



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT,
ENERGY AND ENTERPRISE

Malta's

Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050



Malta's Sustainable Development
Strategy for 2050

DECEMBER 2022





Foreword

Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 is an ambitious plan that affirms the Maltese Government's commitment to advance sustainable development in every sector at all levels. Following the direction set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Strategy will seek to stimulate and mainstream actions across all workings of Government and ascertain that the ambition laid out by the United Nations, together with Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050, is realised in the most consistent and efficient manner possible.

Through this Strategy, the Maltese Government will be focusing its efforts towards ensuring that social cohesion, the protection of the environment, and economic growth move forward in a coherent and mutually beneficial way. It is only by reinforcing and advancing these three pillars together that sustainability can truly be achieved. Therefore, it is crucial that every sector and actor is actively involved throughout the entire process to transform the Maltese Islands into a country that is able to meet current and future needs and one that is capable of successfully overcoming any emerging challenges and threats.

The Strategy focuses on identifying existing gaps and provides guidelines and targets to effectively address them. In this regard, the Maltese Government will keep on working and strengthening its efforts to develop a greener and more inclusive economy,

while incentivising the reallocation of public and private investment to sectors that mostly require it and to those fields that can further contribute towards a more socially and environmentally sustainable economy and future, such as research, development, and innovation. Additionally, the transformation of key areas, including the green, blue, and digital economy; urban development and cultural heritage; transport; health; and education and employment, is required for securing a future that has people, the planet, and prosperity at heart.

Particular attention is being given not only to the local, but also to the international context, especially in light of environmental concerns and global phenomena such as poverty, conflict, terrorism, irregular migration, and climate change. The Maltese Government will therefore continue working closely with other international partners and provide the necessary development assistance to positively transform our world.

Our task now is to work together to achieve the targets laid out in the Strategy. Sustainable development is everyone's responsibility, and it is in every country, sector, and individual's best interests for it to be at the very core of our way of life. This Strategy will therefore serve as the path which the Maltese Government, the private sector and all civil society need to follow to secure a resilient and sustainable Maltese Islands for all.

Dr Miriam Dalli

The Hon. Minister for the Environment, Energy and Enterprise

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Introduction

The principles of sustainable development are wide and overarching, and incorporate all the elements that make up our environment, economy, and society as a whole. Achieving economic growth and developing a healthy and cohesive society while safeguarding the environment is, however, no easy task and requires a strong concerted commitment from everyone. We all therefore need to work together to integrate these three pillars in our daily lives and ensure that they are at the heart of the governance, management, and operations of Malta's public, private and civil society sectors.

Global realities such as climate change, global pandemics, poverty, migration, terrorism, and armed conflict are leading to environmental and socio-economic turmoil all over the globe, the repercussions of which are also being felt in Malta. Furthermore, being a small island state with an ever-growing population and a very limited pool of natural resources, the country's environment, society, and economy are constantly under threat. Nevertheless, sustainable development provides an opportunity to tackle these challenges holistically and collectively, to improve the quality of life of citizens while addressing threats to our planet.

In so doing, Malta will be promoting the shift to a green and blue economy, and an inclusive society, through the introduction of relevant measures, initiatives, incentives, and schemes, and by supporting and fostering the research and innovation sectors and the uptake of digital and innovative technologies.

Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 provides an overarching strategic framework and direction through which Malta can contribute to positive transformative change both within and beyond its borders. By 2050, Malta will seek to establish a climate whereby its values and priorities complement the core principles of sustainability and allow its economy to grow and its society and environment to flourish and prosper. The Strategy will enable Government to strengthen and develop mechanisms for cross-sectoral policy integration, while introducing measures and initiatives that reflect the current and future needs. It also aims to empower all members of society to actively contribute to the overall well-being of the Maltese Islands.

This Strategy focuses on five strategic goals, divided into a number of strategic objectives, which are considered the most significant for, and pertinent to, Malta based on the previous published Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050 as well as various sectoral consultations with key stakeholders. Each objective highlights the challenges and needs of that particular thematic area and presents a list of actions and targets that will help us to reach our aims.



The priorities that need to be addressed include transitioning towards a climate-neutral green and blue economy; preserving sustainable urban development and cultural heritage; ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all; accelerating digital transformation, smart mobility and connectivity; and achieving social fairness and prosperity for all.

This Strategy builds on existing initiatives implemented by the Government of Malta focusing on building strong and resilient communities and safeguarding the environment. It also seeks to strengthen current institutional mechanisms and support structures while paving the way for the introduction and implementation of new policies and processes that will further enable the country to reach its goals in a more effective, efficient, and coherent way.

Sustainable development is a call to action by all, and it is only by establishing strong collaborations among all actors and stakeholders, including international cooperation, that we can shape our future to one that is truly sustainable and meet the current and needs. Malta will therefore, continue to work with a multitude of partners in setting up the right conditions required to transform challenges into opportunities and inspire behavioural and cultural change that places the values of sustainable development at its very core.

From Vision to Strategy

Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 is an ambitious forward-looking document that establishes a long-term strategic direction for the advancement and implementation of sustainable development principles in Malta.

This Strategy was developed following months of consultations held with all Government Ministries and Entities as well other key stakeholders including private and civil society actors.

The Strategy is built upon Malta's Sustainable Development Vision 2050, which was published in 2018. The Vision, which is aligned with the United Nations Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, set up the long-term aspirations and priorities

for mainstreaming sustainable development, and served as the main guiding principle for the promotion of a long-term sustainable development strategy for Malta. It is structured and designed on a number of key normative governance principles intended to steer sustainable development forward and foster a sound and solid foundation on which sustainable development actions can be mainstreamed across all economic sectors and strata of Maltese society.

The Strategy follows the Vision's ambition of working together towards achieving a healthy and resilient environment, economy, and society for all, while bestowing upon future generations a country which is in better shape than the one we inherited.

Strategic Goals



Areas of development until 2050 on which we need to work to realise Vision 2050.

Strategic Objectives



Milestones which we need to reach to implement the Strategic Goals.

Targets



Measurements that show progress in achieving the Strategic Goals.

Malta's Sustainable Development Strategic Goals and Objectives

This document lays down Malta's strategic orientation for steering sustainable development by setting out five strategic goals while defining strategic objectives that outline how to effectively achieve the ultimate aim of this Strategy by 2050. Each goal is also linked to the fourteen normative governance principles defined in Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050 as well as the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The strategic goals will be monitored through a defined set of targets (Annex 1) that will be translated into concrete actions in the next phase of the Strategy i.e. Malta's Sustainable Development Action Plan for 2030.

Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 is founded on the principle that environmental protection, economic growth and social cohesion are interlinked and therefore cannot function successfully in isolation.



Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Transitioning Towards a Climate-Neutral Green and Blue Economy

Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050

- Circular consumption and production patterns
- Transition towards a low-carbon emission economy
- Transition towards low-carbon energy
- Protecting, conserving and enhancing natural capital

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Towards the Preservation of Sustainable Urban Development and Cultural Heritage

- Sustainable buildings and urban development
- Building safe and integrated communities
- Combating poverty and social exclusion

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all

Good health and well-being

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Accelerating Digital Transformation, Smart Mobility and Connectivity

Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050

- Sustainable mobility
- Transition towards a digital economy
- Creation of more high-skilled and high value-added jobs
- Increased investments in research and innovation

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



STRATEGIC GOAL 5

Achieving Social Fairness and Prosperity for All

- Creation of more high-skilled and high value-added jobs
- Combating poverty and social exclusion
- Fair and inclusive labour market
- High quality education and training
- Building safe and integrated communities







Strategic Goal 1:

Transitioning Towards a Climate-Neutral Green and Blue Economy

Malta, as a small island with limited land, freshwater, and other natural resources experiences a number of environmental challenges, particularly due to its insularity, climate, and other natural circumstances. These challenges are becoming even more apparent with the high population density and influx of tourists that, despite creating more opportunities for economic growth, are creating even more strain on the country's infrastructure, services, resources, and environment at large. Therefore, it is in the best interest of everyone that priority is given towards ensuring that such realities are addressed in a manner that is conducive to long term environmental and socio-economic well-being.

Government will continue to work towards maximising the efficiency of resource use by promoting measures that ensure sustainable production and consumption, thereby reducing the negative impacts on the climate as well as on our land and aquatic environment. Dedicated awareness-raising and educational campaigns are expected to foster a culture of positive behaviour change due to a shift in the social and cultural mindsets of people, while encouraging further investment in businesses that have environmental, social and governance principles at heart.

The Maltese Government will be working with stakeholders to ensure their contribution towards the transition to a climate-neutral Maltese Islands, whereby the principles of green economy are mainstreamed across all policy areas and operations of the public, private and civil society sectors alike. Government will make it a priority to continue to strengthen its efforts and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders to reach Malta's objectives of achieving carbon neutrality and net zero emissions as well as nurturing the principles of environmental responsibility from a young age. Furthermore, Government will continue to foster action for the conservation and sustainable use of our natural capital by strengthening existing measures and implementing new ones aimed at safeguarding our land, marine and freshwater ecosystems and their services.



Being an island state, Malta's coast plays a crucial role when it comes to securing a healthy socio-economic environment since it not only acts as the main habitat to a variety of species and ecosystems, but also is the main source of income for many people. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that all commercial and recreational activities involving the aquatic environment are managed sustainably to ensure the advancement of Malta's blue economy. By transitioning to a resource-efficient, resilient and sustainable blue economy, the maritime industry and related sectors will be sustained, while at the same time ensuring that the future health and productivity of our marine ecosystems, resources and services are safeguarded.

Government will also be introducing new policy frameworks aimed at improving the overall quality of life of our localities, communities and neighbourhoods through effective mechanisms and schemes to incentivise the proper collection, treatment, and management of waste, while encouraging and enabling businesses, households, and consumers to invest in, and opt for, sustainable production processes and products.

Malta will also continue to promote the principles of climate neutrality and sustainable development through its diplomatic relations and participation in international fora and will strengthen its efforts to improve the quality of life of citizens in foreign territories, particularly in developing countries. This will be effected through official development assistance, where they will be given the necessary means and tools to live sustainably and overcome challenges stemming from environmental disasters and climate change.



Malta will be achieving Goal 1 by:

Strategic Objective 1

Towards a Resilient and Climate-Neutral Economy

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues that the world is facing, and letting it go unchecked will have severe ramifications for the global economy and population, particularly due to the number of environmental and socio-economic threats and challenges that will escalate as a result. The effects of such a phenomenon will be felt worldwide and Malta is no exception. Therefore, mitigating and adapting to climate change in the most effective and efficient way possible is crucial in ensuring environmental and socio-economic health and well-being, and in securing a safe and resilient future for all.

A green and resilient economy is not only necessary for a healthy environment, but also for a strong and stable society where the quality of life and physical and mental well-being of citizens are respected and safeguarded. In this regard, Malta, whose economic system depends heavily on its already limited resources, is committed to achieving climate-neutral economy where circularity and sustainability are at its core.

By enhancing its bilateral and multilateral relations, becoming more actively involved in climate negotiations at the international level, and introducing various national policies, measures and initiatives aimed at reducing pollution, improving air quality, and supporting energy and water efficient practices, Malta will be working to create more resilient communities, towns and villages. Moreover, Government will also continue to encourage a shift in the behaviour of people in favour of adopting, and opting for, greener choices by investing in more research, innovation, and opportunities for learning for all ages, and through the incentivisation and promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns and the use of alternative modes of transportation.



The Maltese Government will be ensuring that the right governance frameworks, structures, and enforcement mechanisms are in place to promote a climate-neutral Malta. Evidence-based measures will therefore be adopted in consultation with key stakeholders across the public and private sectors and civil society. This will be complemented by further investment in infrastructure and technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in buildings, and by implementing spatial and urban planning policies that take into account the impact of development on the air, land and water quality.

