2014 stood at 11.1 per cent. Despite Malta's high ESL rate compared to the EU28, Malta has committed itself to reduce its Early School Leaving to 10 per cent by 2020; equivalent to the EU2020 ESL target. The employment rate of early school leavers in Malta was of 14.3 per cent, compared to 4.5 per cent in the EU28, suggesting that the likelihood of early school leavers finding employment is relatively better in Malta than in other Member States. The unemployment rate for the same cohort stood at 6.1 per cent compared to 6.6 per cent in the EU28.

Latest comparative statistics issued by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education¹ indicate that over the course of 20 years, Malta witnessed a significant increase in student participation at Further and Higher Education levels. Whilst in 1995, there were a total of 11,039 students following further (academic) education, further (vocational) education or higher education, in 2014 the total student population amounted to 30,394, with 8,189 students following further (academic) education (3,872 in 1995), 7,167 following further (vocational) education (1,362 in 1995) and 15,038 in higher education (5,805 in 1995).

TARGET GROUP

It is empirically evidenced that long-term disengagement from the labour market drastically reduces the probability of employability. Consequently, being out of work exposes individuals to a higher chance of falling into poverty and social exclusion. To this effect, the Maltese Government - through its policies and strategic plans - is committed to increase the well-being of society by means of improved education, training and employment opportunities; tackling social dependency; and reducing the intergenerational cycle of joblessness and dependency on the welfare state.

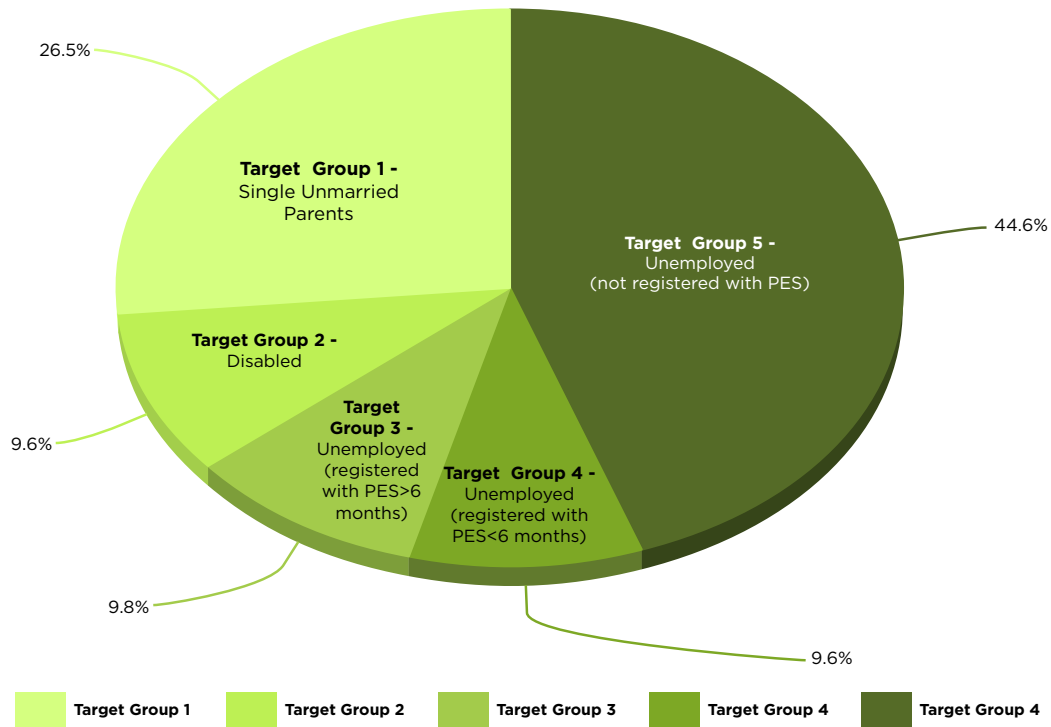
Through a number of preventive, supportive and reactive measures, Malta's Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan will be centred on NEETs and youth who are potentially at risk of becoming NEETs. It is recognised that reaching NEETs and mobilising them to re-engage with the education system or enter the labour market is a challenge. NEETs are not a homogeneous group, and their contextual realities necessitate different interventions. Through the heterogeneity of Maltese NEETs, a common variable which singles out is poor educational attainment. Given this scenario, significant importance is given to:

- Educational measures that can offer a second-chance education;
- Development of employability skills;
- Transition from school to work.

Administrative data has been collated to profile Maltese NEETs. Through the electoral register, social benefit register, the unemployment register and employment data, the Ministry for Education and Employment has compiled a breakdown of who the NEETs are. The graphical illustration below shows the five heterogeneous groups identified.

¹Further and Higher Education Statistics 2013/2014

DISTRIBUTION OF NEETS



- Target Group 1** consists of single unmarried parents who are rearing a child. Almost all of the single unmarried parents are females. Beneficiaries receive social assistance without any training or work requirements. Although social assistance technically lasts until the child or children are 23 years of age and thereafter beneficiaries are required to start looking for work, this does not happen in the majority of the cases. Hence, single unmarried parents can become completely dependent on benefits though a welfare trap.
- Target Group 2** consists of disabled youths who are in receipt of a disability pension.
- Target Group 3** consists of unemployed youths who have been registering with the Public Employment Service for more than 6 months. The majority of these youths are in receipt of unemployment assistance. Although such beneficiaries are obliged to search for work, the benefit carries no lifetime limit. Individuals have to be head of households to be eligible to receive such benefit.
- Target Group 4** consists of unemployed youths who have been registering with the Public Employment Service for less than six months. Most of these youths had previous work experience. This type of unemployment is more of the frictional type.

