

MALTA

VET in Europe - Country Report

2011

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the VET system in Malta. Information is provided for each of the following themes:

1. General Content – Framework for the Knowledge society
2. Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility
3. VET to support recovery from the crisis
4. Historical Development, Legislative and Institutional Framework
5. Initial Vocational Education and Training
6. Continuing vocational education and training for Adults
7. Training for VET teachers and trainers
8. Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)
9. Lifelong guidance for lifelong learning and sustainable employment
10. Financing: investment in human resources
11. Authors, sources, bibliography and abbreviations

This overview has been prepared in 2011 and references refer to 2010.

Keywords:

Vocational education and training

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Theme 1: General context – framework for the knowledge society

1.1 Political and socio-economic context

Malta's political system is a parliamentary representative democratic Republic, with the President of Malta as the constitutional Head of State. The executive powers are in the hands of the Prime Minister of Malta who is the head of government and the cabinet. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament of Malta which consists of the President of Malta and the House of Representatives of Malta. The Speaker is the presiding officer of the legislative body. Since Malta's Independence in 1964, the main party electoral system has consisted of two main political parties: the Nationalist Party (*Partit Nazzjonalista*); and the Labour Party (*Partit Laburista*). There is also the Green Party Alternattiva Demokratika, but so far they do not have representation in Parliament.

Malta consists of the islands of Malta, Gozo (*Għawdex*), Comino (*Kemmuna*), Cominotto, Selmunett, and Filfla, and a few tiny islets. Only the first three are inhabited. Malta is divided into a number of regions: Central, Northern, South Eastern, and Southern regions. The Gozo region comprises of all of the other islands. Malta is a small economy, naturally confined within its geographical limits. It has no natural resources, but it has succeeded in attracting and maintaining strong manufacturing firms, mainly owned by big international companies. The Maltese economy is service oriented as well as having a strong tourism industry.

Following the rebound in economic activity from the 2009 crisis, employment increased by 2.2% during 2010 while unemployment declined from 7.0% to 6.7%. Inflation, as measured by the 12 month HICP moving average, was 2.0% in 2010. However, the rate of inflation edged up and reached 2.5% by March 2011. It is believed that external factors underpin this recent rise in prices, with particular pressure emanating mainly from rising prices in energy and food commodities¹.

There were a number of projects funded under the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which invested in skills analysis, professional development of teaching staff, as well as investment in better training infrastructure within the vocational sector.

¹ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f' soċjeta b' saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

1.2 Population and Demographics

Malta is a southern European country, situated centrally in the Mediterranean Sea, 93 km south of Sicily and 288 km east of Tunisia. Malta covers just over 300 km² in land area, and is one of Europe's smallest and most densely populated countries. Malta can be considered a city-state. The country has two official languages: Maltese and English, with Maltese being the national language.

Country	2003	2006	2009	2010
EU 27	486,647,831	493,226,936	499,723,520	501,105,661
Malta	397,296	405,006	413,609	412,970

***Source of Data:** Eurostat (Demographic Statistics), extracted 19th May 2011

The population of Malta in 2009, as estimated basing on figures obtained from the 2005 Population and Housing Census, totalled slightly over 400,000. Just over half the population then was female. The total population included Maltese citizens, estimated at 396,278 (96%) and foreigners residing in Malta, at 16,692. Children under 18 comprised nearly 20% of the total population, while persons aged 65 and over made up 15%. The Northern Harbour district remained the most populated district in Malta, having a total of 121,450 residents, or 29% of the total population².

Age Range	2009	2015	2025	2010 ³
0-24	122996	112,100	102,700	121,271
25-64	230640	230,400	226,600	231539
65+	59654	72000	75,500	64798
TOTAL	413290	414,500	404,800	417,608

*Data (up to 2009) collated from Demographic review 2009, National Statistics Office (NSO)

The Demographic Review of population projections produced by NSO with the 2009 population as base, indicates that the total population is expected to decrease to 380,242 in 2050. Projections also reveal a continuously ageing population, with the share of elderly persons increasing in comparison with their younger counterparts. This trend is already evident from the change in population between 2009 and 2010. The projection for 2050 indicates the percentage of persons aged less than 20 is expected to decrease from 22%, as recorded in 2009, to 17%. On the other hand, the share of individuals aged 65 and over is expected to increase significantly in the coming forty years to 24% from the 15% recorded for the year under review⁴.

² National Statistics Office, 2010, Demographic Review 2009, Malta: National Statistics Office.

³ National Statistics Office, (2011), News Release: World Population Day 2011, 11 July 2011, 1100 hrs, 131/2011.

⁴ National Statistics Office, 2010, Demographic Review 2009, Malta: National Statistics Office.

Country	2010	2015	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
EU 27	25.9	28.26	31.05	38.04	45.36	50.42	53.47
Malta	21.19	26.69	31.25	39.14	41.71	49.77	59.07

*Source of Data: Eurostat (EUROPOP2008 – Convergence scenario, national level) extracted 19th May 2011

Malta is facing an aging population which poses a challenge on CVT as people's working life is being extended beyond the age of 65. This has started being reflected in the expansion of VET courses as evening-courses by the main vocational education providers in Malta.

1.3 Economy and Labour Market Indicators

In 2010, the Gross Domestic Product registered a growth of 3.2% in real terms, and 6.2% in nominal terms. The country experienced a buoyant recovery in the international economy, especially in the first half of 2010. Growth was mainly export driven, with net exports contributing 3.7% to real growth while the domestic sector amounted to 1.2% during 2010. This was mainly attributed to a decline in real private consumption which declined by 0.8%. These developments mainly reflect a low level of consumer confidence⁵.

Country	Primary sector & utilities		Manufacturing		Construction		Distribution & Transport		Business & other services		Non marketed services	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
EU 27	15175.8	7.0	33992.7	15.7	16573.2	7.7	57099.0	26.4	38733.1	17.9	53694.1	24.8
MT	6.2	3.8	24.6	15.0	11.7	7.1	54.0	32.8	24.3	14.8	41.7	25.3

Source Eurostat (Labour Force Survey) extracted 19th May 2011

In 2010, Malta experienced an upturn in international trade, which together with a weaker Euro led to an increase of 18% in exports, in contrast to the decline of 8.6% in 2009. A positive performance was registered in financial intermediation, other business services, hotels and restaurants and manufacturing sectors, with the latter mainly reflecting the expansion in electronics and furniture and other sub-sectors. The share of financial intermediation increased by 2% in 2010 and contributed to around 37% of

⁵ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f' soċjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

the total growth to Gross Value Added. Meanwhile, the manufacturing industry showed a positive contribution to total growth in Gross Value Added of 15% while the other business and hotels and restaurants sectors showed contributions to total growth of 9% and 8%, respectively⁶.

In 2010, employment increased by 2.2% while unemployment declined from 7.0% to 6.7%. The unemployment rate decreased from 7.2% in April 2010 to 6.2% in April 2011, while the EU27 unemployment rate stood at 9.4%⁷.

Table 5: Employment rates⁸ by age groups and highest level of Education attained (%), 2003, 2006 and 2010 for Malta									
ISCED	2003			2006			2010		
	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
0-2	47.0	57.0	37.4	38.3	56.3	33.6	40.3	61.1	35.3
3-4	52.2	80.4	72.7	50.4	86.0	68.0	46.90	85.1	67.2
5-6	74.6 (U)	89.7	72.4	74.4	90.0	62.7	72.3	91.8	62.9
TOTAL	49.6	63.7	41.5	44.2	66.6	38.3	44.1	70.5	38.2

Source Eurostat (Labour Force Survey) extracted 19th May 2011

Malta is currently investing further in its vocational sector with the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), the main VET provider, currently implementing an ERDF Project for the extension of its Campus. This is planned to be completed in 2013, after which it is expected that MCAST will be able to increase its student intake, as well as provide a better learning environment for its current students. There is currently also investment carried out at the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) which is working on building a new vision and strategy based on a clearly-defined mission to provide quality learning to enable more individuals to participate in tourism studies, including the low-skilled and unskilled. There is also another initiative, which involves the introduction of embedded learning for Foundation (first level) students at MCAST, providing them with the opportunity to learn key subject areas such as Maltese, English and Mathematics through the students' own preferred area of vocational studies. Embedded learning in vocational education started in September 2010 at MCAST, and is to be piloted until June 2011⁹.

⁶ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f' soċjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Worked out as number of employed persons as percentage of the total population.

⁹ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, (2011), Malta's National Reform Programme Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment;

Table 6: Unemployment rates¹⁰ by age groups and highest level of Education attained (%), 2003, 2006 and 2010 for Malta

ISCED	2003			2006			2009		
	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
0-2	18.1	6.7	:	19.5	7.4	:	15.9 (u)	8.7	5.9 (u)
3-4	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
5-6	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
TOTAL	17.4	5.5	:	15.9	5.0	:	13.0	6.0	4.9 (u)

Source Eurostat (Labour Force Survey) extracted 19th May 2011; (:) data not supplied

Table 7: Total public expenditure¹¹ on Education as % of GDP, at secondary level of Education (ISCED 2-4), 2002-8"

Country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
EU	2.32(S)	2.35(S)	2.29(S)	2.25(s)	2.23 (s)	2.20(s)	:
MT	2.09	1.58	1.92	2.92 (b)	:	2.81	3.17

Source: Eurostat (UOE), extracted on 19th May 2011

It can be noted that public expenditure on education in Malta has increased and risen above the EU27 average these past years, reflecting government's commitment to education and training for a better qualified workforce.

1.4 Educational Attainment of Population

Malta has registered an increase in the percentage of young people staying on at school following the end of compulsory education at the age of 16. This resulted in a drop in early school leavers from 53.2% in 2002 to 36.9% in 2010. None the less, Malta still lags behind the EU27 average at 14.1% and is far from both the Lisbon target of 15% and the EU2020 target of 10%. Throughout the period 2000-2008, from amongst the EU-27 Member States, Malta registered the largest decrease in percentage of early

¹⁰ Worked out as number of unemployed persons as percentage of the active population (employed + unemployed).

¹¹ Total public expenditure on education, at Isced level 2-3-4, by programme orientation (million PPS, % of GDP, % of public expenditure)

school leavers between the age of 18 to 24. None the less, early school leavers remain a great challenge for the country¹². The progress achieved over the period 2000-2008 is attributed almost entirely to the establishment of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) which provides vocational and professional education and training to upper secondary students¹³.

In dialogue with the European Commission, Malta has set the following targets: aiming to reduce school drop-out rates to 29% by 2020; and increasing the share of 30-34 years old, having completed tertiary or equivalent education to 33% by 2020. In the period 2010-2015, Malta will endeavour to continue to offer new possibilities for learning whilst ensuring that all persons receive due certification and recognition of their studies in a drive to value all learning, in order for this to be able to serve the individual learner as a basis for further study or work¹⁴.

Country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EU	17.0	16.6 (b)	16.1	15.8	15.5	15.1	14.9	14.4	14.1
MT	53.2	49.9	42.1 (b)	38.9	39.9	38.3	39.0	36.8	36.9

Source Eurostat (Labour Force Survey) 19th September 2011

Year	2007						2009					
	3GEN	3PV	3VOC	4GEN	4PV	4VOC	3GEN	3PV	3VOC	4GEN	4PV	4VOC
MT												
F	1527	0	1042	0	0	135	1415	0	587	0	0	40
M	1130	0	1774	0	0	468	967	0	795	0	0	35
T	2657	0	2816	0	0	603	2382	0	1382	0	0	76

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data Collection) extracted 19th May 2011.

¹² Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f'socjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

¹³ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, (2011), Malta's National Reform Programme Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment;

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Early school leavers are defined as the percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.

The Pre-budget document published by government highlights how Malta's policies in education and training are centred around two crucial targets: that of reducing early school-leavers; and increasing tertiary education attainment. These are part of Malta's vision to develop a knowledge-based and creative economy built on developing the high potential of Malta's human capital.

Government is also embarking on initiatives involving multidisciplinary teams in order to tackle absenteeism from school within compulsory level.

Government is working to attract more students and adults into further and higher education within a lifelong learning context. Within compulsory education a new National Curriculum Framework has been published for consultation. Among the proposals put forward is that of introducing vocational subjects at secondary level of education in order to encourage more students to keep on studying on completion of compulsory education. These vocational subjects introduce additional certificates to the current Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) level examinations for vocational and technical subjects and levels lower than SEC, and which will enjoy the same parity of esteem as SEC subjects.

The extension of vocational subjects at post-secondary level involves mainly the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS). These institutions are extending their provision of vocational subjects at post-secondary level. The MCAST is to build an extension of its Campus to increase its student intake, as well as provide a better learning environment for its current students. The ITS is working on a new vision and strategy based on a clearly-defined mission to provide quality learning to lead to excellence in the tourism industry, with a view to enable more individuals to participate in tourism studies, including the low-skilled and unskilled¹⁶.

Table 10: Graduates at ISCED Level 5 and Level 6 of Education, programme orientation and sex (numbers), 2007 and 2009												
Year	2005						2007					
MT	5A1	5A2	5B1	5B2	6	5-6	5A1	5A2	5B1	5B2	6	5-6
F	1009	296	257	0	3	1565	1311	325	47	0	11	1694
M	695	225	238	0	6	1164	826	219	97	0	8	1150
T	1704	521	495	0	9	2729	2137	544	144	0	19	2844

Source: Eurostat (UOE Data Collection) extracted 19th May 2011

¹⁶ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, (2011), Malta's National Reform Programme Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

Table 11: Youth Education Attainment Level by Sex (%), 2002, 2005, 2009 & 2010												
Year	2002			2005			2009			2010		
	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU27	76.7	79.3	74.0	77.5	80.2	74.8	78.6	81.4	75.9	79.0	81.8	76.2
MT	39.0	42.2	36.1	53.7	57.0	50.5	52.1	56.7	48.2	53.3	60.8	47.0

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey) extracted 19th September 2011

Youth education attainment for Malta is far behind than the EU27 average and the EU2020 Targets, even though there was an improvement over the past 8 years. None the less, there is much more work which needs to be done in order to raise percentages to European standards. Vocational training is deemed to be an important vehicle in order to encourage more students to continue their education beyond the school-leaving age and to develop their true employment potential. The National Reform Programme, in view of the EU2020 targets commits Malta to continue building on achievements so far. This measure aims to extend the provision of vocational education, in particular through:

1. The introduction of vocational subjects in secondary school, with the aim of fulfilling the potential of students in vocational fields, and to introduce students to subjects which can capture both their aptitudes and their interest, in view of them progressing to further vocational studies and to employment in a given technical or vocational sector at a later stage. Preparation of ground work involved in the setting up of VET provision is underway and will continue until 2011.
2. The extension of vocational subjects at post-secondary level of education in institutions which are dedicated to vocational education and training, namely MCAST and ITS, which has already been referred to earlier; and
3. The introduction of embedded learning for Foundation (first level) students, providing them with the opportunity to learn the key subjects of Maltese, English and Mathematics through the students' own preferred area of vocational studies. Embedded learning in vocational education started in September 2010 at MCAST. Depending on its success, it will continue thereafter.

Table 12: Lifelong Learning – Adult Participation in Education and Training by Sex (%) , 2002, 2005, 2010									
Year	2002			2005			2010		
	T	F	M	T	F	M	T	F	M
EU27	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9.0	9.1	10.0	8.3
MT	4.4	3.8	4.9	5.3	4.5	6.1	5.7	6.1	5.2

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey), extracted 19th September 2011

Participation in lifelong learning in Malta has improved over the last 10 year period from 4.4% to 5.7 %. However, this is again still lower than the EU27 average and Malta needs to further promote adult education. Similar to patterns across the EU, more females than males participate in lifelong learning, particularly in 2010. In order to enhance Lifelong Learning, a wider and more structured adult learning network was created in the community with the direct involvement of the Local Councils. Government is working on the publication of a framework of the Lifelong Learning Strategy for consultation. The Strategy should set a number of targets to ensure that our country becomes a centre of excellence as defined in Malta's Vision for 2015.

In addition, MCAST has also introduced a maturity clause in their courses which allow students of ages 21 or older to follow vocational courses at level 3 while those at age 23 or older to follow higher level courses even if they do not have the minimum entry qualification requirements.

Table 13: Number of Beneficiaries under each mobility type for the period 2007-9				
Mobility type	No. of Mobilities 2007	No. of Mobilities 2008	No. of Mobilities 2009	TOTAL
IVT	86	49	87	222
PLM	14	69	74	157
VETPRO	37	45	41	379
TOTAL	137	163	202	758

Source: European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA) – National Agency for the Lifelong Learning programme

The vocational and training institutions in Malta have a good track record in promoting the mobility of both students and teachers within the vocational sector. This is the result of the good participation in the Leonardo Mobility Programme financed by the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Mobility type	Males	Females	TOTAL
IVT	54	70	124
PLM	36	50	86
VETPRO	81	75	158

1.5 Definitions

There are no official VET-related definitions and the meaning of many terms is the result of shared understanding of the local education system and ways of working between the key players in education. The Malta Qualifications Council, in order to facilitate understanding among a wider audience and open access to opportunities and reforms currently taking place within the country has published definitions for a number of terms. These definitions help to facilitate similar understanding of the system by the different players and clients of Lifelong Learning.