Government will also continue to incentivise the agriculture and aquaculture sectors so that they are better able to carry out activities that are favourable to a climate-neutral, green and blue economy, while being empowered to overcome market challenges and remain competitive. This will be further complemented by strengthening and enforcing good waste management practices to ensure the consistent reduction in emissions of methane and other gases generated from waste.

Furthermore, the Government will continue working towards making the tourism industry, which is one of the major contributors to Malta's economy, more sustainable. By incentivising all the sectors directly and indirectly related to this industry to adopt procedures and technologies that reduce the carbon footprint, together with the reshaping of consumer choices, Malta will be in a better position to drive transformative change and reach its ambition of achieving climate neutrality.

Government will ensure that all the key relevant sectors are consulted and involved in the development of new measures, initiatives, and projects so that environmental considerations and assessments are integrated and adhered to in all the steps of the process. Thus, by promoting a culture of knowledge sharing, we will be enabling and empowering private and public networks to work together and explore further opportunities to achieve climate neutrality and green economic growth.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Continuing to invest in the appropriate governance frameworks to promote the transition to climate neutrality while enabling Malta to be better able to react and effectively address environmental challenges brought about by climate change.
- Mainstreaming existing and future strategies and action plans to ensure coherence when it comes to the implementation of green economic principles.
- Incentivising the public, private and civil society sectors to reduce emissions by adopting innovative low carbon and energy-efficient technologies in their daily operations, while enabling them to remain competitive.
- Continuing to provide schemes and incentives for the greening of our buildings and development projects to minimise their impact on the environment and promote clean and sustainable towns and villages.
- Incentivising the use of electric vehicles and alternative modes of transport by strengthening existing measures and implementing new ones that address the electrification of public and privately owned vehicles while offering opportunities for people to opt for affordable and accessible alternative transport means.
- Strengthening mechanisms to ensure that permitting processes take into consideration the impact on our environment and give priority to projects that promote the use of renewable energy and are climate-neutral.
- Enforcing the proper waste management measures to ensure the reduction of emissions emanating from this sector.
- Adopting new financial instruments, while encouraging further environmental auditing, that promote environmental, social and governance principles and attract local and foreign investment in eco-friendly measures and technologies to facilitate the transition to a climate-neutral, green and blue economy.
- Driving transformative change through more investment in research and innovation in the area of climate action in order to come up with effective solutions in promoting climate neutrality and combatting climate change in all sectors.
- Strengthening educational programmes and offering more training, while carrying out campaigns to raise awareness on the importance and benefits of achieving climate neutrality and encourage people of all ages to opt for a lifestyle that does not harm our natural environment.
- Strengthening stakeholders' engagement in decision-making, while strengthening cooperation with international partners and institutions to streamline and spearhead efforts towards a green transition of our economy and society and promote further the adoption of renewable sources of energy and net zero principles.
- Supporting international efforts to combat climate change and halt and reverse environmental degradation through the strengthening of transboundary collaboration and the provision of financial aid for climate and biodiversity action.¹
- Directing more official development assistance towards those countries affected by environmental disasters caused by climate change so that they can undergo a sustainable recovery and grow their capacity to build resilience to future crises.

¹Malta's Foreign Policy Strategy

<https://foreign.gov.mt/en/Government/Documents/Ministry%20for%20Foreign%20Affairs%20-%20Foreign%20Policy%20Strategy.pdf>

Strategic Objective 2

Responsible and Efficient Use of Resources which Safeguards Environmental and Socio-Economic Well-Being

Municipal solid waste generation and management are critical issues particularly for small island states. The introduction of appropriate policies as well as capacity building measures aimed at encouraging waste prevention, recycling, reuse, and recovery are important to ease the burden on landfills, conserve natural resources, and save energy.

Addressing municipal solid waste generation and carrying out efforts to improve waste prevention are strategic objectives which will be strengthened through actions on sustainable production and changing consumer behaviour. The Maltese Government will invest in the uptake of the best available technologies that recover waste and improve the efficiency of raw materials and natural resource use across the local product chain, while at the same time consider the principle of the extended producer responsibility. Such actions will lead to more effective and sustainable resource use, in line with the circular economy principles.

Government will therefore strive for a circular economy that works for both producers and consumers. Research and innovation can also be useful tools to bring about the change required in establishing more sustainable production processes and reducing externalities.

In so doing, the Maltese Government will therefore continue to support and encourage enterprises to adopt innovative, intelligent and sustainable production standards that can significantly reduce the impacts on the environment and health of citizens whilst remaining competitive. This approach will be backed by the development of the right economic instruments and sustainable finance mechanisms that will be in place to support a circular economy approach.

Furthermore, consumers and the choices they make is crucial in catalysing the shift to more sustainable production. Information and education measures in combination with transparent labelling practices will empower consumers to opt for more sustainable choices in their daily lives.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Conducting research to understand material flows from certain industrial activities and commercial establishments, while using this data and information to develop regulatory frameworks, policies and monitoring mechanisms to facilitate the transition towards a circular economic model.
- Mainstreaming of Life Cycle Assessments or similar studies to inform decision-making and embedding such assessments in the permitting process for certain industrial facilities.
- Increasing national efforts and investments in research and innovation and incentivising the private sector to invest in innovative and sustainable production processes to move towards circularity.
- Strengthening support mechanisms to encourage the uptake of certified environmental, social and governance management systems to allow businesses to prove their environmental, social and governance credentials while enabling consumers to make better decisions when choosing products and services.
- Continuing to promote the setting-up of suitable donation platforms, including reuse centres and second-hand markets.
- Carrying out assessments of projects that have the potential of generating large amounts of construction and demolition waste to ensure that they are managed in line with the waste hierarchy, while developing the right market conditions and facilitating innovation to encourage the use of the construction industry's secondary raw materials.
- Investing in waste-to-energy facilities and increasing Malta's capacity to collect and treat different waste fractions through the improvement and diversification of waste management infrastructure, while ensuring that such infrastructure respects environmental limitations such as land use.
- Reducing the Public Service waste footprint through market-based instruments such as green public procurement as well as further investment in the digitisation of office procedures through the uptake of electronic document management systems and the provision of accessible paperless online services and information systems.
- Strengthening compliance and enforcement by improving the institutional capacity of the relevant enforcement entities.
- Reducing the availability on the market of unsustainable, short-lived or single-use products and materials to encourage the use of products and materials that are more consistent with circular economy principles.
- Improving and extending the producer responsibility to include more waste streams so that the private sector can contribute towards better waste management.
- Continuing to sustain effective awareness-raising and educational campaigns focusing on waste prevention and management, and the benefits for the environment and citizens' well-being, targeting different audiences, ranging from household units and the tourism sector to government entities and the private sector.
- Strengthening government collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, academia, and civil society organisations.

Strategic Objective 3

Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Natural Capital to Improve Ecological Resilience and Sustainability

The conservation and sustainable use of our land and maritime natural resources are crucial to a good state of the environment that contributes to the well-being of communities by providing multiple ecosystem services and leading to economic activities with high value-added and high-quality jobs. Economic sectors that benefit directly from sustainable natural resource use include water management, agriculture and rural development, fisheries and tourism.

Our natural environment harbours a diverse array of species across the land, coastal and sea ecosystems, which require protection from various pressures associated with natural processes and human-related activities.

Malta is committed to strengthening measures that lead to the conservation and restoration of our natural capital, recognise its values and lead to better integration into sectoral policies. The Government will, therefore, continue to implement management plans and legal provisions for Natura 2000 sites across the Maltese Islands with the aim of ensuring that action is taken to mitigate against environmental threats while fostering ecosystem restoration that prioritises species and habitats of unfavourable conservation status.

Efforts will also be made to value ecosystems and their services and integrate this across public sectors and national accounts, thereby facilitating further mainstreaming of nature and biodiversity objectives into national policies. Achieving the goal of biodiversity conservation also requires measures that further enhance awareness and strengthen collaboration with stakeholders, including educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, and the private sector. In so doing, we will encourage a behavioural shift by which citizens, land managers and businesses will contribute further to biodiversity conservation.



Efforts will be made to address land degradation with the aim of ensuring that the amount and quality of land resources required to support ecosystem functions and services remains stable or increases. Having healthier soils and sustainable land management is vital not only for supporting our food production systems but also for improving resilience to climate change and reducing environmental pressures. To this end, land managers and farmers will be empowered to adopt sustainable practices and implement measures which prevent soil degradation and maintain natural habitats.

Freshwater, coastal and marine waters are also critical natural resources which provide several services. Water intensive processes and activities will continue being remodelled to make diligent and efficient use of Malta's limited natural water

resources, with the objective of achieving good quantitative and qualitative status of water bodies. This will be supported by investing further in rainwater harvesting and alternative water supply sources.

Measures will be taken to ensure that Malta's coastal and marine waters retain a good environmental and ecological status. In doing so, Government will address the principal pressures and threats that affect marine waters, including those arising from pollution, over-exploitation of resources, invasive alien species and anthropogenic activities.

Malta's objective is to ensure that the natural capital is managed and coordinated in an integrated manner that delivers significant benefits for society, the economy and the environment.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Mobilising public and private investments to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources to halt biodiversity loss and ensure the sustainable and equitable use of natural capital by, inter alia, restoring ecosystems, addressing pressures on biodiversity, managing terrestrial and marine protected areas, and adopting sustainable practices.
- Assisting farmers and land managers by incentivising them and supporting them to protect and enhance the natural capital they are responsible for and providing the relevant tools and technologies to help them carry out these activities.
- Empowering farmers to adopt sustainable practices and measures such as agro-ecological and water use efficient practices, through various tools which will aim to incentivise more sustainable land management and preserve soil and water quality.
- Strengthening spatial planning and the development permission process to reduce land take-up in natural, semi-natural and agricultural land to improve environmental quality and biodiversity conservation for the continued provision of ecosystem services.
- Strengthening the marine environment governance framework through stronger implementation of existing policies and the creation of appropriate frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, to minimise contamination discharges and effluents from activities on land as well as ensuring the sustainable management of aquaculture activities.
- Supporting a strong knowledge base through research and sound data on the status of Malta's natural capital to address challenges and trade-offs among ecosystem services.
- Continuing to invest in upgrading the national infrastructure for wastewater collection and treatment to be reused for irrigation and industrial purposes.
- Continuing to invest in rainwater harvesting through green and blue infrastructure as well as increasing the water retention capacity of our valleys.
- Supporting and implementing national water conservation awareness campaigns as well as providing various incentives to encourage behavioural changes.



Strategic Objective 4

Developing Sustainable Food Systems to Achieve Food Security and Ensure Environmental and Socio-Economic Welfare

The security and sustainability of Malta's food systems are being heavily influenced by several factors, including climate change, the country's geographical limitations and a high population density. This is, in turn, affecting people's health and well-being as these are also determined by the food that is consumed. Therefore, Government will be doing its utmost to ensure that our food sector remains resilient and sustainable and has the capacity to overcome any current and future challenges, while making the most of the opportunities presented to grow and develop further.

The Government will continue to strengthen existing measures and empower national agencies and entities to better regulate food systems, safeguard high operational standards, and ensure that food supply chains and businesses adhere to the principles of sustainability and social responsibility. Moreover, by offering more opportunities for collaboration and cooperation among relevant actors, we will also allow for more transparency, accountability, and traceability in our food systems and products, and guarantee a level playing field for all stakeholders.

Malta will continue to increase the resilience of our local food production sectors and services by incentivising the adoption of innovative business models and technologies, which will ensure that Malta's limited agricultural land and fish stocks are used in the most effective way possible, and that the food produced is of the highest quality. Furthermore, Government will also continue to strengthen policies aimed at promoting farming and fishing practices that reduce the environmental impact of agriculture and aquaculture. This will be further complemented by the introduction of measures that support organic farming and fishing and promote the welfare of Malta's animals and marine species.

