



# Youth employment policies in Malta

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**EXCEPT Working Papers** are peer-reviewed outputs from the <http://www.except-project.eu/> project. The series is edited by the project coordinator Dr. Marge Unt and by the project co-coordinator Prof. Michael Gebel. These working papers are intended to meet the European Commission's expected impact from the project:

- i. to advance the knowledge base that underpins the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in Europe with the aim of enhancing the employment of young people and improving the social situation of young people who face labour market insecurities, and
- ii. to engage with relevant communities, stakeholders and practitioners in the research with a view to supporting relevant policies in Europe. Contributions to a dialogue about these results can be made through the project website <http://www.except-project.eu/>, or by following us on twitter @except\_eu.

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Responsibility for all conclusions drawn from the data lies entirely with the author.



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## The key risk groups in the labour market in Luxembourg

Table 1 “Risk group” construction<sup>1</sup>

Potential risk groups	Importance by actors		
	Public opinion/ Media*	Mainstream policy	Academic research
All young people	2	2	1
Young unemployed	4	5	1
Early school leavers	5	5	2
Young people with low skills	4	4	2
Young people with outdated qualifications	3	4	1
Young people without qualifications	4	4	2
NEET	5	5	1
Higher education graduates	1	1	1
Migrants/Ethnic minorities	1	2	1
Teenage/single parents	3	3	1
Young people from workless families	2	2	2
Young people from remote/disadvantaged areas	2	2	2
Young people with a disability	2	3	2
Other (please indicate & if necessary include new row/s) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people	1	1	2
NEETS who are inactive	4	4	1

The answers in the above table reflect my personal opinion, based on my observations of the development of the sector over the past years.

Mainstream policy (see below for the main documents used to answer this aspect) and the general public opinion (as gauged by what is reported in the media) in Malta tend to be in line with each other. The risk groups of early school leavers and NEETS are being given prominence in Malta, thanks to the European Union’s open method of coordination and the country specific recommendations which influence Malta’s national reform programme. The related issue of qualifications mismatch is also growing in importance since the Maltese labour market is increasingly demanding specialised skills that are not found in Malta. It appears that a considerable percentage of NEETS in Malta are inactive, and mainstream policy is trying to target such risk group.

The more highly qualified young people do not experience significant difficulties to be employed and so are not considered as risk groups. Malta is currently experiencing very low unemployment in general. While young qualified persons might increasingly run the

<sup>1</sup> 1=no significant role to 5=very important



risk of being underemployed in the first stages of their working lives, such aspect is not given prominence neither in the media, nor in policy.

There is insufficient public and political will to assist young migrant persons (especially from African countries), and little is done to try to integrate this group. There is also an insufficient public awareness about the need to integrate young persons with disability into the labour market, though the government is increasingly focusing its attention on this group. Malta has one of the lowest employment rates in the EU of people with disability.

Academic research about risk groups in Malta is scarce. The small size of the country translates into little academic research in general, and especially about concepts of emerging importance such as youth risk groups. The low ratings given in the above table reflect the little existing research.

The youth risk groups that are especially not adequately addressed by national policies are: young migrants/ethnic minorities and young people from workless families/disadvantaged areas.

The main documents consulted to decide to the rating used in Table 1 are the following (However, I also checked government websites and online newspapers to arrive to my conclusions):

Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ (2017). Annual report 2016. Available at: [http://www.agenzjazghazagh.gov.mt/Downloads/202/Annual\\_Report\\_2016/](http://www.agenzjazghazagh.gov.mt/Downloads/202/Annual_Report_2016/)

Foundation for Social Welfare Services. (FSWS, 2013). Embark for life - Integration of Young people into the labour market PROJECT DOSSIER ESF 3.61. Available at: <https://fsws.gov.mt/en/fsws/Documents/EU%20Projects/DOSSIER%20E4L%20%20%20%20FINAL.pdf>

Government of Malta (2014c). The Minister for Education and Employment and the Parliamentary Secretary for EU Funds visit ongoing alternative learning programme. Available at: <https://eufundscms.gov.mt/en/Information/Press%20Releases/Pages/THE-MINISTER-FOR-EDUCATION-AND-EMPLOYMENT-AND-THE-PARLIAMENTARY-SECRETARY-FOR-EU-FUNDS-VISIT-ONGOING-ALTERNATIVE-LEARNING-P.aspx?IsPrintPrev=1>

Government of Malta. (2017a). Annual and final implementation reports for the Investment for growth and jobs goal. Available at: <https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>

Government of Malta. (2017d). Malta midterm self-assessment report - National action plan 2015-2017. Available at: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org>



- Government of Malta. (n.d.a). ESF 3.60: Youth employment programme. Available at: <https://investinginyourfuture.gov.mt/project/opportunitajiet-indaqs/youth-employment-programme-33947763>
- Government of Malta. (n.d.b). EU funds website. Available at: <https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>
- Maltatoday. (2014, August 11). Bartolo bemoans lack of interest in youth guarantee scheme. Available at: [http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/42186/bartolo\\_bemoans\\_lack\\_of\\_interest\\_in\\_youth\\_guarantee\\_scheme\\_#.WeM19ztdKRo](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/42186/bartolo_bemoans_lack_of_interest_in_youth_guarantee_scheme_#.WeM19ztdKRo)
- Martin, I. (2017, January 2). 300 have 'disappeared' from school and work. 16-year-olds drop out into idleness or illegal employment. Times of Malta. Available at: <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170102/local/300-have-disappeared-from-school-and-work.635437>
- Ministry for Education and Employment. (2015b). Youth guarantee implementation plan - Malta. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16478&langId=en>
- Ministry for Education and Employment. (2016b). Youth Guarantee SEC Revision Classes 2016 Report. Available at: <http://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Youth%20Sec%20report%20FINAL.pdf>
- Ministry for Education and Employment. (2017). Youth Guarantee. Available at: <https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/More%20About%20our%20Initiatives.pdf>.
- Ministry for Finance. (2016). National reform programme – Annex table 2. Available at: <https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Annex%20Table%202-16.pdf>
- Ministry for Finance. (2017a). National reform programme. Available at: [https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/NRP\\_2017.pdf](https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/NRP_2017.pdf)
- Ministry for Finance. (2017b). National reform programme – Annex table 2. Available at: [https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Annex\\_Table\\_2-17.pdf](https://mfin.gov.mt/en/Library/Documents/NRP/Annex_Table_2-17.pdf)



## Youth employment policies: a general overview

Table 2 An overview of active labour market programmes at national level (2005-2015)

	Year	2005	2010	2015 or the last year of available data, specify
Indicator				
1	Total number of active labour market programmes	N/A	N/A	N/A
1.1	including youth-targeted	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Number of participants (stock) in active labour market programmes:			
2.1	Total number	871 persons (2006)	2,114 persons	4,701 persons (2014)
2.2	% of the labour force (15-64)	0.5 (2006)	1.2%	2.5% (2014)
3	Number of youth participants (up to 29 years old) in active labour market programmes:			
3.1	Total number	262 persons (2006, estimate, less than 25 years)	779 persons (less than 25 years)	1,596 persons (less than 25 years; 2014)
3.2	% of the labour force (15-29)	0.8% (2006, estimate, less than 25 years)	2.7%	5.7% (2014, less than 25 years)
3.3	% of the total number of participants (stock)	30% (2006, estimate, less than 25 years)	37% (less than 25 years)	34% (2014, less than 25 years)
4	Expenditures on active labour market programmes:			
4.1	Total amount (EUR)	3.4million (2006; labour market measures, categories 2-7)	3.42million (labour market measures, categories 2-7)	7.71million (2014, labour market measures, categories 2-7)
4.2	% of GDP	.06 (estimate, 2006)	.05	.1 (2014)
5.	Expenditures on all active labour market programmes for youth participants:			
5.1	Total amount (EUR)	N/A	N/A	N/A
5.2	% of GDP	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	Expenditures on youth-targeted active labour market programmes:			
6.1	Total amount (EUR)	N/A	N/A	N/A
6.2	% of GDP	N/A	N/A	N/A



6.3	% of the total expenditures on active labour market programmes	N/A	N/A	N/A
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### Comments about Table 2

All data in Table 2 derives from Eurostat.