- **General Education:** This term is used as in the definition given by UNESCO¹⁸ and is taken to refer to those academic areas of studies within compulsory education as well as at post-compulsory level which lead to further in-depth studies in particular subjects, and which lead to entry into University;
- **Pre-vocational education:** This term is not used within the Maltese education system. There once existed one institution by this name which prepared students for entry into healthcare vocational courses, but the institution was closed as part of the reform in vocational education.
- **Vocational education:** Vocational education in Malta is used similarly to that given by UNESCO¹⁹ to refer to that type of education and training which is related to a trade and which is closely related to the world of work. The main provider of vocational education at post-compulsory level is the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). There is currently no provision of vocational education at secondary level education although there are plans to provide vocational educational subjects in compulsory education soon;
- **Technical education:** This term is often used in conjunction with the term vocational education. However, technical education tends to refer more specifically to particular trades (crafts, carpentry etc.) and electrical areas. The term vocational education is wider than technical education;
- **Tertiary education:** This term is used similarly to that defined by Cedefop²⁰ and taken to refer to University studies and leading to University degrees;

¹⁷ Values quoted may be less than in table as not all mobilities of approved projects would have taken place by end of 2009.

¹⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 1997, International Standard Classification of Education – ISCED 1997, Paris, November 1997.

¹⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 1997, International Standard Classification of Education – ISCED 1997, Paris, November 1997.

²⁰ Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop, 2008

- **Higher education:** This term is often used interchangeably with tertiary education but is wider in that it includes all forms of studies at level 5 and higher on the Malta Qualifications Framework. Some vocational education courses are often included under Higher Education;
- **Further education:** This term is used to refer to those studies which are at levels higher than compulsory education in Malta;
- **Post-secondary non-tertiary education:** This term describes that level of study in general education which is at a higher level than compulsory education and which leads to entry into University studies;
- **Training:** This describes any organised learning experience as part of formal or non-formal education;
- **Initial vocational education and training (IVET):** This term is used to refer to that training normally undertaken after full-time compulsory education to promote the acquisition of the necessary knowledge skills and competences for entry into an occupation or group of occupations. In Malta IVET may or may not involve apprenticeship;
- **Continuous vocational education and training (CVET):** This term refers to professional or vocational development through education and training after having completed vocational education and training.
- **School-based programmes:** This term is used to describe, as indicated by UOE²¹, instruction which takes in educational institutions;
- **Alternance training:** This term is not usually used in the local education context although this type of education and training provision as defined by Cedefop²² exists within the local apprenticeship training;
- **Apprenticeship:** This term is used in the local system to describe, as defined by Cedefop²³, systematic, long-term alternating periods in a school or training centre and at the workplace, where the apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance);
- **Curriculum:** is a set of actions followed when setting up a training course: it includes defining training goals, content, methods (including assessment) and material, as well as arrangements for training teachers and trainers. In Malta, there is a National Minimum Curriculum, which is drawn up by the Ministry of Education and ensures that each and every student in Malta receives adequate education according to his abilities and needs²⁴;

²¹ UNESCO, OECD, & EUROSTAT, 2005, UOE Data Collection on Education Systems, Volume 1, Manual: Concepts, definitions, and classifications, Montreal, Paris, Luxembourg.

²² Terminology of vocational training policy, Cedefop, 2008

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Malta Qualifications Council, 2006, Glossary of select terminology of Qualifications Framework, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council – which referred to definition included in the EQF.

- **Qualification:** is achieved when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. A qualification is a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process. In Malta qualifications are being referenced to the Malta Qualifications Framework²⁵;
- **Skills:** are the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the EQF, skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)²⁶;
- **Competences:** A competence is taken to represent the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and other abilities to perform a function against a given standard in work or study situations and in professional and/or personal development. In the EQF 'competence' is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy²⁷.

²⁵ Malta Qualifications Council, 2006, Glossary of select terminology of Qualifications Framework, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council – which referred to definition included in the EQF.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

Theme 2: Modernizing VET to support LLL, internationalization and mobility

2.1 VET policy developments and priorities in supporting LLL

There is support for Lifelong Learning in Malta through the Directorate for Lifelong Learning within the Ministry of Education, even if currently there is yet no official updated Lifelong Learning Policy for Malta. Malta's policy with respect to education, and particularly with respect to vocational education can be identified within the Strategic Plan 2007-9 of MCAST²⁸ (which requires updating), the National Reform Programme regarding the EU2020 targets²⁹, as well as the Pre-Budget Document of 2011³⁰.

The Strategic plan for MCAST highlights the recognition that Malta needs to have vocational education and training provision that would provide a meaningful experience for the individual and establish a credible alternative to the university education without the duplication of provision or wasteful competition. It provides a vision that places a greater emphasis on the importance of vocational education and training related to Malta's current and emerging competences and skills-base, competitiveness and economic development within the context of a global economy. The MCAST strategic plan has been designed and developed to ensure synchronisation with the Government's drive towards better quality and accountable education and training system whilst ensuring relevance to the economy and due care and consideration for the environment.

The strategic aims stated for MCAST for the period of 2007 to 2009 (even if they still apply to date) included:

- increasing and widening the participation of young people and adult learners, raising retention and achievement whilst ensuring progression and equal opportunities;
- promoting efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and value for money and generate income;
- providing a safe, welcoming, friendly, client focused and high quality teaching and learning environment;
- working with employers, professional bodies and the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) to meet the training demands/needs of the economy;
- developing a single coherent internal quality assurance framework across all MCAST courses and provision and to facilitate and respond to external quality assurance;

²⁸ MCAST, 2006, Strategic Plan 2007-09: The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, a new era, a College with a clear focus, Malta: MCAST.

²⁹ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, (2011), Malta's National Reform Programme Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment;

³⁰ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2010), Pre-Budget Document 2011: Ideas, Vision, Discussion, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

- ensuring the holistic development of all MCAST students and an overarching entrepreneurial ethos, encouraging appropriate and relevant student initiatives;
- further developing the Management Information System to ensure the efficient and effective management of information and data;
- working with other stakeholders to maximize European Union Funding and thereby create education and training opportunities for Maltese and Gozitan citizens and promote life-long learning;
- building effective local and international partnerships, school links, university links, collaborative arrangements;
- committing to continuous professional development for all MCAST staff;
- expanding and building the College's infrastructure and services to facilitate the effective delivery of programmes; and
- becoming a centre of vocational excellence in the Mediterranean Region providing internationally recognized qualifications and promoting international understanding and peace.

The 2011 Prebudget document³¹ identifies lifelong learning as the guiding principle which should direct policy-makers towards concrete action for the achievement of excellent education and training measures. Efforts are to focus on creating learning environments which are open, attractive and accessible to all individuals, equipping all citizens with the skills needed to take an active role in social and economic life, targeting efforts at people who are not currently taking the full benefits from the education systems, thus putting them more at-risk of being socially excluded, and increasing mobility by removing obstacles and promoting experiential learning and active inclusion.

Government recognizes that to improve the quality and efficiency of education and training, it is therefore necessary to have a fully-functioning knowledge triangle, which includes education, research and innovation, to strengthen the capacity for anticipating labour markets needs, and to have a strong partnership between the world of education, training and work. This entails having a close cooperation between the fields of education, vocational training and the labour market, involving both the public and the private dimension.

The Prebudget document of 2012³², recognized that with the establishment of the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC), the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC) and the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE), the qualifications sector, as well as the further and higher sector, including vocational education and training, have benefitted from enhanced and research policy

³¹ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2010), Pre-Budget Document 2011: Ideas, Vision, Discussion, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

³² Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f' soċjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

direction and concerted efforts across all areas with a view to the further strategic development of these areas.

In the development of these areas, Government has implemented a national qualifications framework for Malta, which is crucial for the mutual recognition of qualifications obtained locally and abroad, within and beyond EU borders. It has also exploited, multiplied and developed the use of vocational training as an important vehicle in attracting more students to continue their education beyond school-leaving age and to develop their true employment potential.

In the coming years, Government will be intensifying its efforts to consolidate these achievements and to further invest and strengthen Malta's further and higher education provision. It aims to further regulate the sector with a view to fostering both public and private provision of further and higher education, to certify all types of learning that take place within further and higher education and to validate the knowledge, skills and competences that individuals are able to show that they possess, transforming these into qualifications for use within the labour market or for the purpose of further study.

The Government of Malta is currently working on the publication of a framework for the Lifelong Learning Strategy to present for consultation. The Strategy should set a number of targets to ensure that our country becomes a centre of excellence as defined in Malta's Vision for 2015³³.

2.2 Implementation of European tools and principles

Malta is experiencing development related to qualifications and frameworks for recognition which are also having an impact on the field of vocational education and training. The changes being implemented reflect developments and reforms which are taking place at European level. These latest developments and their impact can be considered to include the following aspects:

- **Implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF):** Malta has been among the first to draw up and develop its national qualifications framework, now known as the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF)³⁴. This qualifications framework is based on 8 levels and is linked to the EQF. The Malta Qualifications Council has also published a series of four policy documents entitled 'Valuing All Learning'^{35, 36}, two of which discuss the National Qualifications Framework specifically and the other on vocation and education qualifications with respect to this framework.

³³ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f'soċjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

³⁴ <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/>

³⁵ Malta Qualifications Council, 2007, Valuing all learning Volume 1: A National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council, <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?l=1>

³⁶ Malta Qualifications Council, 2007, Valuing all learning Volume 2: Guidelines for a Vocational Education and Training system for Malta's National Qualifications Framework, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council, <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?l=1>

The third document tackles Quality Assurance in vocational education³⁷, while the last policy document talks about the validation of informal and nonformal learning³⁸. In November 2009, the Malta Qualifications Council also published its draft Referencing Report³⁹ which describes the method that the country intends to adopt in order to be able to reference all types of qualifications (national and international) offered in Malta on to the Malta Qualifications Framework. The Malta Qualifications Framework has been adjusted and evolved to accommodate and include more qualifications from its first launch in 2007 and is still evolving as reforms in both the vocational and other sectors of education are being mapped on to it. Although to date, the Malta Qualifications Council does not yet have the legal capacity to accredit qualifications, it has already started level rating qualifications and short courses on to the MQF. In 2010, the Malta Qualifications Council published a consultation document on qualifications⁴⁰ to be awarded at national level. This document defines the different awards that best fit the Malta Qualifications Framework so that learning providers, learners, teachers, employers, trade union activists, parents and other stakeholders share a common language and recognisable standards;

- **Quality Assurance in VET:** The Malta Qualifications Council has been working in this area and has already published a policy document⁴¹ where it describes the principles and direction that it wants to take with respect to quality assurance. The Malta Qualifications Council has been awarded funds under the Leonardo call within the Lifelong Learning Programme for a National project to work on piloting the application of EQARF within some local VET providers and based on this experience, to develop a manual for other vocation and education training providers to assist them with reforming and aligning their quality assurance systems to those identified by EQARF. The project started end of 2010 and is to be finalised in 2012;
- **Accumulation of learning outcomes in mobility:** The Malta Qualifications Council has been promoting the use of learning outcomes for a number of years. It has also included this approach in the application forms which are submitted by training providers when applying for the level rating of their courses. However, so far, although advocated, this approach has as yet not been taken up at a national level and more work needs to be done. As the EQF National Contact Point, the Malta

³⁷ Malta Qualifications Council, 2007, Valuing all Learning Volume 3: A Quality Assurance Policy for Vocational Education and Training, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?l=1>

³⁸ Malta Qualifications Council, 2007, Valuing all Learning Volume 3: Frameworks for the validation of informal and non-formal learning in Malta, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?l=1>

³⁹ Malta Qualifications Council, 2009, Referencing Report: Referencing of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF/EHEA), Malta: Malta Qualifications Council, <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/referencingreport?l=1>

⁴⁰ Malta Qualifications Council, 2010, Classifying Qualifications: A National Awards System Referenced to the Malta Qualifications Framework: a proposal, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council

⁴¹ Malta Qualifications Council, 2007, Valuing all learning Volume 3: A Quality Assurance Policy for Vocational Education and Training, Malta: Malta Qualifications Council, <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?l=1>

Qualifications Council has, in fact, dedicated part of its activities to raising awareness about learning outcomes;

- **Initiatives for implementing a unit-based credit system for VET:** There have already been initiatives in the local provision of vocation and education training to implement the use of ECVET in courses. ECVET are currently being used in the foundation courses which are being offered by MCAST at level 2 of the MQF. In addition, the Malta Qualifications Council has obtained funding under Leonardo call within the Lifelong Learning Programme for a pilot project focusing on the conversion of both IVET and CVET, full qualifications and short courses, as well as in a number of different sectors, existing provision into the ECVET system. The project includes the main players in IVET (MCAST, ITS and ICMCH) as well as CVET (ETC) and will lead to the development of a manual which will provide support to all VET providers in Malta on how to convert their existing courses into ECVET. The project will finish in 2012;
- **Geographical mobility in VET:** MCAST has been very active in taking advantage of the opportunities for mobility which the Lifelong Learning Programme provides to vocational education and training in the case of Initial vocational training (IVT Leonardo Mobility). The same can be said for the Institute of Tourism Studies where students need to spend one year abroad as part of their training. In addition, both MCAST and ITS have also started to participate in the ERASMUS mobility programme, even if to a much smaller extent. The Lifelong Learning Programme has also been used to enable the mobility of teachers and trainers;
- The Europass Mobility has been taken up in relation to the Youth in Action programme, but there is less use of the tool in other areas of vocational education. On the other hand, there is widespread use of the Europass C.V. for employment purposes. MCAST is currently working on the Europass Certificate Supplement while MQC has commenced work to promote the use of this tool.

2.3 Internationalization and transnational mobility in VET

2.3.1 Policy Framework for internationalization and transnational mobility in VET

The international dimension of vocational education, particularly within MCAST is reflected in its Mission Statement which states that the institution is to provide a universally accessible vocational and professional education with an international dimension, responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy. In fact, within MCAST's strategic plan⁴², two of its strategic aims refer to internationalization and building effective local and international partnerships, school links, university

⁴² Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology, 2006, Strategic Plan 2007-09: Vocational Education and Training that supports the changing Economy

links, collaborative arrangements, with the objective of becoming a centre of vocational excellence in the Mediterranean Region providing internationally recognized qualifications and promoting international understanding and peace. The strategic plan also highlights MCAST's intention to build effective partnerships and collaborative arrangements by working with a range of providers, including schools, international partners, universities, professional bodies, and industry key players having roles and functions similar to MCAST.

The College offers vocational qualifications that are work-related and internationally recognised. MCAST strives to be a centre of excellence in the Mediterranean region and be a leading provider of vocational education and training for organisations, government institutions as well as international students. This is to be achieved by:

- Developing international markets;
- Reviewing and developing curriculum offers in response to demand from international students, organisations or government institutions;
- Ensuring that the education and training provision is of excellent quality and the certification provided is recognised at the international level;
- Providing comprehensive support services for international students; and
- Capitalising on Malta's strengths and potential.
- Establishing and maintaining regular contacts with regional, European and international institutions and organisations in order to promote collaboration and the implementation of projects and programmes.

The strategic countries with which MCAST is closely related are England and Germany. The close ties with England are reflected through the large number of BTEC courses which are offered to students. In fact MCAST is one of EDEXCEL's International Centres for BTEC. This requires close ties in order to ensure that courses provided adhere to the quality assurance standards required by BTEC. The strategic link with Germany is through Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft since they are the strategic partners through whom MCAST is offering top-up degrees at Level 6 qualifications within the vocational stream. None the less, MCAST has been closely related to other countries with staff mobilities with a wider number of vocational institutions across Europe.

The Institute of Tourism Studies also has an international dimension. It receives students from across the world as well as requires its students to have placements abroad. The Institute has relations with numerous other institutions all over the world particularly within the European Union. It also participates very actively in European Funded projects. The Institute also fulfils international standards in tourism.

The Institute for Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH) works in collaboration with the University of Malta as well as MCAST, and thus also participate in European projects, promoting mobility among both staff and students.

2.3.2 Transnational mobility programmes and schemes in VET

Both MCAST and ITS promote the transnational mobility of its staff and students. The main vehicles for this mobility are through Leonardo and ERASMUS within the Lifelong Learning Programme. In the case of the Institute of Tourism Studies, students are required to spend one year placement abroad in order to be able to proceed to higher level training.

Table 15: Number of Leonardo Beneficiaries approved under each mobility type for the period 2007-9				
Mobility type	No. of Mobilities 2007	No. of Mobilities 2008	No. of Mobilities 2009	TOTAL
IVT	86	49	87	222
PLM	14	69	74	157
VETPRO	37	45	41	123
TOTAL	137	163	202	502

It can be noted that the participation of vocational students at IVT has benefited considerably through the Leonardo project. MCAST has also invested in a number of projects for staff under VETPRO. The table below shows that the duration of mobilities for IVT has varied mainly between 2 and 26 weeks.

Table 16: Frequency of duration of mobility across mobility types for the period 2007-9		
Duration in weeks	Target group	Number of participants
2	IVT	44
3 - 5	IVT	129
6 – 9	IVT	3
10 – 13	IVT	6
14 – 26	IVT	15
26 +	IVT	9
TOTAL		206*

* Total is less than 222 as not all mobilities approved were implemented.