Malta will also continue to invest in the availability, accessibility, affordability, and attractiveness of the local food supply by supporting local produce through various schemes and financial grants, while incentivising our younger generations to choose careers related to agriculture and aquaculture. The Government will therefore be strengthening and supporting educational programmes and awareness-raising campaigns with the aim of enhancing the value and appeal of these sectors, while offering more opportunities for all our farmers and fishers to increase their skills and know-how and be better able to make use of innovative solutions and sustainable production methods.

Through such educational and awareness-raising initiatives, Government will nurture a culture that stimulates responsibility in the business models and marketing practices of operators of the food supply chain, and incentivises sustainable food systems, food labelling and certification. Additionally, every economic sector will become empowered to reduce food waste at all stages of the food supply chain, while through education and awareness-raising initiatives we will support individuals to choose healthy, nutritious and sustainable food.

Furthermore, Government recognises that research and innovation that is accessible to everyone, together with more opportunities for investment in green and digital technologies, are key to achieving environmental and socio-economic sustainability within the food sector. Malta will therefore continue to support initiatives that develop the public and private sectors' research and innovation capacity, as well as services that are driven by innovative technologies, to ensure that the food systems in place bring with them further environmental, economic, health and social benefits to all.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Enhancing regulatory frameworks to monitor food security and quality and present consumers with healthy and sustainable choices, while deterring unfair competition and ensuring that local producers remain relevant.
- Reinforcing policies and initiatives that monitor and incentivise the decarbonisation of the agriculture and aquaculture sectors, as well as the food supply chain, and discourage the use of excess fertilisation, harmful pesticides, and antimicrobial agents.
- Strengthening and empowering advisory facilities while continuing to invest in support structures to provide the services and assistance necessary for the production and certification of high-quality sustainable products.
- Incentivising the production of local food while encouraging people to choose healthy, nutritious, and sustainable local fresh products through funding schemes and promotional campaigns.
- Mainstreaming social and cultural events and initiatives that create awareness of the nutritional and environmental benefits associated with the consumption of fresh products and encouraging more people to opt for such produce.
- Creating opportunities for farmers and fishers to market their food products by investing in enhancing their capacity to access national and international markets and take full advantage of local and international funding streams.
- Offering incentives to landowners to allow interested farmers to use their land to grow produce in a sustainable way and make the most of what that land has to offer.
- Strengthening educational and training programmes to encourage the uptake of careers in the agriculture and aquaculture sectors, while enabling stakeholders in the food industry to enhance and expand their skills and knowledge base.
- Carrying out educational and awareness-raising campaigns to promote the benefits of sustainable food systems and encourage people to produce and consume food responsibly from a young age.
- Encouraging producers, enterprises, and households to reduce food waste by strengthening enforcement mechanisms and structures, while providing incentives to food businesses to work with civil society actors so that food that is about to reach its expiration date is used instead of thrown away.
- Enabling producers to adopt alternative solutions to their farming and fishing practices through the incentivisation of organic and climate-smart techniques and the expansion of services and initiatives that promote the use of new water and the repurposing of agricultural waste.
- Supporting collaborative platforms and further stakeholder engagement to ensure that policies, procedures, and practices are streamlined, transparent, and accountable, and that the principles of sustainability are adhered to in all the stages of the food supply chain.
- Investing in research and in innovative green and digital technologies to assist farmers and fishers to utilise the resources available in a responsible way and empower them to safeguard the well-being of animals and fish stocks and address current and future challenges in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Strategic Objective 5

Investing in Sustainable Finance for a Greener and Climate-Neutral Economy

The transition towards a sustainable economy, society and environment will require a commitment by the public and private sectors to direct investment to enhance the capacity of all actors to foster sustainable development. Finance is therefore positioned as an important tool for achieving ambitious sustainable development goals and objectives.

Managing sustainable financial resources will be essential for achieving a successful transition to a resource that is efficient, greener, circular, inclusive and a sustainable model of development. Sustainable finance involves the integration of environmental, social and governance factors across the financial system with the goal of strengthening resilience, targeting more result-oriented capital allocation and improving accountability.

Government policies and public finance will play a central role in directing investment in sustainable projects and initiatives and providing financial assistance; however given the high upfront investment required, the financial institutions have a great potential for influencing how private capital is mobilised and shifted towards sustainability.

Government will therefore create a culture that enables further financial guarantees and tools, such as green bonds, to attract investors in servicing the capital and investment needed to achieve our environmental and socio-economic aspirations. Government will continue to support businesses to incorporate ESG credentials into their processes and corporate actions. Government will therefore continue to strengthen support mechanisms and commitment to publicly showcase the sustainability credentials of companies which will in turn attract investors.

In doing so, the Maltese Government will ensure that companies seeking funds for sustainable projects find the required financial resources, while also giving sustainability conscious investors the opportunities to invest in such projects.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Developing an adequate regulatory framework for sustainable finance to meet our sustainable development goals and objectives.
- Prioritising sustainable finance by ensuring that funding and financial instruments are designed in line with the sustainability principles and that any investments do not undermine them.
- Strengthening financial assistance such as grants, schemes and subsidies to encourage businesses to invest in technological and innovative sustainable solutions which will in turn create new competitive economic niches and contribute towards the creation of green jobs reskilling and upskilling.
- Enhancing stakeholder collaboration in the financial sector to streamline policies, schemes, and activities to adequately address the needs of investors, self-employed individuals, and businesses, in particular SMEs.
- Encouraging banks and other financial entities to finance sustainable investments while collaborating with, incentivising, and supporting, businesses' ESG initiatives.
- Increasing awareness on sustainable finance to build the necessary knowledge and drive ambitious policies for the benefit of all stakeholders and society at large.







Strategic Goal 2:

Towards the Preservation of Sustainable Urban Development and Cultural Heritage

The age structure and population dynamics of the Maltese society are changing. The proportion of elderly people, in particular, is increasing and society is becoming more diverse due to increased migration flows. If such realities are effectively addressed, we will transform the challenges brought about by demographic changes into opportunities for the sustainable development of the Maltese Islands.

Efforts will focus on working towards ensuring greater connections among citizens, which will result in improved social cohesion and resilient communities. We will further facilitate active participation in the labour market as well as in social processes and activities throughout one's life, thereby securing the health and well-being of all citizens and enabling them to reach their full potential.

Through a more equitable and cohesive society that respects cultural diversity, people are presented with more opportunities to safeguard and preserve their heritage and cultural identity. Our ambition is to create an environment which allows culture and the arts to thrive. This will further ensure that everyone is empowered to exercise the right of freedom of artistic and cultural expression, while creating a more open and creative society.

We need to create the right balance between the restoration and preservation of our cultural heritage and further urban development. In building our urban environment, Government will introduce measures which preserve our cultural heritage while safeguarding our natural environment to ensure sustainable and resilient towns and villages whereby the well-being of citizens is secured.

Malta will be achieving Goal 2 by:

Strategic Objective 1

Placing Culture and Heritage at the Heart of the Development of Our Local Communities

Cultural heritage is the backbone of our society and is fundamental in developing a sense of belonging within a community. Therefore, by safeguarding and enriching it, Malta will be protecting our cultural identity while enhancing social capital, boosting economic growth and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Investing in culture and heritage will contribute to developing new opportunities for the sector that will, in turn, help bolster Malta's economy. Through a strengthened cultural governance framework, Government will be ensuring that public infrastructure, policies and processes, together with institutional capacity, foster an environment conducive to an inclusive, resilient and robust cultural sector.

Malta will be ensuring that all members of society have easy access to the culture and arts and are given the opportunity to participate fully in the sector, while being empowered to make use of all the resources necessary to reach their full artistic potential. In view of this, we will be transforming cultural venues into hubs to promote further social and cultural engagement, while offering more opportunities for artists to practise and grow their artistic talent.

Government's efforts will focus more on strengthening the ties between education, the cultural sector, civil society and industry through which professionals, teachers, learners and practitioners are given the necessary tools to develop their skills and attain the highest level of artistic and cultural education.

The Maltese Government will also be working with cultural associations, organisations and entities worldwide to further advance the cultural sector in both Malta and Gozo. By harnessing the synergies brought about by strong ties and further participation in bilateral and multilateral cultural programmes, our artistic professionals will be able to learn all the skills and develop the necessary tools to reach even farther heights in their artistic careers. Broadening cultural relations will lead to new opportunities in terms of job creation, improvement in heritage skills and the advancement of several industries including that of tourism.

Investing in our cultural sector will build a society which nurtures the good health and well-being of its members and provides them with all the creative opportunities they require to live fulfilling and happy lives. Consequently, through such investment, Malta and Gozo can secure a healthy cultural and social future that enables people to live, work and develop together as one community.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Strengthening cultural governance through the development of cross-sectoral policies and action plans for the cultural and creative sectors.
- Fostering innovation to enhance the cultural sector, while reinforcing policies and supporting initiatives that promote cultural diversity and heritage locally and overseas to attract more tourists and investment and enable the development of high quality sustainable and responsible tourism across all the Maltese Islands.
- Nurturing cross-sectoral collaboration by strengthening existing, and initiating, new collaborations, partnerships, networks, and other forms of support frameworks with representations and experts from other sectors.
- Continuing to direct investments towards research and innovation, conservation, restoration, protection and management of cultural sites across the Maltese Islands.
- Fostering learning, knowledge and awareness of cultural facilities, spaces and venues, including art schools, music schools, museums, heritage sites, cultural centres, festivals, dance houses, auditoriums and libraries, while guaranteeing their existence and accessibility for all.
- Advocating, facilitating, and investing in initiatives, measures and projects that put artists, and cultural and creative practitioners at their heart.
- Investing, advocating, and facilitating efforts towards the development of knowledge, skills and competences needed by cultural and creative practitioners, to flourish in their sectors.
- Building and strengthening strategic partnerships, collaborations, and networks on a national and international level to enable further opportunities for artists and practitioners.
- Identifying knowledge gaps in the creative and cultural sectors and developing appropriate research plans to address such gaps in consultation with the sector stakeholders as well as academic and professional entities.
- Integrating culture at the core of urban development and planning policies with the aim of preserving the Maltese cultural identity.

Strategic Objective 2

Sustainable Urban Planning and Development for Liveable and Resilient Towns and Villages

Malta's ever-increasing population together with the small size of the Maltese Islands is contributing to the concentration of most human activity in urban areas. The increasing urbanisation trend is resulting in increased densification of development and land-uses, and higher demand and use of services, infrastructure and resources, posing significant challenges to the achievement of sustainable urban development.

The transformation to sustainable and resilient urban spaces is therefore the way forward. The creation of safe, resilient, and sustainable towns and villages relies on various factors and this transformation cannot be achieved alone or in isolation. To this end, Malta will continue to promote action and active participation within the workings of Government and across all levels of society.

In building our urban environment, we need to ensure that both our cultural heritage and scheduled buildings and monuments are adequately protected and safeguarded. The Maltese Government will therefore introduce innovative and sustainable solutions when designing and implementing new development projects so that they integrate well with their surroundings.

Government will also continue to promote urban development that is green and which encourages citizens to lead a healthy and active lifestyle by further investing in greening our buildings and infrastructure, and in the creation of green spaces as well as accessible walking and cycling networks in our towns and villages. Such investment will help in combating and mitigating heat generated by concentrated human activity and will also improve the state of the natural environment and the physical and mental health and well-being of the inhabitants

by reducing pollution and providing clean and fresh air. This will be further complemented by cleaner modes of transport that will contribute to a reduction in transport-related GHG emissions and thus resulting in higher air quality standards for our localities. Measures will also be taken to mitigate community exposure levels to noise, dust, and light in a manner conducive to healthy living.

Government will be working closely with local councils, businesses and civil society organisations so that all actors and levels of society are actively involved in making urban areas and communities more sustainable. We will therefore continue to provide national grants and incentives as well as support such organisations to tap into EU funds to increase the green and blue environmental infrastructure and thus make their localities more resilient and inclusive for their communities.