No data was found for the total number of active labour market programmes and expenditures on youth participants.

Data for 2005 and 2015 is unavailable, so I used data for 2006 and 2014.

The classification of youth is different than that requested – it comprises persons younger than 25 years.

*Table 3 Overview of types of measures and schemas against youth unemployment in the last years (both running and finished ones; time horizon – last 5-6 years, 2011-2017)*

Type of measure	Importance <sup>2</sup>	Preventive/reactive <sup>3</sup>	Youth specific	Main source of funding <sup>4</sup>	Linked to EU initiatives <sup>5</sup>	Main actors of delivery <sup>6</sup>	Evaluation present	Youth/participant feedback used to improve the delivery
(Re-)orientation courses, preparation for training or employment	2	3	Yes	2, 1	Partly linked to 1	Ministry for Education and Employment	No	Partly
Vocational guidance, career counselling	2	3	Yes	2	No	Ministry for Education and Employment; Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	No	Partly
Training (with certificates)	3	3	Partly	2,1	Partly linked to 1	Ministry for Education and Employment; Jobsplus; Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology	Partly	Partly
Training (without)	3	3	Partly	2,1	Partly linked to 1	Jobsplus; Malta College	Yes	Partly

<sup>2</sup> Importance depends on the comparative scale of the program (coverage & expenditure) -> Does not exist = 0; Not relevant = 1; Quite important = 2; Very important = 3

<sup>3</sup> To what extent do policies focus on preventative measures or are purely reactive to manifest problems  
PREVENTIVE = 1; REACTIVE = 2; BOTH=3.

<sup>4</sup> EU = 1; national = 2, regional = 3, local = 4; other -5

<sup>5</sup> Youth Guarantee =1; Youth Employment Initiative =2; Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship =3; Eures =4; Support to youth entrepreneurship =5; Other - 6

<sup>6</sup> state = 1, region = 2, municipality = 3, church = 4, foundations, NGOs = 5, private sector = 6, educational institutions=7 Other, please specify=8 If several, please list all



certificate s)						of Arts, Science and Technology		
Employment incentives, subsidies for employer	1	2	No	2	No	Jobsplus	No	No
Direct job creation	None	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable				
Start-up incentives, self-employment programmes	1	1	Partly	2	No	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology; Malta Enterprise	No	No
Other	None	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable				

### Comments about Table 3

The importance of the measures (column 2) in each type of measure was evaluated with regards to how many youths are being assisted. In order to judge such importance, a list of interventions under each type of measure was first compiled. Then an estimate of the youth affected by such interventions was drawn. It was not possible to examine the amount of expenditure for each type of measure.

In the last column, there isn't evidence of 'formal' youth/participant feedback being used to improve delivery in most of the interventions. However, interventions are often improved through 'informal' feedback from participants. I know this is the case from my own personal experience in "Vocational guidance, career counselling". This is why I wrote 'partly'. While this might also be the case in "direct job creation" and "start up incentives...", I don't have direct knowledge about such informal feedback from participants, and so I wrote 'no'.

*Table 4 Strengths and weaknesses of the overall policy approach*

Effectiveness of the overall policy approach towards tackling youth unemployment and social exclusion	
Strengths	Weaknesses
A strong focus on training at all ability levels, including the provision of alternative educational and training mechanisms for youths who are not academically inclined	Limited measures focusing specifically on: inactive youths; families and communities of inactive youths; foreign youths
Considerable resources used for capacity building purposes such as the strengthening of organisational systems and physical infrastructure and the training of professionals who work with young persons	Lack of quality lifelong career guidance outside the educational system.
	Scant evaluation of the effectiveness of existing measures



## Youth employment policies: focus on selected interventions

Table 5 A brief overview of selected youth employment interventions

No	Name	Level	Main target group <sup>7</sup>	Type <sup>8</sup>	Starting year	Funding source	Part of EU initiatives	Evaluation	“Good practice” example <sup>9</sup>	Impact of policy measures on youth inclusion <sup>10</sup>	Trends in the way selected policy measures influence unemployed young people <sup>11</sup>
1	SEC revision classes	National	D	3	2014 – ongoing	EU	Youth Guarantee	Yes – Positive	Yes	4	Not applicable
2	Alternative Learning Programme	National	D	3	2014 - ongoing	EU	Part of it, the ALP Summer ICT Course, is part of the Youth Guarantee	No	Partially	3	Not applicable
3	NEET Activation Scheme	National	D	1, 2, 3	2014 - ongoing	EU	Youth Guarantee	Yes - mixed	No	1	Unknown
4	Youth.inc	National	D	1, 3	2011 - ongoing	national	/	No	No	1	Unknown

### Comments about Table 5

Measure 1: I chose this measure as: 1. it is an example of good practice; 2. It may increase the chances of students of getting ‘good jobs’; 3. The intervention is ongoing;

<sup>7</sup> a. targeted youth, b. universal, c. targeted risk group, d. targeted to youth risk group;

<sup>8</sup> (re-)orientation courses, preparation for training or employment = 1; vocational guidance, career counselling = 2; training (with or without certificates) = 3; Employment incentives, subsidies for employer = 4, direct job creation = 5, and start-up incentives, self-employment programmes = 6

<sup>9</sup> EU Database of national labour market ‘good practices’ definition: “A specific policy or measure that has proven to be effective and sustainable in the field of employment, demonstrated by evaluation evidence and/or monitoring and assessment methods using process data and showing the potential for replication. It can cover both the formulation and the implementation of the policy or measure, which has led to positive labour market outcomes over an extended period of time.”

<sup>10</sup> 1 - very weak; 2 - weak; 3 - medium; 4 - strong; 5 - very strong; N/A - not applicable. Please provide a brief explanation of the ratings, incl. references if relevant.

<sup>11</sup> 1 - Significant improvement; 2 - Improvement; 3 - No change; 4 - Deterioration; 5 - Significant deterioration; N/A – not applicable. Please provide a brief explanation of the ratings, incl. references if relevant.



4. It targets only young people; 5. It targets a group of young people who are at risk of becoming NEETs.

Measure 2: I chose this measure as: 1. it has elements of good practice in it; 2. It may increase the chances of students of getting 'good jobs'; 3. The intervention is ongoing; 4. It targets only young people; 5. It targets the most likely group of young people who are at risk of becoming NEETs.

I wrote "no" with regards to evaluation, as the only available data does not derive from proper evaluation of the measure.

Measure 3: While the first cycle of this measure is in my opinion not an example of good practice, I chose this measure as: 1. It has the potential of becoming more effective in its second cycle; 2. It may increase the chances of participants of getting 'good jobs'; 3. The intervention is ongoing; 4. It targets only young people; 5. Unlike the previous two measures, this measure targets individuals who are already NEETs.

While I believe that the impact of the first cycle of the measure on youth inclusion was very weak, I expect the second cycle of the measure to have a stronger impact.

Measure 4: There isn't enough information which can be used to answer whether the measure can be an example of good practice. The impact of the measure on youth inclusion is unknown but is likely to be very weak, due to the small number of participants. I chose this measure as: 1. It may increase the chances of participants getting 'good jobs'; 2. The intervention is ongoing; 3. It only targets young people; 4. It targets a group of young people who are at risk of becoming NEETs.; 5. Unlike the other measures, this does not fall under the Youth Guarantee scheme and is only funded by the Maltese government.