Table: 17 – Overview of VET transnational mobility programmes and schemes

Title of program/scheme and geographical coverage	Managing authority	Sources of funding ⁽⁴³⁾ and corresponding level of funding for the programming period	Start – end date (programming period)	Target groups ⁽⁴⁴⁾	Average duration of mobility per target group (in months)	Number of participants	Implementation mechanisms	Practices to recognize the KSC acquired abroad	Sources of information (including evaluation reports)
EU programs									
1. Leonardo IVT	EUPA – National Agency (Malta)	Lifelong Learning Programme	Variable	IVT students are chosen according to the approved project proposal	IVET Students (as indicated in previous table)	IVET - around 80 students	According to project proposal submitted	Transfer of credits	Hosting organisation and sending organisation.
2. Leonardo VETPRO	EUPA – National Agency (Malta)	Lifelong Learning Programme	Variable	Staff chosen according to project approved.	VET staff	VET teachers About 1	According to project proposal submitted	N/A	Hosting organisation and sending organisation.

⁽⁴³⁾ EU programmes, EU Structural Funds (e.g. ESF), National budget, Employer contribution, Individuals’ funds/savings, etc.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ E.g. students, apprentices, VET professionals, etc.

2.3.3 Arrangements to secure work placements for transnational mobility in VET

There are no main financial and non-financial incentives to encourage companies to participate in transnational mobility in VET as host or sending organisation. No particular measures to raise companies' awareness on the importance of participation in transnational projects have been made. There are usually only activities and dissemination by the European Union Programmes Agency – Malta's national agency which promotes its programmes with potential beneficiaries across the different sectors.

There are no particular frameworks at national/regional level to facilitate recognition of periods of work abroad, but European tools such as the Europass Mobility is usually used. Workplaces for transnational mobility is not only targeted at IVET but also often for PLM (People in the labour market) as part of CVT.

There is no database/registry of companies participating in transnational mobility projects in VET.

Theme 3: VET to support recovery from the Crisis

3.1 Overview

Different results were obtained across sectors, in 2010. A positive performance was registered in financial intermediation, other business services, hotels and restaurants, and manufacturing sectors, with the latter mainly reflecting the expansion in electronics and furniture and other sub-sectors. The share of financial intermediation increased by 2% in 2010. This contributed to around 37% of the total growth of Gross Value Added. Meanwhile, the manufacturing industry showed a positive contribution to total growth in Gross Value Added of 15% while the other businesses and hotels and restaurants sectors showed contributions to total growth of 9% and 8%, respectively⁴⁵.

On a less positive note, the construction, and the wholesale and retail trade sectors showed a slight decline in their share of total gross value added. The construction sector continued to decline, albeit at a slower rate. The wholesale and retail trade sector contributed 3.5% to growth in total value added, with the growth in the wholesale trade sub-sector being partially offset by a drop in the retail trade subsector. Nevertheless the sector continued to underperform relative to the economy.

Following the rebound in economic activity, employment increased by 2.2% during 2010 while unemployment declined from 7.0% to 6.7%. Those within the poverty line have suffered most, mainly due to the rise in commodities, and thus experienced greater hardship to survive in the current economic climate.

3.2 Effects of the Crisis on VET and corresponding measures

During the crisis, government has continued to invest in vocational education at both IVET and CVET level. This has been reflected in greater numbers of students entering vocational education at post-compulsory level, mainly attending MCAST courses at Foundation Level.

⁴⁵ Ministry of Finance, the economy and Investment, (2011), Bix-xogħol ninvestu f'soċjeta b'saħħitha: Pre-Budget Document 2012, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

3.2.1 Trends in Learners' behaviour

Due to the fewer opportunities of work in the labour market, many young people were encouraged to further their studies and stay on at school. The **Foundation courses** at MCAST which are open to young persons with just a school leaving certificate but no other formal qualifications are a very attractive alternative to unemployment. This has made it possible for many youths to choose a sector they would like to work in, and while they acquire key competences at Level 2 on the MQF, they can also start training in their preferred sector skills. MCAST has also introduced the implementation of ECVET in these courses, in line with developments at European level. Successful completion of this course also opens a pathway to higher level vocational courses which were previously not possible due to the lack of formal qualifications.

The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) has also continued offering programmes such as the **Work Trial Scheme** which seeks to integrate unemployed persons in a workplace for a period of 12 weeks so that these persons are able to receive additional work experiences. This scheme thus offers on-the-job training to adults looking for work.

Another ongoing initiative is the **Community Work Scheme** which provides long-term unemployed persons (over five years) with the opportunity to increase their income up to 75 per cent of the minimum wage. Participation is mandatory, and those who refuse to work without providing a valid reason are struck off the unemployment register, consequently losing their benefits. Participants need to work for 30 hours a week, with a total of 780 hours for each participant. It is proposed that such an initiative be extended to all persons who have been registering for more than six months, with participants' skills being matched with the community work or training selected for them.

In 2010, the ETC also started a new project aimed at youths – **YEP (Youth Employment Programme)** which provides additional guidance and counselling to youths besides training and preparation for the world of work. The programme is funded through the European Social Fund. It aims to be more inclusive in the provision of access to its services by reaching a greater proportion of youths in society including both inactive youths as well as other youths who are in employment. These groups of youths are in addition to those young job seekers which ETC is already catering for. YEP is offering innovative services since it has started to offer psychological assistance, career guidance as well as organise youth activities with the input of professional Youth Workers. These innovative methods are intended to help young people in different ways and in both their personal and professional career development as these go hand in hand when youths are making choices about their future.

The overall impact was an effort by government which resulted in more and more young persons as well as unemployed adults following some form of vocational training programmes with the aim of improving their skills as well as increasing their chances of finding employment. This has been reflected in the greater percentage of young people staying on at school, resulting in having fewer early school leavers.

3.2.2 Trends in Enterprises' Behaviour

There was a continued interest and uptake of use by companies to invest in further training of their own workers in order to boost their innovative and competitive edge in preparation for when the economy starts to pick up, particularly through incentive programmes funded by government. The government's **Employment Aid Programme** scheme, launched in February 2009 and ongoing till September 2013, was utilised by many enterprises of different sizes. With this scheme, through the use of social funds, private enterprises can apply for support from government to inject investment money in the training of their own workers. Thus, there was a strong incentive to invest in CVT, which was to the benefit of the individual workers, the enterprises, as well as to the country's economy.

In addition, this year, Malta Enterprise, which promotes investment and enterprise in Malta, introduced programmes that fund the training of personnel. Malta Enterprise has increased the number and range of staff training programmes, which it covers through its schemes.

3.2.3 Measures taken to address the negative effects or as a result of the crisis (by public authorities at national, regional, local and by social partners)

In 2010, Malta was starting to see positive trends in many of its economic sectors. It has recognized the need to strengthen further education and is committed to drafting a law on further and higher education in order to differentiate it from lower levels of education, with the primary objective of realizing the full potential of this sector. Vocational education falls within this sector and the proposed legislative structure will allow the further development of quality provision of vocational education. In fact, the expansion of the MCAST campus in order to offer better quality vocational training as well as accommodating greater numbers of students, is currently being implemented through the allocation of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Government has also recognized the need and contribution of quality career guidance education and has used European Social funds in order to offer professional development to career guidance professionals, who can either work in the vocational sector, or else have the professional knowledge to offer quality guidance to secondary students wishing to pursue vocational education courses.

Government is also committed to promoting the mobility of workers for further education and training, and although so far it has mainly invested in offering scholarships, is also now committed to engage into agreement with companies and entities to help promote worker mobility.

Through the restructuring of the Malta Qualifications Council and the achievements through the Malta Qualifications Framework, government is committed to developing more flexible pathways and better transitions between education and vocational training. This commitment comes along with the development of new Vocational Degrees by MCAST, which started first September 2009 and having the first graduates in vocational subjects in June 2010.

A closer link between vocational education provision and industry is currently part of a project financed by the European Social Fund. The project: ***Linking Industrial Needs and VET to optimize Human Capital*** is one example of how MCAST is tailoring its vocational and educational training to the industry's needs in order to help Malta remain competitive in the international market, particularly in difficult times following the recent recession. This project thus makes vocational education more responsive to industry needs by building links between the two, and consequently developing curricula which are closer to the needs of the various sectors.

MCAST has also invested in a programme to support students with special needs . This programme allows students with special needs to participate in some of the learning activities as well as encourage disabled youths to become more independent in preparation for potential employment later on in life.

Government also recognizes the need to restructure and strengthen adult education in Malta with the aim of promoting employability and ensuring a supply of skills to match demand in the labour market by means of key competences. Government has thus embarked on a long-term strategy to reform this sector as well as build collaboration with communities and vocational institutions such that there will be wide spread opportunity for further training across all sectors of education and particularly within the vocational sector. The Directorate for Lifelong Learning has been set up and the provision of adult courses as evening classes are being restructured in order to enable learners to obtain certification following successful completion of these adult courses. An increase in participation in adult education has been registered in the past few years (9.5%⁴⁶) among 24-35 year olds even if there was a decrease to 8.4% in 2010.

⁴⁶ Source: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=trng_lfse_01&lang=en

Theme 4: Historical background, legislation and Institutional Framework

4.1 Historical background

Traces of technical education in Malta may be found between the 14th century, and 1854⁴⁷. It mainly involved training in skills and craft work related to the building trade, cabinet and furniture making, silver work etc. The first state school dedicated to technical instruction, the 'Technical and Manual school' opened its doors at Valletta in 1893. It catered for young apprentices in carpentry, joinery, carving and stuccowork. However, attendance to this school was low and it was eventually closed down in 1906. A technical school was opened in 1930. By 1934, the syllabuses were raised to City and Guilds levels and students qualified as teachers of hand craft.

Following the end of the Second World War, provision of technical education was strengthened, making it also available to adults in the evening. The Industrial Training Act in 1952 provided regulation of the employment and training of apprentices. It placed a new responsibility on employers to invest in the training of their workers. The White Paper for Future British Defence Policies published by the British government in 1957 led to the opening of a number of technical schools and the number of students following technical education increased steadily.

In 1960, funds from the United Nations to build the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) were approved. It offered courses in the areas of Hotel Administration, Commerce and Business Studies, and Civil, Mechanical and Electrical engineering. It was eventually closed down and transformed into a 'New' University in 1977. Economic challenges in Malta during the 70s and international ideas on education led to restructuring of the compulsory educational system. Trade schools were set up with 75% of the time allocated to vocational skills for students of ages 14-16 and technical institutes were consolidated⁴⁸.

The late 1990s and early 2000 have seen a gradual dismantling of trade schools for 13-16 year olds and the strengthening of vocational education at post-secondary level. The result was limited and uncoordinated provision of vocational education at post-secondary level during the 1980s and 90s. This was due to vocational education not receiving the same investment as general education during this period. Consequently it did not grow in the same way as tertiary education and the result was a number of separate institutions which were remnant of past vocational education provision.

There was a major investment in upper-secondary vocational education in 2001 with the setting up of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). MCAST served to bring together a number of institutes, some of which already existed as separate vocational schools. This was done following recommendations made by an ad hoc working group set up by the Ministry of Education as well as the

⁴⁷ Sultana R., 1992, Education and National Development: Historical and critical perspectives on Vocational schooling in Malta, Malta: Mireva Publications.

⁴⁸ Zammit Mangion, 1992, Education in Malta, Malta: Studia Editions.

contribution which the European Training Foundation (ETF)⁴⁹ gave to the Malta Professional and Vocational Awards Council.

The ETF report identified local needs in vocational education to include the need:

- to set up a national system of qualifications;
- to strengthen the role of social partners;
- to support further involvement of employers;
- to develop training in new economic growth areas; and
- to invest more in the provision of vocational education.

The report recommended that these necessities could be tackled by streamlining all existing provisions for vocational education under a common umbrella within a college. Hence, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology was re-opened again in 2001 with this new remit. Today MCAST consists of 10 institutes in Malta and two campuses in Gozo. The MCAST campus is currently being expanded in order to be able to house more students in a state-of-the-art physical environment with all the updated technologies.

4.2 Legislative framework for IVET

The provision of vocational education by the State in Malta is regulated by Chapter 327 of the Education Act (2010) which describes how the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is to function. This Act is divided into 11 parts with Part VIII being dedicated exclusively to MCAST. Out of 136, articles 85-112 refer to describing the different structures of MCAST and their responsibilities.

The Act details the roles and responsibilities of MCAST, the areas of training that it should offer, as well as the roles of the Board of Governors, the Council of the Institutes, the Administrative Bureau, the Boards of Studies of the Institutes, and the Partnership office.

The Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) is also regulated by Chapter 327 of the Education Act of 2010. Article 132 states that the Minister is to ensure the existence of an institution to provide courses and programmes of education and training, including practical and work experience at the levels of further and higher education, that leads to recognised qualifications in trades, skills and professions as may be necessary in the tourism, restaurants and the catering industry and services. It also gives the Minister the power to make regulations to regulate the bodies, administration and all other aspects related to the running and management of the Institute of Tourism Studies.

The Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH) is regulated by the same Act but under Part VII, which regulates the governance of the University of Malta.

This Act can be downloaded from the following weblink:

<http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lp&itemid=18417&l=1>

⁴⁹ European Training Foundation (ETF), 1999, An Overview of Vocational Education and Training: Malta

4.3 Institutional Framework for IVET and Organigram

The main providers of vocational education and training in Malta at post-secondary level are the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) and the Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH). There are currently also plans to include vocational subjects at lower secondary education level. This is being discussed as part of a major curricular reform within compulsory education.

Decisions with respect to vocational education at lower secondary education falls under the responsibility of the central education system and thus under the control of the two Education Directorates: the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education; and the Directorate for Educational Services.

Decisions within MCAST, as highlighted by the Education Act⁵⁰, are taken by its various bodies, with the Board of Governors being the highest level at which major decisions are taken. The Board of Governors has as members, representatives of the different social partners as well as employers such that links with industry are ensured. There are also members of the Tourism industry within the Board for the Institute of Tourism Studies, with the current chairman coming directly from the sector. The Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage, as part of the University of Malta, will also have different types of representatives on its Board.

MCAST⁵¹ today strives to work within its mission statement ‘to provide universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy’. MCAST houses ten institutes. Courses offered vary in the type of study as well as training. Not only is there a difference in the level of study, but also in the work experience offered. Some courses form part of apprenticeship schemes while others have different forms of work placements or exposure. The institutes include:

- **Agribusiness**⁵²: This institute offers courses related to agriculture and animal husbandry. It offers courses at Foundation level, BTEC-First Diploma and BTEC- National Diploma ;
- **Art and Design**⁵³: This institute offers training in art and design, offering courses from basic level at certificate level or MCAST access course which prepares students for higher level courses within the same institute;

⁵⁰ Government of Malta, 2010, **CHAPTER 327, EDUCATION ACT**, ACT XXIV of 1988, as amended by Legal Notices: 98 of 1988, 63, 64, 135 and 136 of 1989, 153 and 156 of 1990 and 10 of 1991; Act X of 1991; Legal Notices: 66 and 153 of 1991, 67, 89, 90 and 105 of 1992, 21 and 117 of 1993, 5, 12, 110 and 149 of 1994; Act II of 1995; Legal Notices: 79 of 1995 and 165 of 1996; Act XVIII of 1997; and Legal Notices: 177, 181, 183, 184, 189 and 202 of 1997, 9, 30 and 172 of 1998, and 41, 101 and 102 of 1999; Acts VI of 2001, XVIII of 2002 and III of 2004; Legal Notices 144 and 363 of 2004; Acts II of 2005 and XIII of 2006; Legal Notices 293 of 2006, and 327, 391 and 424 of 2007; Act XXXII of 2007; Legal Notices 212 of 2008, and 21 and 85 of 2009; Act XXIII of 2009; and Legal Notice 102 of 2010.

⁵¹ <http://www.mcast.edu.mt/>

⁵² http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_agribusiness.asp

⁵³ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_artanddesign.asp

- **Building and Construction Engineering⁵⁴**: This institute offers training in trades related to the construction industry. Courses are offered in skills areas such as painting and decorating, plastering, tile laying, air-conditioning, masonry, and construction. These are offered at different levels ranging from Foundation courses which require no qualifications, to Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma and National Diploma;
- **Electrical and Electronic Engineering⁵⁵**: This institute offers courses related to electronics, ranging from electrical installations, industrial electronics, computer engineering to electronic engineering. These courses are offered at different levels;
- **Business and Commerce⁵⁶**: This institute offers courses in areas related to business such as insurance, retail, administrative and secretarial studies, as well as applied science. Courses are also offered at different levels;
- **Community Services⁵⁷**: This institute offers training in the service related sector. Courses offered are mainly in hairdressing and beauty sector, child-care services, as well as sport and leisure;
- **Mechanical Engineering⁵⁸**; This institute offers training in the area of mechanical engineering, motor vehicle engineering, aerospace as well as motor vehicle repairs. Most of the Certification offered is at City and Guilds, but there are also other courses at Certificate level leading to an MCAST Certificate;
- **Information and Communication Technology⁵⁹**; This institute offers training in the area of ICT. Courses are offered from a very basic level such as Foundation Certificate to higher levels;
- **Maritime Institute⁶⁰**; This institute offers training to those who are interested in taking up a career in the maritime sector, whether within the Armed forces or as an officer sailing ships. The institute offers courses in National Watch, Engineering Watch, Chief Mate, Second Engineer, Master Mariner, Chief Engineer as well as Probationary Cadet.;
- **Institute of Applied Sciences⁶¹**: This institute offers training to those who want to be trained in the area of laboratory sciences. The institute currently offers three courses for pharmacy technicians, applied science and in health and social care.