- **Target Group 5** consists of youths who are captured in the Labour Force Survey but do not feature in any type of administrative register. Some of these youths state that they are looking for work. Notwithstanding, it may also be the case that youths falling within this category have lost the confidence to find employment, are not interested in work, or are working in the informal economy.

LINK WITH OTHER POLICY AREAS

The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan cannot be planned in isolation. To complement this Plan, a number of policy frameworks have been designed to ensure that young people are provided with a holistic institutional set-up which takes into account a number of interrelated factors. These include demographics, educational attainment and absenteeism, intergenerational cycle of low work intensity and dependency on benefits, supply and demand factors, personal agency, poverty and social exclusion.

Investing in programmes which combine employment policies with targeted intervention in other policy areas is central to achieving inclusive economic growth. Where different policy sectors co-exist separately, it is difficult for societies to be responsive to the needs of its citizens. The following are the national policies and frameworks which focus on the development of young people:

- **National Employment Policy**

The National Employment Policy is an analytical and strategic framework aimed at accentuating the economic and social dimension of employment. Through a number of supply and demand-side proposals, the Policy aims to contribute to the reduction in labour market frictions. The role of youths within this framework is highlighted, not only due to a national declining working age population, but primarily because of the potential that young people can bring to the workplace through innovative practices. Activation measures targeted at different cohorts of young people, as well as initiatives aimed at minimising the incidence of dead weight loss are put forward.

- **National Youth Policy Towards 2020**

The National Youth Policy provides a shared vision for the future of young people. Through a focus on inclusion, empowerment and activation, two strategic strands are presented. The first strategic framework focuses on youth work and services for young people, including new spaces at local community level for young people and youth organisations; awareness raising, listening to and supporting the voice of young people; and initiatives for the active engagement, empowerment and participation of young people and youth organisations. The second strategic framework includes education and training; health and well-being; employment and entrepreneurship; arts and culture; social inclusion; voluntary and community activities; and sport and recreational activities.

- **Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014-2020**

The Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta is aimed at sustaining foundations, creating alternatives and increasing employability. Through this strategy, a lifelong learning approach is presented through a focus from early childhood education and care to adult learning. The Framework has four broad goals in line with European benchmarks:

- Reduce the gaps in educational outcomes between boys and girls and between students attending different schools, decrease the number of low achievers and raise the bar in literacy, numeracy, and science and technology competence, and increase student achievement.
- Support educational achievement of children at-risk-of-poverty and from low socio-economic status, and reduce the relatively high incidence of early school-leavers.
- Increase participation in lifelong learning and adult learning.
- Raise levels of student retention and attainment in further, vocational, and tertiary education and training.

- **A Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving in Malta**

The Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Early School Leaving in Malta aims at facilitating targeted action that supports students through their school years, from early childhood to the end of compulsory school and beyond. The strategic plan is centred on a number of pillars aimed at addressing the challenges of early school leaving. These include:

- Cross-sectoral cooperation and monitoring;
- Preventive measures:
 - Early childhood education and care.
 - Making schools relevant and meaningful for every student.
 - Supporting children and young people at risk through innovative teaching and learning tools and through school and community based solutions.
 - Reintroducing vocational education in the secondary schools as an alternative learning pathway.
 - Transition processes, flexible pathways and career guidance.
 - Strengthening parental support.
 - Supporting teachers to address the early school leaving challenges.
- Intervention measures:
 - Early warning systems.
 - Support networks for students at risk.
- Compensation measures:
 - Reintegration programmes at further education levels.

- **National Vocational Education and Training Policy**

The National Vocational Education and Training Policy provides a review of the VET sector in Malta, following the outcome of a consultation exercise which brought together multiple stakeholders. It provides a strategic opportunity on possible goals to furthering and widening VET at national level. Based on the principle of ensuring provision and sustaining stronger vocational education, this Policy puts forward a number of policy actions centred on two-pronged recommendations:

- Addressing quality and attractiveness.
- Ensuring labour market relevance.

- **A National Literacy Strategy for All in Malta and Gozo**

The National Literacy Strategy for All aims at promoting and enhancing lifelong, high quality literacy practices among people through different life stages. The Strategy strives to improve literacy outcomes which lead to more inclusive societies, higher educational attainment and improved job prospects through a number of initiatives specifically targeted at distinct life cycles and different cohorts of the population. The central principle characterising this Strategy is that literacy is a principal factor in achieving social inclusion. Through the proposed measures, individuals are empowered to participate actively in society, as well as obtain the necessary skills to further their social participation, education and employability prospects.

02

Implementing the Youth Guarantee Scheme in Malta

MEASURES

The Council Recommendation establishing the Youth Guarantee urges Member States to:

‘Ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.’

Council Recommendation (2013/C 120/01)

Malta’s implementation scheme was designed following an analysis of the heterogeneity of the target group. Several variables emerged, necessitating an intervention programme which differed in intensity and scope. These include the social background, dependency on welfare benefits, psycho-social situation and absenteeism. Young people experiencing inequality or disengagement since their entry gate of life are more likely to become entrapped in a system of disconnection from society and its institutions. Other young people merely need an impetus to further their education or enter the world of work.

A set of priorities encompassing the formulation of Malta’s Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan were established:

- Encouraging educational attainment.
- Facilitating the successful reintegration into education, training or employment of young people who are disengaged or at-risk of becoming disengaged.
- Instilling a culture of mutual obligation as opposed to dependency on the welfare state.
- Providing the learning tools which ascertain that young people are equipped with the necessary employability skills.
- Focusing on the sustainability of young people’s entry to the labour market, rather than offering short-term solutions.