I could not answer the last column. The first two measures are carried out among students, and so the question is not applicable. In the case of the last two measures, there isn't sufficient information to be able to evaluate the trends

### Detailed description and evaluation of the selected measures

Name of the initiative	<b>SEC Revision Classes</b>
Short description	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b> To improve the grades of students who obtain a grade of six or lower in at least one of the mandatory subjects at SEC level or who were absent from those exams. (SEC qualifications enable students to further their studies at post-secondary level.)</p> <p><b>Intended effects:</b> To increase students' post-secondary educational possibilities.</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b></p>



	<p>Secondary school students who perform poorly in SEC exams of Maltese, English, Mathematics or Physics.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b></p> <p>Same as previous answer.</p> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b></p> <p>Education – free revision classes</p> <p>Revision classes are provided in Maltese, English Language, Mathematics, Physics and Biology. Students can apply for up to three subjects if they have obtained a grade which is 6 or lower in more than one of the above subjects. These classes are provided free of charge during the summer period. Such training is carried out by qualified warranted teachers.</p> <p><b>Level:</b></p> <p>National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b></p> <p>Offered in July/August 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017. Ongoing.</p> <p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b></p> <p>Only the government is involved.</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b></p> <p>Classes are offered by Ministry for Education and Employment</p> <p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b></p> <p>The budget is unknown. The measure is partly-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).</p> <p>However, the budget for all the all measures under the Youth Guarantee between 2013 and 2015 was EUR3,068,802 (Government of Malta, 2017b), while the budget for all measures under the Youth Guarantee during the period 2014-2020 is EUR5,031,569 (Government of Malta, 2017c).</p>
<p>Achieved results</p>	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b></p> <p>The total number of students who took part between 2014 and 2016 is 2,097 (Government of Malta, 2017e). The total number of students who were entitled is unknown. However, in 2014, the number of students who applied for this measure represented about 60% of all eligible persons (Maltatoday, 2014).</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis:</b></p> <p>Unknown</p>



	<p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available:</b></p> <p>Unknown</p>
Targeting	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b></p> <p>Students who perform poorly in their SEC level exams in Maltese, English, Mathematics or Physics.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b></p> <p>The programme is specifically targeted to young people</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>
Youth involvement	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way:</b></p> <p>No.</p> <p><b>Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>
Links to EU initiatives	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p> <p>Youth Guarantee</p>
Available evaluations	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p>There exists a publicly-available ex-post (vis-à-vis the 2016 programme) evaluation report “Youth Guarantee SEC Revision Classes 2016 Report” (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2016b). The report lacks a section explaining the research design. However, it starts by showing administrative data of the percentages of students who passed in their SEC resits in 2016, comparing those who attended SEC Revision Classes and those who did not. The report then focuses on data gathered from three questionnaires, two addressed to teachers (meant to elicit their evaluation of the administration related to the initiative and the students who participated in the initiative) and one to students (which seeks to elicit their attitudes towards the initiative).</p> <p>There is also another publicly available document (ex-post hoc vis-à-vis the 2016 programme) examining this measure about best practices for teachers participating in the SEC Revision Classes (Ministry for Education and</p>



	<p>Employment, 2016a). This report is based on the quantitative data deriving from the previously mentioned report, plus a review of relevant international literature. The following is a useful press release about the measure: Ministry for Education and Employment (2015a). While it is not an evaluation reports, it contains some statistics about the measure and its outcomes. In particular it highlights, number of registrations, pass rates and success rates.</p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>The above two mentioned internal evaluation reports exist.</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>The Ministry for Education and Employment (2016b) report includes the percentages of students who passed in their SEC resits in 2016, comparing those who attended SEC Revision Classes and those who did not. The evaluation also includes results from a survey distributed among students, teachers and coordinators about their views of the measure.</p> <p>The Ministry for Education and Employment (2016a) report provides the insights of several teachers about the initiative, highlighting specific difficulties encountered and strategies to deal with them.</p> <p>The evaluations do not include aspects such as deadweight loss, substitution effect, or displacement effect.</p>								
<p>Summary of evaluation results</p>	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>The Ministry for Education and Employment (2016b) report indicates that overall, students who attend the revision classes perform better in the resits than those who do not. Thus, the measure can be viewed as successful. The following is a table showing the percentage of students who obtained a pass (4 or 5 mark) in SEC resits in 2016. The table compares the results of students who attended SEC Revision Classes and those who did not, by subject.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="440 1845 1337 1971"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="440 1845 600 1971">Subject</th> <th data-bbox="600 1845 823 1971">Students who attended SEC</th> <th data-bbox="823 1845 1034 1971">Students who did not attend SEC</th> <th data-bbox="1034 1845 1337 1971">Improvement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Subject	Students who attended SEC	Students who did not attend SEC	Improvement				
Subject	Students who attended SEC	Students who did not attend SEC	Improvement						



	Revision Classes	Revision Classes	
Maltese	63.16 %	59.09 %	4.07 percentage points
English	39.74 %	32.56 %	7.18 percentage points
Maths	27.79 %	23 %	4.79 percentage points
Physics	26.97	17.95%	9.02 percentage points

While the impact of the measure is already positive, the report puts forwards a number of recommendations to improve it further. The following are some of the main recommendations deriving from the report:

- provide classrooms with better amenities (including air-conditioning);
- provide teachers with more resources;
- nurture an environment where students feel more comfortable evaluating their proficiency more realistically;
- give more detailed and transparent information meetings for teachers;
- put in place systems to reduce the amount of absenteeism and dropouts from the programme.

According to the Ministry for Education and Employment (2016a) report, teachers are worried that there isn't enough time to cover all the required material. The report concludes that teachers would benefit from a short preparation course providing them with "tips, insights, and techniques required for the successful delivery of short courses" (p.27).

<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b>            Yes (This is my evaluation, which is in line with the results of the formal evaluation).</p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b>            The effect is substantial at it covers thousands of students across the country and there is evidence that among those who do not pass from their SEC exams, those who take up the course are more likely to achieve pass marks than those who do not. The difference in likelihood of passing the exams between the two groups varies from 4 percentage points in the subject of Maltese to 9 percentage points in the subject of physics.</p> <p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



	<p>The fact that the classes are organised in summer may reduce take up, as this is the time which students normally dedicate to leisure, employment, family obligations and other personal activities. Indeed, it has been reported (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2016a, p.24) that “the fact that the Revision Classes take place in summer can hamper the learning process due to the heat and cultural events which take place in summer” and that “part-time jobs and lack of motivation from the students’ side can contribute to absenteeism and dropout rate”.</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>I believe that this measure adequately addresses its objective. It is effective in increasing SEC pass rates, and has a large coverage and take-up rate. However, here is an unmeasured element of deadweight in the measure, since some students would have pursued private revision classes in the absence of such measure.</p>
<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>Yes, it addresses a major problem relating to unemployment and social exclusion in Malta, namely low levels of qualifications. Before 2014, students who failed in their SECs could only have access to often-expensive private tuition. By eliminating the fees associated with such classes, a significant percentage of students were encouraged to revise SEC subjects in summer under the guidance of qualified teachers and re-do the exams in September.</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as ‘good practice’ example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main “success factors” of this intervention.</b></p> <p>A major success factor of this initiative is the strong publicity spearheaded by the Minister for Education and Employment which ensures a high uptake of the measure. Besides the initiative is relatively easy to offer as long as there are the necessary funds and the educational system provides the opportunity to re-sit exams at the end of summer. There is no need to re-develop curricula, as these are the same ones that students studied during the normal academic year (though such curricula have to be adapted). Teachers are attracted to the programme as they earn extra money during their time of inactivity.</p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>The measure increases the pass rate of the SEC exams, thus enabling more students to further their education beyond compulsory schooling. The measure is particularly beneficial for families who would have found it financially difficult to send their children to private classes.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>



Name of the initiative	<b>Alternative Learning Programme</b>
Short description	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b></p> <p>To prevent students from slipping through the net of the education system and become NEETS. The programme focuses on students who are detached from the educational system and who are not interested in trying to sit for SEC exams, by offering an alternative curriculum, in a bid to entice them to further their education in some vocational stream.</p> <p><b>Intended effects:</b></p> <p>Reduce the number of young persons who do not further their education.</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b></p> <p>15/16-year-old students who are reaching the end of compulsory schooling, and who do not intend to further their studies.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b></p> <p>Same as previous answer.</p> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b></p> <p>Education and training</p> <p>This programme has two phases. The first phase, which spans over one academic year, offers the opportunity for students who do not intend to sit for SEC subjects an alternative educational experience in which they are taught several vocational and basic subjects through varied teaching methods. The second phase, which takes place during summer, offers the opportunity to participants to improve their competencies in ICT. Group training sessions forming part of this phase are spread over ten days and cover a total of 50 hours. Successful participants are awarded the ECDL standard certificate.</p> <p><b>Level:</b></p> <p>National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b></p> <p>2014 - ongoing</p> <p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b></p> <p>Only the government is involved.</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b></p> <p>Ministry for Education and Employment. The measure was developed by the Early School Leavers Unit, the unit responsible for the development of VET, and the Student Services Department.</p>