MCAST also has its Gozo Centres,⁶² one in Xaghra and one in Xewkija, which offer a range of courses. They offer some of the courses that are also provided by the mainland institutes, thus eliminating the need for students from Gozo to travel to Malta for their studies.

⁵⁴ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_buildingandconstructionengineering.asp

⁵⁵ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_electricalandelectronicsengineering.asp

⁵⁶ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_businessandcommerce.asp

⁵⁷ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_communityservices.asp

⁵⁸ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_mechanicalengineering.asp

⁵⁹ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_informationandcommunicationtechnology.asp

⁶⁰ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_maritimeinstitute.asp

⁶¹ http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_appliedscience.asp

⁶² http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_gozocentre.asp%22

Besides MCAST, the Institute of Tourism Studies⁶³ (ITS) provides higher and vocational education in the field of Tourism and act as stepping stone for further studies at tertiary level at the University of Malta. ITS is responsible for providing the Hospitality Industry with personnel trained to international standards. Courses are offered at different levels, ranging from Foundation Level, to Certificate, Diploma, and Higher Diploma. They also offer apprenticeships under the ESTS programme. There is training offered in a variety of services within the tourism sector, these ranging from food preparation, food and beverage, restaurant services, accommodation, hotel operations, travel agency to Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Vocational courses are also offered by the Institute of Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage⁶⁴ (ICMCH) which promotes and co-ordinates the pursuit of interdisciplinary training at professional, technical and craftsman levels in all aspects of conservation, restoration and management of cultural heritage. ICMCH makes use of Heritage Malta's Conservation Division's extensive facilities, providing courses leading to degrees conferred by the University of Malta as well as certificates awarded by MCAST.

A number of IVET courses offer apprenticeship schemes. In this case, the apprenticeship is not regulated by the training providers, but the Employment and Training Services Act gives this role to the Employment and Training Corporation. Part VII of the Act is all dedicated to Apprenticeships. This section gives the Employment and Training Corporation the power to regulate and oversee apprenticeships and describes its roles and responsibilities.

⁶³ <http://www.its.edu.mt/>

⁶⁴ <http://www.heritagemalta.org/icmch/index.html>

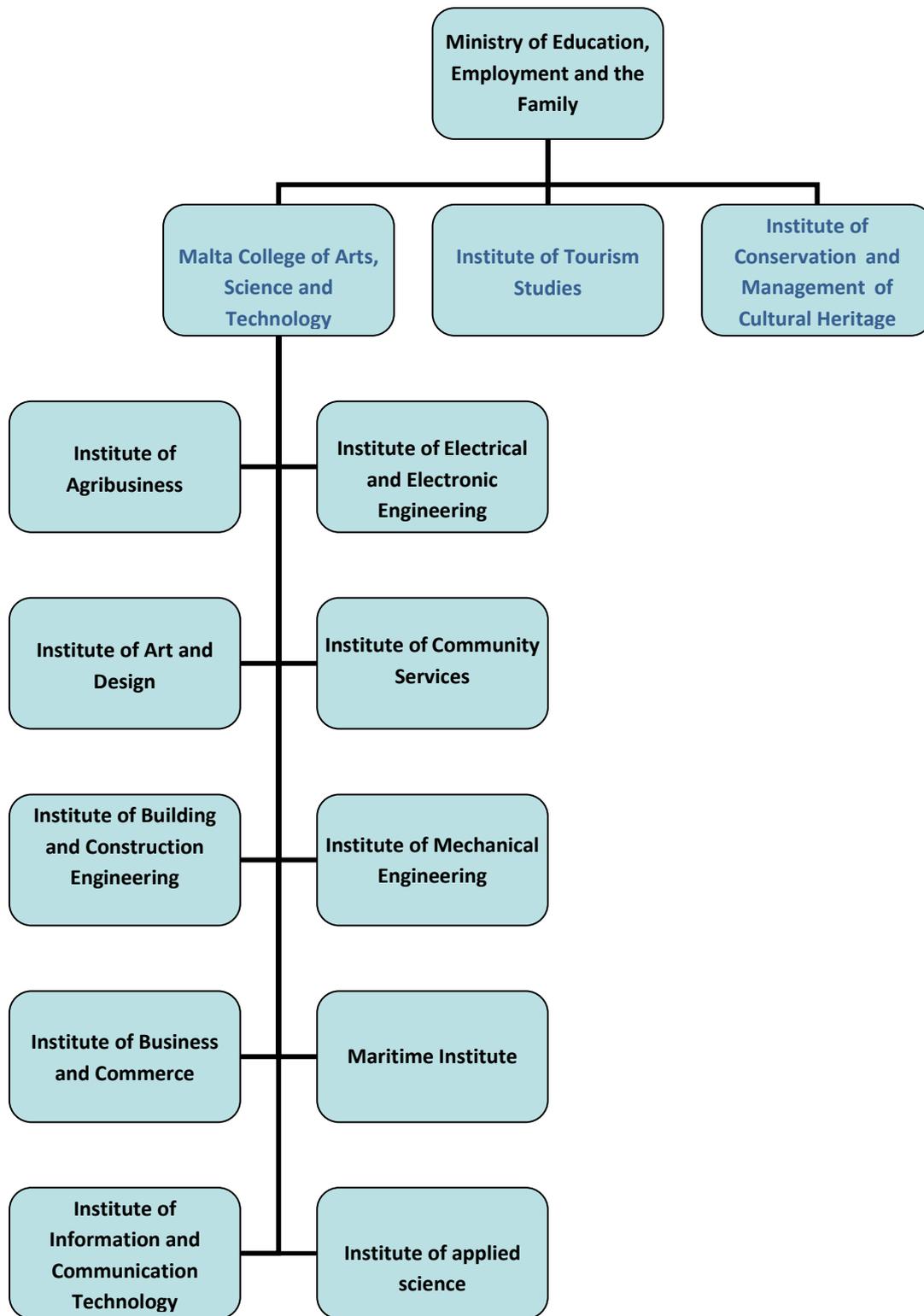


Figure 1: Organigram of the provision of IVET in Malta

4.4 Legislative Framework for CVET

The primary law of Malta relating to CVET includes mainly the Employment and Training Services Act (Chapter 343)⁶⁵. The Employment and Training Services Act provides the legal framework for a National Employment Authority, for the establishment of an Employment and Training Corporation and for the regulation of employment and training services. Article 16 describes the role of the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) with respect to provision of training through courses and/or schemes for the purpose of assisting persons willing to find work or improve their position, as well as collection of data from employers regarding the number, educational level, skills and aptitudes of persons which they would require for employment purposes both in the short term and in the long term. This data will assist ETC in providing adequate training courses or other schemes to fill the industry gaps. ETC also has the ability to remunerate persons participating in its schemes. Article 17 allows ETC to provide training courses and other schemes as it may consider adequate as well as approve such courses and schemes provided by other persons. It can also publish recommendations with regard to the nature and length of the training for any such employment, any further education required together with the training, the persons by and to whom the training ought to be given, the standards to be attained as a result of the training and the methods of ascertaining whether those standards have been attained. ETC can also make arrangements for the application of selection tests or other methods for ascertaining the attainment of the standards recommended by it and may award certificates of the attainment of those standards.

Legal Notice 347 of 2005 as part of the Employment and Training Services Act also describes the role and responsibilities of the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC). Although MQC does not regulate CVET or IVET directly, it regulates qualifications, particularly in the VET sector. The Employment and Training Services Act can be downloaded from the following link:

<http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lp&itemid=18411&l=1>

There is limited legal framework for the regulation of private CVET training providers. They fall under the regulations of licensing of schools as determined by the Education Act 2010 which includes all forms of educational providers. Quality assurance falls under the Malta Qualifications Council which so far does not have the legal power of official accreditation.

4.5 Institutional Framework for CVET and Organigram

CVET in Malta is provided through the different system and institutions. The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) provides training in vocational areas mainly to unemployed persons although its courses are open also to those who wish to further their education to improve their employment opportunities. MCAST has in recent years invested in offering more courses in the evening which serve as opportunities for CVET. Then one also finds a number of private training providers who offer courses

⁶⁵ Government of Malta, **CHAPTER 343**, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES ACT, ACT XXVIII of 1990, as amended by Acts XV of 1995, XVI of 1997, II of 2005, VII of 2006 and XXXII of 2007; and Legal Notice 424 of 2007.

in various vocational areas on part-time basis in order to allow people in employment to attend as part of CVET. The Directorate for Lifelong Learning with the Directorate for Educational Services also provides adult education in both general education, but also in a number of vocational areas as evening courses.

The role of social partners is through the presence of representatives of unions as well as employers within the sector on the Boards of the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) as well as on the Board of Governors for the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). Their presence ensures relevant decisions to be taken with respect to the provision of vocational education.

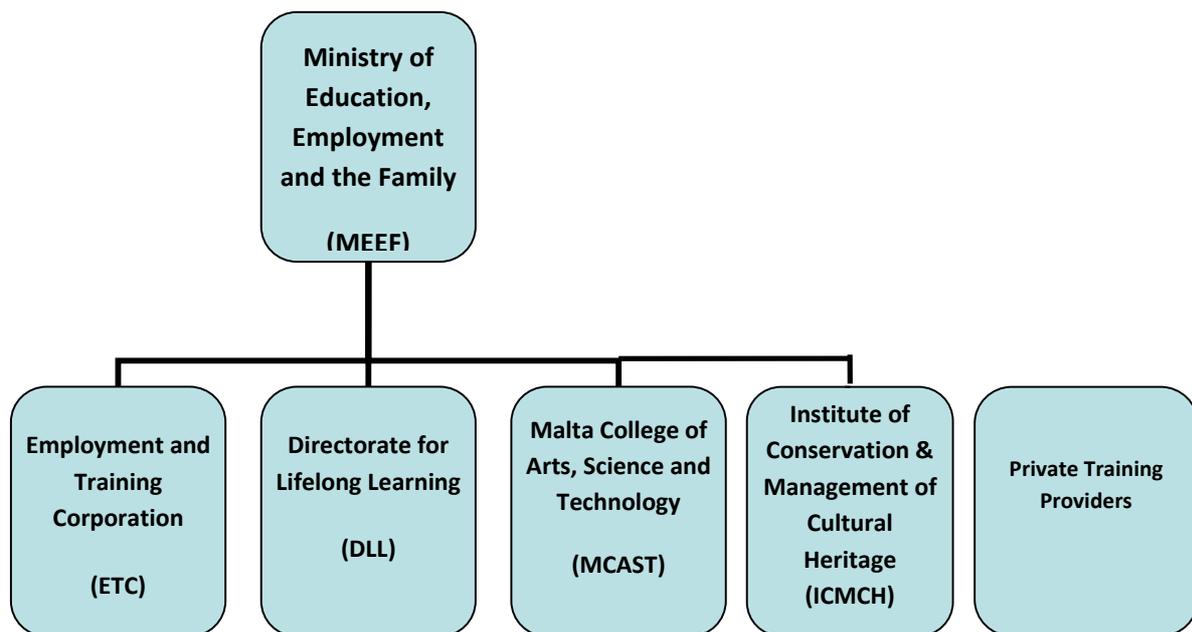


Figure 2 : Organigram for the provision of CVET in Malta

Theme 5: Initial Vocational Education and Training

The last decade has seen a great investment in IVET in Malta with the setting up of MCAST – the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology in 2001. This is the umbrella institution which houses different institutes providing state vocational education and training in a range of different sectors.

5.1 Background to the IVET system and diagram of the education and training system

Compulsory education schooling in Malta starts with primary education from the age of 5 and goes up to 16 years of age, when the student should finish his/her secondary school education. However, there is also provision of schooling for children from the age of three, with more than 85% of the children attending pre-school.

Primary education is six years long and consists of two cycles. The first cycle is called the early years and the final three years are called the Junior years. Education in the early years is based on play while in the Junior years it is more formal. At the end of primary education, children up to June 2010, sat for an 11+ examination in May with those who are successful moving on to Junior Lyceum (grammar type) schools while those who fail go to Area Secondary schools. As from June 2011, children will have a normal end of year examination at the end of primary education and all children will proceed to secondary school. 2011 shall bring about the education reform which abolishes streaming at primary level, the 11+ examination, and tracking in secondary level education.

Education at compulsory level in Malta is provided by the State (60%), the Church (30%), and Independent (private – 10%) entities.

Secondary education is five years long, and currently there are no vocational subjects taught to students at this age. However, there are plans to introduce elements of vocational education at this level as from 2011. Students finishing compulsory education have a number of different options. Those who choose to continue with their studies can either decide to take general education which leads to a tertiary qualification at the University of Malta, or else choose a vocational path and attend one of the courses offered by the Institutes within MCAST, at ITS or at the ICMCH. MCAST offers vocational courses in a wide range of sectors, with courses starting from Level 2 on the MQF, and which are open to those students who do not manage to acquire any qualifications but only a school leaving certificate. Those students wishing to pursue training in the tourism sector can choose to attend ITS whilst those opting for conservation work of built heritage can attend ICMCH. At University, students can obtain qualifications at levels 5,6,7, and 8, while at MCAST, vocational qualifications range from Levels 2 to 6 with the recently introduced vocational degrees.

Most of the vocational training courses offered at MCAST are BTEC courses, which are qualifications accredited by EDEXCEL and recognised on the U.K. qualifications framework. MCAST also offers a number of home grown qualifications, which are pegged to the Malta Qualifications Framework. In the case of Tourism Studies, courses lead to local qualifications or City and Guilds from U.K and are pegged to the Malta Qualifications Framework. Students in Tourism studies can proceed from one level of qualification to another and can also move on to follow tertiary studies at the University of Malta without any problems. ICMCH offers vocational courses in conservation of built heritage in collaboration with MCAST as well as tertiary level courses in conservation of a wider range of disciplines including paintings, paper, glass, ceramics and textiles through the University of Malta. The three institutions offer the possibility of apprenticeship for some of its training courses. There are a number of private vocational and education training providers. These institutions mainly provide part-time courses for persons already in the labour market and usually prepare students for foreign accredited qualifications such as City & Guilds.

Entry into University usually takes place following successful completion of two years of study in general education, mainly at Junior College, which forms part of the University of Malta, but also at Private, Church and one other State post-secondary level school. Students wanting to go to University sit for their Matriculation Certificate at the end of the two years. The Matriculation Certificate includes the study of two subject areas at Advanced Level and four others at Intermediate⁶⁶ Level.

The curriculum delivered by the different educational institutions is determined in different ways, depending on the level and type of training provided.

In the case of compulsory education, all schools in Malta have to fulfil the requirements of the National Minimum Curriculum⁶⁷. This document, determined by the Minister of Education, stipulates the entitlement of each and every child with regards to the levels and quality of education they should each receive. At the end of compulsory education, students sit for national school leaving examinations run by the Matriculation Board (MATSEC) of the University of Malta. The curricula for these national examinations are drawn up by experts in the subject areas, who also have experience in secondary level education. The curriculum for the Matriculation Certificate at post-secondary level, is also determined by the University of Malta and syllabi are also drawn up by experts in the subject areas and with teaching experience nominated to the syllabus panels.

Curricula at MCAST vary according to the way they are determined. In the case of BTEC courses, these are mainly determined by the foreign awarding board EDEXCEL although there is room for adaptation to the local industry needs. In the case of home grown qualifications, these are developed by the trainers at MCAST. The participation of social partners at MCAST is through their representation of the Board of Governors. In the case of the Foundation Courses at level 2 of the Malta Qualifications Framework, the curricula have been designed based on the recommendations of the Malta Qualifications Council which stipulate that a good percentage of the curriculum needs to focus on the development of the key competences.