To this effect, a number of measures aimed at addressing the challenges faced by different categories of young people were drawn up:

- NEET Census
- NEET Activation Scheme I
- NEET Activation Scheme II
- Alternative Learning Programme
- SEC Revision Classes
- MCAST Remedial Classes
- MCAST Work-Based Learning
- Sheltered/Supported Employment

NEET CENSUS

Following the preliminary analysis of Malta's NEET population and an invite which was sent through various media to inactive youth to participate in the NEET Activation Scheme, it was decided that a NEETs Census was to be commissioned to ensure that subsequent measures targeted at this cohort are drafted on evidence-based research. Such project would not have been possible without the linking of different registers and the collaboration of the Data Protection Commission.

The NEETs Census consists of the design of a questionnaire aimed at gathering relevant information on the characteristics of the NEET population, as well as the expectations they have of education and the labour market. Interviewers will be adequately trained and supported, with the aim of equipping them with the tools needed to conduct an objective survey, as well as the necessary skills that are required when faced with different scenarios. Following interviews, validation of data and analysis, a report with the findings will be published. Such report should mirror the contextual realities and expectations of the NEET population, and should hence serve as a basis for strategic policy.

The questionnaire incorporates several components:

- Personal information and social demographics.
- Education and training.
- Work experience and interests.
- Feedback on their choice to dismiss the Youth Guarantee programme; and
- Suggestions on how they could be motivated to participate in Youth Guarantee initiatives, including the media channels used to deliver the message, and the content of the programme.

NEET ACTIVATION SCHEME I:

The NEET Activation Scheme aims at encouraging through targeted intervention and empowerment the re-integration of young people who are detached from the education system or from the labour market. This scheme consists of different phases of intervention. Given the heterogeneity of the target group, youth can either participate in all phases or the final two phases. In cases where minor intervention is needed and an offer is available, the young person initiates his/her Youth Guarantee participation from Phase Three.

Inactive young people, unemployed youth who had been registering for more than six months, and youth dependent on social benefits were formally invited to participate in the NEET Activation Scheme. Failure of the latter two cohorts to participate means that they would be struck off from the PES Unemployment Register or have to forfeit their social benefits.

- **Phase 1: Profiling, Behavioural and Employability Courses**

In the first phase, applicants are individually profiled. Psychologists are entrusted with conducting specific tests aimed at drawing up the main characteristics of each participant. The profiles are then handed to the assigned youth worker to ensure that the professionals working with participants provide personalised assistance according to the background of the young person. Youth workers act as mentors; supporting young people in their training path towards their re-integration into education or employment. Participants receive 40 hours of direct contact with the youth worker through the familiarisation process and another 80 hours of training intervention covering:

- Motivational and behavioural training.
- Guidance on employment.
- Development of communication skills.
- CV writing and interview skills.

The motivational and behavioural training is organised around five components which are aimed at enabling participants to develop skills that are necessary for them both as members of society and as prospective employees. The five components include:

- Intrapersonal skills: Assertiveness, confidence and self-esteem constitute an important element of this component. Participants are trained on personal hygiene, nutrition, grooming and appropriate attire. Planning, time-management and problem solving are also addressed during this stage.
- Self-efficacy: During this period, participants are trained and encouraged to turn their emotions into a positive force. Young people are also encouraged to set realistic goals and are provided guidance on how to achieve such goals.

- **Civic participation:** This component focuses on equipping participants with the civic skills needed to engage in society. These include, being aware of one's duties, responsibilities and rights, as well as the duties, responsibilities and rights of others. Young people are also compelled to understand the ethical and appropriate conduct needed on the place of work.
- **Organisational skills:** Participants are encouraged to understand work values and are trained on how to deal with change in the workplace, how to address bullying and how to manage stress. Moreover, during this stage young people are trained about health and safety matters.
- **Group skills:** The last component consists of basic group skills deemed to be essential to build healthy employment relationships. These include working in a team, respecting conflicting views, negotiating, compromising and making decisions.

In the first phase of this scheme, participants are also offered guidance on employment. Through collaboration with Malta's Public Employment Service and the social partners, young people are informed about labour market trends and demands. The aim of this exercise is to guide these participants on the opportunities that are available in their area of interest.

The development of communication skills is a requisite which many employers seek when recruiting an individual. To this effect, one of the modules in this phase focuses specifically on developing effective communication through verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Such skills include spoken and written language, tone of voice, body language and facial expressions.

The last module in the first phase of the scheme focuses on writing a CV and preparing for an interview. The training is geared towards utilising the Europass CV, and including the information that presents the achievements and strengths of the individual. Young people are also trained to be ready for a job interview, through a number of practical tips presented to participants.

Following this initial phase, young people are requested to either further their training through continued education or else participate in a work exposure, leading to an offer of traineeship.

In both instances, participants receive an allowance. Such allowance is subject to a number of conditions including performance and attendance, which should not be less than 80%.

- **Phase 2: Continued Education/Work Exposure**

Participants opting for continued education are assisted to enrol in one of Malta's accredited institutions. The courses which young people can enrol in vary from academic-based to vocational training, leading to a recognised qualification.

Young people who opt for the work stream are offered 12 weeks of work exposure. During this phase, participants are activated through a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training, with the aim of gaining the required employability skills needed in a real working environment. Moreover, participants are expected to gain a better understanding of the demands requested by the industry and potential employers. The work exposure occurs either in a simulated workshop or in an actual place of work. In this phase, young people are given the possibility to choose the sector which is more compatible with their skills, competences and interests.

During this phase, employers are given the opportunity to train and evaluate a potential employee prior to employment; hence facilitating prospective recruitment. No financial costs are incurred by employers during the Work Exposure period. At the end of the twelve weeks, employers can opt to retain one or more of the participants for the traineeship phase.

- **Phase 3: Traineeship**

Following the work exposure phase and depending on their performance, young people are offered up to six months traineeship, which are based on the dual system of vocational training providing a combination of theoretical knowledge supplemented by related hands-on practical training. The latter form of training will provide the participants the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice, whilst having a first-hand experience of work in the calling of their choice. Participants' job preferences are matched with the demands of interested employers. The theoretical tuition is delivered by Malta's Public Employment Service or by any entity approved by the Corporation to provide such training on behalf of the Corporation.