In order to achieve a high-quality living environment, we need to ensure that our towns and villages are clean and well-maintained. Measures related to waste disposal and the reduction of litter alongside regular maintenance of neighbourhoods will therefore be given due importance. This also necessitates further investments in education and enforcement.

Sustainable urban development will therefore be a fundamental contribution to economic growth and social progress while ensuring good quality of life for the population.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Increasing further public and private investment towards existing open spaces to make them safer, more accessible and attractive while creating new open spaces within urban areas and ensuring that such areas are adequately maintained.
- Ensuring appropriate spatial planning policies and developing standards for smart and sustainable urban design and planning.
- Supporting capacity-building in urban planning to adopt context-adapted solutions for urban sustainability, also through universally accessible smart building design and technologies and more effective assessment and monitoring of social, environmental, and economic impacts of development.
- Integrating and enforcing nature-based solutions and elements related to smart and sustainable infrastructure in the development of new buildings, projects and road works to maximise ecological and environmental contribution through the development of relevant guidance and standards at national scale.
- Incentivising the greening of households and other private buildings, such as through the installation of green facades, green walls, green roofs and front gardens.
- Implementing various measures to reduce and better manage traffic, whilst facilitating active and alternative mobility options and more pedestrian-friendly streets to act as safe walking or cycling routes between popular hubs, such as the village core and recreational areas.
- Providing adequate waste collection systems and enforcement in order to ensure that the cleanliness and aesthetics of neighbourhoods are maintained.
- Providing adequate funding to local councils to cover the increasing costs of services, upkeep and maintenance, particularly in areas where tourism, commercial and industrial activity is high.
- Empowering and encouraging local communities and businesses to engage in afforestation and community garden projects and contribute actively to the cleanliness and upkeep of their localities and surrounding environment.
- Mitigating noise, dust and light emissions from industrial and construction activities through enhanced regulatory frameworks, permitting processes and enforcement mechanisms.
- Establishing mechanisms to bring together the relevant stakeholders, including government, local councils, the private sector, and the resident community itself.

Strategic Objective 3

Sustainable Demographic Development for the Creation of Resilient Communities

Population development in Malta is being shaped by an ageing population, changing migration flows and declining birth-rates. If not addressed correctly, these demographic trends, can result in key challenges for the sustainable development of the Maltese Islands and limit our ability to meet the needs of current and future generations.

Population dynamics can affect economic growth, employment, income distribution, poverty, social protection and pensions. Such changes also put pressures on infrastructure, housing, health and education systems, services and commodities. Furthermore, they also influence environmental conditions as well as the sustainability of our towns and villages.

The Maltese Government will ensure that all citizens, including our older population, can live healthy lives and is able to participate in, and contribute to, Malta's socio-economic growth. This will also be coupled with successful migration and integration policies and programmes that will allow migrants

to actively participate in society while contributing to our economy. by offsetting the effects of an ageing population and addressing labour and skills shortages in our economy. Moreover, Malta will continue to work with other countries and international partners to find ways to eradicate humanitarian crises that are disrupting demographic trends, and increase its efforts to empower all people, including those living in developing countries, to overcome the challenges they face.

Further efforts will be made in addressing barriers that may prevent individuals and couples from starting and expanding their family.

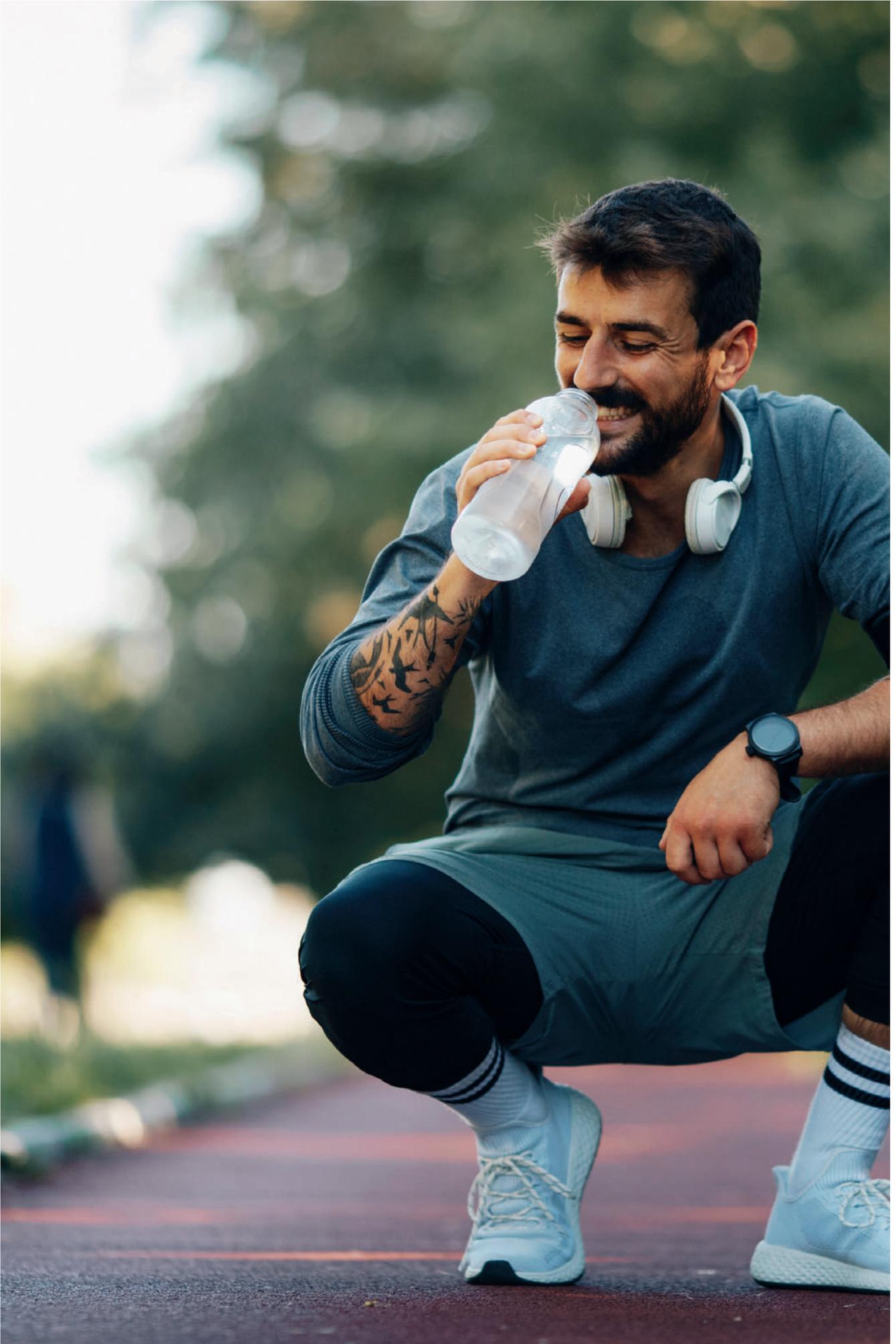
Looking ahead, the Maltese Government is also committed to ensuring that all levels of Government actively consider demographic change in decision-making. In this regard, we will continue working on embedding strategic foresight across all sectoral policies, programmes and initiatives to cater for the current and future demands of the population.





Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Strengthening coordination and coherence across education, employment, social welfare, health, housing and other policies to effectively address the changing population.
- Implementing incentives that motivate older workers to return or remain in employment while encouraging employers to retain older and ageing workers.
- Improving access to lifelong learning and training opportunities, especially for low-skilled and older workers.
- Improve working conditions and job quality through the promotion of occupational health and safety principles and more flexible working arrangements which correspond to the needs of employees of different and increasing ages.
- Developing programmes that promote intergenerational solidarity by increasing interaction, and exchange of skills, knowledge and experiences between generations.
- Reinforcing residential and community-based care services for vulnerable persons and the elderly, including the possibility of providing personal care services at home.
- Creating the necessary support structures to further enhance social services for older persons in the community, including the provision of day centres and night shelters.
- Strengthening support structures and services that provide assistance to facilitate intercultural inclusion of migrants and safeguard their fundamental human rights and equal life opportunities.
- Strengthening collaborations with migrant communities, NGOs and international organisations to carry out joint integration initiatives.
- Ensuring that all migrants can develop their language and literacy skills in Maltese and English to ensure inclusion and to be able to contribute to Malta's socio-economic growth.
- Promoting awareness-raising campaigns to tackle all forms of discrimination experienced by vulnerable groups.
- Conducting research and related actions to identify and address the specific integration needs of vulnerable groups.
- Providing access to fertility services for those within our society who wish to raise a family and need those services to conceive.
- Strengthening work-life balance measures while promoting the development of flexible and family friendly workplaces.
- Extending the free high quality childcare services to all children while continuing to provide services before and after school hours as well as summer schools to meet the needs of parents and guardians.
- Continuing to expand Malta's bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, together with its official development assistance, to help overcome global socio-economic threats, including poverty, migration, terrorism, and armed conflict, and ensure that people all over the world, particularly those living in developing countries, can live and grow in safe and resilient communities.





Strategic Goal 3:

Ensuring Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All

Good health and well-being are key pillars of sustainable development in which all individuals are able to lead health and fulfilling lives and participate fully within their communities.

Government will therefore continue to promote and support an environment that allows people of all ages to make use of an efficient and effective healthcare system, while encouraging them to consume nutritious food and maintain an active lifestyle. By streamlining and integrating healthcare services, everyone will be given the opportunity to access timely, affordable and good quality healthcare.

Efforts will be made to strengthen prevention systems to deter disease and illness incidences and ensure a healthier and better quality of life. This also necessitates the strengthening of awareness raising and educational programmes focusing on communicating the importance and value of leading healthy lives. The Maltese Government will continue to invest in healthcare professionals and their continuous professional development to effectively meet the requirements of, and respond to, the health needs and challenges of current and future generations.

In so doing, Malta will ensure that individuals at the early stages of their development will be able to develop the confidence and competencies needed to consume a healthy diet and engage in physical activity and sport throughout their lives. Moreover, healthcare workers and other members of the workforce will become better equipped with the knowhow and capacity to offer and deliver high-quality advice and medical interventions.

Through this Goal Government will be ensuring that good health and well-being remain a top priority on the Government's agenda and a healthy environment that promotes good nutrition and an active lifestyle is fostered.

Malta will be achieving Goal 3 by:

Strategic Objective 1

Fostering Good Health for All by Strengthening our Public Health System

Good quality health and well-being are crucial in maintaining healthy communities and enabling economic growth. Therefore, improving the health and well-being of all of Malta's citizens will remain high on Government's agenda. Malta will continue to strengthen and build upon health policies and structures currently in place to provide every individual with the opportunity to lead a healthy and active life, and to benefit from equitable access to sustainable quality healthcare.

Malta will continue to invest in an efficient and accessible healthcare system that is able to enact effective and sustainable solutions and is capable of responding to changing demographics and meet the needs and expectations of all by providing improved and faster access to health services and technologies as well as medicines.

The Maltese Government will be focusing on building a sustainable prevention system that can effectively address challenges relating to diseases, illnesses, disabilities and health inequalities while being equipped to respond to emerging health threats in an adequate and timely manner. In light of this, Government will continue to ensure that healthcare professionals are empowered through access to further training and medical research so that they can reach their maximum potential and better contribute towards good quality healthcare.

Malta will be streamlining and coordinating prevention programmes to overcome any barriers concerning healthy lifestyle choices and promote good health and well-being so that people can enjoy healthier, longer and happier lives. Therefore, Government will be working towards strengthening its collaboration with relevant stakeholders to increase awareness on, and effectively tackle, social determinants of health such as income, employment, education and the environment, among others, and continue to create the necessary investment in prevention in all stages of life.