At ITS, curricula are developed by the tutors at the Institute, a good number of whom are still working in the industry. Recently, further development in Tourism Studies have taken place through the

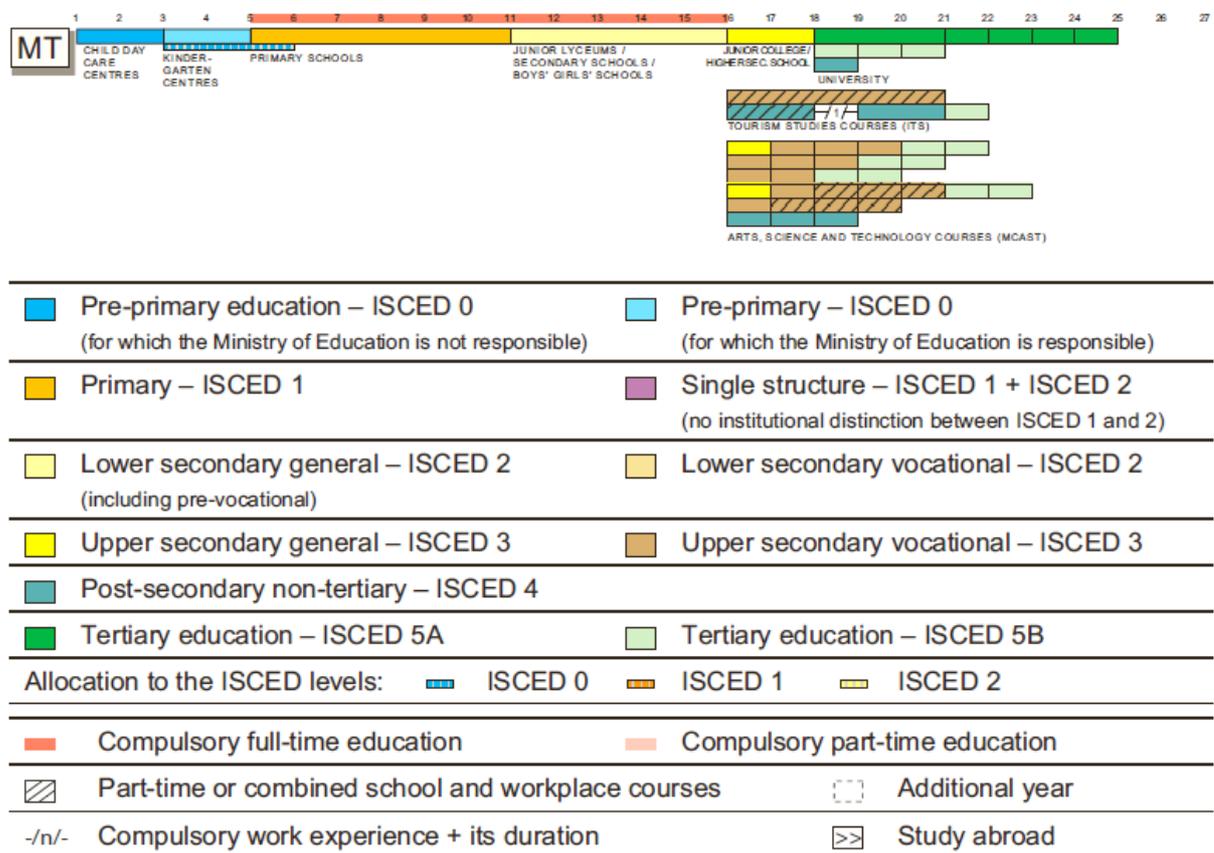
⁶⁶ Intermediate subject level is considered to be one third of an Advanced Level

⁶⁷ Government of Malta, 1999, Creating the Future Together: National Minimum Curriculum , Malta: Ministry of Education

establishment of further opportunities for studies for students who can proceed from vocational studies within the Institute of Tourism Studies to tertiary level studies at the University of Malta. The ITS Board includes representatives of the sector, who ensure that the curricula reflect the current needs of the sector. In the case of ICMCH, many of the tutors are themselves conservators and so working directly in the industry.

Quality is ensured in different ways in the various institutions. There is a Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education to ensure quality in the case of compulsory education. Quality assurance at MCAST is determined by EDEXCEL in the case of the BTEC courses with external verifiers attending the college regularly every year. Internal Quality Assurance is determined by the procedures required by EDEXCEL. In the case of home grown qualifications there are internal procedures. The Institute of Tourism Studies has its own manual for quality assurance which determines the procedures to be followed.

A summary of the education provision in Malta is given in the diagram overleaf and which has been taken from the Eurydice website.



Source: Eurydice.

Figure 3: Organisation of Education System in Malta (Source Eurydice)

5.2 IVET at lower secondary level

There is currently no form of vocational and educational training at lower secondary level, although there are plans for its implementation in the future. The new proposed National Curriculum Framework as part of the Education Reform within compulsory education and currently in the public consultation phase proposes the introduction of vocational subjects within compulsory schooling. This being said, there still do exist qualifications which are at Level 2 of the Malta Qualifications Framework, a level which is lower than that which successful students at leaving school level achieve (Level 3).

In this report description of provision of vocational and education training is given by the stage of educational institution and not by the Level of Qualification.

5.3 IVET at Upper Secondary level (mainly school based)

On finishing compulsory education at the age of 16, students can opt to take the path of vocational and education training. The main institution to which they can enrol is MCAST, which offers courses at levels 2, 3, 4, 5 and now also up to Level 6 to students depending on the qualifications which they obtain on completion of compulsory education and how they perform from one level of qualification to another.

The ITS offers vocational courses at levels 2 to 5 of the Malta Qualifications Framework. Vocational Courses offered by ICMCH are carried out in collaboration with MCAST and thus fall within the prospectus of MCAST.

Admission Requirements

Admission requirements for IVET courses vary according to the level of course offered. Those students who finish compulsory education without any qualification can proceed to any of the Foundation Courses at MCAST based on obtaining their school leaving Certificate. Entry into higher level courses will depend on the qualifications obtained by students as part of their Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) which are national examinations. Each course requires its own passes in specific subject areas and these are indicated in the course prospectus. The local IVET system, however, also allows students to move from one level of qualification to a higher level within the same sector. Vocational institutions also have a maturity clause, which allows students aged 21 and above to apply to follow courses at Levels 3 and 4, and 23 years and above at Level 5 courses. Students admitted under the maturity clause do not necessarily need to have all the specified entry requirements into a course, but are interviewed and the Selection Board will guide applicants to the best course to follow.

Registration and Tuition Fees

Attendance to IVET vocational courses at MCAST and ITS are free of charge although some courses require that students pay the registration fee to sit for the examinations in the case of the BTEC and City and Guilds qualifications. The government also gives students attending vocational courses a stipend to support their expenses during their studies.

Table 18: Information on existing types of education IVET programmes at Upper-secondary level

Type of Educational Programme	Admission Requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED Level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance Between School-based and work-based Training	Average duration of Studies	Access to other pathways
Courses offered by MCAST⁶⁸							
MCAST Foundation Certificate	Completed compulsory education + interview and/or aptitude test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulture & Animal Care; • Art & Design; • Construction & Engineering Skills; • Construction in Stone & Trowel Trades; • Hairdressing; • Care; • Electrical & Electronic Engineering; • Mechanical Engineering; • Business; • Computing. 	ISCED Level 2 (MQF Level 2)	85% dedicated to key competences; 15% dedicated to sector skills.	Mainly school-based with some practical experience depending on the sector.	1 or 2 years of full study depending on the level of education of students on entry into the course	Students completing course successfully can proceed to an MCAST-BTEC First Diploma
MCAST Introductory Course	Compulsory education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masonry Heritage Skills (<i>Riffied</i>); 	ISCED Level 2 (MQF Level 2)	Some key competences but mainly sector skills	School based with practical sessions	3 months	Successful students can continue the proper course in stone restoration

⁶⁸ Further information about MCAST courses can be obtained from the college website: <http://www.mcast.edu.mt/>

MCAST Certificate	2 SEC/ O-Level passes or MCAST Foundation Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trowel Trades (Painting & Decorating, Plastering, Tile Laying); • Construction in Stone; • Construction & Engineering Skills; • Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning; • Masonry Heritage skills (<i>Riffied</i>); • Banking & Financial Services; • Marketing Studies; 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 3)	Some key skills but mainly vocational skills	Full-time courses are school-based with practical sessions. Apprenticeships have an alternance model	1 year full-time study or 2 years part-time on apprenticeship	Some courses lead to entry into higher level courses
Other courses	2 SEC/O-Level passes (special subject areas –Physics, Maths, technical drawing/ graphical design) Or MCAST Foundation course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aircraft Structure and Repair Course; • Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Category ‘A’ License Course; • MCAST Aircraft Maintenance Technician Course (Leading to Part-66 Cat B.1.1 Examinations) • MCAST Aircraft Maintenance Technician Course (Leading to Part-66 Cat B2 Examinations) 	ISCED Level 3	Mainly vocational skills and content related knowledge	2 years full-time or else school-based followed by 12 months of work experience	2 years full-time or stipulated hrs of study followed by 12 months of work	Lead to license to work in aviation industry
OIC (Officer in Charge)	6 SEC/O-Level passes (Physics, Maths, English) Preferred – Geography, foreign language Or Probationary Officer Cadet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigational Watch; • Engineering Watch; 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with 12 months ocean going experience	3 years full-time	Can lead to entry into course of Chief mate or into industry

Chief Mate	Valid OIC Navigational Watch Certificate of competence y + 12 months at sea in that capacity +medical test, physical aptitude test and interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Mate 	ISCED Level 4	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based	1 year full-time	Leads to entry into Industry
Officer	4 SEC/O-Level passes (Compulsory English) + medical test, physical aptitude test and interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probationary Officer Cadet 	ISCED Level 3	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based	1 year full-time	Leads to entry into other courses
MCAST Diploma	4 SEC/O-Level passes or First Diploma in area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning; • Dental Surgery Assistants; • Pharmacy Technicians; • Computer Engineering; • Industrial Electronics; • 	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	Mainly school-based with practical sessions, some are offered as apprenticeship	Varies between 1-2 years full-time according to sector	Lead mainly to higher level courses but can allow entry into labour market
City & Guilds	2-4 SEC/O-Level passes or other City & Guilds depending on area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hairdressing (women); • Electrotechnical Technology; • Electrical Installation/Maintenance; • Diploma in Automotive Maintenance & Repair; • Technician Advanced Diploma in Motor Vehicle Engineering; • Diploma Mechanical Engineering (craft level); 	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Elements of key competences and Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions, or alternance in the case of apprenticeship	Varies, 2 years full-time or 3 years part-time on apprenticeship	Entry into the labour market

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in Automotive Maintenance and Repair; • Certificate in Automotive Body and Paint. 					
ITEC Diploma	2 SEC/O-Level passes or lower level ITEC Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty Specialists; • Holistic Massage; • Facial Electric Treatments; • Diet & Nutrition for Complementary Therapists; 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 3)	Elements of key competences and Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions, or alternance in the case of apprenticeship	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time apprenticeship	Entry into other higher level courses or the labour market
MCAST-BTEC First Diploma	2 SEC/O-Level passes or MCAST Foundation Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture; • Animal Care; • Printing; • Art & Design; • Health & Social Care; • Sport (Exercise & Fitness); • Business; • Engineering (electronics); • Mechanical Engineering; • Mechanical Engineering (Aircraft Maintenance Engineering); • I.T. Practitioners; • Construction. 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 3)	The greater percentage of training is vocational and less on key competences.	Mainly School-based with some practical experience depending on the sector	1 year full-time	Students completing course successfully can proceed to an MCAST-BTEC National Diploma
MCAST-BTEC National Diploma	4 SEC/O-Level passes or First Diploma related to area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture; • Design Crafts; • Media Production; • Civil Engineering; • Building Services Engineering; • Children’s Care, Learning and Development; • Health & Social Care (Health 	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Elements of key competences and Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions, or alternance in the case of apprenticeship	Varies – 1 or 2 years full-time. Some are also offered as part-time apprenticeship	Entry into the labour market or higher National Diploma

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies); • Health & Social Care (Social Care); • Sport (Development, Coaching & Fitness); • Applied Science (Laboratory and Industrial Sector); • Electrical/electronic Engineering; • Communication Technology; • Manufacturing Engineering; • Operations and Maintenance Engineering; • Computing; 					
MCAST Access Course to Foundation Diploma	4 SEC/O-Level passes Maths & English obligatory	• Art & Design	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	1 year full-time	Provides access to BTEC Foundation Diploma
MCAST-BTEC Foundation Diploma	A Level Art or 5 SEC/O-Level passes (Art obligatory) + portfolio of art work	• Art & Design;	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	1 year full-time	Provides access to BTEC Higher National Diploma
MCAST-BTEC National Certificate	4 SEC/O-Level passes Or related First Diploma	• Agriculture;	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	Alternance between work and study as apprenticeship	2 years part-time apprenticeship	Entry into the sector labour market
MCAST Advanced Diploma	MCAST Diploma	• Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning;	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	Alternance between work and study as apprenticeship	2 years part-time apprenticeship	Entry into the sector labour market

MCAST Technician Diploma	MCAST Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masonry Heritage Skills (Mastru) 	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	2 years full-time	Entry into the labour market
Courses Offered by the Institute of Tourism Studies⁶⁹							
Foundation Courses	1-2 SEC/O-Level passes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Preparation and Service; • Restaurant Operations 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 3)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with 14 weeks of work experience plus potential 12 month international internship	1 year full-time	Entry into Certificate Course
Certificate	SEC/O-Level passes (Maths, English & Maltese +ECDL) or Foundation course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Beverage Service and Supervisory Studies; • Food Preparation and Production and Supervisory Studies; • Hotel Operations; • Accommodation Operations; • Tour Guiding; • Travel Agency Operations; 	ISCED Level 4 (MQF Level 4)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with 14 weeks of work experience plus potential 12 month international internship	2 year full-time	Entry into Diploma Course or sector industry
Craft Certificate	Foundation course with lower than 65% assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Beverage Service; • Restaurant Operations • Food preparation and Production 	ISCED Level 3 (MQF Level 3)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with 14 weeks of work experience	1 year full-time	Entry into sector industry

⁶⁹ Further information on course types offered by the Institute of Tourism Studies can be obtained from : <http://www.its.edu.mt/>

ESTS	School leaving Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Preparation and Service; • Restaurant/bar preparations; • General Assistance 	<p>ISCED Level 3</p> <p>(MQF Level 3)</p>	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	Alternance between work and study	2 years part-time on apprenticeship	Entry into sector industry
Diploma	Certificate level at higher than 65% assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Beverage Service; • Culinary Arts; • Hotel Operations • Accommodation Operations; • Travel Agency; • Tour Guiding 	<p>ISCED Level 4</p> <p>(MQF Level 4)</p>	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical experience	1 year full-time	Entry into Higher Diploma or sector industry

Assessment

Most of the assessment in vocational education is formative and there are few written examinations. Project work and other hands-on activities form a substantial part of the assessment.

Progression

As has already been indicated, students can progress from one level qualification to another. In addition, all qualifications offered by MCAST and ITS have already been pegged to the Malta Qualifications Framework. This facilitates the recognition of the level of any qualification obtained by any local vocational institution.

Access to the Labour market

Not all courses lead to direct access to the labour market but are only interim qualifications as one moves from one level qualification to another. However, it also allows those who decide not to proceed with their studies to have some form of qualifications which may be used within the labour market. Since MCAST has been set up in 2001 and through experience, employers are becoming more familiar with the qualifications system and types of skills which graduating students acquire and hence, vocational qualifications are gaining greater respect within the labour market.

Since the setting up of MCAST in 2001, the number of students continuing with upper-secondary education beyond compulsory age has increased. The number of students in IVET has also increased, and although there was also an increase in the number of students in general education, a balance in numbers between the two strands has been reached.

5.4 Alternance Training (including Apprenticeship)

Apprenticeship Schemes⁷⁰ for vocational education and training in Malta are based on the dual system where the apprentice follows a training programme at a vocational educational institution while concurrently also carrying out on-the-job training at a place of work. Through apprenticeship, students acquire competences while they obtain a realistic view of the world of work. This experience, together with the theoretical training leads to a number of nationally recognised qualifications certifying competence in a particular occupational area. Over 85% of those successfully completing an apprenticeship are engaged in full-time employment subsequent to their apprenticeship whilst some have even set up their own business.

The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) is responsible for the administration of the apprenticeship scheme. The Corporation is responsible for providing a training placement, monitoring the student's progress and also carrying out a number of monitoring visits during the apprenticeship year to make sure that the training provided by employers meets requirements set.

ETC's responsibility includes: marketing of schemes with prospective participants and parents; issuing call for applications; promoting the apprenticeship scheme with prospective apprentices and employers;

⁷⁰ Further information can be obtained from the ETC website: <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2188>

assisting persons who wish to embark on an apprenticeship to find a suitable training placements; providing assistance to organizations wishing to sponsor apprentices; monitoring the on-the-job training of apprentices; and co-ordinating the trade testing process of apprentices on completion of their apprenticeship.

There are two apprenticeship schemes:

1. **Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS):** This apprenticeship leads to an occupational competence at technician level (level 4 on the MQF). At the end of the apprenticeship, the learner will have the competence to supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work.
2. **Extended Skills Training Scheme (ESTS):** This apprenticeship offers a wide range of opportunities to young persons willing to learn a trade or skill at craftsman level (level 3 on the MQF). At the apprenticeship learners will be able to take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study and adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems.

The apprentice, the employer (also known as the sponsor) and the ETC enter into a contractual agreement stating the rights and obligations of all parties during the apprenticeship. Apprentices are obliged to attend at a vocational educational institution to acquire the underpinning knowledge (off-the-job training) related to their sector. Public and private sector firms provide the on-the-job training, the latter employing the largest number of apprentices in both schemes.

Apprenticeship Contracts

Besides the maintenance grants, apprentices also earn a stipend that is paid by the employer to support their learning. Conditions of apprenticeship include the following:

- **Hours of Work:** cannot exceed the ordinary hours applicable to the employer's establishment. Time allotted to theoretical instruction is considered as part of the normal working hours;
- **Vacation Leave:** Apprentices are entitled to 2 working days for every 20 days attendance at the place of work;
- **Statutory Bonuses:** Apprentices are entitled to half of the statutory bonuses (June and December).
- **National Insurance (NI) Contributions:** Weekly rate of NI contributions payable by the employer and the apprentice: Under 18 years, 10% of weekly wage up to a maximum of €4.38; Over 18 years, 10% of weekly wage up to a maximum of €7.94;
- **Sick Leave:** Apprentices are entitled to 30 days sick leave, of which 15 days will be on full pay and the other 15 days on half pay. This benefit may be availed of only after the successful completion of the probationary period;
- **Overtime:** Apprentices are eligible to work overtime provided the necessary consent is provided by ETC. This will ascertain that the extra hours will not influence badly on the time the apprentice needs to either rest or study. Overtime rates are those applicable to full-time employees performing the same job. No overtime rate is to be worked out on a wage below the National

Statutory minimum wage. Overtime of apprentices below 18 years of age is regulated by LN 440 of 2003.