The following traineeships are offered:

Name of Traineeship:	Target Audience	Qualification Level:
Office Procedures	Persons interested in working as clerks, administration, coordinators, secretaries and other similar occupations	MQF Level 3
Process Manufacturing	Persons interested in working as assemblers, factory operators, packers and other similar occupations	MQF Level 2
Sales Techniques	Persons interested in working as sales and marketing assistants, promoters and resellers and other similar occupations	MQF Level 2
Front Office	Persons interested in working as customer care representatives, receptionists, telephone operators and other similar occupations	Not accredited
Warehouse Operations	Persons interested in working as storekeepers, delivery persons, warehouse assistants and other similar occupations	Not accredited
General Maintenance	Persons interested in working as handyman, plasterer, painter, building maintenance, and other similar occupations	Not accredited
Cleaning Attendants	Persons interested in working as cleaners, room and laundry attendants, chamber maids and other similar occupations	MQF Level 2
Life Skills for the Work Environment	Irrespective of the area -that the on-the-job training focuses on, this traineeship offers customer care and personal and social skills off-the-job training.	MQF Level 3

Participants are eligible for a training allowance which is equivalent to 80% of the National Minimum Wage. Those participants receiving unemployment benefits or social assistance can either choose to forfeit the benefits for the duration of the traineeship period and receive 80% of the National Minimum Wage, or forfeit the 80% National Minimum Wage and receive the unemployment benefit or social assistance entitlement.

Employers are encouraged to participate in this initiative through a subsidy which is provided for every trainee retained following the Work Exposure phase. A tax deduction of €600 is granted for every trainee offered a six-month traineeship.

NEET ACTIVATION SCHEME II

The NEET Activation Scheme II is the successor of the first edition of this scheme. What distinguishes the two is that the second edition will place more focus on psychosocial services provided to young people throughout the scheme. It is acknowledged that young people who are detached from every strata of society are faced with higher chances of exclusion. To this effect, targeted intervention focusing on the development of the person is warranted, before participants can actually be ready to integrate sustainably in the workplace. Moreover, a partner in this scheme will be the national army, which will assist young people in behavioural development.

The NEET Activation Scheme II will be offered to all youths who, following the results of the NEET Census, appear to still be NEETs. Such a scheme will be optional for this cohort. This scheme will also be offered to all young people registering with Malta's Public Employment Service. Participation is mandatory with the exception of young graduates seeking employment. Any young person refusing participation will be struck off from the Public Employment Services register.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMME

The Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) is targeted to address and support the needs of 15/16-year-old secondary school students who are in the final year of their compulsory education, and who for varied reasons have not been motivated to learn by the regular mainstream programme of education offered. Low performance in education carries a high cost, often leading to low economic returns and increased social problems. The Alternative Learning Programme is a pathway to re-engage with education through a second-chance educational programme designed on the student's needs.

This programme recognises that individuals learn in different ways and that learning needs are not homogeneous. Through the Alternative Learning Programme students who are potentially at-risk of becoming early school leavers and NEETs, are provided with the necessary knowledge, skills, competences, values and dispositions to enhance their possibilities for meaningful work or other vocational studies.

- **Phase 1: Alternative Learning Programme as part of Compulsory Schooling**

In the first phase, students who indicate that they will not be sitting for the SEC examinations are requested to participate in this programme which taps into the students' learning skills, dispositions and experiences by using different and varied strategies and approaches to learning and teaching. Through this programme, young people are encouraged to believe in their abilities and to appreciate learning.

During this phase, students embark on a variety of vocational experiences ranging from hospitality to welding, coupled with basic literacy and numeracy skills classes. The programme is housed in a dedicated school, which boasts a fully equipped gym, a hairdressing salon, a design and technology lab, a youth hub where the students relax and reinforce their group skills, and basic skills classes of Maltese, English and Maths, among other subject areas.

The overall objectives of this first phase are to:

- Demonstrate the necessity of academic subjects through their application in vocational subjects.
- Use vocational subjects as a learning tool for students with learning disabilities or difficulties.
- Ameliorate personal qualities and life skills through vocational training.
- Introduce students with special interest in vocational subjects, and smoothen the transition from compulsory to post-secondary education at the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) or the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS).

Students following this Alternative Learning Programme are required to choose any two units from the list below:

- Electrical/Electronic Trade
- Personal & Beauty Care
- Hairdressing
- Hospitality
- Gardening & Landscaping
- Customer Care
- Basic Engineering
- Woodwork
- Welding
- Textiles

A certificate at MQF level 1 is issued to successful participants. Upon completion of the first phase students are encouraged to proceed to the second phase which leads to MQF Level 2.

- **Phase 2: Alternative Learning Programme Summer ICT Course**

The second phase of the Alternative Learning Programme takes place in the summer months. Group sessions are spread over ten days, each covering a total of 54 hours. Students are obliged to attend a minimum of 80% and upon successful completion they are given an allowance of €4.05 per hour of attendance, as well as a ticket refund for the use of public transport. Proficiency in ICT is a requisite in most occupations. To this effect, during this summer programme, young people are encouraged to improve their competences in the specific ICT fields. To address the deficiency in social skills, non-obligatory psychological services are offered to participants.

The following topics are covered during this phase:

1. Introduction to the Internet:

- An introduction to computers, mobile devices and internet basics
- Using an operating system and its applications
- Browsing the Internet
- Communicating via email
- Managing digital media
- Social networking
- Internet banking
- Online shopping
- e-Government services
- Digital citizenship and online safety
- Tips on purchasing a computer, a smart mobile device and an internet connection.