	<p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b></p> <p>The estimated budget for this measure in 2014 was €87,032 (Government of Malta, 2014c). More recent budgets are not available.</p>
Achieved results	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b></p> <p>The following data derives from different sources. 356 students completed the ALP programme in 2014-2015 (Government of Malta, 2014b); 255 participants completed their studies in the scholastic year 2015-2016 (Government, 2016); and 180 participated in 2017 (Malta Independent, 2017).</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis.</b></p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available.</b></p> <p>Unknown – Information is not available.</p>
Targeting	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b></p> <p>Secondary school students who are not benefitting from the traditional educational system.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b></p> <p>Program is especially targeted to young people.</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>
Youth involvement	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way (Yes/Partly/No). Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>No</p>
Links to EU initiatives	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p> <p>The Alternative Learning Programme is partly linked to the Youth Guarantee. In particular, the Youth guarantee covers the “ICT - Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) Summer Course”. This is a two-week ICT course held between July and September and available to secondary students aged 15/16 who have participated in the ALP course throughout the year.</p>



Available evaluations	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p><u>No formal ad hoc evaluations are available.</u> A reply to a parliamentary question in 2014 stated that a report with the feedback gathered from students and teachers participating in the measure would soon be completed (Government of Malta, 2014a). Similarly, a European Commission report (2016, p.2) stated that “the programme’s effectiveness in ensuring that students remain in the education and training system is currently being assessed”. However, to-date none has been published.</p> <p>On the other hand, a tracer study carried out among secondary school leavers in 2015 by the Directorate for Educational Services (within the Ministry for Education and Employment) included the paths of students who had followed the Alternative Learning Program.</p> <p>Directorate for Educational Services (2017). Tracer study report 2015. Available at: <a href="https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Press%20Releases/Documents/pr172338a.pdf">https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Press%20Releases/Documents/pr172338a.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>While there isn’t any formal evaluation of the measure, the data that I mentioned is internal, deriving from a different entity within the same Ministry.</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>Not detailed – only a table summarizing four potential career choices made by participants in the measure is available.</p>
Summary of evaluation results	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>Out of the 150 young persons who participated in the survey, 47% continued with VET studies, 25% found employment, and another 28% are inactive.</p> <p>When data is categorised by gender, the following results emerge. Relatively more females than males furthered their studies (59% and 40% accordingly). On</p>



	<p>the other hand, more males are employed than females (29% and 18% accordingly) and more males become inactive (31% and 23% accordingly). The study does not say anything about the effectiveness or impact of the programme, beyond the few statistics that was mentioned. The study is not a specific evaluation of the Alternative Learning Programme – it is a tracer study about all students who completed compulsory education.</p>
<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b></p> <p>There isn't enough evidence about this. On one hand, the above mentioned tracer study seems to point out that the results of the program are encouraging. But as will be seen below, there are several issues relating to the programme which have not necessarily been solved.</p> <p>The currently quality of intervention in the beginning of the programme was not up to the required standard. In 2014, the Malta Union of Teachers harshly criticised the Alternative Learning Programme (ALP) on various grounds including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scarce planning resulting in the lack of a shared syllabus;</li> <li>• staff who are unprepared to deal with vulnerable students needing highly individualised learning programmes or the support of (inexistent) learning support facilitators;</li> <li>• no specific guidance teachers provided for the programme;</li> <li>• questionable engagement of vocational trainers without basic specific pedagogical training;</li> <li>• teachers being admonished for trying to exert order or discipline; and,</li> <li>• students in other schools allegedly getting themselves into trouble in order to be sent to the ALP programme and avoid normal schooling (Malta Independent, 2014; Times of Malta, 2014).</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry disputed some of the MUT's allegations and stated to be working to improve others. The improvements (if any) over the last three years are unknown.</p> <p>Whereas it is surely better to prevent students from becoming NEETs than just assisting them when they are already NEETs, some academics have argued that intervening in Form 5 (the last year of compulsory education) is already too late for many students. In 2015, Prof Carmel Borg, a former Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta, stated that there needs to be more focus on childcare centres, in which some problematic issues could already be traced. Prof Borg advocated intervention through a community-oriented approach, arguing that family poverty, unemployment and illiteracy often lie at the root of the problem (Micallef, 2015). Some academics have also disputed the approach of segregating students into different schools according to ability and/or motivation.</p>



	<p>Besides, in 2017, the Minister for Education and Employment admitted that around 300 students still ended up disappearing from education and work over the previous year (Martin, 2017). The number appears not to have improved since the ALP (and the youth guarantee in general) started in 2014. However, one can argue that this and complementary measures have blocked the increase of the negative figures.</p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b></p> <p>While the number of students who follow the programme is substantial, the magnitude of the overall effect of the program is unknown. The tracer study quoted earlier indicates that the programme may be having a moderate effect on the targeted population. However, more research needs to be carried out and made public to ascertain this.</p> <p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p> <p>As stated above and for reasons which are not clear, the programme has been unable to help a significant number of about 300 students who still end up as NEETs every year.</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>The main weakness of the intervention is that its effectiveness needs to be gauged through thorough investigation.</p>
<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>This measure tackles an important cause for the social exclusion of young people – namely that of motivating young people who are uninterested in traditional education to further their studies.</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as 'good practice' example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main “success factors” of this intervention.</b></p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>Overall this measure cannot be viewed as a clear example of good practice. Some evidence appears to show that it is improving the life chances of its participants. However, the measure has received substantial criticisms, including from the Malta Union of Teachers in its initial phases in relation to insufficient planning. It has also been criticised for its ideology which promotes segregation according to abilities.</p> <p>Despite the above, this measure includes aspects of good practice. Most importantly, it gives another chance to students who do not fit in the traditional educational system to further their studies in areas that might be more related to their interests and abilities. Having diverse educational pathways might</p>



	<p>encourage more students to remain in education and training. By offering a more practical educational experience, this programme offers an alternative to the traditional classroom set-up associated with schools.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>
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Name of the initiative	<b>NEET Activation Scheme</b>
Short description	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b></p> <p>The scheme aims at encouraging the re-integration of young people who are detached from the education system or from the labour market through targeted intervention and empowerment.</p> <p><b>Intended effects:</b></p> <p>Enabling participants to develop skills that are necessary for them both as members of society and as prospective employees.</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b></p> <p>Young unemployed or inactive persons.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b></p> <p>Beneficiaries need to satisfy the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 16-24 years of age at the month prior to the issuing of the call for applications;</li> <li>- Resident in Malta or Gozo;</li> <li>- Unemployed (both registering with ETC and non-registering);</li> <li>- Not registered with MCAST, University, Junior College, Higher Secondary and ITS;</li> <li>- Inactive. (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2017)</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b></p> <p>Training and work exposure</p> <p>Participants are profiled and receive 40 hours of personalised assistance from youth workers and another 80 hours of motivational and behavioural training intervention covering topics such as guidance on employment, communication skills, and CV writing skills. Following this phase, Participants 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 equivalent to the minimum wage.</p> <p><b>Level:</b></p> <p>National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b></p>



	<p>2014 - 2020</p> <p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b></p> <p>Yes, different organisations are involved in the implementation of this measure. Stakeholders include Jobsplus, educational institutions and private employers. The names of the latter were not announced, but probably include the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology.</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b></p> <p>Jobsplus (formerly called Employment and Training Corporation)</p> <p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b></p> <p>The budget for this specific measure is not available. However, the budget for all the all measures under the Youth Guarantee between 2013 and 2015 was EUR3,068,802, while the budget for all measures under the Youth Guarantee during the period 2014-2020 is EUR5,031,569 (Government of Malta, n.d.b).</p>
Achieved results	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b></p> <p>This initiative is meant to assist some of the estimated 4,600 NEETs in Malta. The initiative was formally divided into two cycles – Cycle 1 (2014-2015) and Cycle 2 (2016-2020).</p> <p>554 young persons were reported to have applied to join the first cycle the scheme. It was also reported that after the first cycle of the youth guarantee scheme, 72 participants were in employment or further study twelve months after the completion of the youth guarantee scheme, while another 45 persons are registering for employment (Ministry for Finance, 2016). Assuming that the figures refer to first cycle of the NEET Activation scheme, this translates to around 13% of the participants who found employment or furthered their studies, while another 8% moved from inactivity to registering for employment.</p> <p>Under version two, there are the following targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Circa 150 participants will be provided training and personalised support per annum;</li><li>2. 600 participants will be provided training and personalised support during the period of validity of the contract;</li><li>3. A target of 300 participants will gain a qualification. (Ministry for Finance, 2017)</li></ol> <p>The current number of participants is yet unknown.</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis.</b></p> <p>Unknown.</p>