Table 19: Rates payable to apprentices under the Extended Skill Training Scheme		
Year	Wage (payable by the sponsor)	Maintenance Grant (payable by the Government)
1	€ 47.75 per week	€ 93.17 per month
2	€ 49.99 per week	€ 93.17 per month
3	€ 73.61 per week	Nil

Table 20: Rates payable to apprentices under the Technician Apprenticeship Scheme		
Year	Wage (payable by the sponsor)	Maintenance Grant (payable by the Government)
1	€ 49.97 per week	€ 93.17 per month
2	€ 52.20 per week	€ 93.17 per month
3	€ 75.87 per week	Nil

A one-time grant of €326.11 or part thereof is paid to cover expenses related to the purchase of educational equipment.

Certification

A Journeyman’s Certificate is awarded to those who successfully complete the apprenticeship: at Technician level to TAS apprentices and at Craftsman level to ESTS apprentices.

Entry into such programmes is usually limited to the number of sponsors, or the number of employers offering apprenticeship placements. There are instances when the number of students applying for apprenticeships was greater than the number of sponsors identified.

Table 21: Information on existing types of educational IVET programmes such as apprenticeship							
Name of Alternance Programme	Admission requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED Level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance Between School-based and work-based Training	Average duration of Studies	Transfer to other pathways
Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS)	Depending on level (see table 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Technician • Aircraft Maintenance Technician • Building Services Engineering Technician • Computer Engineering Technician • Computer Network & ICT Support Technician • Construction Technician (Construction Design / Civil Engineering / Land Surveying / Quantity Surveying) • Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technician • Industrial Electronics Technician • Jeweller/Silversmith • Laboratory Technologist • Mechanical Engineering Technician (Plant / Design & Manufacturing / Mechatronics / Operations & Maintenance) • Motor Vehicle Engineering 	ISCED Level 3	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	A number of days during the week are at work and the rest of the days following vocational education and training	3 years	Entry into the labour market or self-employed

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technician • Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technician • Software Developer • Stone Heritage Technician (Mastru) • Telecommunications Technician 					
Extended Skills Training Scheme (ESTS)	Depending on level (see table 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty Therapist • Commis Chef • Commis Waiter • Electrical Installer • Hairdresser • Mechanical Fitter • Motor Vehicle Mechanic • Painter and Decorator • Plasterer • Plumber • Printer • Restaurant/Bar Operations • Stone Heritage Craftsperson (Sewwej) • Stone Mason • Tile Layer • Vehicle Body repairer / Spray Painter • Welder and Fabricator • Woodworker 	ISCED Level 3	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	A number of days during the week are at work and the rest of the days following vocational education and training	3 years	Entry into the labour market or self-employed

5.5 Programmes and alternative pathways for young people

No other youth programmes or alternative pathways exist other than those identified so far. The only other form of IVET, which persons can follow, are the training programmes offered by ETC but these are considered as mainly CVET.

5.6 VET at post-secondary (non-tertiary) level (mainly school-based)

The main vocational education and training at post-secondary level are those courses offered at Level 5 of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) and where students are over the age of 18. This is because entry into this course follows the successful completion of lower level qualifications courses within the sector.

Admission Requirements

Admission into these Level 5 Qualifications leading to the Higher National Diploma is only available for those who complete the MCAST-BTEC National Diploma successfully. This means that this level of post-secondary education builds on previous vocational and education training. A similar pattern of progression can be identified in the case of ITS

Registration and Tuition Fees

The course of studies is offered for free by government, but students need to pay for registration to the BTEC examinations. In addition, students are also given a regular stipend to support expenses during their studies. There are no registration fees in the case of ITS.

Progression

Students who complete the MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma can successfully move on to IVET at tertiary level, leading to a Bachelor's level of qualification. Successful students at ITS can proceed to the University of Malta to complete a Bachelor level of studies in Tourism Studies.

Table 22: Information on existing types of educational IVET programmes at Post-secondary level

Name of IVET Programme	Admission requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED Level/orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance Between School-based and work-based Training	Average duration of Studies	Transfer to other pathways
Courses offered by MCAST⁷¹							
MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma	MCAST-BTEC National Diploma within the area of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Management; • Interactive Media; • Graphic Design; • Fine Arts; • 3D Design; • Media (moving media); • Construction; • Building Services Engineering; • Business; • Health & Social Care; • Electrical/Electronic Engineering; • Electric/electronic Engineering (electronic); • Mechanical Engineering; • Computing (software development) • Computing (ICT Systems Support); 	ISCED Level 5 (MQF Level 5)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	2 years full-time	Entry into the labour market And in some cases entry into Bachelors degree course
Courses Offered by the Institute of Tourism Studies⁷²							
Higher Diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality and Tourism Management 	ISCED Level 5 (MQF Level 5)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with work experience plus 12 month international internship	4 year full-time	Entry into Tertiary education or sector industry

⁷¹ Further information about MCAST courses can be obtained from the college website: <http://www.mcast.edu.mt/>

5.7 VET at Tertiary level (mainly school-based)

In September 2009, MCAST issued, for the first time, a call for applications for vocational degrees. This project is being undertaken in collaboration with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, a world renowned German research institution known by many as the developer of the MP3. Through Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, MCAST has acquired access to practically all universities in Germany. The call for applications for the first group of its vocational degree programmes was issued in the Institutes of Art and Design, Business and Commerce, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Information and Communication Technology.

Table 23: Information on existing types of education IVET programmes at Tertiary Level							
Name of Programme	Admission Requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED Level/ orientation	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance Between School-based and work-based Training	Average duration of Studies	Transfer to other pathways
Courses offered by MCAST⁷³							
Bachelor of Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in area of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic Design & Interactive Media; • 3D Design & Interiors; • Business Enterprise 	ISCED Level 5 (MQF Level 6)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	1 year full-time	Entry into the sector industry
Bachelor of Science (Hons)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in area of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronics Engineering; • Electronics and Control Engineering; • Software Development; • Computer Networks 	ISCED Level 5 (MQF Level 6)	Vocational Skills and underpinning knowledge	School-based with practical sessions	1 year full-time	Entry into the sector industry

⁷² Further information on course types offered by the Institute of Tourism Studies can be obtained from : <http://www.its.edu.mt/>

⁷³ Further information about MCAST courses can be obtained from the college website: <http://www.mcast.edu.mt/>

5.8 Language Learning in VET

A characteristic of the Maltese educational system is one where textbooks, references and the official forms of assessment are all carried out in English as from primary education level. This trend is also followed in VET provision. Thus MCAST courses based on BTEC will have all formal assignments and other forms of assessment presented by the students in the English language, even if the main language of instruction in the classroom may reflect a predominant use of the Maltese language. This trend is also followed in the other home-grown courses at MCAST and the courses offered by ITS as well as ICMCH. The use of English as a working language is reflected in all the documentation, including the course prospectus of these institutions, which is also published in the English language.

The teaching of languages is predominantly present in the Foundation Courses at level 2 of the Malta Qualifications Framework. This is primarily due to the focus on the teaching of the basic key competences promoted by the European Commission, emphasising the importance that all local students have to learn the Maltese and English language. Knowledge of English language is considered essential and it is necessary to be able to learn and be assessed in any sector specific vocational training which the students might wish to follow at a later stage. In the case of ITS, more importance is given to language learning due to the exigency of languages proficiency within the tourism industry.

There is no specific use of the language Europass or the Common European framework for languages.

Theme 6: Continuing vocational education and training

6.1 General Background

The updated document of the National Reform Programme⁷⁴ identifies government's key objectives in education to raise the general qualifications level, reduce early school leavers and attract more students and adults into further and higher education within a lifelong learning context. It is thus government's aim to have more adults engaged in further training either through adult education and/or CVET. There is recognition that improvements are needed in relation to lifelong learning among the lower skilled target groups and in order to ensure further reduction of early school leavers. This objective remains a crucial aspect of education as is indicated in the National Reform Programme (NRP) related to the EU2020.

The work of the main providers of adult education and CVET (the Directorate of Lifelong Learning, MCAST and ITS) are regulated by the Education Act of 2010⁷⁵ (see chapter 4). On the other hand the provision of training by ETC is regulated by the Employment and Training Services Act⁷⁶.

The NRP update⁷⁷ reports the initiatives taken by government in fulfilment to its commitment to adult education and CVET and these include:

- Developing alternative modes of delivery for those school leavers, who choose to work on a full-time basis while pursuing part-time/evening programmes at MCAST and ITS;
- Providing open, distance and e-learning programmes by MCAST and ITS;
- Developing a policy on the validation of informal and non-formal learning and setting up of Sector Skills Units;
- ITS to conduct validation of prior learning and work experience;

⁷⁴ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, 2010, National Reform Programme 2008-10: Annual Progress Report 2009, Government of Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

⁷⁵ Government of Malta, 2010, **CHAPTER 327, EDUCATION ACT, ACT XXIV of 1988, as amended by Legal Notices: 98 of 1988, 63, 64, 135 and 136 of 1989, 153 and 156 of 1990 and 10 of 1991; Act X of 1991; Legal Notices: 66 and 153 of 1991, 67, 89, 90 and 105 of 1992, 21 and 117 of 1993, 5, 12, 110 and 149 of 1994; Act II of 1995; Legal Notices: 79 of 1995 and 165 of 1996; Act XVIII of 1997; and Legal Notices: 177, 181, 183, 184, 189 and 202 of 1997, 9, 30 and 172 of 1998, and 41, 101 and 102 of 1999; Acts VI of 2001, XVIII of 2002 and III of 2004; Legal Notices 144 and 363 of 2004; Acts II of 2005 and XIII of 2006; Legal Notices 293 of 2006, and 327, 391 and 424 of 2007; Act XXXII of 2007; Legal Notices 212 of 2008, and 21 and 85 of 2009; Act XXIII of 2009; and Legal Notice 102 of 2010.**

⁷⁶ Government of Malta, **CHAPTER 343, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES ACT, ACT XXVIII of 1990, as amended by Acts XV of 1995, XVI of 1997, II of 2005, VII of 2006 and XXXII of 2007; and Legal Notice 424 of 2007.**

⁷⁷ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, 2010, National Reform Programme 2008-10: Annual Progress Report 2009, Government of Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

- Developing professional standards for vocations and trades by MQC using Competence Matrices and Occupational Standards in nine identified sectors, namely hospitality; heritage; construction; community care; agribusiness; art & design; electrical and electronics engineering; mechanical engineering and business & commerce; and
- Giving more visibility and status to Vocational Education and Training using a career guidance tool called “Vocational Qualification Package” (VQPACK).

With regard to Life Long Learning, the following actions have been taken:

- the Directorate for Lifelong Learning has been set up and is currently drawing up a strategy for Lifelong Learning;
- Opening of a new Lifelong Learning Centre, providing a wider choice of programmes;
- Entering into partnerships with Local Councils and voluntary organisations for the provision of adult training programmes;
- Integrating qualifications awarded by various creative art schools into the MQF; and
- Providing scholarship schemes for supporting adults in access to specialist higher education and training.

There is recognition by the social partners of the need and value of CVET and other forms of Adult education, with trade unions setting up their own foundations for training provision to their worker members as well as for other groups such as unemployed and inactive people.

The projects by the Malta Qualifications Council aimed at setting up the Sector Skills Units as well as defining the occupational standards have produced outcomes which are setting the path for regulating further the provision of CVET in the country. Through the whole process, MQC has involved the input of the different key stakeholders, including trade unions, employers’ associations as well as associations of different sector groups. There is wide consensus on the need for reforms which the Malta Qualifications Council is implementing in providing CVET with greater value and recognition as part of the country’s vision for lifelong learning.

There have also been developments with respect to the validation of informal and non-formal learning. A digital tool, to facilitate the process of validation, has been developed and piloted for use in the future. This tool has been created by means of the Leonardo Da Vinci project entitled INLearning.

6.2 Formal Learning in CVET

There are various forms of CVET and adult education provision in Malta. These include provision by the:

- **Directorate for Lifelong Learning (DLLL):** Within the Directorate for Educational Services (DES) there is the Directorate for Lifelong Learning which is responsible for Adult Education. It offers courses for adults in academic subjects, Art, crafts, IT subjects, Leisure, and music. These courses are offered as evening courses. There is also the Lifelong Learning Centre which offers academic subjects during the day;

- **Employment and Training Corporation (ETC):** The ETC offers courses to unemployed people as well as those looking for ways to improve their opportunities for employment advancement. Courses are offered in the areas of: basic skills; care workers; dangerous goods drivers; hospitality; ICT related; job skills; office related; private guards; and other trades. These courses are offered as either day or evening courses. ETC also provides CVET through traineeship which is a dual system of occupational training. Traineeship programmes are developed by ETC together with the employers, their associations or other professional bodies. The programme is made up of off-the-job training component and on-the-job training. The minimum duration of the traineeships is 13 consecutive weeks and the maximum is 52 weeks, based on a 40-hour week. The duration varies according to the programme.
- **Part-time Courses at MCAST:** MCAST is also committed to provide opportunities for CVET. It achieves this through its part-time evening courses, which are offered in a range of areas by the different institutes. As of September 2011 240 short courses are being offered;
- **The Institute of Tourism Studies⁷⁸** offers a number of part-time courses (for students over 16 years of age) designed to meet specific needs within the Hospitality and Tourism Industry. Courses offered range from short courses of few hours to longer-term part-time courses.
- **The Institute for Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage** also offers part-time evening courses in the area of conservation as part of the CVET.

All these institutions have in 2010 continued to promote the maturity clause which allows persons older than 21 to apply for entry into courses leading to qualifications up to **level 3** and those who are over 23 years of age to apply for entry into higher level qualifications without necessarily having the required entry qualifications. Government has also used European Social funds, enabling MCAST to organise regular meetings between employers and VET providers whereby industry and VET are linked in such a way as to identify skills gaps in a number of vocational sectors and hence facilitate the development of training courses tailored to fill these gaps.

Besides these main state-funded providers of Adult Education and CVET, one also finds a number of privately run VET providers which offer evening courses in a range of different vocational sectors. There is currently no official register of recognised vocational courses offered as CVET within the private sector. Main sectors of private vocational training include: ICT; Care Services and Human Resources.

Modes of formal CVET provision

Most of the opportunities for CVET in Malta are in the form of evening courses where workers attend classes after work within formal training institutions. It is only in some cases that classes are held during the day. Although government is committed to start delivering CVET through the use of e-learning, this is still at the earlier stages and far from implementation. Very few adult courses are held online.

⁷⁸ Part-time courses offered by ITS can be obtained from <http://www.its.edu.mt/files/9/Prospectus%20PT-2010-2011.pdf>

Types of formal CVET provision

Provision in CVET in Malta can be found in various areas. The Directorate for Lifelong Learning⁷⁹ is more oriented towards academic studies with some courses targeting basic skills. It also has a few vocational courses, mainly in the areas of IT and some trades and crafts. MCAST offers a range of both short courses and full BTEC qualifications as evening courses. The sectors of training include agribusiness; electrical and electronic engineering; trades, construction; IT; Art; Media; construction; mechanical engineering; aeronautical engineering; maritime sector. ETC offers CVET in basic skills; care workers, dangerous goods driving; hospitality; IT related; job skills; office related; private guards and trade. ICMCH also conducts a number of short CPD courses. It aims to develop this area further, giving opportunities to local and foreign professionals, technicians and craftsmen to upgrade their skills in their particular field of conservation-restoration and management of cultural heritage. The ITS also offers a wide range of short part-time courses related to the Hospitality and tourism industry.

Level of qualifications within CVET

There have been developments by some of the vocational education and training providers as they have started to map and level rate the courses which they offer for adults as evening courses. The MQC has started level rating short courses but this process does not yet cover all courses and will take some time to cover the whole provision of CVET. MCAST has already started level rating their short courses on the Malta Qualifications Framework as well as providing credit value in terms of ECVET. There has been limited level rating of the short courses offered by other training providers as well as the number of credits that are to be assigned to each of these short courses. MQC is currently piloting the conversion of current VET courses into ECVET through funds awarded under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. The piloting exercise will be finalised by 2012.

Admission into CVET courses

Admission into CVET courses varies according to the course level. However, there is always a maturity clause which allows persons working in the sector to follow the courses even if they do not have the traditional entry requirements. In all cases, the institutions believe that the applicant has enough academic background to be able to follow profitably the short course. The intention is to offer as many opportunities as possible to learners by widening as much as possible the entry requirements.