2. Internet at Work:

- Communicating with clients or colleagues through email and social networking
- Introduction to word processors
- Introduction to spreadsheets
- Introduction to presentation software
- Introduction to databases
- Using ICT for marketing, stock keeping and client database
- The ethical use of ICT: data protection principles
- ICT safety: including backups and password security
- Searching for a job online
- Proper disposal of used ICT equipment
- Writing and posting a CV online.

Successful participants are awarded an MQF Level 2 qualification certificate in Everyday Computing. Following completion of the Alternative Learning Programme, young people are either encouraged to enrol in an educational institution to further their vocational training or to enlist in the NEET Activation Scheme.

SEC REVISION CLASSES

The SEC Revision Classes programme is aimed at secondary school students who obtained SEC results in at least one of the mandatory subjects ranging from 6, 7 or unclassified. Students who fail to sit for the SEC exams are also eligible to attend. Such grades significantly reduce the students' post-secondary routes, putting young people at a strong risk of exiting the educational system without a sound qualification attainment.

Revision classes are provided in Maltese, English Language, Mathematics and Physics which are core subjects in Malta's educational framework. Students can apply for up to three subjects if they have obtained a Grade 6 or lower in more than one core subject. These classes are provided free of charge during the summer period.

During this programme, young people are assisted by qualified teachers to achieve higher grades. Participants are also encouraged to enrol in an educational institution to further their educational attainment prospects.

MCAST REMEDIAL CLASSES

Students who fail one of the exams through Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 of the respective course at the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) are given the opportunity to receive remedial classes during the summer period. These are offered free of charge. Remedial classes are offered to:

- Level 1 students who fail Mathematics, Maltese, English Language, IT and/or Science, and who therefore cannot progress to Level 2. These classes are also expected to assist students in their preparation for the Assessment Tests for Mathematics, Maltese and English Language which are held the following September.
- Level 2 students who have not achieved the required 30 credits, without which they are not eligible to progress to a Level 3 course.
- Level 3 students who fail Mathematics, Maltese, English Language, IT and/or Science, and who therefore cannot progress to Level 4.

Through these remedial classes, MCAST students are given a second-chance opportunity to progress to higher levels. Through this initiative, the rate of drop-outs is expected to decrease.

MCAST WORK-BASED LEARNING

In line with its mission of providing universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) has developed a targeted programme which is responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy.

Through this three-tier framework, young people enrolling at MCAST are given the opportunity to access and progress to all levels of vocational education offered by the College. The aim of this new framework is to incentivise young people to further their educational prospects, whilst reducing the incidence of dropping out from the educational stream, and to provide an education and training pathway which is labour market relevant.

Foundation College: Level 1 - 3

- Level 1: Industrial Visits and Seminars
- Level 2: Work Placements
- Level 3: Apprenticeship and Work Placements

Through these levels, young people are presented with a number of industry projects, activities and placements which facilitate their understanding of the demands and challenges faced by the labour market. The primary aim for learning in this phase is to accustom students to acquire knowledge within an authentic work environment. Through simulated or real work placements, participants can experience a range of inter-related activities and scenarios.

Technical College: Level 4

The Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is offering apprenticeship in 45 different courses, with the involvement of all institutes. This gives the possibility to students enrolled in lower levels to progress to the apprenticeship phase in their area of study. Central to the effectiveness of this phase is the engagement with employers. Through a continuous collaboration with social partners, MCAST is expected to develop apprenticeship standards, as well as develop a comprehensive skills competence framework covering all sectors.

University College: Level 5-7

In this phase, students progressing to Levels 5 to 7 will be given the possibility of an internship which is an opportunity to integrate a career-related experience into an educational programme. This programme is expected to facilitate the transition from education to employment. Through participation in planned and supervised work within an industrial organisation, interns will be able to acquire important supplementary employment-related skills, as well as engage with potential future employers or entrepreneurship partners. The internship is governed by a tripartite agreement between the intern, the sponsoring organisation and MCAST.

SUPPORTED/SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT

Supported and Sheltered employment will be provided to youths with disability who are outside the education and labour market stream. Inactive and unemployed youth with disability will be encouraged to participate in activation measures which are client-centred. The programme includes specific services leading to different phases of intervention. Since the cohort is not homogeneous, enrolled youths will participate in all or a number of phases, as may be required following assessment.

- **Phase 1: Initial Profiling of clients**

In this first phase, clients will be individually profiled by the Employment Support Worker within Malta's Public Employment Service. Through this stage, participants may be referred to assessment or to training. A Personal Action Plan will be designed for every individual.

- **Phase 2: Assessment by Occupational Therapist and/or other professional/s**

A medical assessment confirming the disability will be presented. Following the medical assessment, a subsequent assessment by the occupational therapist and/or other professional/s will be designed. This will focus on the abilities and/or limitations of the individual, together with the support measures that are required.

- **Phase 3: Training and Development**

In this third phase, specific pre-employment training activities aimed at encouraging independent living and developing social and employability skills will be organized and delivered according to the needs of the different target groups. One-to-one mentoring will be provided to participants to address the diverse needs of the target group during transport, job tasters and other job-related activities.

- **Phase 4: Sheltered Employment Training**

Following training and development, participants will receive work-related practical training accompanied by continuous job coaching and assessment.

- **Phase 5: Work Exposure (Bridging the Gap)**

In this phase, the youth with disability will be offered a period of work exposure with an employer to enable him/her to demonstrate the skills needed for a particular job. On-the-job support will be provided as required.

- **Phase 6: Sheltered or Supported Employment**

In this last phase, the services of job coaching will be provided in accordance with the needs of participants. The individual's development will be regularly monitored with the aim of facilitating the transition of youths with disability to move to open employment with the least possible support.

PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES

For the Youth Guarantee programme to be effective, it is necessary that the varying needs of the youth cohort are attended to. Because of the heterogeneity of youth, first contact points will vary. To this effect, an inter-agency approach is adopted where multiple actors collaborate to provide a holistic service to these youth.