	<p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available.</b></p> <p>The only data available are the general budgets for the whole Youth Guarantee programme as listed above.</p>
Targeting	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b></p> <p>Young unemployed or inactive persons.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b></p> <p>It is especially targeted to young people.</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
Youth involvement	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way (Yes/Partly/No). Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>No</p>
Links to EU initiatives	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p> <p>This initiative forms part of the Youth Guarantee.</p>
Available evaluations	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p>There is only one available evaluation, by Marketing Advisory Services (2015). It is ex-post Cycle 1 of the initiative (or mid-term if one considers the initiative as one whole).</p> <p>Marketing Advisory Services (2015). <i>Research on the youth guarantee – Qualitative and quantitative research (Malta) 2015</i>. Available at: <a href="https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Research%20on%20the%20Youth%20Guarantee%202015.pdf">https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Research%20on%20the%20Youth%20Guarantee%202015.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>It is external.</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized</b></p>



	<p><b>jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>The evaluation aims at identifying and highlighting areas which need to be improved in strengthening key aspects of the programme. The research is based on one-to-one interviews with participants in the scheme, focus groups with youth workers and teachers, and an evaluation questionnaire with beneficiaries who completed the programme. It does not include details such as deadweight loss, substitution effect, or displacement effect.</p> <p>The following are some further details about the design of the research that was carried out:</p> <p>Interviews were carried out with one hundred youths who had ongoing or recent experience as a participant within the measure. Each semi-structured interview took between 45 minutes and an hour to carry out.</p> <p>Four focus group sessions were carried out with youth workers and teachers who were employed within the measure. Each focus group was between one hour and forty five minutes and two hours long.</p> <p>A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from all youths who participated in the measure. Data was obtained from 49 respondents. The questionnaire mainly consisted of close-ended questions and required between 10 and 15 minutes to complete.</p> <p>All three research methods aimed to provide participants the opportunity to express their opinions and feelings in relation to their experiences within the programme.</p>
Summary of evaluation results	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>The evaluation of the scheme resulted in overall positive feedback from the participants about their education and training experience. According to the youths, teachers were competent and able to teach the course content (which was deemed to be relevant and useful) in a way which could be easily understood. On the other hand, some participants lamented that being within a group of students with mixed ability levels was not helpful. The professionals working on the scheme also held generally positive views, stating that the programme is working, especially in promoting and driving self-improvement of the youths who were enrolled for the right reasons. However, these professionals also asked for the need of a stronger structure which supports the scheme.</p>



<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b></p> <p>Despite the above results deriving from research carried out among participating students and professionals (Marketing Advisory Services, 2015), the first cycle of this programme was not particularly successful, as can be seen from the very low number of persons who ended up in employment or further training after completing the programme. The second cycle of the programme aims to be a significant improvement over the first one.</p> <p>As will be seen below, the program was also rather unsuccessful in recruiting participants.</p> <p>Marketing Advisory Services (2015). Research on the youth guarantee – Qualitative and quantitative research (Malta) 2015. Available at: <a href="https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Research%20on%20the%20Youth%20Guarantee%202015.pdf">https://education.gov.mt/en/youthguarantee/Documents/Research%20on%20the%20Youth%20Guarantee%202015.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b></p> <p>The effect of the first cycle in terms of employment was very small. Only 72 participants were in employment or further study twelve months after the completion of the youth guarantee scheme,</p> <p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p> <p>The first cycle of the programme had a low response rate (554 out of the then estimated 7,000 NEETS). Apart from the fact that as noted by the participants, the programme was not well marketed (Marketing Advisory Services, 2015), the low response rate indicated that the authorities did not have sufficient information about who are the NEETs in Malta. Thus, research was carried out to investigate and categorise the population of NEETs. This investigation revealed that the estimated number of NEETs is much smaller than that previously thought (around 4,600). Besides, NEETs were found to be a highly heterogeneous group, leading to the conclusion that different activation measures are required to target the different categories that comprise NEETs. The first cycle of the NEETs Activation Scheme was found to only have targeted Floating NEETs, one of the smaller groups of NEETs. Indeed, rather than enrolling inactive NEETs, most of those enrolled were registering unemployed who were obliged to participate in the scheme. (In relation to this point, such obligation appears to have resulted in many unmotivated participants, thus leading to poor outcomes).</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>As stated above, the poor understanding of NEETs in Malta led to an unprecise targeting of participants in the first cycle of this initiative.</p>
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	<p>The participants were not provided with sufficient social skills and support, leading to instances where youths with severe social problems behaved badly towards their employers and co-workers. In order to tackle this problem, which proved to be much larger than expected, in the second cycle of the scheme, strong psychosocial support will be provided throughout the programme, not just in the beginning of the scheme. The second cycle of the scheme also emphasises discipline, ethics and other basic work values.</p> <p>With regards to employment experience, the research exercise concluded that a greater variety of work placements would be helpful. Besides, more adequate monitoring when participants are attached with employers would reduce abuse from both employers and participants.</p> <p>The professionals working on this scheme also pointed out that they were not supported by an adequate organisational structure, leading them to experience insufficient role clarity, problems relating to accountability and insufficient networking with other professionals working in the scheme.</p>
<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>The first cycle of this measure appears to have failed to address the main causes of social exclusion. It was unable to target the group of Core NEETs, comprising those with social and behavioural problems - This group was not reached by the organisers of the measure. The organisation of the training was also not optimal. However, after the experience of the first cycle of this measure, the government aims to improve the second cycle, which “is going to be tailor made based on the needs of youths and shall be provided into smaller and more homogeneous groups” (Government of Malta. (2017a, p.127).</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as ‘good practice’ example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main “success factors” of this intervention.</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>Despite the overall positive feedback given in the evaluation mentioned earlier, the first cycle of this measure can hardly be described as successful – it tried to target an ill-defined and heterogeneous group with training that was not tailor made, it failed to target an important subgroup of NEETs, and ended up with relatively few participants in employment or in further education and training. Having said that, the experience of the first cycle of the measure helped to highlight several deficits which will hopefully be amended in the second cycle of this measure. For instance, it is positive to note that “outreach activities were launched in February 2017 and so far have included promotion on radio stations,</p>



	a social media campaign, as well as meetings with Secondary school psycho-social teams and other entities such as LEAP and Agenzija Zghazagh detach youth work” (Ministry for Finance, 2017, p.5).
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Name of the initiative	<b>Youth.inc</b>
Short description	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b></p> <p>The main aims of the measure are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instil a work and lifelong education ethic among young participants;</li> <li>2. Inform young people of learning and employment opportunities;</li> <li>3. Increase their chances of gaining employment;</li> <li>4. Reduce the risk of unemployment; and</li> <li>5. Promote lifelong learning. (Eryica, 2014, p.13)</li> </ol> <p><b>Intended effects:</b></p> <p>The projected outcomes for young participants are: 1. Personal and social development and increased self-esteem; 2. Access to quality information and advice; 3. Second-chance education and training; 4. Promotion of independence, personal autonomy, active citizenship and a pattern of lifelong learning; 5. Integration into further education and training opportunities and/or the labour market. (Eryica, 2014, p.13)</p> <p>More generally, the instrument aims to help young people to improve their standard of education and gain more knowledge, values and skills to enter the labour market or gain qualifications to continue in further education and/or training. The instrument aims to help young persons with low levels of education gain skills and knowledge at MQF Levels 1 and 2, in order to be able to further their studies.</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b></p> <p>Youths who finished compulsory schooling but do not have the qualifications to further their education and training.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b></p> <p>Same as above</p> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b></p> <p>Education and training</p> <p>This is an inclusive education programme, based on applied learning, for young people. Participants are assisted to gain key competencies, sectoral skills and underpinning knowledge, leading to MQF Level 1 and Level 2 certification. Participants learn transferable skills such as applying theory to work-related</p>