Quality Assurance within CVET

The quality assurance structures for CVET fall within the quality assurance system of the particular institution. This means that there is need for further development in the quality assurance of CVET. The MQC has issued a policy document which provides direction in quality assurance, but it still has to lay down the official standards in line with those indicated for EQARF. MQC, in collaboration with a number of local institutions, is currently piloting through another Leonardo project, , the implementation of EQARF into various vocational training institutions. A final product of this pilot project is the development of a Manual giving guidelines to be followed by all vocational education and training institutions once MQC takes on a greater regulatory role of the sector.

Evidence of direct employer support for VET is difficult to quantify⁸⁰. In a study conducted in 2001, a total of 1,683 enterprises participated in this exercise⁸¹, of which 991 or 59% provided continuing

⁷⁹ Evening courses can be viewed at: <http://www.eveningcourses.gov.mt/>

⁸⁰ Ammerman P., 2004, Achieving the Lisbon Goal: The Contribution of Vocational Education and Training Systems Country Report: Malta, Greece: Navigator Consulting Group.

⁸¹ National Statistics Office, Malta. *Continuing Vocational Training Survey*. 2001.

training (CVET) to their employees⁸². These results are limited to enterprises employing ten or more staff. 14.1% of the enterprises have in-house training centres. For the vast majority, training is provided externally.

Government, through the ETC, offers support to employers for CVET through the Training Aid Framework (TAF). This framework supports local companies by giving out financial assistance to those companies, which decide to invest in their human resources and training of their workforce. This scheme is available for companies in the private sector and the subsidy varies according to the type of training and the size of the enterprise. Training can be in-house or out-sourced and can be given in Malta, abroad or through distance learning. The Training can be a course at the University of Malta or at a foreign university. The training can even lead to a PhD. Self-employed persons can also be eligible. Each company can be eligible to a maximum of €250,000 each year.

The validation of informal and non-formal learning by the MQC is still in its initial stages. With respect to the validation of informal and non-formal learning for entry into CVET courses, this mainly applies to those applying under the maturity clause. In these cases, the work experience and learning opportunities gained non-formally and informally by the applicant are considered when it comes to the decision on whether to accept the applicant to follow a course or not.

Table 24: Participation rate in non-formal education and training by labour status (%), 2007				
WSTATUS / GEO	EMPLOYMENT	INACTIVE POPULATION	TOTAL	UNEMPLOYMENT
EU-27	38.8	12.4	31.3	19.5
MT	43 (p)	13.4 (p)	31.3 (p)	17.3 (p)

The participation rate in non-formal education and training by labour status shows similar trends as that for the EU27 average. It can be noted that the participation rate for Malta is higher among the employed and inactive population, but less so by those who are unemployed. In Malta a great percentage of inactive persons are females who decide on having career breaks in order to raise a family. This group still engages in forms of non-formal learning at rates higher than the EU27 average.

⁸² Sultana, R., Spiteri A., Ashton D., & Schoner U., 2002, Vocational Education and Training and Employment Services in Malta: Monographs Candidate Countries, Milan: European Training Foundation, available on [http://www.medaete.net/pubmgmt.nsf/\(getAttachment\)/1FBDB56DD32E7FDEC125716C0044B055/\\$File/ENL_MON_MT_03_EN.pdf](http://www.medaete.net/pubmgmt.nsf/(getAttachment)/1FBDB56DD32E7FDEC125716C0044B055/$File/ENL_MON_MT_03_EN.pdf)

6.3 Non-formal learning in CVET

Due to the inexistence of any regulation of non-formal education in Malta, as well as lack of a system for documenting the different forms of non-formal education, it is difficult to describe the provision of non-formal CVET with accuracy. The figures provided for Eurostat in fact are indicated as estimates.

The government of Malta is aware that there is a significant amount of non-formal learning taking place, of which part involves CVET. In its plight to give value to all that individuals know and are able to do, it is committed to the development of a system for the validation of informal and non-formal learning. This is recognised in the country's update of the National Reform Programme⁸³ where in the case of lifelong learning, government commits itself to developing a system for measuring and tracking formal, informal and non-formal learning activities in Malta, developing a policy on the validation of informal and non-formal learning and the setting up of Sector Skills Units to conduct validation of prior learning and work experience. This commitment is again repeated in the NRP document related to the Europe 2020 Strategy⁸⁴.

MQC has since published a fourth policy document⁸⁵ which identifies the various types of 'invisible' learning which is present in the country and provides an argument in favour of its value and the need to recognise and validate it. A framework within which this validation process is to take place is put forward. MQC is currently involved in a number of projects whereby a system for the validation of informal and non-formal learning is being piloted and sector skills are being organized in order to draw up occupational standards against which the validation process is to take place. MQC is working towards having a system where organisations can apply to formalize their non-formal learning into formal training courses with assessment and leading to a partial or full qualification related to the Malta Qualifications Framework. MQC has this year also started working on two Leonardo da Vinci National Projects to pilot the conversion of existing vocational courses into ECVET as well as aligning the quality assurance of vocational education and training institutions with EQARF. In these projects a number of CVET short and longer courses have been included.

Most of non-formal learning CVET takes place either at the workplace or else is provided by NGOs, trade unions or other voluntary associations.

There are no official institutions responsible for the provision of non-formal CVET in Malta. What one finds are Foundations, mainly set up by trade unions, to provide forms of training to workers. There are also a number of private CVET training providers who offer short courses without any certification except that of attendance. The result is that many times employers or individuals invest their time and money in such CVET training, following which they do not gain any form of certification that recognises the learning achieved. The tables below, in fact, represent approximate data.

⁸³ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, 2010, National Reform Programme 2008-10: Annual Progress Report 2009, Government of Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

⁸⁴ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, (2011), Malta's National Reform Programme Under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment;

⁸⁵ Malta Qualifications Council, 2008, Valuing all Learning Volume 4: Frameworks for the validation of informal and non-formal learning in Malta. <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/documents-publications?!=1>

Table 25: Participation rate in non-formal education and training by highest level of education attained (%), 2007				
ISCED97/ GEO	0-2	3-4	5-6	TOTAL
EU-27	15.6	31.4	51.5	31.3
MT	21.1 (p)	40.2 (p)	68.3 (p)	31.3 (p)

When looking at the statistics of the participation rate in non-formal education and training by highest level of education attained, Malta is faring quite well, with percentages higher than the average percentage for the EU27. Like the trend across all Europe, it can also be noted that the percentage participation increases with higher level of education attained. The total percentage of 31.3% for Malta indicates that the number of Maltese at level 0-2 ISCED is much larger than the number of persons at ISCED level 5-6.

6.4 Language Learning in CVET

Most of CVET tends to be short courses and focused on particular sectoral skills training. Opportunities of CVET involving language learning usually involves general education courses which are offered by the Lifelong Learning Directorate as part of their adult education courses. In this case, the range of languages offered are wide, giving opportunities to locals and foreigners residing in Malta, to learn other popular languages such as English, Italian, French, Spanish and German.

In addition, adult courses in languages are also offered by the various embassies or educational institutions within the embassies. The most frequently studied languages are the following: French; Italian, Spanish and German. There are also opportunities to learn other less common languages such as Chinese and Arabic in which interest has risen due to their value for commerce and business, as well as for employment purposes.

In the case of basic language learning for CVET, the main emphasis remains with English since this is the working language in so far as most products imported in the country are in the English language. Language understanding is thus crucial when using products, manipulating machinery as well as in communicating with clients.

6.5 Training programmes to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market

The main vulnerable groups identified by the Government of Malta and who are at risk of exclusion from the labour market included youths, over 40s, women returnees, persons with disabilities, immigrants as well as those with low skills and qualifications. These are the main groups for which ETC invests in traineeships and other schemes, giving the opportunity to these people to have on-the-job CVET as well as providing work experience which would increase their employability.

Youth Employment Schemes –YEP

This scheme is financed through the European Social Fund and provides young persons with information related to job search, guidance, training programmes, career resources and tools, tips and advice, virtual interviews, quizzes and on-line one-to-one consultations with career guidance practitioners. It also has Youth Employment Outreach TV programme giving useful information and advice as well as tackle topics according to labour market needs. ETC Youth Days with short workshops, challenges area, film forums and entertainment as well as exhibition areas are organized. YEP assists young persons in participating in different types of training.

Work Trial Scheme

The objectives of the Work Trial Scheme (WTS) are two-fold, serving both the requirements of the employer who offers to train the work exposure participant and the needs of the unemployed jobseeker. The ETC grants the participant 50% of the national minimum wage per week for the duration of the scheme. Placements can have a duration of a maximum of 12 consecutive weeks. The work experience will be based on a 20 hour week (4 hours a day) in all cases. Eligible jobseekers include: **youths** aged 16-24 who never worked i.e. new labour market entrants with no job experience in their field of job preference; Youths aged 16-24 with previous work experience but not in line with their respective job preference; Graduates and other persons who completed their studies and never worked in their field of study; inactive persons (i.e. at least a one (1) year break from last employment); registered jobseekers aged 25 years and over who have been unemployed for at least six (6) months; recently made redundant persons, i.e. within six (6) months from date of last employment, who would like to change their job preference. A person can only benefit from this scheme once within a particular calendar year.

The scheme offers employers the opportunity to evaluate a potential employee prior to employment, as a result facilitating prospective recruitment; 20 hours of work exposure per week, for a maximum of 12 weeks in exchange of work experience, the advantage to train and mould a potential employee's attitude and behaviour in conformance with the organizational culture. This is especially important when there is a shortfall of specialized workers in a particular sector. No financial costs are incurred by the employer during the training period, giving him/her the opportunity to overcome the skills gap by getting the jobseekers' skills in line with the needs of the company prior **to his/her** commitment to employ.

Bridging the Gap Scheme

Bridging the Gap is designed to support a trainee in the transition period from unemployment to employment. It allows the employer to evaluate the performance of the trainee in the workplace, prior to proper engagement. The scheme offers the trainee a period of work exposure with an employer to enable him/her to demonstrate the skills needed for a particular job. The employer and ETC enter into an agreement regarding the work exposure period, whereby a trainee is placed on the scheme with the prospect of employment. The programme supports and targets disadvantaged groups to enhance their capabilities to re-integrate into labour market. Those who can benefit from this scheme include: Registered Disabled Persons who are registering as unemployed; Former substance abusers; former offenders; correctional facility inmates on leave; and other vulnerable groups. The participant will gain workplace skills required by employers, have access to employment opportunities and receive a weekly allowance of 80% of the current national minimum wage from ETC while renouncing the rights to any Social Security benefits throughout the work exposure phase.

Traineeships

Traineeship is a dual system of occupational training targeted at new labour market entrants, unemployed or employees involved in restructuring exercises. ETC offers this flexible training to supplement skills shortages. The programmes are developed by ETC together with the employers, their associations or other professional bodies. The programme is made up of off-the-job training component and on-the-job training. The content and occupational standards of this training programme are drawn up after consultation with employer. On finishing the programme trainees sit for a competency test and receive certification. The minimum duration of the traineeships is 13 consecutive weeks and the maximum is 52 weeks, based on a 40-hour week. The duration varies according to the programme. The entry requirements vary according to the traineeship, however, such requirements are kept to a minimum to avoid unnecessary hurdles. A traineeship cannot be embarked upon unless an employer is available prior to the start of the traineeship. Employed traineeship applicants, whether they are referred by their employer or apply on their own have to accept off-the-job training delivered by ETC or approved training providers. Their respective employers provide on-the-job training. Persons following a traineeship are at least entitled to the respective national statutory minimum wage. Conditions of work are safeguarded by the respective laws of Malta. Throughout the whole traineeship, ETC pays a training subsidy of 40% of the weekly national statutory minimum wage for the duration of the training period. The training subsidy is increased to 50% of the weekly minimum wage in case of disadvantaged groups. Only employers of trainees, who are registered unemployed upon embarking on a traineeship, are eligible for this subsidy. On completion of the traineeship, trainees are assessed by a Trade Testing Board to test the standards of occupational competence reached. Those who show proficiency in a range of skills making up an occupation are awarded a Certificate of Achievement.

	Unemployed	Duration	Off Job Trg.	Entry Qualifications
Woodwork Skills	Yes	16 wksx 40 hrs	8 hrsx week	Completed. Compulsory Educ.; Sch. Leaving Cert.; Able in Numeracy, Eng & Maltese Skills; Placement Interview
Sales Persons	Yes	13 wksx 40 hrs	8 hrsx week	Completed. Compulsory Educ; Sch. Leaving Cert.; Able in Numeracy, Eng. & Maltese Skills; Placement Interview.
Freight/Shipping	Yes	15 wksx 40 hrs	8 hrsx week	5 Passes at O-Level; Certs/evidence in use of pc applications; Placement Interview.
Office Skills	Yes	20 wksx 40 hrs	8 hrsx week	5 Passes at O-Level; ECDL 2,3,4 & 7; Placement Interview.
Care for the Elderly	Yes	27 wksx 40 hrs	8 hrsx week	School Leaving Certificate; Test in Eng & Maltese Languages; Placement Interview.

Theme 7: Training VET teachers and Trainers

7.1 Priorities in training VET teachers and trainers

Recent developments in the training of VET teachers and trainers included the initiative taken up by MCAST through a project funded under European Social funds which have enabled existing teaching staff to further their studies at Masters level in view of professionalising teaching staff for the introduction of vocational degrees which started in September 2009. MCAST, through the same project, has also invested in further training of its staff in pedagogy through a post-graduate course at level 7 of the MQF. In addition, MCAST continues to encourage its staff to invest in further education and training. This training initiative was a one-time effort and so far no official training programme for vocational staff exists in Malta.

MCAST is also promoting the use of learning outcomes. It is also involved in a Leonardo project (ECVET) where courses and qualifications offered will be converted into ECVET which include the description of learning achieved in terms of learning outcomes.

7.2 Teachers and trainers in IVET

There is recognition that teachers in VET must be well qualified in order to fulfil quality assurance aspects of vocational and education training. This aspect has been the focus of both MCAST as well as of ITS. In the case of ICMCH, the structures reflect those present within the University of Malta.

7.2.1 Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in IVET

Teachers at both ITS and MCAST can be holding positions of Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers, and Senior Lecturers. ITS does not have its own teacher-trainers. When organising in-service training of staff, ITS usually uses the expertise from within the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta.

MCAST, as indicated in the table overleaf, is the institution with the majority of IVET teachers in Malta. In order to provide in-service training to its staff, MCAST has set up the VTTU – Vocational Teacher Training Unit. The mission statement of this unit within the Professional Development Centre is to provide quality and state-of-the-art pedagogical training to staff in reflection of a constantly changing

society thus enabling them to fully develop their own individual potential and talents within the context of the college and related industry. This aim is also highlighted in MCAST's strategic plan⁸⁶.

Table 27: Number of Teachers at MCAST in 2006 as indicated in official statistics⁸⁷

Name of Institute	Assistant Lecturer	Lecturer	Senior Lecturer
Agribusiness Institute	5	1	0
Institute of Art and Design	19	0	0
Inclusive Education Unit	2	0	0
VTTU	0	2	1
Basic Skills Unit	9	1	1
Institute of Building and Construction Engineering	37	1	0
Institute of Business and Commerce	56	11	0
Institute of Mechanical Engineering	27	0	0
Maritime Institute	1	2	0
Institute of Information and Communication Technology	25	2	0
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering	26	0	0
Institute of Community Services	25	1	0
Gozo Centre	20	0	0
Total	252	21	2

Table 28: Types of Teachers within IVET in Malta⁸⁸

Persons with extensive knowledge and trade skills as a result of many years of experience – no formal VET teacher-training;
Persons with extensive knowledge and trade skills as a result of many years of experience – formal BTEC VET teacher-training;
Persons with a Bachelor's Degree in a vocational area (e.g. engineering) but no formal teacher-training;
Persons with an Education degree but education training is not specifically to teach within the VET sector
Persons with an Education degree and with a Masters (thesis related to VET sector)

⁸⁶ Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology, 2006, Strategic Plan 2007-09: Vocational Education and Training that supports the changing Economy

⁸⁷ National Statistics Office (2010), Education Statistics 2006, Malta: National Statistics Office.

⁸⁸ A number of these staff have undergone in-service teacher training in VET as part of MCAST initiatives.

7.2.2 Pre-service and in-service training of IVET teachers and trainers

There is no official provision of pre-service training of IVET teachers. The main teacher-training provision in Malta is that run by the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. The Faculty of Education offers various paths into the teaching profession. The courses which it runs include: Bachelor of Education (Hons.) (B.Ed.(Hons.)) primary track which prepares teachers for primary level of education; Bachelor of Education (Hons.) (B.Ed (Hons.)) secondary track which prepares students to teach one or two subjects at secondary level; or else a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) which is also oriented towards teachers' learning at secondary level.

The Bachelor of Education (Hons) courses are both four year full-time courses. The PGCE is a nine month course which is offered to students who have already obtained a Bachelor's degree (B.A. or B.Sc.) in their subject area(s) for which they are then trained to teach.

The Faculty of Education currently does not run any teacher-training courses which are directed to preparing teachers for the vocational sector.