The responsibility for overall coordination is endowed to the Ministry for Education and Employment which is also assigned to ensure that all partners are informed of the services and programmes offered by each entity. The other bodies engaged in the implementation and monitoring of the Youth Guarantee are the following:

- **Jobs+**

The Jobs+ Unit within the Ministry for Education and Employment is responsible for the planning and implementation of the Youth Guarantee initiatives. Additionally, through the Jobs+ Unit social partners and representatives of the Maltese political parties are entrusted with the task of advising and co-ordinating with Government issues relating to the labour market. Such initiatives are discussed within the Active Labour Market Counselling and Action Committee.

- **Malta's Public Employment Service (Employment and Training Corporation)**

The Public Employment Service profiles and assesses the registered youth unemployed. Following the provision of advisory services, a personal action plan is designed for every registered youth. In accordance with the specific needs of the registrant, training services are offered to assist the young person in developing the skills and competences needed in a fluctuating labour market. If the young person is still unemployed following this intervention, work exposure followed by traineeship is offered. Malta's Public Employment Service in collaboration with the Jobs+ Unit is also assigned to monitor the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

- **Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)**

The Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology is Malta's leading vocational education and training institution. It covers MQF Level 1 to =MQF Level 6 courses, encouraging students to progress to higher levels through a continuous pathway. Through its three colleges (Foundation, Technical, University), MCAST offers learning pedagogies which are both classroom and work-based, with the aim of imparting the knowledge and acquisition of skills needed in specific industries.

- **Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ (Youth Agency)**

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ is a strategic partner in the delivery of youth services and the dissemination of information. The services offered include Youth.Inc which is a second-chance education programme; Youth Cafes which are spaces in the communities which provide services that are inclusive, accessible and which are responsive to the different needs of young people; and the Youth Hub which is a non-formal educational service offered within a formal setting. Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ is also the entity entrusted with main streaming youth issues into national policies and has a central role in bringing together the interests of youth with government policies.

- **Early School Leaving Directorate**

The Early School Leaving Directorate is entrusted with providing an advisory role, as well as an implementation function focusing on early intervention, preventive and supportive measures targeted at early school leavers or potential early school leavers. This Directorate is the contact point established within the compulsory education structure to capture early school leavers from the education stream.

DEFINING A 'QUALITY' OFFER

The Council Recommendation establishing the Youth Guarantee provides a closed list of offers: employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship. The European Commission adopts an outcome-based approach, whereby according to the Frequently Asked Questions about the Youth Guarantee , a 'good-quality' offer can be measured by its outcome, and can be defined as good quality if the beneficiary does not re-enter the unemployment or inactivity spell thereafter.

According to the Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative, which can be used as a guideline for the Youth Guarantee ² programme, an employment offer is defined as a:

'a voluntary but conditional promise, submitted for acceptance by an offeror (e.g. employer) to the participant, as long as it clearly indicates the offeror's willingness to enter into an agreement under specific terms with the participant and that it is made in a manner that a reasonable person would understand its acceptance will result in a binding agreement. Once the participant accepts it becomes an agreement which legally commits both parties.' ³

Offers may be either subsidised or non-subsidised. Provision of an offer by the State does not necessarily mean that the offer is accepted or successfully completed by the participant.

Malta's Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan identifies a number of good-quality offers. These include:

- **Traineeship:** In line with the Quality Framework for Traineeships, a traineeship is defined as a 'a limited period of work practice, whether paid or not, which includes a learning and training component, undertaken in order to gain practical and professional experience with a view to improving employability and facilitating transition to regular employment' ⁴. Eligible employers need to show that they have an employment commitment to maintain the participant following the traineeship phase. Following acceptance from both parties (employer and participant), a written traineeship agreement is drawn up between the Public Employment Service, the employer and the Youth Guarantee participant.
- **Apprenticeship:** Apprenticeships in Malta are to be recognised by the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). Similar to the traineeship model, employers need to show an employment commitment to be eligible for participation. The definition used by the European Commission within the scope of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships is the following: 'Those forms of Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) that formally combine and alternate company-based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school-based education (periods of theoretical/practical education followed in a school or training centre), and whose successful completion leads to nationally recognised IVET certification degrees' ⁵. A contractual relationship defining the rights and obligations of the employer, the apprentice and MCAST is drawn up.

² Frequently Asked Questions on the Youth Guarantee, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=11423&langId=en>

³ Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13458&langId=en>

⁴ Council Recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships (2014/C 88/01) [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1411116781313&uri=CELEX:32014H0327\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1411116781313&uri=CELEX:32014H0327(01))

⁵ European Commission (2012), Apprenticeship supply in the Member States of the European Union. Final Report, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6633&visible=1>

- **Job Opportunity:** To consider a job opportunity as a 'quality' job offer, such opportunity shall last for at least six months. The employer engaging the Youth Guarantee participant is legally bound to complete an engagement form and submit it to the Public Employment Service. Such form shall include the type of contract offered by outlining whether the job is on a full-time or part-time basis, and whether it is on a definite or indefinite basis.
- **Continued Education:** An offer of continued education is deemed as enrolment in a recognised educational institution (public or private) offering long-term, post-compulsory schooling courses.
- **Continued Training:** An offer of continued training is deemed as enrolment in a recognised training institution (public or private) offering courses leading to an educational attainment of minimum MQF Level 2. Short courses are not considered as 'quality' offers.
- **Second-chance Education:** Second-chance programmes are a pathway to continue or re-enter education. Programmes targeted at early school-leavers and low-skilled youths meeting quality requirements of curricula, assessment and validation of learning outcomes, and which lead to a recognised qualification are considered to be a 'quality' offer.
- **Supported and/or Sheltered Employment:** Youths with a disability can be provided with an offer of supported or sheltered employment providing practical employment training in various sectors of the labour market, and including the assistance of job coaches. Employers offering supported or sheltered employment are to submit an engagement form to the Public Employment Service specifying the type of contract offered by outlining whether the job is on a full-time or part-time basis and a definite or indefinite basis.
- **Self-initiative Traineeship, Education or Employment opportunity:** Youth Guarantee participants who find an offer of traineeship, education or employment (including self-employment) upon their own initiative are requested to demonstrate that the criteria for assessing a 'quality' offer as established in other forms of 'offers' are met. This means that a traineeship offer needs to be accompanied by a written agreement between the employer, participant and the Public Employment Service; an education initiative needs to lead to a qualification from a recognised institution; and an employment offer needs to be regulated by an engagement form submitted to the Public Employment Service.