A good understanding of the personal and societal factors that influence mental health is fundamental in developing policies and creating an environment that is conducive to the improved mental health and well-being of all. Therefore, we will continue to strengthen and positively transform current support structures and services in place so that people experiencing mental health difficulties find the help required and are provided with all the necessary opportunities for their recovery and inclusion.

It is only by investing in the physical and mental well-being of people that the Government will ensure full and active participation and effectively contribute to the well-being of individuals while working towards improving our environment and Malta's economic prosperity.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Ensuring that the physical, social, and psychological environment in which individuals, families and communities live, work and play is conducive to supporting their well-being and development.
- Ensuring that a *Health in All Policy* approach is adopted and form the basis where the health and well-being of societies and individuals can be nurtured and enhanced.
- Promoting policies where equity and determinants of health are pro-actively considered in the workings of Government and decision-making processes.
- Enhancing the public healthcare system's efficiency and effectiveness through investments in the latest technologies, and by improving the accessibility of medical treatments and procedures, sexual and reproductive health services, and medicinal and hygiene products, to address the current and future needs of our population.
- Directing more investment into the primary health care system to support holistic health care delivery.
- Strengthening the prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyles by focusing on behavioural changes and choices, including the prevention, protection, screening, early diagnosis and control of disease progression.
- Adopting an environmental health approach which considers population health in ecological and spatial terms and promotes and safeguards the well-being of public health from adverse environmental effects and pollution.
- Increasing our efforts to support policy dialogues within and beyond the health sector that promote policy coherence in implementing our healthcare instruments assisted by the required institutional capacity and evidence-based knowledge.
- Investing in quality education that can promote and protect physical and mental health through knowledge and life skills, provision of safety and meaningful activities, and social networks.
- Prioritising and integrating education on the social determinants of health in curricula.
- Enabling more investment in human resources in the health sector through further recruitment, retention, development and training of healthcare personnel.
- Empowering organisations and local councils to advocate healthy lifestyles and good well-being through further incentives that will enable them to carry out projects and initiatives that promote healthier and more resilient communities.

Strategic Objective 2

Promoting Good Nutrition and Active Lifestyles for a Healthy Society

Providing safe and healthy food while enhancing opportunities for engagement in sports and physical activities are a prerequisite for safeguarding the health and well-being of all members of society.

Malta will therefore strive to promote healthy nutrition as the basis for a daily routine for our population by increasing the vegetable and fruit intake, and reducing the consumption of fatty food and salt. This also necessitates transformation in the production and processing systems so that food will be sufficient, varied, nutritious, affordable and of sustainable nature to people at all times, as this is crucial to maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Government will further strengthen measures, including those that encourage sports and physical activity, to reverse obesity traits in the growing proportion of overweight and obese children and adults. This would reduce the health, social and economic consequences of excess body weight. Fostering active participation in sports and physical activity also makes good socio-economic sense in the long term since a physically active community would need fewer costly medical interventions, placing a lower demand on health services and contributing to a more productive workforce.

Education has an important role to play by ensuring that schools are the agents that influence food preferences, food choices, food consumption as well as behaviour related to sports and physical activity. Government will therefore strengthen measures aimed at encouraging further participation in physical activity during and after school hours and develop stronger links with communities to improve the health of children and families. This will be complemented by the necessary investment in community-based programmes that provide information regarding healthy dietary intake and that support regular physical activity.

Measures will focus on making sports facilities more accessible and affordable for all while ensuring that the sports industry remains financially self-sustainable and competitive. National associations and sports organisations will be supported by developing adequate sports facilities, providing administrative support and training while also ensuring that fair play and good practices are followed in all sports institutions.

Priority will be given to the creation of an enabling environment and infrastructure. These include amongst others adequate green spaces to encourage the uptake of physical activity with the aim of safeguarding and enhancing the well-being of our population.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Raising awareness about healthy eating and moderation to promote and mainstream the principles of healthy eating.
- Incorporating the importance and benefits of healthy eating and physical activity within school curricula and learning programmes education to better equip people with the tools and know-how they require to make good choices and live a healthy lifestyle.
- Conducting studies on nutrition to increase our understanding of individuals' and communities' choices and dietary habits to improve the consumption of nutritious and balanced meals.
- Ensuring accessible and affordable nutritious food that upholds high standards of safety and quality, plant health, and animal health and welfare.
- Promoting participation in physical education and physical activity at all educational stages, including pre-school age, compulsory schooling age, and post-secondary and tertiary educational institutions, during school and after school hours.
- Advocating lifelong participation in sports, including leisure and informal physical activity, grassroots, amateur, elite and Paralympics, and Special Olympics sports.
- Supporting youth athletes to be able to complete their education without having to drop out of sports, and vice-versa.
- Enhancing sport services and providing support in logistics, organisation, and infrastructure to all sports, including leisure and informal physical activity, grassroots, amateur, elite and Paralympics, and Special Olympics sports.
- Investing in opportunities for disabled people to participate in sports through the Special Olympics and Paralympics and advocating participation in mainstream activities in unified sports and specialised events.
- Investing in sports facilities to make them more accessible to persons of all ages and abilities.
- Supporting sports organisations in investing in higher quality facilities, coaching services, and equipment to improve the standards and performance in sports, both locally and abroad, and make Malta a more attractive destination for international sports events.





Strategic Goal 4:

Accelerating Digital Transformation, Smart Mobility and Connectivity

The digital industries have been a critical driver of economic growth and have transformed society over the past decades. Looking ahead, Malta will continue to develop robust government policies and infrastructure, harnessing a quality-seeking mentality and attracting high-value-driven industries, with the aim of strengthening Malta's technological prowess and its competitiveness.

Whereas the spread of digital technologies is contributing to an improvement in the well-being of modern society, we need to make sure that the necessary safeguards are in place to guarantee accessible, safe and user-friendly digital environments. In so doing, the Maltese Government will ensure that no one is left behind as a result of digitalisation and that everyone has adequate digital and basic skills, as well as the opportunity to increase their digital know-how.

Good transport infrastructure and services are fundamental to the successful functioning of all economies. Malta will continue to work towards achieving a high degree of connectivity both across the Maltese Islands as well as with other countries while ensuring that movement of people and goods is realised in the most sustainable manner possible.

Our ambition is to capitalise further on Malta's strategic location in the middle of the Mediterranean by transforming our country into a leading Mediterranean multi-modal logistics hub, while at the same time ensuring high-quality and efficient land transport networks and encouraging stronger air connectivity.

Malta will be achieving Goal 4 by:

Strategic Objective 1

Towards a Digitally Empowered Economy and Society

Digital technologies are critical in accelerating economic growth and job creation, safeguarding the environment, as well as in ensuring high-quality services and creating opportunities for personal development. Digitalisation is, therefore, a key enabler for sustainable development in that it can generate unique opportunities to strategically address sectoral development challenges and to ensure equitable economic growth, environmental sustainability, and a healthy society.

Looking ahead we must work towards nurturing digitally empowered and capable citizens. To this end, we will ensure that all citizens have easy access to affordable, secure and high-quality connectivity and services, while being equipped with basic and specialised digital skills that will enable them to fully participate in economic and societal activities of today and the future.

Building a secure and sustainable digital infrastructure, together with further investments across the public and private sectors, is therefore a prerequisite for Malta to remain at the forefront of digital transformation.

Malta needs to prioritise the implementation of standards in data protection and privacy. This is fundamental in securing active participation by all and encouraging individuals to tap into the various opportunities presented by technology and data. Giving individuals more control over their personal data will strengthen consumer trust which will, in turn, encourage businesses to seize the opportunities of the digital economy.²

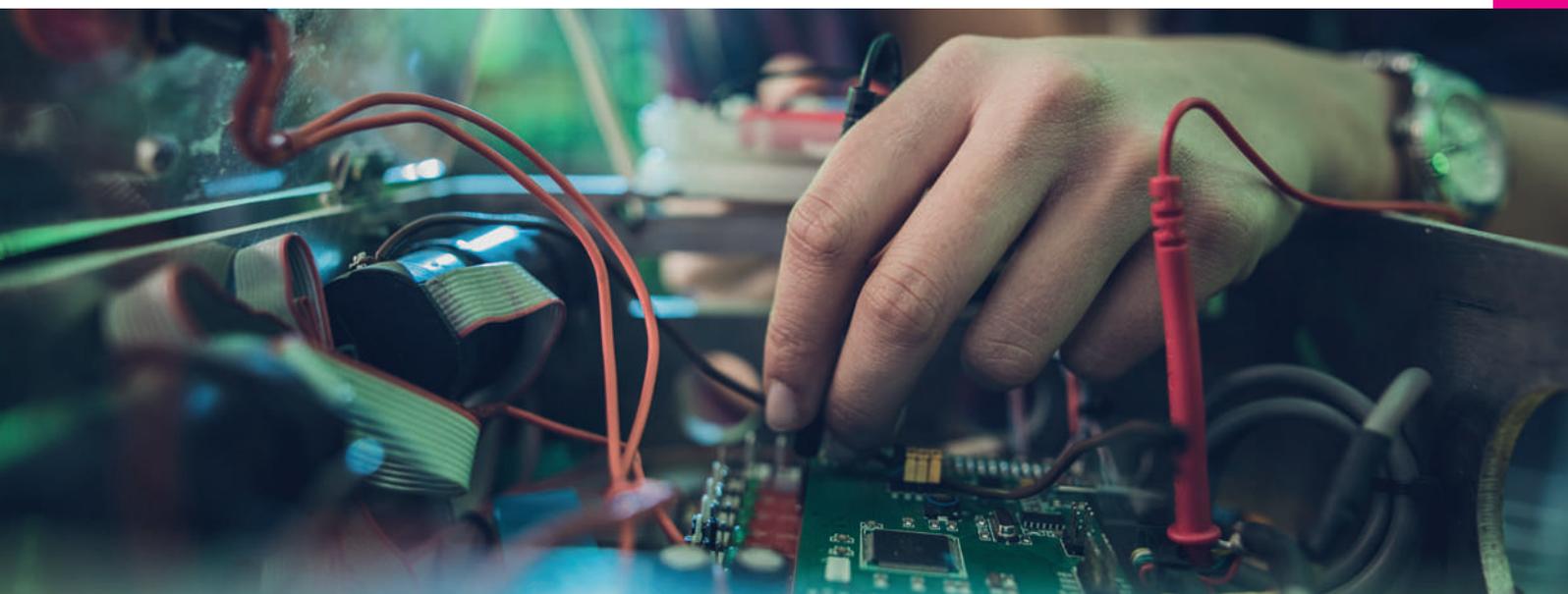
Government will promote and support businesses to adopt digital technologies, products and services that will not only enhance their productivity and competitiveness but will also facilitate Malta's progress towards a green transition. In this transition, SMEs in particular play a central role, not only because they represent the majority of Maltese companies, but also because they are a critical source of innovation.

² A Future-Proof Malta, <https://mimcol.com.mt/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/A-Future-Proof-Malta-Consultation-Document.pdf>



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Implementing resilient and robust digital infrastructure and technologies that are capable of supporting future demands across all sectors and services.
- Providing affordable and high-quality connectivity that allows everyone to get online and access work, school, and life remotely and equally.
- Strengthening collaboration among educational institutions, community organisations and industry to mainstream eSkills in school curricula and lifelong education so that all cohorts of society, regardless of age or background, can engage with and benefit from digitalisation.
- Responding to future requirements of the labour market in supporting digital skills development and job transition.
- Providing a safe, accessible, accountable and trustworthy e-service environment by establishing a digital governance framework to ensure the protection of fundamental rights, freedom of expression, personal data and privacy.
- Building new capabilities in the areas of cyber security to improve resilience and preparedness and further strengthen information campaigns so that the public is better informed about how to use digital tools.
- Ensuring more accessible, efficient and accountable public services by streamlining Government processes through digital innovation.
- Supporting businesses through incentives, as well as providing enabling tools and practical support to encourage them to take up current and future areas of digital innovation including those related to artificial intelligence and the internet of things.
- Continuing to support businesses through schemes and initiatives to ensure they have the necessary digital capacity to support flexible and remote working.
- Stimulating public and private investments in the digitalisation of systems and processes to increase resource efficiency and facilitate the transition to a climate-neutral, green, competitive and inclusive economy.



