

Health and Structural funds in 2007-2013: country and regional assessment

COUNTRY ASSESSMENT FOR HEALTH & STRUCTURAL FUNDS

MALTA (MT)

Table 1: Country assessment summary - Malta

NSRF strategic objectives	Funding source	Direct health sector investment	Indirect health sector investment	Potential health gain	Lisbon Agenda (renewed 2005)
				Personal Economic Social Environmental	
Sustaining a growing, knowledge-based competitive economy	ERDF/CF	-	X	E, S	To create a more attractive investment and working environment; To enhance growth through knowledge and innovation; To create more and better jobs.
Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life	ERDF/CF	X	X	Env, P, E, S	
Investing in human capital	ESF	-	X	S, P, E	
Addressing Gozo's regional distinctiveness	ERDF/CF/ESF	-	X	E, S, Env	

Table 2: Eligible regions under Cohesion Policy Objectives

Cohesion Policy Objective	Regions
Convergence	Malta
Phasing out	N/A
Phasing in	N/A
Regional competitiveness and employment	N/A

Table 2: Eligible regions under Cohesion Policy Objectives

Background: Malta has a population of approximately 402,727 (2005). Of these, 0-14 years: 16.7%; 15-64 years: 69.5%; 65 years and over: 13.8% (*Source: Index Mundi, 2007 estimate*). Life expectancy is 79.15 years for the total population: men 76.95 years; women 81.47 years. In 2003 the first health lifestyle survey was conducted. Among its main findings were that youngsters aged between 18 to 24 rate their health as being significantly better when compared to elderly persons aged 65 years or more. It was estimated that around 78,800 persons (26.9%), suffer from a long-term health problem and/or disability generally related to a person's age. 98.7% of people between 18 - 24 years do not suffer from a long-term health problem or disability, compared with 40.8% of people aged 65 years or over (*Source: National Statistics Office. Lifestyle Survey 2003*). Overall, the standardized mortality rate in Malta is decreasing and compares well with EU-15 (old member states) and EU-12 (new member states). Deaths due to diseases of the circulatory system (ischaemic heart disease, stroke and heart failure) are the leading causes of death accounting for 44% of all deaths. The standardized mortality rate for diseases of the circulatory system in Malta is lower than that of the new EU member states but higher than that of the old EU member states. Neoplasms are the next commonest cause of death accounting for 23% of all deaths (*Source: National Mortality Registry, Department of Health Information. Annual Mortality Report 2005*).

Health and Structural funds in 2007-2013: country and regional assessment

Table 2: Eligible regions under Cohesion Policy Objectives

Health care is mainly provided through public hospitals and primary health care centres. Continuous investment to modernize the health system, in terms of infrastructure, service facilities and training requirements, will remain an important cornerstone in the generation of a healthy population and therefore also a healthy labour force. Demographic changes are already a key challenge for the provision of health care services. Increased demand for health services as a result of the ageing population is already the leading cause of overcrowding of hospital facilities, waiting lists for acute services and also for rehabilitation and long-term care. That said, public health services are considered to be highly cost effective and provide considerable value for money. It is estimated that around 7.44% of GDP is spent on health care in the public sector. Total health expenditure (including expenditure in the private sector) amounts to 9.3% of GDP and public expenditure in education, health and social policy exceeds 60% of total public recurrent expenditure (*Source: National Strategic Reference Framework - Malta 2007-2013*).

Table 3: Programme period 2007-2013 - health investment in the NSRF and OPs

Allocation of money in the SF 2007-2013

Source and budget	ERDF €443 978 031; ESF €112 000 000; CF €284 145 020
Total	€840 123 051
Health sector % of total allocated SF	€28 900 000 million (approximately 3.4%)

NSRF strategic objectives (with OP relevance and funding source)

1. Sustaining a growing, knowledge-based competitive economy (OP 1 - ERDF/CF)
2. Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life (OP 1 - ERDF/CF)
3. Investing in human capital (OP 2 - ESF)
4. Addressing Gozo's regional distinctiveness (OP 1 OP 2 - ERDF/CF/ESF)

Operational Programmes

1. Investing in competitiveness for a better quality of life. (OP 1)
2. Empowering people for more jobs and a better quality of life (OP 2)

Direct health sector investment (with NSRF/OP relevance)

Health infrastructure

The major expenditure under this sector is expected to be incurred on the relocation of Oncology and Dermatology Departments to other premises which will offer enhanced facilities to patients (NSRF Strategic objective 2 "Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life"; and OP 1).

E-Health

A priority in investment to promote the e-society will be the improvement of the national health services through a holistic information system that will be deployed and various other initiatives to be implemented as part of the national e-Health strategy (NSRF Strategic objective 2 "Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life"; and OP 1).

Indirect health sector investment (with NSRF/OP relevance)

The issue of occupational health is a matter that requires further investment – both at the public information level and also at the micro level of the enterprise (NSRF Strategic objective 2 "Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life"; and OP 1).