RE-ENTRY INTO THE YOUTH GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

In Malta's Youth Guarantee programme, re-entry in one of the measures is possible through different routes. Youth completing the programme but following their participation are still considered as inactive or unemployed, are allowed to enrol in any other Youth Guarantee measure. No time limit is established in such cases and no conditionality is imposed to re-entry. For those who drop-out voluntarily, refuse an offer and/or were terminated from the programme because of disciplinary action, there is the elapse of six months before the participant can enrol in the Youth Guarantee.

Moreover, there may be instances where the youth decides to take some time off to decide which path to choose. In such cases, the participant can enrol in any Youth Guarantee measure without restrictions. In instances where participants are referred to psycho-social assistance during the programme, such time is considered to be a 'pause', and the youth is asked to resume the programme once the required assistance is received. This often implies that in such cases an offer is not provided within the four-month time-frame. The time considered to be a 'pause' should not however be deemed as a sign of inefficiency, as providing the conditions for young people to be prepared to enter the labour market is perceived as a priority in Malta's Youth Guarantee framework.

The Ministry responsible for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee provides second-chance opportunities to those young people who do not manage to find sustainable employment or education following their participation. Notwithstanding, the Ministry is not to be made accountable for any offer in accordance with the Youth Guarantee contract which is not respected by the participant.

OUTREACH AS A MEANS TO INCENTIVISE SUPPLY AND DEMAND

A key challenge for the successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee Council Recommendation is to reach the NEET cohort and assist them in re-engaging with education or entering the labour market. The heterogeneity of NEETs entails using different channels of communication. Those youths who are registering as unemployed with the Public Employment Service are in contact with employment advisors and are hence not difficult to reach. Conversely, reaching inactive youths is more demanding, mainly because they do not feature in employment or education registers, and they may not be interested in receiving any information or Government intervention.

To this effect, it is necessary that different tools are used to ensure that communication gaps are reduced and to make information accessible to all youths. Following linking of data sources, all NEETs were sent a personal invitation encouraging them to participate in the Youth Guarantee programme. Cognisant of the fact that response rates in such interventions may be low, other communication channels are used. These include social media, printed media and broadcast media.

The Youth Guarantee framework cannot be successful without the engagement and active involvement of employers. Consequently, Malta's Public Employment Service as well as the Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology are constantly in contact with employers informing them about the benefits of investing in youth and encouraging them through subsidies and tax incentives to offer them a traineeship or an apprenticeship.

03

Funding the Youth Guarantee

Funding of the Youth Guarantee will be done through national and European Social Funding budgets. The 2011 Commission proposal for ESF regulation 2014-2020 included an investment priority targeted at the sustainable integration of young people into the labour market. Following the outset of the crisis and its repercussions on youth unemployment and the staggering NEET levels, the June 2013 European Council agreed that youth employment was to be given particular focus in the implementation of the Structural Funds.

Article 3 of the ESF regulation for the period 2014-2020 outlines the scope of support. One of the investment priorities is specifically targeted at addressing the challenges faced by young people:

*'Sustainable labour-market integration of young people, in particular those not in employment, education or training, including young people at risk of social exclusion and young people from marginalised communities, including through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.'*⁶

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) which is complementary to the European Social Fund is granted to those regions experiencing high youth unemployment rates. Malta is not eligible for YEI funding.

Malta's Operational Programme II (2014-2020), 'Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the well-being of society', was approved by the European Commission in March 2015. The Programme outlines Malta's commitment to implement the Youth Guarantee and to address youth unemployment and inactivity, stressing the need to facilitate transitions from education, unemployment or inactivity to further education or employment⁷.

A number of measures are financed through national budgets which are fixed in the last quarter of every calendar year. Since the inception of the Youth Guarantee, the Maltese Government has allocated a share of the available national funds to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

⁶ Regulation(EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006, available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1304&from=EN>

⁷ Operational Programme II (2014-2020), Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the well-being of society, Malta, available at: [https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Programming%20Period%202014%20-%202020/Operational%20Programme%202/Documents/Adopted%20OPII\(f\).pdf](https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Programming%20Period%202014%20-%202020/Operational%20Programme%202/Documents/Adopted%20OPII(f).pdf)

04

Monitoring
and
Evaluation

Malta's Public Employment Service in collaboration with the Jobs+ Unit collates data on all individuals registered with the Youth Guarantee programme. The information gathered is subdivided in three levels:

- Participants' Information
- Duration
- Follow-up

Participants' Information

The information collated in this phase includes the following:

- ID. of participant
- Name and Surname
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Previous Youth Guarantee Experience
- Previous Labour Market Status
- Application date (date when participant registers for YG service)
- Start date of YG Service (date when participant initiates first phase of YG service, e.g. profiling/training, work exposure)
- Communication of Offer
- Type of Offer
- Acceptance or otherwise of offer
- In case of non-acceptance, reason for such
- In case of acceptance, start date of offer
- In case of acceptance, whether the offer was completed
- In case of completed offer of education, the MQF level attained and the awarding institution
- In case of non-completion of offer, reason for such
- Date of non-take up of offer; Take-up but no participation; Take-up participation, and then drop-out; Found alternative offer of employment, education, traineeship, apprenticeship.