Strategic Objective 2

Building Sustainable Communities Through Smart Mobility and Connectivity

Mobility and connectivity are key catalysts for sustainable development. They are vital enablers for economic growth and well-functioning markets, providing the networks and services on which economies depend to flourish. Transport and connectivity are crucial for trade development and Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), providing the means for emerging markets to integrate into the global economy and maximise economic development opportunities.

Smart transport and connectivity systems also support social development and inclusion by facilitating individual mobility, movement of goods, and equal access to employment, education, health and other services.

Building efficient and sustainable transport and connectivity systems contribute positively to achieving environmental and climate change mitigation goals by reducing GHG emissions, enabling the most efficient use of infrastructure and public spaces, whilst preserving Malta's historical, cultural and natural capital. This would in turn result in improved public health and well-being through better air quality, an active lifestyle, and reduced air, noise, and light pollution.

Malta will, therefore, strive for a sustainable system built upon holistic and long-term planning which mitigates negative social, cultural and environmental impacts, balances economic, environmental and social principles, and is responsive to the needs of people, industry, and trade.

Public and social acceptance is vital for a successful transition. Therefore, improvements and changes in mobility and connectivity governance and services need to be complemented by greater private participation to drive reform and innovation.

As technological advancements will shape the future mobility of persons and freight, the proper framework and enablers should be in place to facilitate this transition into making the transport and connectivity systems much more efficient and sustainable.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Providing new, reliable and modernised public transport options and journey quality suitable for all users through inclusive, efficient, accessible and affordable public transport services, and better-planned transport schedules and networks.
- Diversifying safe and affordable alternative and green transport methods with adequate infrastructure and best available technologies.
- Enabling active, inclusive and safe travel by increasing awareness on alternate mobility, and associated benefits, and providing accessible and well-designed spaces for walking and cycling.
- Strengthening transport links and connectivity nationally (within and between the Islands) and internationally to increase accessibility.
- Better managed freight and urban logistics through digitalisation to further improve efficiency while mitigating congestion and environmental externalities.
- Capitalising and incentivising large-scale market deployment of new technologies, including production capabilities and use of sustainable alternative fuels and associated charging and refuelling infrastructure.
- Strengthening the implementation of remote working policies and facilities, and moving towards online services to reduce and avoid the need to travel while enhancing work-life balance for all.
- Investing in research and innovation to harness the benefits of digital technologies in transport management, improve uptake of innovative transportation technologies and infrastructure and mitigate potential impacts of transportation systems while giving safety the highest priority.

Strategic Objective 3

Investing in Research and Innovation for Sustainable Growth

Research and innovation (R&I) play an essential role in fostering smart and sustainable growth and job creation. By generating new knowledge, research is pivotal in developing innovative products, processes and services, which enable higher industrial productivity, competitiveness, and prosperity for all.

Building a knowledge and innovation-driven economy requires continuous investments in research and innovation by both the public and private sectors. Government will therefore continue to mainstream policy, streamline support and channel resources to move towards a research-intensive economy.

Government will continue to support research in smart specialisation areas that have a major impact on the economy and society. This includes research that has direct relevance to the business and enterprise base and meets the needs of society, including improving the quality of health and well-being; protecting the environment, our natural resources, mitigating and adapting to climate change; and facilitating the digital and green transitions.

Highly qualified human resources are fundamental for R&I to grow. The Maltese Government will therefore continue to invest in people by nurturing creativity and innovation at all educational levels from primary to tertiary education and lifelong learning. Furthermore, we will ensure that researchers and academics are provided with skills development opportunities and have the right conditions to contribute to Malta's R&I strategic direction.

Harnessing scientific research and innovative technology has the potential to increase productivity and boost economic wealth and job creation. To this end, Government will facilitate further science-business links for knowledge to spread more widely and is used in the business sector. This will be aided by strengthening collaborations between educational institutions and industry.

Fostering an environment favourable to R&I requires coordinated and coherent action across all sectors. We will therefore work towards the setting-up of an effective governance framework on R&I that is fully supported by the various relevant actors.

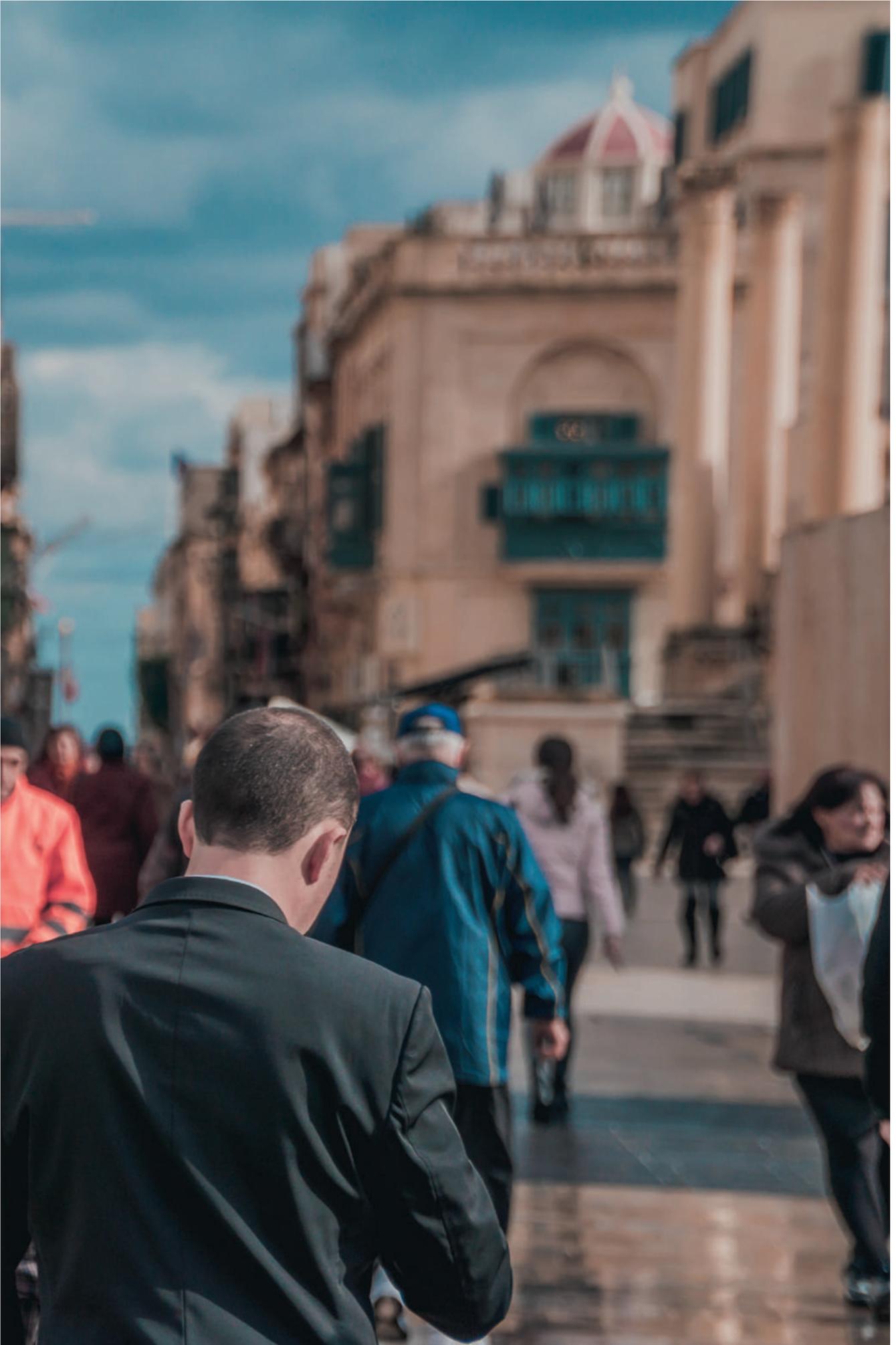
International cooperation is also vital for R&I to flourish, and we will therefore work towards attracting further researchers from abroad and reinforcing international networks in this area.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Strengthening the implementation and evaluation of national R&I policies and programmes and developing new measures to harness investment in R&I.
- Tailoring educational curricula and programmes to sector-specific skills requirements for R&I – with primary focus on smart specialisation areas – to narrow the gap between skills supply and demand in the labour market.
- Continuing to provide financial support and incentives to encourage local R&I and support further public-private cooperation in R&I.
- Supporting public and private sector efforts and resources to attract R&I-based foreign investment.
- Investing in national research facilities within academic institutions, as well as the private and the public sectors, with the aim of increasing human capital and expertise and enhancing participation in national and EU-funded R&I programmes.
- Strengthening the capacity of entrepreneurs to introduce innovative products and services by improving access to, and transfer of, knowledge through further collaboration between businesses, including start-ups and SMEs, and academic institutions.
- Promoting sharing of technical knowledge with other countries and providing incentives to promote inter-country technology collaboration, development, trade and transfers.
- Exploring new opportunities for international R&I collaboration by promoting and facilitating participation in international programmes and partnerships.







Strategic Goal 5:

Achieving Social Fairness and Prosperity for All

The fight against poverty and social exclusion is fundamental for sustainable development and in ensuring a dignified life for all generations. Through this goal, the Maltese Government is committed to working towards the desirable future of a just and equitable society.

Poverty and inequalities negatively affect individuals' quality of life and well-being and are also likely to act as barriers for personal development and future growth. Various factors lead to social exclusion, while individuals and groups at a relative disadvantage are more exposed to these risks than others due to their vulnerability or life circumstances. These factors include unemployment or having a poor quality (i.e. low paid or precarious) job, low level of education and skills, physical and mental health challenges, as well as social characteristics such as age, gender, sex and sexual orientation, ethnicity, citizenship and household type.

Being largely a receiving country in terms of migration flows, Malta is continuously becoming ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse; and this trend is expected to continue in the years to come. Nurturing diversity at all levels and spheres of society presents both a challenge and an opportunity for sustainable development, which if addressed effectively, can lead to a more cohesive and inclusive society.

Sustainable development is a major contributing factor in reducing poverty and providing for a good quality of life in an inclusive economy that promotes investment in education, health, and more general well-being. This necessitates policies which enable the most vulnerable to fully participate in society, benefit from the opportunities created and allowed to actively contribute within the labour market.

Access to education and training has a significant impact on a person's social well-being and the related poverty risk, and therefore, education is key to combating generational poverty and to giving better chances of success to children. In this regard, it is of utmost importance to ensure that citizens have the necessary life skills which enable them to deal effectively with the everyday demands and challenges. Efforts are also required to safeguard the physical, psychological (mental health), and social well-being of children and youths when designing policies and providing the necessary support to enable them to succeed.



Malta also recognises that the responsibility to achieve sustainable development does not stop at its borders but requires international effort and cooperation. For this reason, Government will keep on supporting the European Union and the organisations of the United Nations in their fight against global poverty and other threats while providing the necessary aid to address the root causes of conflict and humanitarian crises such as terrorism, irregular migration, and climate change. By strengthening its diplomatic ties and increasing its official development assistance, Malta will be in a better position to promote health, stability, and prosperity in its immediate neighbourhood and beyond, while allowing itself the opportunity

to contribute to the international dimension by presenting effective solutions to current and future global challenges.