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Table 3: Programme period 2007-2013 -health investment in the NSRF and OPs

Evidence of capacity to deliver intersectoral policy and planning

In terms of maximising health gain from Structural Funds capacity building is an approach to the development of sustainable skills, organisational structures, resources and commitment to health improvement in health and other sectors. In terms of resources allocation, there is commitment to make full use of funding possibilities available under the different Community Programmes and Initiatives. To meet this objective, a meeting between the Managing Authority and other public entities responsible for coordination & management of the main Community Programmes/ Initiatives related to Cohesion Policy (e.g. FP7, CIP, Education Programmes and Environment Initiatives) will be held at least once a year to ensure coherence & coordination between programmes and initiatives (NSRF Chapter 7). Through Public Service Reform, additional efforts will be made to streamline management processes with a view to facilitating more rapid-decision making and implementation and more accountability. Perhaps critically, the Government recognises the need to increase the capacity building of social partners and civil society in terms of SF management. Specifically, taking a pro-active approach in ensuring wider participation in SF Initiatives. Meetings were held with NGOs to find ways of facilitating the participation of NGO in projects co-funded by the SFs. A number of issues are being discussed which will allow NGOs and civil society in general to operate on a more level playing field, including the finalisation of the NGO legislation, the availability of pre-financing to NGOs and the launch of a separate call for project proposals with specific themes and criteria. Furthermore, the aim is also to provide technical assistance to NGOs for capacity-building and for the implementation of projects within the sector (NSRF Chapter 8).

Regional planning and implementation (From OPs)

Malta is treated as a single regional entity. Of key benefit for health gain is that the NSRF dovetails with the National Sustainable Development strategy. It envisages interventions that have the aim of making Malta an attractive location for foreign and indigenous investment as well as improving the quality of life of Maltese citizens. This will be achieved through actions aimed to improve the transport infrastructure, undertake investment to achieve a sustainable environment, invest in risk prevention, promote energy efficiency and diffusion of RES, as well as, improve accessibility measures, undertake urban regeneration and undertake investment in health care. The NSRF is also responsive to the actions proposed in the SD objective of fostering sustainable communities through interventions focusing on education and employment, social inclusion and institution-building issues.

Table 4: Non-health sector investment with potential health gain 2007-2013

Strategic objective (and OP)	Relevant investments	Potential health gain
Sustaining a growing, knowledge-based competitive economy (OP 1)	Supporting enterprise: Particular emphasis will be given to sub-contracting and linkages between large and small enterprises and the need to bolster the support to enterprises to enhance their knowledge transfer base, particularly through their liaisons with academic and industrial-driven research. Emphasis will be given on the transfer and nurturing of new technologies, possibly from other EU countries to local SMEs.	Economic, social

Health and Structural funds in 2007-2013: country and regional assessment

**Table 4: Non-health sector investment with potential health gain
2007-2013**

<p>Improving Malta's attractiveness and the quality of life (OP 1)</p>	<p>Improving and expanding the transport infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the European Union objective for road safety, the Government aims to halve the number of injury accidents by 50.0 per cent by 2010. In order to reduce road accidents resulting from poor road infrastructure design or condition (particularly at accident black-spots), an upgrade is required in the road geometry, surface and signage. • The strategic three-pronged approach of removing traffic bottlenecks, improving road safety whilst simultaneously promoting modal shift in personal mobility away from the private car shall result in healthier travel in the Maltese Islands. Reduction in traffic congestion shall result in better vehicle exhaust emission control and the improvement in the road surface is expected to dramatically reduce the noise generated from vehicular traffic. <p>Environment and risk protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malta's strategic environmental direction is oriented towards enhancing the state of the environment, managing waste, minimizing sources of pollution, improving the quality of water, protecting biodiversity, rehabilitation and conservation of the country's cultural and natural assets as well as increasing the public's awareness of environmental issues. <p>Urban regeneration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to UR is based on five integrated basic concepts: the right to mobility; urban mobility and urban design; permeability of the urban hub; the eco-friendly city – reducing congestion and pollution and public transport for more sustainable urban development and an enhanced quality of life. The regeneration measures will result in revamped commercial, residential and service oriented assets. This 'new mixed' and adaptive policy is also geared at social inclusion spurring social regeneration through the availability of new housing stock. 	<p>Environmental, personal, economic, social</p>
<p>Investing in human capital (OP 2)</p>	<p>Social inclusion:</p> <p>A knowledge based economy will benefit not only those in the mainstream labour markets but also those in the disadvantaged communities and groups at risk of poverty (including the long-term unemployed, persons with mental health difficulties, disabled persons, lone parents, early school leavers, and migrants) to access education and training and sustainable employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Social, personal, economic</p>
<p>Addressing Gozo's regional distinctiveness (OP 1 and 2)</p>	<p>Enterprise promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for infrastructural investment in those sectors that can contribute to the creation of sustainable job opportunities, such as educational/vocational infrastructures, ICT and tourism facilities. In particular, ICT can be effectively used to mitigate the negative impacts of double insularity on enterprise development and employment opportunities for the Gozitans in general. <p>Human capital and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to increase labour market participation rates, particularly female participation; improve the employability of the unemployed; reduce labour market frictions; and encourage the unemployed particularly those with entrepreneurial potential to engage in entrepreneurial activity. 	<p>Social, economic</p>