	<p>challenges, acquiring knowledge, gaining basic skills, embracing values and working in a team. Participants attending the programme on a full time basis are entitled to receive a stipend.</p> <p><b>Level:</b> National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b> 2011 – ongoing</p> <p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b> The measure is implemented by Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ.</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b> Youth.inc is under the remit and management of Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ – Malta’s National Youth Agency.</p> <p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b> Unknown.</p>
<p>Achieved results</p>	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b> 106 young people participated in the programme in 2014/2015 (Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ, 2016) and 109 in 2015/2016 Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ (2017).</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis.</b> Unknown.</p> <p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available.</b> Unknown.</p>
<p>Targeting</p>	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b> Youths who finished compulsory schooling but do not have the qualifications to further their education and training.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b> It is especially targeted to young people.</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b> Not applicable.</p>



<p>Youth involvement</p>	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way (Yes/Partly/No). Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>Yes. The programme, through its non-formal learning methods, gives opportunity to participants to be creative and contribute to the design of activities.</p>
<p>Links to EU initiatives</p>	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p> <p>No.</p>
<p>Available evaluations</p>	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p>None are available (as confirmed by the senior manager of Youth.inc).</p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Summary of evaluation results</p>	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b></p> <p>Unknown, since no evaluation exists</p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b></p> <p>Unknown – however, the magnitude is inevitably small since the number of individuals targeted is small.</p>



	<p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>The main weakness of the intervention is the lack of available evaluation – which renders the results of this initiative unclear.</p>
<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>This measure aims to address an important cause of unemployment and social exclusion, namely low skills and educational levels. It is based on the promising rationale that young people who did not benefit sufficiently from formal education can be successful if they are engaged and motivated to participate actively in an applied learning environment. However, the extent to which this measure reached its aim is unknown.</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as 'good practice' example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main “success factors” of this intervention.</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>The measure’s potential for replicability is unknown due to lack of evidence of its effectiveness.</p>

## Diffusion of EU youth employment initiatives

Since Malta joined the EU, through the open method of coordination, subsequent governments have carried out policies to improve various aspects of education and the labour market in line with EU targets.

EU initiatives play a vital role in the implementation of youth labour market inclusion in Malta. The amount of funds used, the range of initiatives taken and the number of young persons reached are all substantial. Indeed, the majority of youth labour market inclusion initiatives in Malta are co-financed by the EU. Some initiatives target solely youth, while others have a wider catchment of participants, including young persons.

For example, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCSAST) which is the main vocational education and training institution in Malta has received substantial funds from ESF and from the Lifelong Learning Programme to reform its operations and upgrade its courses (Cedefop, 2015), mainly for the benefit of young persons. Tens of millions of Euros have been spent during the 2007-2013 period to develop and improve the quality of VET in economic areas required by the country (such as ICT, aviation



maintenance etc), to make its courses more conducive to the progression of vulnerable students to higher levels of education and towards lifelong learning for everyone (Cedefop, 2015).

ESF funds have been used by the Malta Qualifications Councils to accredit quality vocational training and to create the infrastructure for the design of occupational standards of skills in different sectors. The government, especially through the Ministry for Education and Employment has been using substantial ESF funds for scholarship initiatives at various levels of ability, from first degree to post-doctoral studies.

Jobsplus, Malta's public employment services, has also made use of considerable ESF funds for initiatives which have a wide target audience including young persons, such as training initiatives, the promotion of more women in the labour market, and the facilitation of the employment of persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged categories.

It is worthwhile highlighting the ESF co-funded Youth Employment Programme (2008-2013) which was "intended to increase the employability and labour market integration of young people, particularly early school-leavers, who benefited from further training as well as greater knowledge of their rights and responsibilities at work" (Government of Malta, n.d.a). Currently, the Youth Guarantee Programme, managed by the Ministry for Education and Employment, is the flagship initiative assisting the youth labour market inclusion in Malta. The programme, which started in 2013 and will continue until 2020, has four different initiatives, supporting young people (of less than 25 years) with training, job exposure and personalised assistance. The momentum brought about by the Youth Guarantee has helped recent governments to focus more on the problem of early school leavers in Malta. Young persons have also benefitted from other initiatives supported through ESF and offered by other institutions such as the Ministry for Gozo, the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association (MHRA) and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS) (Government of Malta, 2017b).

Malta is not eligible for funding from the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) which is only granted to regions experiencing high youth unemployment rates (Ministry for Education and Employment, 2015b).



## Consistency of the policies for youth inclusion

Youth employment policies are intrinsically related to other components of social policy in Malta. Policies attempting to increase and improve youth employment are often directed at education and training, even at the level of compulsory schooling. Thus educational policies and employment policies are intertwined. Besides, youth employment policies are portrayed by government as a means of reducing government aid relating to unemployment and inactivity.

A case in point is the “Free childcare scheme” that I focused on in Table 6. I chose this measure as it is probably the main government measure meant to increase mothers’ employment in Malta, while it is both an employment measure and a social policy measure. Considerable funds are being allocated for this measure.

I also chose the measure “Embark for Life – Labour market integration of social excluded youth (E4L)” as it has been evaluated and the results of the evaluation are public. In Malta, this is often not the case. Besides, the measure is an example of good practice, especially due to the fact that it involved the cooperation of several stakeholders (both employment and non-employment oriented) which again, is something not very common in Malta.

*Table 6 A brief overview of selected youth employment interventions related to components of social policies*

No	Name	Level	Main target group	Starting year; end year	Funding source	Part of EU initiatives	Evaluation	Impact of the policy measures	Trends in the way selected policy measures influence unemployed young people
1	Embark for Life – Labour market integration of social excluded youth (E4L)	National	D. Targeted to youth risk group	2009-2013	EU Co-Funded	European Social Fund	Yes, positive	Employment impact in quantitative terms is rather small.	Not applicable
2	Free Childcare Scheme	National	C. Targeted risk group	2014-ongoing	National funds	Not applicable	Yes, mixed results	The employment impact appears to be substantial (despite the deadweight of the measure)	More inactive young women are in employment



### Detailed description and evaluation of the selected measures

Name of the initiative	<b>Embark for Life – Labour market integration of social excluded youth (E4L)</b>
Short description	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b></p> <p>To empower socially excluded youth to participate in educational programmes and/or find employment, so that they would be able to live as independently as possible within their community and improve their standard of living (Foundation for Social Welfare Services, FSWS, n.d.)</p> <p><b>Intended effects:</b></p> <p>The initiative aimed to integrate 240 socially excluded young persons in the labour market through three approaches: bring structure and stability into the lives of young people at risk; help them become productive and independent by being actively involved in education and/or employment; and prevent their exploitation by the surrounding black market economy (The MyWay Project, 2015).</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b></p> <p>16-24 year olds who for various reasons and life situations, face difficulties in finding or keeping employment.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within the target age group of 16-24 years old;</li> <li>- homeless, at the risk of becoming homeless or living in an inappropriate housing arrangement;</li> <li>- referred by a caring institution or youth agency; and</li> <li>- committed and willing to find and keep suitable employment. (FSWS, 2013)</li> </ul> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b></p> <p>Training and employment advice plus adequate living arrangements</p> <p>This project addressed the needs of young people at risk of social exclusion through various forms of support, based on the participant's needs. Training was offered in areas such as: communication, life skills, budgeting and monetary skills, health and safety at the workplace, and networking to find a job. Further training available was given on CV and application writing skills, searching for the right job, adaptation to the workplace, and teamwork. Participants were also assisted to find adequate living arrangements.</p> <p><b>Level:</b></p> <p>National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b></p> <p>2009-2013</p>