Malta is therefore committed in creating the right conditions and environment in which all individuals in society can realise their ambitions and reach their full potential with dignity, equal rights and responsibility. In this way we will be able to enjoy the benefits of sustainable development through diverse yet coordinated actions, supporting all dimensions of well-being. These include policies and strategies related to social welfare and housing, education and employment, health, and culture.



Malta will be achieving Goal 5 by:

Strategic Objective 1

Empowering Citizens and Communities Through Policy Instruments and Measures for the Benefit of All

Inclusivity and equality are critical for the realisation of sustainable development. We strive for a society in which individuals are viewed equally and supported to flourish and live inclusive, healthy and fulfilling lives, irrespective of their race, colour, ethnic origin, age, disability, religion, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Diversity and inclusion shall be mainstreamed across a wide range of policies, administrative practices, and services to ensure total commitment against discrimination while empowering all citizens to determine their own lives and enabling them to participate fully in Malta's social, economic, cultural, and political life.

The continued investment in appropriate socio-economic policy instruments and measures is essential to create the foundations for a more just, equitable and inclusive society.

Civil society and voluntary organisations are the backbones of community resilience and social inclusion. Therefore, Malta shall ensure that the necessary support structures are in place so that this sector continues to prosper, and volunteering remains attractive to society as a means to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development.

Education shall continue to play a significant role in fostering a culture of inclusion and respect, where diversity is accepted and valued and citizens, irrespective of their background, can live, work, learn and interact, while sharing the same rights, having the same responsibilities, and enjoying the same opportunities.

Our objective is to narrow the gap between the richest and poorest members of society, while ensuring an equitable access to resources for all. Furthermore, the Maltese Government believes that this ambition should move beyond Malta's borders. Therefore, we will continue strengthening our diplomatic ties and providing development assistance to ensure that people and communities all over the world can live in a healthy and prosperous socio-economic environment that safeguards their well-being and allows them to enjoy affordable access to high-quality services and reach their full potential.

Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Ensuring an adequate and sustainable social protection system to ensure that social benefits and services are channelled to the most vulnerable and that beneficiaries have the necessary skills and capabilities to utilise such support in the most efficient and effective manner.³
- Securing access to universal, equitable, people-centred and integrated healthcare services and community care for all while addressing the social determinants of health and well-being.
- Providing accessible, equal and quality education for all, including early childhood education, lifelong learning opportunities, vocational training, and informal and non-formal education and ensuring their relevance to the future demands of the labour market.
- Facilitating and supporting access to fair and high-quality jobs while promoting workforce development and career advancement opportunities for all.
- Ensuring that there is adequate accessibility and affordable housing available for everyone.
- Ensuring that everyone has equal access to digital technologies and services and have the ability and skills to use them effectively.
- Strengthening the mainstreaming of the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination in the workings of Government and the design, implementation and evaluation of public services and sectoral policies.
- Strengthening bodies and legislative frameworks with a view of guaranteeing equality for all and facilitating the reporting and prosecution of hate crime and/ or discrimination.
- Eliminating discrimination and stereotypes through responsive and inclusive formal and non-formal learning as well as eliminating the use of gender-sensitive and inclusive language in the media and journalism; also adopting awareness-raising campaigns that guarantee a safe and inclusive environment for all.
- Ensuring accessible, accountable and transparent government institutions and services to enhance civic participation at all levels with the aim of promoting greater social inclusion.
- Strengthening collaborations with relevant stakeholders, including academia and civil society organisations, while supporting them to grow their capacity to contribute to dynamic, vibrant and sustainable communities effectively.
- Strengthening coordination and coherence across education, employment, social welfare, health, housing and other policies to effectively address the needs of all citizens and communities.
- Continuing to enhance Malta's diplomatic relations and expanding its development aid to assist people, particularly in developing countries, to develop communities that safeguard the well-being of their members and allow them to access safe, secure, and affordable high-quality health, education and employment services.

³ A Social Vision for Malta 2035: Shaping the Future of Our Society available at: https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MFSS/Documents/A%20Social%20Vision%20for%20Malta%202035.pdf



Strategic Objective 2

Ensuring Accessible Products, Services and Environments which Address the Needs of a Diverse and Changing Population

Developing an inclusive community starts with having spaces and buildings designed and adapted to be accessible and safe for everyone regardless of their gender, age, ability, family responsibilities, cultural and economic background, or any other factors.

The public and private sectors will progressively implement universal design approaches for all publicly accessible buildings and infrastructure. These approaches will include the enforcement of universal design as a requirement for new infrastructure and retrofitting existing facilities to improve accessibility.

Securing high-quality energy and water is essential for communities to thrive and for citizens to develop and reach their potential. Therefore, Government will continue to reinforce policies and develop the appropriate infrastructure aimed at providing all individuals residing in Malta easy access to affordable energy and water resources and services. This will, in turn, allow everyone to strengthen their capacity to support the country's social and economic well-being while being able to meet all their needs.

Access to a range public and private transport options is critical for the inclusion of citizens. A central part of this will be the ongoing review of urban policies to address infrastructural barriers, expand travelling choices, foster the use of public and active transportation, and enhance network facilities for improved accessibility and participation by all members of society.

Effective and integrated spatial planning and road infrastructure are also central in ensuring that daily needs facilities and services are within walking or cycling distance as well as equally and safely accessible by all citizens.

The Government will also address barriers to participation in sports, recreational, social and cultural activities. Inclusion in these activities creates meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging for all people.

Progress in information and communications technology (ICT), artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics is anticipated to create more significant opportunities for services and products that are user-friendly, easily accessible and understood to the greatest extent possible by all people. As citizens, we all have a responsibility to create an accessible and welcoming environment. Therefore, the Maltese Government will continue working towards building a society that intuitively sees, accounts for, welcomes, and values all people.

Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Implementing and enforcing standards and guidelines for accessible design in pedestrianisation, road infrastructure, housing, buildings, establishments, facilities and other community spaces.
- Enhancing power and water distribution networks and infrastructure to conserve energy and water, and safeguard people's rights to equal and affordable access to electricity and high-quality water services, ensuring that current and future demands are met.
- Ensuring and supporting affordable transport networks, providing easy access to daily facilities, convenient and reliable journey times, and ensuring equitable access for all user groups by addressing the needs of persons with reduced mobility and specific needs.
- Ensuring that all products and services on the market are designed and adapted to address the particular needs of all persons.
- Strengthening the requirements for accessibility in public procurement.
- Making assistive devices and technologies accessible to enable and empower all people to live independently and participate as full and equal citizens.
- Ensuring that all services, as well as digital communications and technologies, are accessible and available to all, and that everyone has the ability and skills to use them effectively.
- Investing in the public service to continue to design and deliver programmes and services that are human-centric, user-friendly and easily accessible to all.
- Assisting the private sector to ensure the digital transformation of services that respond to the needs and preferences of all citizens, including the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Ensuring that timely, targeted, relevant and reliable data and information related to sectors such as the environment, transport, tourism, education, business, health, justice and public services are made accessible to the public.
- Making cultural, leisure and recreational areas, facilities and products accessible for all without compromising their environmental and/or historical integrity.
- Implementing and enforcing accessibility standards and guidelines for all public events.
- Developing placemaking collaborations through participatory approaches which involve communities, planners and developers to achieve desirable physical, social, cultural and ecological place qualities while ensuring accessibility for all.



Strategic Objective 3

Building Safer Communities and Ensuring Timely and Effective Justice System

Ensuring a safe environment and access to justice for all is one of the Government's core responsibilities. The Maltese Government will preserve the high level of security of the country and the citizens through a combination of preventive and responsive measures intended to protect against threats and risks.

Malta will guarantee peace of mind through holistic and efficient enforcement strategies and structures that are predictive and adaptive to future needs and technological advancements. These shall be accomplished through a modern and operationally agile enforcement system which will continue to provide a professional service based on consistency, transparency, and liability.

A community-centric approach to enforcement by maintaining clear, consistent and transparent communication with local councils and citizens will be adopted. This will boost trust, confidence, and legitimacy and enable more excellent responsiveness to community needs.

As a result of its geographic position, at the crossroads of the Mediterranean and on the threshold of Europe, Malta is vulnerable to arrivals of irregular migrants and asylum seekers. In addressing this phenomenon, we strive to safeguard Malta's internal security through border management which respects international protection obligations and instruments.

The Maltese Government is also committed to facilitating safe, orderly, and regular migration that reflects Malta's demographic and labour market realities. In this way, we harness the positive contributions of migrants to sustainable, inclusive, and competitive growth.

While ensuring the safety and security of citizens, it is also the Government's duty to provide an equitable and accessible path to justice, support and protect victims, and hold offenders accountable, while facilitating their rehabilitation and social reintegration. The aim is to increase the capabilities of the justice system to adapt to societal changes and continue to innovate and embrace digital technologies, making the entire justice sector easily accessible while ensuring that such services are tailored to meet future needs.

Furthermore, Malta will continue collaborating with European and international partners to further develop its capacity to effectively address emerging and continually evolving threats to national and international security.

Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Strengthening the operational capacity of our legal services and processes, law enforcement institutions and civil protection while committing to a high-quality service.
- Facilitating the uptake of local and international upskilling programmes by the armed forces, law enforcement and civil protection personnel to enable them to enhance their skills and be better prepared to respond to emergencies and threats.
- Supporting educational programmes and promotional campaigns to raise public awareness of human rights, and strengthening our legal framework to empower all citizens to make their voices heard and ensure that their interests and freedoms are protected.
- Enhancing the use of innovative technology towards a more data-driven law enforcement.
- Enhancing community safety by promoting a responsive public safety system which includes community policing, civic engagement, community involvement, and public education through awareness campaigns and violence prevention curricula in schools.
- Bringing all the relevant institutions, agencies and programmes together, including schools and employers, to provide early intervention, address the underlying causes of offending behaviours, maximise opportunities to support positive life choices, avoid or divert from offending behaviours and criminal offences, and adopt restorative justice practices.
- Ensuring equal access to a fair justice system as well as high-quality and person-centred services to address the needs of those who have committed offences, their families, and victims of crime.
- Enhancing care facilities to assist people with behavioural misconduct in their rehabilitation, while establishing post-release services to foster social reintegration and reduce recidivism and entry or re-entry into correctional facilities.
- Ensuring prevention and rapid response to emerging security threats through an integrated and coordinated approach.
- Creating enforceable policy frameworks through domestic action and international cooperation intended to tackle organised crime.
- Strengthening border management and migration policies and instruments which will be supported by digital and intelligent systems that facilitate data sharing to ensure an effective and collaborative approach among national agencies and bodies.
- Continuing to ensure that the best conditions are provided in closed and open centres.
- Strengthening institutional capacities to guarantee fair and effective asylum procedures to ensure the expeditious determination of asylum claims and swift repatriation, resettlement, and reintegration of irregular migrants.
- Enhancing cooperation and partnerships with third countries of origin and transit, while continuing to support the European Union, the United Nations, and other international organisations to effectively address threats to international security.



- Improving the quality and the efficiency of justice through innovation, digitalisation and new technology whilst fully respecting the rule of law and guaranteeing the substantial and procedural rights of all citizens.⁴
- Ensuring access to justice and legal information to all citizens, irrespective of location, access to technology and vulnerabilities.
- Ensuring appropriate mechanisms of intelligent information security for the transfer, dissemination, entry and storage of data in the judicial system.
- Building and improving the competences and digital skills of judges, supporting staff and external professionals within the justice sector.



⁴Digital Strategy for Malta 2022 – 2027, available at: https://justice.gov.mt/en/justice/Documents/DJS_2022_2027_ENG.pdf

Strategic Objective 4

Achieving High Quality Education Responsive to Labour Market Needs

Our vision is to move towards a high-quality and equitable education system which is accessible and provides lifelong learning opportunities to all, and enables present and future generations to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for active citizenship and employment. We consider an inclusive educational system as being available and accessible to learners of all ages, including those facing challenges, such as those from vulnerable groups.