Duration

For every participant, the following information is collated during this phase:

- Duration from application date to start date of Youth Guarantee service
- Duration from start date of Youth Guarantee service to communication of offer
- Duration from communication of offer to take-up of offer
- Duration from application date to take-up of offer.

Follow-up

The final phase for data monitoring is the follow-up phase. The following information is gathered for every participant:

- Follow-up status (3 months from exit date)
- Follow-up status (6 months from exit date)
- Follow-up status (12 months from exit date)
- Follow-up status (18 months from exit date)

The information gathered throughout the three phases is directly linked to the Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Youth Guarantee.

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING SCHEMES

Supplementing the data gathered on each participant throughout the different phases of the Youth Guarantee, a number of evaluation exercises are carried out. For each measure that is offered under the Youth Guarantee programme, the effectiveness ratio and the resource efficiency ratio are calculated. The variables used in this analysis include the population of participants, the outcome of youth following their participation, and the expenditure allocated to the measure. The effectiveness ratio is calculated as a share of successful completion from the total population of participants in a particular measure. The resource efficiency is measured as a share of the spending on successful participants from the total spending allocated to all participants.

A study which is computed following the completion of the SEC Revision Classes is the analysis of results achieved for both the treatment group and the control group. The common factor between the two groups of analysis is that they have attained the same results in their first attempt in SEC examinations. The difference is that the control group opts not to participate in the SEC Revision Classes offered by the State as part of the Youth Guarantee programme, whereas the treatment group receives the services offered by the State. Both groups sit for their resit examinations the following September.

Additionally, a component of the Youth Guarantee is to design evidence-based research studies leading to policy measures specifically addressed at the target group. The NEET Census provides insight on the aspirations, needs and realities of NEETs. The results of this method of analysis are the basis for policy formulation in assessing and continuously improving the schemes.

DATA LIMITATIONS

When collating data a number of limitations were observed. At different phases, attaining cross-sectional data from different sources proved to be a limitation. Notwithstanding, this limitation has been addressed in early 2015 through the endorsement of L.N. 19 of 2015 (Processing of Personal Data (Education Sector) Regulations, 2015)⁸ which enabled the sharing of data on young people, between Malta's Public Employment Service and educational providers.

Another limitation encountered is the unavailability of differences-in-differences estimation. Assessing the effectiveness of the treatment group as opposed to the control group for different measures proves to be difficult, if not impracticable even if one assumes that the variables of interest are the same. Other omitted factors may influence the results.

Comparing the effective performance of Youth Guarantee services can result in a limitation as it is acknowledged that the probability of the effectiveness ratio is diminished when the target group is young people who are most at-risk. Particularly when the group receiving intervention requires intensive assistance; which very often goes beyond training and guidance, and may include psycho-social assistance; the effectiveness ratio diminishes significantly. Unless such contextual variables are taken into account, it is difficult to conduct a comparative analysis between Member States or between different measures offered within one Member State.

⁸ L.N. 19 of 2015, Processing of Personal Data (Education Sector) Regulations, 2015, available at <http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lp&itemid=26603&l=1>

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The expected outcome following the implementation of the Youth Guarantee is two-fold:

- Individual impact
- Structural impact

Through the measures outlined in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan for the following years it is expected that youth unemployment, the NEET rate and early school-leavers rate decline significantly. Moreover, it is estimated that the skills gap is diminished through the active collaboration with employers and the focus that is being placed on practical work experience. The Youth Guarantee is expected to yield long-term positive returns as the measures offered centre on enhancing the social dimension of those furthest away from the labour market and education through personalised assistance, the development of employability skills, and a behavioural change through the mutual obligation principle.

Through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, it is envisaged that structural changes occur. The Public Employment Service, educational institutions and training systems; all of which are partners in the Youth Guarantee framework; are committed to undertake the necessary reforms to ensure that the programmes and services offered are in line with the needs of their target users.

Notwithstanding, it is recognised that for the Youth Guarantee to leave the desired impact, it needs to be complemented with other frameworks in the social, economic, education and employment fields. Inclusive and sustainable societies require a policy scenario where different policy sectors are closely intertwined in a protective, yet empowering fabric where long-term goals are shared and understood.

APPENDIX

Summary of Initiatives

Name of Initiative	Key Objectives	Target Group	Funding	Name of Lead Organisation	Timetable of Implementation
NEET Census	Identifying NEETs and understanding their aspirations	NEETs (15-24)	ESF	Ministry for Education and Employment	2015
NEET Activation Scheme I	Activating NEETs	NEETs (15-24)	ESF	Ministry for Education and Employment	2014-2015
NEET Activation Scheme II	Activating NEETs	NEETs (15-24)	ESF	Ministry for Education and Employment	2016
Alternative Learning Programme	Providing a second-chance education; reducing early-school-leaving	Young people in their final year of compulsory schooling	ESF	Ministry for Education and Employment	2014
SEC Revision Classes	Facilitating the transition from compulsory education to further education	Young people in their final year of compulsory schooling	ESF	Ministry for Education and Employment	2014
MCAST Remedial Classes	Facilitating the transition from one level to a higher level of education; minimising the risk of dropping-out from the education stream	MCAST students	ESF	MCAST	2014
MCAST Work-Based Learning	Enhancing access to vocational education; providing opportunities for progression; increasing labour market relevance of education and training	MCAST students	ESF	MCAST	2015
Supported/ Sheltered Employment	Providing a client-centred approach to youths with disability in the development of skills; facilitating the transition towards open employment.	Youths with Disability	ESF	Malta's Public Employment Service	2016



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for more Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
This project is part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



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