	<p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b></p> <p>Yes. The project was formulated within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services within the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity through cooperation with youth entities and organisations with youth at risk of social exclusion. Different stakeholders played a role in the implementation of this measure. 27 different entities working with youths at risk referred young people to this initiative. Aġenzija Appoġġ (the national agency for psycho-social welfare services) and Aġenzija Sedqa (the national agency focusing on drugs and alcohol abuse, compulsive gambling and other dependencies) offered their support in the implementation of care plans for the participants. Jobsplus (then called Employment and Training Corporation, ETC, Malta’s public employment services) provided guidance on issues such as matching market needs with the abilities of the participants, and provided the necessary training design and delivery. On the other hand, the Housing Authority was responsible for the coordination of the rent subsidiary scheme and assisted participants who could benefit from mainstream Housing Authority schemes. Close collaboration with the Youth Agency (Aġenzja Zagħzagħ) aimed to ensure that such partnerships continue beyond the lifespan of the ESF project (FSWS, n.d.).</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b></p> <p>The initiative was managed by the Foundation for Social Welfare Services within the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity.</p> <p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b></p> <p>EUR576,827 (ESF co-funded) (Government of Malta, 2017b)</p>
<p>Achieved results</p>	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b></p> <p>386 young persons were reached by this initiative and over a third of these (132) found and maintained a job or moved on to further training up to 6 months after having received support from the initiative (FSWS, 2013).</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis.</b></p> <p>Unknown</p> <p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available.</b></p> <p>EUR 576,827 for 386 participants = EUR 1,494 per participant</p>
<p>Targeting</p>	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b></p>



	<p>16-24 year olds who for various reasons and life situations, face difficulties in finding or keeping employment.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b></p> <p>Especially targeted to young people.</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b></p> <p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Youth involvement</p>	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way (Yes/Partly/No). Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>Not really. However, the intervention was targeted to the needs of the participants. Thus, participants chose the vocational training they wished to have, and received the career guidance assistance they required.</p>
<p>Links to EU initiatives</p>	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p> <p>85% of funds derive from ESF, under Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life (FSWS, 2013)</p>
<p>Available evaluations</p>	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p>An ex-post evaluation exists by the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (2013).</p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>Internal</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower</b></p>



	<p><b>salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>The evaluation is not detailed. It includes some staff and clients' experiences of the initiative and the following basic quantitative results: number of persons supported, number of participants in employment six months after receiving employment, number of participants gaining a qualification, the impact increase in the employment rate and the impact increase in the number of adult participants in lifelong learning. This data is categorised according to year.</p>
<p>Summary of evaluation results</p>	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>The organisers of the initiative stated that it has surpassed the projected targets, by reaching a total of 386 young people instead of the 240 originally planned. Most importantly, 132 of these (or 34%) have found and maintained a job or moved on to further training up to 6 months after having received support from the project (FSWS, 2013).</p>
<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b></p> <p>Yes, it trained more individuals and assisted more participants to gain employment or embark in training leading to a qualification than was originally planned (see FSWS, n.d.).</p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b></p> <p>Considering that every year around 300 young persons end up as inactive after finishing compulsory schooling, the impact of this one-off measure is small.</p> <p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p> <p>There appears not to have been any problems concerning take-up. It was reported that all individuals who were referred and were eligible to benefit from the initiative were accepted, even if this meant exceeding the number of planned participants (FSWS, 2013).</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>In order to leave stronger social effects, the initiative could have been scaled up, after the initial trial run. This could have been done by investing more resources and widening the selection criteria.</p>



<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>Yes, this initiative addressed major causes for unemployment and social exclusion of the targeted young persons. The initiative focused not only on the employment aspect (as ALMP normally do), but also addressed the participants' social difficulties in relation to the provision of adequate housing. Besides, it included training that goes beyond the normal job searching skills and VET, and comprised other important topics that the participants required such as communication and networking, life skills, monetary skills and health and safety at the workplace.</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as 'good practice' example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main "success factors" of this intervention.</b></p> <p>A major success factor was the holistic approach through which participants were assisted. This could not have been possible without the collaboration of various stakeholders (as elaborated in the next answer).</p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>Despite the small size of the country, organisations in Malta tend to carry out initiatives on their own. However, the organisers of this initiative managed to unite the efforts of several stakeholders. Thus, "Aġenzija Appoġġ and Aġenzija Sedqa offered their support in the implementation of care plans for the project participants. The role of ETC was to provide guidance on issues such as matching market needs with the abilities of the participants, and provide the necessary training design and delivery. On the other hand, the Housing Authority was responsible for the coordination of the rent subsidiary scheme and assisted participants who could benefit from mainstream Housing Authority schemes. The organisers also enlisted the help of 27 different entities working with youths at risk in order to refer young people to this initiative.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>

<p>Name of the initiative</p>	<p><b>Free Childcare Scheme</b></p>
<p>Short description</p>	<p><b>(Primary/Main) aim of the measure:</b></p> <p>To increase female employment.</p> <p><b>Intended effects:</b></p>



	<p>By providing free childcare, the option of joining the labour market would become more attractive to women with young children, thus increasing their employment rate.</p> <p><b>Target groups:</b> Parents in employment or in education with young children.</p> <p><b>Eligibility criteria for beneficiaries:</b> Children between 3 months and 3 years old whose parents/guardians are either both employed or in education can benefit from the free childcare scheme. In the case of a single parent/guardian, the latter must be employed and paying social security contributions. When parents/guardians are in education, they need to be pursuing a course leading to a recognised qualification.</p> <p><b>Type of intervention (which type of ALMP &amp; which elements of social policy):</b> Free childcare Free childcare is offered for parents who are in education or employment and who have children between the ages of three months and three years. These parents may send their children to childcare providers that have entered into a public-private partnership with government.</p> <p><b>Level:</b> National</p> <p><b>Start/ end date:</b> April 2014 - ongoing</p> <p><b>Are stakeholders involved in the formulation/implementation of this measure?</b> Yes, the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) collaborates with over 100 public and privately owned childcare centres in the implementation of this measure.</p> <p><b>How/through which institutions is this measure implemented?</b> Ministry for Education and Employment</p> <p><b>Budget (EUR, thousand) and source:</b> Original budget for April-December 2014 = EUR3,800,000. Amount paid: EUR5,316,778 Original budget for January-December 2015 = EUR8,000,000. Amount paid: EUR11,152,442 Original budget for January-December 2016 = EUR11,000,000. Amount paid not yet available. (National Audit Office, 2016)</p>
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<p>Achieved results</p>	<p><b>Number of young people covered (entire running period) (data on number of people <u>who are entitled</u> and <u>who actually take part</u>)/ number of young people who have found a job.</b></p> <p>According to the National Statistics Office (2017) about a third of babies are born to parents who are 29 years old or younger. 9,734 children benefitted from this programme until December 2016 (NRP 2017). Thus it is estimated that about 3,300 young women benefitted from this initiative by the end of 2016. However, it is unknown how many of these women would have been in employment without the implementation of the measure.</p> <p><b>Total expenditures for the program on annual basis.</b></p> <p>The expenditure for April-December 2014 was: EUR5,316,778  The expenditure for January-December 2015 was: EUR11,152,442  The expenditure for January-December 2016 is not known but the author estimates that it will be over EUR11,000,000.</p> <p><b>Total expenditure per beneficiary? If not available, other expenditure data what is available.</b></p> <p>The author estimates that the expenditure from the beginning of the initiative till the end of 2016 is about EUR3,000 per child (or per mother).</p>
<p>Targeting</p>	<p><b>Which are the target groups of this measure?</b></p> <p>Parents in employment or in education with young children.</p> <p><b>Is this program especially targeted to young people or to all unemployed?</b></p> <p>The program is not especially targeted to young people, but about a third of the users are probably young people.</p> <p><b>If it is targeted to all unemployed, does it include special focus to young people (for example, by providing more incentives if young unemployed are targeted)?</b></p> <p>No</p>
<p>Youth involvement</p>	<p><b>Are there specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way (Yes/Partly/No). Please describe if Yes/Partly</b></p> <p>No</p>
<p>Links to EU initiatives</p>	<p><b>Is the program linked to an EU initiative (like Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, Framework for Quality traineeships and apprenticeship; EURES Job; Support to youth entrepreneurship). If yes, to which one?</b></p>