Inclusive education is considered a fundamental human right that provides the foundation for a more just and equal society, and diversity in learners is valued as a source of richness in our society. Within this context, school cultures and environments that are innovative, safe, secure, and contribute further to the development of all learners, need to be encouraged.

Malta's economy is becoming more globalised and knowledge-based, and thus, it is necessary to ensure that skills development through improved education and training fosters productivity, quality, innovation and competitiveness, as well as social and occupational mobility. The Maltese Government is committed to developing a society that is capable and competitive in a global economy, and is driven by information, knowledge, and innovation.

Government will address the need for further research that will help enhance the understanding between education and the labour market, particularly when it comes to skill mismatches and labour market outcomes while continuing to bridge the gap between skills and labour market requirements.

We will continue to reinforce the modernisation of our vocational education and training system by supporting apprenticeship, traineeship, work-based and work-placed learning initiatives, as well as lifelong learning.

In so doing, the Maltese Government will work towards further enhancement of existing governance frameworks and support structures as well as strengthening cooperation between institutional players and the industry.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Ensuring that all learners have access to opportunities for participation in the educational systems and structures, and that those who might be at risk of exclusion are mainly supported to achieve equally meaningful learning access.
- Continuing to strengthen existing systems to address issues of absenteeism and early school leaving, and reduce gaps in educational outcomes between students.
- Embracing the potential of ICT, digital content and open education resources to explore new, flexible and alternative learning methods whilst securing participation from all strata in society.
- Supporting educators, organisational and school leadership teams through training to work in inclusive education, apply the concept of learner-centredness, and understand and respond to diversity by promoting inclusive values.
- Providing high quality professional development opportunities for educators to improve their skills and be better equipped to meet the current and future labour market demands.
- Ensuring greater recognition of workplace learning and building capacity for recognition of prior learning through revamped skill cards that will support technical skills and occupations.
- Supporting a robust joint venture between educational institutions and the industry, with the aim of developing curricula and study programmes, as well as offering educational paths and opportunities, together with short courses and industry certifications that represent the present and future needs of the labour market, including green skills.
- Developing training programmes that integrate skillsets relevant to the labour market needs and promote re-skilling and up-skilling with the aim of enhancing individuals' and enterprises' development.
- Strengthening community education approaches through programmes that are locally coordinated by local councils and civil society organisations.
- Widening participation in lifelong learning and international exchange programmes through scholarship schemes and initiatives that meet the needs of adult learners and the wider needs of society, including the needs of the labour market.
- Providing support to increase work-based learning opportunities to more students by integrating aspects of work-based learning in a wider variety of vocational education and training programmes.
- Initiating research on skills supply and demand in the labour market that will provide data on the specific knowledge, skills and competences desired from prospective employees.

Strategic Objective 5

Equal Opportunities and Fair Access to the Labour Market

Creating new job opportunities that meet the needs of every individual in terms of pay, security and prospects in a fair and inclusive labour market is a desirable social goal but is also essential to sustain the long-term growth and prosperity of the Maltese economy.

Malta is committed to fostering the development of the labour market by promoting fair, sustainable, and inclusive growth. This needs to be considered within the context of the challenges and opportunities emerging from new realities, particularly demographic changes, the changing face of work brought about by globalisation and technological advancement, new work arrangements and skills gaps associated with the green and digital revolutions.

This calls for measures that make it easier for all members of society to enter, re-enter and remain in the labour market, by providing value-added jobs that safeguard working conditions in a continuously changing working environment, creating opportunities for personal development, career advancements, and entrepreneurship, as well as ensuring that workers can successfully balance their professional and private lives.

The Government, by being a pioneer in family-friendly measures, with levels of excellence in terms of flexible working arrangements and remote working in the public service, will serve as a good role model for the private sector and act as a facilitator in this transition.



Malta will be achieving this Objective by:

- Continuing to provide and strengthen working conditions, support measures and incentives to all citizens, and in particular, vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society.
- Addressing gender imbalance while promoting greater industry growth by incentivising industry-led training programmes for women who are re-entering the labour market or who are pursuing career advancement, focusing on the STEM sector and launching entrepreneurship schemes.
- Strengthening the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms.
- Providing paid parental leave to encourage more take-up from both men and women and provide longer compensated paternity leave to allow fathers to be more involved in the early days of their child's life.
- Introducing carers' leave for workers that have ill relatives in their household.
- Safeguarding flexible working arrangements and the right to disconnect for all workers across all sectors to ensure a greater balance between private life and work.
- Promoting employee well-being programmes to ensure physical, emotional and mental health well-being at the workplace.
- Reinforcing residence programmes and providing more assistance to employers to attract foreign workers to fill skills gaps present in the resident population and address labour shortages.
- Ensuring that Malta's official development assistance empowers people in poorer countries and enables them, especially women and vulnerable individuals, to access the labour market and advance in their careers.

Implementation and Monitoring of Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

Sustainable development necessitates a range of development policies, measures and programmes across all sectors. To ensure the successful and effective implementation of this Strategy, we therefore require integrated planning, cooperation and commitment by all key actors at various levels.

The aim of this Strategy is to serve as an overarching strategic framework that will lead to tangible and concrete action plans for the whole of Government and society. This Strategy also aims to reduce the silo approach among the various Government administrative layers to ensure a more harmonised approach. This will be achieved by building and enhancing capacity across Ministries to ensure effective mainstreaming of sustainable development principles across the workings of Government.

This needs to be further complemented by renewed investment in our education system to incorporate education for sustainable development so that our citizens acquire the necessary skills and abilities to respond to future needs.

Implementation and Monitoring of the Strategy

Achieving sustainable development requires a holistic and cross-sectoral policy approach to ensure that economic, social and environmental challenges are addressed holistically. It also requires political goodwill from governments to develop actionable strategies and establish the appropriate governance frameworks and mechanisms to ensure coordination, implementation and monitoring. Achieving sustainable development, therefore, requires a change in the way we think and act, as individuals, as organisations and as a society.

Through sustained long-term coherent goals and objectives, Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 aims to support and empower all citizens to flourish in our society, reach their full potential, and enjoy a good quality of life without compromising the capabilities of future generations. Whilst the Government has the primary responsibility to realise this Strategy yet ownership by the diverse sectors of the Maltese society, including civil society and private sector is imperative. The Maltese Government is therefore committed to continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure an open and transparent dialogue with interested parties.

To turn the Strategy into reality, 10-year period Action Plans will be developed until 2050. These Action Plans will translate the content of Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy for 2050 into more specific and tangible actions which will contribute to the fulfilment of the Malta's Sustainable Development Vision by 2050.

In order to measure progress, a monitoring framework will be developed for the Strategy and its Action Plans. In particular, a set of indicators will be developed to track and report progress towards achieving the Strategy's targets. This, together with other monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that may be necessary, such as committees, will guide improvements to the Strategy and our approach to delivery.

This Strategy will be reviewed as necessary, and in accordance with the requirements of the Sustainable Development Act (Cap. 521) as well as other national, EU and international developments and commitments.

Annex 1

Malta's Sustainable Development Targets

Targets by 2030 (unless specified otherwise)	Lead Ministry (Delivering cross cutting targets requires the involvement of a number of different ministries, agencies and wider stakeholders)
Achieve recycling and landfilling targets in line with the Long-Term Waste Management Plan 2021-2030.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
All beverage bottles placed on the market are to contain at least 30% of recycled plastic.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
By 2024 only beverage containers that have caps and lids made of plastic attached to the container will be placed on the market.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
By 2027, progressively increase the share of government's procurement in greener mandatory and non-mandatory products from 60% in 2020 to 90% of tenders which fall under the scope of Green Public Procurement.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
Reduce air pollution in line with emission reduction targets in the EU Directive 2016/2284 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
Ensure the implementation of conservation objectives and measures for Malta's Natura 2000 sites.	Ministry responsible for the Environment
Achieve a reduction of 19% GHG emissions compared to 2005 levels falling under the scope of the Effort Sharing Regulation.	Ministry responsible for Climate Action
Achieve an 11.5% share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption.	Ministry responsible for Energy
Reduce the modal share of car drivers to 41% compared to 1990.	Ministry responsible for Transport

Targets by 2030 (unless specified otherwise)	Lead Ministry (Delivering cross cutting targets requires the involvement of a number of different ministries, agencies and wider stakeholders)
Ensure public transport boarding above 50.2m.	Ministry responsible for Transport
Provide free public transport to all residents.	Ministry responsible for Transport
Develop a framework with the spatial planning process to integrate land use and transport planning policies and move towards transit-oriented development.	Ministry responsible for Transport
Introduce around 65,000 electric vehicles (EVs), including plug-in-hybrid EVs.	Ministry responsible for Transport
Reduce non-ETS GHG emissions from transport to 525 ktCO ₂ equivalent.	Ministry responsible for Transport
Achieve equitable access to high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) service provision for all children, particularly those who are considered at risk of exclusion, as well as ensuring the maintenance of the already very high rate of children attending kindergarten.	Ministry responsible for Education
Increase the provision of all-day formal ECEC for childcare sector (0-3 years) by at least 11%.	Ministry responsible for Education
Ensure that 15% of adults aged 25-64 continue to participate in Lifelong Learning.	Ministry responsible for Education
Reduce the proportion of early school leaving (aged 18-24) by at least 2%.	Ministry responsible for Education
Continue to provide induction classes for migrant students and supporting them to enrol in schools.	Ministry responsible for Education
Ensure that all students have access to digital tools for learning.	Ministry responsible for Education
Increase adult participation in training to 57.6% every year.	Ministry responsible for Education
Ensure the quality in lifelong learning course provision through the launch of an e-College, with at least ten courses covering different subject areas, attracting at least 4800 learners by 2024.	Ministry responsible for Education
Reduce the percentage of persons who never exercise or play sport to less than 56%.	Ministry responsible for Sports

Targets by 2030 (unless specified otherwise)	Lead Ministry (Delivering cross cutting targets requires the involvement of a number of different ministries, agencies and wider stakeholders)
Contribute to the EU R&D intensity target of 3% of GDP by increasing private and public expenditure on R&D.	Ministry responsible for Research and Development
At least 84.6% of the population aged 20 to 64 should be employed.	Ministry responsible for Employment
All localities in Malta and Gozo will have community policing teams.	Ministry responsible for Home Affairs and National Security
Civil protection staff complement to increase by 50%.	Ministry responsible for Home Affairs and National Security
Ensure equal access to justice education and services to all citizens.	Ministry responsible for Justice
Reduction of at least 3.1% in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion from the 2019 baseline.	Ministry responsible for Social Policy
Increase the uptake of STEM subjects at all educational levels.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Increase the number of graduates and post-graduates with AI-related degrees.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Increase individuals with basic digital skills up to 65%.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Increase ICT professionals by 20%.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Increase Female ICT professionals by 30%.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Increase ICT graduates by 10%.	Ministry responsible for Digital Economy
Ensuring that we have reached 0.7% of Gross National Income for Official Development Assistance (ODA).	Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs
Establish a new acute mental health facility.	Ministry responsible for Health
Increase investment in the refurbishment of existing facilities and in the creation of primary care hubs.	Ministry responsible for Health

Targets by 2030

(unless specified otherwise)

Lead Ministry

(Delivering cross cutting targets requires the involvement of a number of different ministries, agencies and wider stakeholders)

Set up a national diabetes register, with a view to facilitating a recall system for secondary prevention of diabetic complications.

Ministry responsible for Health

Achieve a reduction in the self-reported proportion of the adult and children population who are overweight and obese.

Ministry responsible for Health

Contribute to 41% of emission reduction by 2030 and the decarbonisation of building stock by 2050, in line with Malta's Long-term Renovation Strategy.

Ministry responsible for Planning

Reach a minimum target of 2% of total government expenditure on the cultural and creative sectors.

Ministry responsible for Culture