	None in particular. It is linked to Malta's target of increasing the number of women in the labour market.
Available evaluations	<p><b>Are there evaluations on this program available? (Add Sources)? If yes, are the evaluations: ex-ante; mid-term, ex-post and/or permanent monitoring?</b></p> <p>Yes, the following evaluations exist which may be considered as mid-term, as they were carried out while the program was ongoing:</p> <p>Borg, A. (2015). <i>Free Childcare – A fix to the family and paid work conflict?</i> Mutual Learning Programme DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility. Available at: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14011&amp;langId=en">ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14011&amp;langId=en</a></p> <p>Government of Malta. (2017d). <i>Malta midterm self-assessment report - National action plan 2015-2017</i>. Available at: <a href="https://www.opengovpartnership.org">https://www.opengovpartnership.org</a></p> <p>National Audit Office. (2016). <i>Report by the auditor general – Public accounts 2015</i>. Available at: <a href="http://nao.gov.mt/loadfile/5cb54848-af90-41db-9fcc-1c861acd8e58">http://nao.gov.mt/loadfile/5cb54848-af90-41db-9fcc-1c861acd8e58</a></p> <p>Other opinions about the measure were found, but they cannot be viewed as proper evaluations.</p> <p><b>Are they internal (by the agency implementing it) or external (e.g. by scientific institutes)?</b></p> <p>Both. The evaluations by Borg (2015) and the National Audit Office (2016) are external, while that of the Government of Malta (2017d) is internal.</p> <p><b>If evaluations of this program are available how detailed is the information provided (please, consider, do they include only basic information or more information, including evaluation of deadweight loss (hiring to subsidized jobs of individuals who would have found regular employment nevertheless); substitution effect (original regular workers possibly better paid and qualified are displaced with participants in the intervention possibly with lower salaries); displacement effect (rises in public sector spending drive down or even eliminate private sector spending)?</b></p> <p>Most of the evaluations are not detailed. They do not tackle aspects such as deadweight loss, substitution effect or displacement effect. The only detailed evaluation is the one carried out by the National Audit Office (2016), which focuses on issues relating to procedural aspects, rather than on the overall effectiveness of the intervention.</p>



<p>Summary of evaluation results</p>	<p><b>Please summarise the main results of evaluations. If there are many evaluations about the same measure, please indicate the results of these separately together with the source.</b></p> <p>The following are some main points resulting from different evaluations carried out:</p> <p>An early evaluation carried out in 2015 by Dr Anna Borg, an independent expert working at the University of Malta, listed several important flaws in the measure, including the following: the system is failing to target disadvantaged households (in which parents don't work); the quality of childcare is being under pressure due to the high demand; childcare centres are not evenly spread across Malta; the opening hours are not consistent and may be incompatible with the typical working patterns of parents; and the working conditions of child carers are allegedly bad. More recently Borg stated that despite the measure, women are still pushed to choose between a job and motherhood as the free childcare measure is only effective short-term, since when children start going to school, the problem of who is to care for children resurfaces, as most schools close their doors early in the afternoon (Caruana, 2017). Borg also questioned the positive effect that this measure had on the overall increase of female employment, which in 2015 and 2016 was lower than in the previous years (Balzan, 2017)</p> <p>An audit carried out by the National Audit Office (2016, p.100) "revealed lack of control exercised by the Ministry for Education and Employment over the service providers. The implementation of a fully automated attendance recording system beginning 2016 only translated into a new set of risks, which still resulted in significant undue payments". According to the report, the end result is that childcare providers abused the system in a substantial and varied ways. For instance, a centre with a set capacity of 15 children was accommodating 87. Besides, over a period of four month, 60 centres were paid around EUR90,000 for booked hours for which children failed to attend.</p> <p>On the other hand, according to an evaluation carried out by the government (2017d, p.5) "results showed an evident upward trend in the number of mothers who returned to employment within the same year of giving birth. In 2015, a spike was observed in the number of mothers joining the labour market within the same year of giving birth. This kink is a clear indication of a behavioural response motivated by the provision of free childcare. Although it may be premature to draw conclusions, the introduction of free childcare seems to be effective in facilitating a more rapid return to the labour market for mothers within the first three years of birth of the child. Such results were further confirmed as the number of mothers returning to employment within 2</p>
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	<p>years of giving birth as a percentage of the total number of mothers who gave birth during those 2 year period and had not been employed, also increased in 2014.”</p> <p>According to the Malta Employers’ Association (2017, p.13), “The measure to introduce free child care has yielded positive results in terms of an increase in female participation. The service can be improved by considering the needs of an increasing number of families who are on shift work. These can be accommodated through an expansion of the hours during which child care is available, and through the setting up of more child care centres around Malta and Gozo.”</p>
<p>In your view: How would you assess the quality of the intervention?</p>	<p><b>Does this program achieve its stated goals and intended effects?</b></p> <p>I believe that despite the criticisms, the program is achieving its stated goals. It is contributing to increase the number of mothers in employment – as evidenced by the fact that the number of children in childcare centres has doubled from around 1,800 to 3,600 in the early part of 2016 (Eurofound, 2016). This view appears to be shared by important stakeholders including social partners (e.g. Malta Employers Association, 2017).</p> <p><b>Assessment of the magnitude of the effect?</b></p> <p>The precise magnitude of the effect is difficult to assess, since raw data is open to different interpretations. However, the general feeling in Malta is that the measure is a very important one – probably the most important measure to increase female employment carried out by the Labour government since it was elected in 2013. The measure has given mothers with young children a stronger incentive to return to work, and apart from improving the economic situation of families, it has also enabled more mothers to increase their personal fulfilment by using their work-related skills.</p> <p><b>Coverage and take-up: are there problems concerning coverage? Possible barriers for participation (lack of information, complexity of system, conditionality, degree of attractiveness for young people, etc.)?</b></p> <p>A number of criticisms regarding coverage have been pointed out. The program has been criticised for not covering the women in the most vulnerable families, where parents are not in employment or education. It has also been criticised for being too rigid and not assisting families in which parents work non-office hours. The program has also been criticised for not covering sufficiently the islands of Malta and Gozo. In 2017, the government stated that it does not intend to offer the programme to families with unemployed parents (see answer below),</p>



	<p>but it also promised that it would increase the flexibility of the system, offering a night childcare service, and extending the service to other localities especially those of high commercial activity (Pace, 2017).</p> <p><b>In your opinion which are the main weaknesses of this intervention in terms of: adequacy; coverage; take-up; effectiveness of this intervention?</b></p> <p>I agree with the government that if free childcare is offered to the unemployed parents and parents not in education, it runs the risk of closing the important gap that was created between the benefit of staying at home and the benefit of going to work, thus creating a poverty trap. On the other hand, as this measure is offered to all parents in employment or education, it inevitably carries with it a heavy deadweight, as before the introduction of the measure, many mothers (around 1,800) were already paying to use childcare facilities. Thus, the government might wish to consider some form of means testing for the beneficiaries of the system in order to reduce the deadweight.</p>
<p>Related to the causes of unemployment and target risk groups</p>	<p><b>Does this measure address the main causes for unemployment and social exclusion of young people and target the risk groups among young people? Explain how or, instead, why not?</b></p> <p>The measure addresses a major cause for the inactivity of mothers (including young mothers), namely that of remaining at home to care for their children, by making it more economically attractive for them to find employment and leave their children at childcare centres.</p>
<p>Interventions assessed as 'good practice' example</p>	<p><b>Explain shortly which the reasons are and what are the main "success factors" of this intervention.</b></p> <p>This measure tackles the major issue of childcare that was holding many mothers from returning to work. It is contributing to change Maltese culture, making it more acceptable for mothers to leave children with child carers and go to work. The substantial funds invested by government are contributing to the measure's success.</p> <p><b>Give a reason why you value it as a good practice?</b></p> <p>By widening the gap in benefits between mothers who go to work and those who stay at home, the measure has made work pay more.</p> <p><b>Or alternatively, what do you see as main reasons hindering the potential for replication in other contexts?</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>



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