Teachers teaching in the VET sector will possibly be graduates from the Faculty of Education. Primary B.Ed. (Hons) students have been recruited to teach basic skills alongside secondary level teachers graduating in the subjects taught in some of the institutes. This means that MCAST has a mix of teachers ranging from those who are knowledgeable in the trade/technique being taught and thus come from the Industry side to graduates from the Faculty of Education as Primary/secondary teachers. Those teachers having knowledge of the particular trade would not necessarily have a tertiary qualification or pre-service teacher-training either. One also finds teachers with a tertiary qualification such as engineers but without any pre-service teacher training or else teachers with pre-service teacher training from the Faculty of Education. None of the teachers start teaching VET with a pre-service qualification in teacher-training at VET level because this type of pre-service teacher-training is currently not available in Malta.

VET teacher-trainers can be identified within the VTTU – Vocational Teacher Training Unit within MCAST. These are persons who have been educated within the Faculty of Education and have mainly a Masters in Education level qualifications and coming from the VET sector.

A good number of teachers are attracted to teach at MCAST. However, like any other educational Institution, MCAST also has a good number of attrition as staff moves, mainly to either Junior College or the University of Malta, which are more attractive institutions for teachers.

In the case of in-service VET teacher-training, the VTTU is responsible for organising this for the teaching staff within MCAST. Since MCAST has been set up, it has chosen the Edexcel/BTEC Vocational Teacher Framework as the vehicle to achieve a Certificate in Further Education Teaching (FE) having international recognition. The qualification has the joint badge of Edexcel and MCAST. This professional qualification in FE teaching is designed to provide focused and specialist vocational programmes with a clear work-related emphasis. The qualification provides a vocational programme of study that meets the individual needs of candidates related to their current vocational area of specialisation. There is a strong emphasis on the development of practical skills alongside the development of requisite knowledge and understanding in further education and training. The certification, which is a qualification at British

National Vocational Qualification Level 5, is offered to MCAST assistant lecturers as part of their Continuous Professional Development.

More recently, MCAST has obtained funding from the European Social Fund which covers the development and delivery of a Post-graduate certificate in Education within the Vocational Sector for its Lecturing Staff who already hold a Bachelor's Degree, as well as a training course for those who are not graduates.

Teacher-trainers for delivering this course have been recruited on a service contract and were required to possess a minimum of Masters level qualification in Education. The collective agreement for teaching staff at MCAST makes in-service training a requirement of teaching staff's work obligations⁸⁹.

7.3 Types of teachers and trainers in CVET

7.3.1 Teachers, trainers and training facilitators in CVET

Most of the teachers teaching within CVET at MCAST and ITS are usually full-time staff at these VET institutions and consequently fall within the same type of teachers as for IVET provision.

In the case of other CVET providers such as ETC and DLLL, teachers would be similar to those within MCAST and ITS. The main difference is that a higher percentage of the teachers would have post-graduate studies in the area of Adult Education, particularly at DLLL, since there is greater provision of training in basic skills and academic studies than CVET. This is due to the fact that the Faculty of Education caters for the need to train teachers working within the sector of Adult Education.

ETC training staff is normally knowledgeable in the areas they teach, but – as is common in most LLL sectors in Malta – they tend to have little training in adult education methods. The Faculty of Education's Adult Education Programme has entered into a partnership with the ETC and offered Diploma and Masters-level courses in Adult Training and Development⁹⁰.

⁸⁹ MCAST & MUT, 2007, Collective Agreement between the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Malta Union of Teachers (MUT) On the Full-time and Contract Academic Staff of the College.

⁹⁰ Sultana, R., Spiteri A., Ashton D., & Schoner U., 2002, Vocational Education and Training and Employment Services in Malta: Monographs Candidate Countries, Milan: European Training Foundation, available on [http://www.medaete.net/pubmgmt.nsf/\(getAttachment\)/1EBDB56DD32E7FDEC125716C0044B055/\\$File/ENL_MON_MT_03_EN.pdf](http://www.medaete.net/pubmgmt.nsf/(getAttachment)/1EBDB56DD32E7FDEC125716C0044B055/$File/ENL_MON_MT_03_EN.pdf)

Table 29: Types of Teachers within IVET in Malta
Persons with extensive knowledge and trade skills as a result of many years of experience – no formal VET teacher-training;
Persons with extensive knowledge and trade skills as a result of many years of experience – formal BTEC VET teacher-training;
Persons with a Bachelor’s Degree in a vocational area (e.g. engineering) but no formal teacher-training;
Persons with an Education degree but education training is not specifically to teach within the VET sector
Persons with an Education degree and with a Masters/Post-graduate in Adult Education.

7.3.2 Pre-service and in-service training of CVET teachers and Trainers

In the case of in-service training for CVET, this is mainly included with the other initiatives which MCAST is taking up with its staff, who are also responsible for teaching IVET. In this way, VET trainers have teacher training within the VET strand as a result of the in-service courses which MCAST has organised for its staff.

In the area of adult education, the Faculty of Education has developed post-graduate diplomas as well as Masters in Education courses within Adult Education. These courses have ensured the presence of specialised people in Adult Education among teaching staff in the sector. These courses have attracted both CVET teachers as well as those teachers who teach academic subjects within the Adult Education sector.

The Directorate for Lifelong Learning regularly organises short in-service training sessions for adult educators. These sessions are organised around 2-3 times a year. The topics tackled in these in-service sessions usually target issues which are relevant to the adult educator’s work.

Theme 8: Matching VET provision (skills) with labour market needs (jobs)

8.1 Systems and mechanisms for the anticipation of skills needs

There is no specific institutional framework for anticipation of skills needs in Malta. The main characteristic of Malta's economy is its rapid changing nature and this many times makes it very difficult to predict future skills needs. This does not mean, however, that there is no link between education and training, and industry. There are instruments for acquiring some data about the skills needs and labour forecasting at national level. These are mainly the labour market statistics produced by the National Statistics Office (NSO) in Malta. NSO produces data derived from scientific surveys based on international methodologies and criteria, such as the Labour Force Surveys. It also publishes employment-related administrative data collected by ETC, such as the regular updates on the gainfully occupied population and registered unemployed⁹¹. Although these instruments do not forecast future skills needs, they give a snapshot of the current situation of economic activity.

The Central Bank of Malta also carries out quarterly surveys among employers within the various economic sectors, forecasting their short-term employment needs. Similarly, the Malta Chamber of Commerce Industry and Enterprise compiles a monthly 'Industry trends survey', based on a selected sample of local operators in the manufacturing industry. In this survey, respondents express their short-term expectations on topics including their labour force needs.

The forecasting of labour needs in particular sectors is often based on one-off, ad-hoc studies, sometimes forming part of new policy and strategy documents about a specific sector. Examples of studies carried out on skills need include the ICT⁹² and the environment⁹³ sectors⁹⁴.

However valid these studies may be, they cannot be used to extrapolate long-term future needs. This is mainly due to Malta's economic scenario where developments and unpredictable changes tend to occur at a fast rate⁹⁵.

⁹¹ Debono M., (2008), Improving the capacity to anticipate EU-wide labour market and skills requirements: Malta, Contribution to the EEO Review: Autumn 2008.

⁹² Ministry for Investment, Industry, and Information Technology, 2007, Scoping Study on the demand and supply of ICT skills in Malta, Report compiled by KPMG in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, Industry and IT.

⁹³ Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), 2007, Employment in the Environment Goods and Services Industry in Malta, Malta: Employment and Training Corporation.

⁹⁴ Debono M., (2008), Improving the capacity to anticipate EU-wide labour market and skills requirements: Malta, Contribution to the EEO Review: Autumn 2008

⁹⁵ Centre for Labour Studies, 2009, Biennial Report 2007-8, University of Malta: Centre for Labour Studies.

One particular initiative in identifying skills needs for the future was carried out by the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE)⁹⁶. This report outlines the outcomes of a conference, *'Skills for the Future'* held on the 19th of September 2008. The conference was aimed at addressing skills mismatches which exist in the economy as well as those which could emerge following growth in targeted sectors. Over 200 participants representing industry, commerce, employers, educational institutions, government sectoral agencies, students, and other social partners, attended the conference. Seven sectors (Tourism, Financial, Education, Communication, IT, Manufacturing and related materials, and Gozo as an ECO Island) were tackled in this conference and skills gaps identified.

All these studies involved gathering information through both quantitative and qualitative methods from both employers in industry and training providers with the aim of identifying needs in industry.

8.2 Practices to match VET provision (skills) with skills needs (jobs)

MCAST, in its Strategic Plan, places a lot of emphasis on fostering links with industry, business and commerce. There is common understanding that engagement with industry, business, commerce and the community, underpins the foundations on which the College was established⁹⁷. In setting targets for building partnerships, the Strategic Plan includes that of working with a range of providers, including schools, international partners, universities, professional bodies, and industry having roles and functions similar to MCAST.

In November 2007, the Federation of Industry (FOI), now merged and called the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry (MCCEI), signed a collaboration agreement with MCAST. This agreement seeks to pursue areas, which can be developed to the benefit of both institutions and their respective clients. Both organisations pledged to establish a structured framework that would provide MCAST students with the opportunity to better access the world of work through their organisation, as well as to deliver vocational education and training programmes/services for the diverse client groups. Amongst other objectives of this agreement, the two bodies agreed to develop initiatives related to the provision of industry-demanded programmes and courses⁹⁸.

In order to ensure that curricula and courses reflect needs in industry, the MCAST Board of Governors includes representatives of associations in industry such as the MCCEI and the Malta Employers Association, as well as Trade Unions. This representation of industry within the Board ensured that major decisions at MCAST will be always relevant and supportive of changes and needs in industry. However, there is less direct participation in the case of development of curricula. It has to be pointed out that MCAST has also obtained funding from the European Social Fund to run a project on *'Linking Industrial Needs and Vocational Education & Training (VET) to Optimise Human Capital'* (ESF 2.85). This

⁹⁶ National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE), 2009, Skills for the Future: Report on Skills for the future, Report by the National Commission for Higher Education on the outcomes of the conference held on 19th September 2008

⁹⁷ MCAST, 2006, Strategic Plan 2007-09: The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, a new era, a College with a clear focus, Malta: MCAST.

⁹⁸ <http://www.maltachamber.org.mt/content.aspx?id=189732>

project falls under Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007 – 2013⁹⁹ and it addresses the current and anticipated educational needs of ten industrial sectors: Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals; Financial Services; ICT; Furniture; Printing; Infrastructure; Food; Beverages; Maritime; and Plastics. The project is planned to identify the potential skills gaps and shortages of the present workforce. These lacunae are to be addressed through the implementation of specific training responding to new occupational needs, key competencies and future skills requirements. This project is due to start in 2010.

Both through the ESF project described above as well as through other initiatives and collaboration with industry, the input from industry towards training involves either direct discussions through participation in committees or group meetings, or else through responding to questionnaires. In the case of curriculum development, direct discussion and communication is often used. However, there is so far no formal structure or framework for such discussions.

In the case of CVET, ETC often links research results and/or requests from employers to the training which it provides. In cases where there is higher employment demand in particular sectors, or when there is going to be a big direct foreign investment, ETC is always quick to respond to these needs through its training courses. One example was that concerning the Pharmaceutical companies whereby training for operators in these specialised areas was designed and implemented in view of the commitment of a number of companies to set up their production in Malta. This immediate and timely response ensured a supply of trained workers by the time the companies started operating in Malta.

One good practice used to match VET provision with skills needs is the provision of funding programmes to allow industry to invest further in the training of its workers. This is mainly achieved through the Training Aid Framework (TAF) Programme which provides a training grant on the successful completion of an approved training programme aimed to provide knowledge, skills and competences that will increase the adaptability of the trained employee. Such training can be either general or specific. The decision on the type of training and curriculum is decided and designed by the company itself. TAF is expected to provide €8.85 million in training grants between March 2009 and 31st December 2013, and 3,500 trainees are expected to benefit from TAF¹⁰⁰.

The development of occupational standards in Malta has also taken a step forward. MQC has worked towards developing the structure for the development of such standards such that these will be the driving forces leading to the development of curricula in vocational education and training at both IVET and CVET level. This is being achieved through two main different projects led by MQC, namely INLearning which is a Leonardo da Vinci project focusing on the development of a methodology for the validation of informal and non-formal learning and for which the starting point was the development of occupational standards; and SkillsPlus (an ESF project) which has mapped out skills in 9 defined key sectoral areas to match occupational standards leading to formal certification and quality assurance. The objective of SkillsPlus was to create the infrastructure for the design of occupational standards of skills within 9 key sectoral areas: Art and Design; Community Services; Agribusiness; Building & Construction Engineering; Business & Commerce; Electrical and Electronic Engineering; Mechanical Engineering; Tourism Studies; and Cultural Heritage. This project will enhance employability opportunities and ensure

⁹⁹ Government of Malta, 2007, Operational Programme II Cohesion Policy 2007-13: Empowering People for a Better quality of Life, Malta: European Social Fund

¹⁰⁰ Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment, 2010, National Reform Programme 2008-10: Annual Progress Report 2009, Government of Malta: Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Investment.

skills match between VET and industry needs. Social partners and employers' representatives play an integral part of these two projects, thus ensuring that the occupational standards being developed reflect real job skills and knowledge required.

Theme 9: Lifelong Guidance for Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Employment

9.1 Strategy and provision

The task of providing career information, guidance and counselling in Malta is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. It is thus this Ministry which is also responsible for the development of policy on Career Guidance in Malta.

In 2003, Sultana¹⁰¹ identified five major challenges that guidance and counselling services in Malta had to strive to address at the time. These included:

1. The formulation of a national strategy that integrates services and creates new synergies, with a well-stocked national guidance resource centre;
2. The development of standards and quality charters;
3. A shift towards a view of guidance as a lifelong process and the creation of structures and strategies to support the implementation of a lifelong service;
4. Optimising the use of ICTs in addressing individual and community needs;
5. The establishment of closer and more open links between the social partners.

A publication by Sultana on Lifelong Guidance¹⁰² highlighted also the need to consider career guidance beyond that provided at school level and that provision should be both before and during people's working life. The need to draw up policy for career guidance was recognised by government and a commission was set up to draw up a policy document for the provision of career guidance at compulsory schooling level.

A Career Guidance Policy for Schools¹⁰³ was published in 2007. This policy document re-launched career guidance within the Maltese compulsory education system. It served to: clarify the role of career guidance as against counselling; offer recommendations on the setting up of an adequate career guidance infrastructure; and to describe how these services could be carried out in a more professional way. This policy was developed in view that, although many useful services were being offered within the Maltese educational system, there were several structural and procedural weaknesses. The policy proposals in this document referred to organizational structure, career education, and quality standards.

¹⁰¹ Sultana, R. G. (2003). *Review of Career Guidance Policies in 11 Acceding and Candidate Countries*. Italy: European Training Foundation

¹⁰² Sultana, R.G., (2003), *Lifelong Guidance and the European Challenge: Issues for Malta*, Malta: Euroguidance Malta

¹⁰³ Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment, 2007, *A Career Guidance Policy and Strategy for Compulsory Schooling in Malta*, Malta: Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment.

Organisational Structure – It was proposed that career services be composed of two main complementary mechanisms: one operating within the educational system, and one complementary to it. Within *the educational system*, the proposed structure included a centralized head of the Career Guidance Services; College¹⁰⁴ Career Coordinators offering support services to schools; and Career Advisors at school level who coordinate guidance provision and organize career-oriented activities. It was also proposed that a National Career Guidance Centre (NCGC) responsible for sustaining career guidance services in Malta be set up complementary to the educational system. The NCGC should include a research unit, a career information unit, and a quality audit unit. The centre should become the centre of excellence for career guidance in Malta.

Career Education - A developmental career education programme beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout life was also proposed. The proposal was that career education should be delivered in all primary and secondary schools, starting with the fourth year of primary education as part of the Personal and Social Development (PSD) curriculum, which should be transformed into Personal, Social and Career Development (PSCD). The PSCD lessons in the Third, Fourth and Fifth years of secondary level should be increased from 1 to 2 lessons per week.

Quality Standards – It was recognized that high quality standards are needed to ensure that clients get the best possible service. In order to achieve this, there need to be adequately qualified and experienced staff possessing professional competencies. Career service providers should develop and maintain a Quality Assessment System (QAS). The NCGC should regularly monitor career-related services at national level.

The authors recognized that this policy document would only be effective if it was complemented and sustained by other related policies and strategies, particularly with a lifelong learning policy that directs all education and training.

The policy direction with respect to career guidance has led to the creation of new posts within Colleges. It has also led to a government initiative to support the professionalization of career guidance provision through the Career Guidance Capacity Building Scholarship scheme funded through the European Social Fund, which aims to provide more opportunities to promote further specialisation in Career Guidance at postgraduate level. This scheme supports the increase in the number of students following post-graduate courses in Career Guidance, increasing the availability and employment of high-level graduates in this priority sector, enriching the Career Guidance service in the country¹⁰⁵.

The provision of career guidance in Malta dates back to the 60s¹⁰⁶. The current provision falls under the responsibilities of different organisations within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. The provision of career guidance at compulsory level of education falls under the responsibility of the Directorate for Educational Services. The University of Malta has its own Students Advisory Services.

¹⁰⁴ In Malta, schools (both primary and secondary) in regions are clustered to work together within a College.

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.education.gov.mt/cgcb.htm>

¹⁰⁶ DeGiovanni, J., 1997, A Brief History of the Development of Guidance and Counselling in Malta; 1968- 1987, in Careers Education and Guidance in Malta: Issues and Challenges, *Sultana R.G. & Sammut J. M.* (1997), Malta: Enterprises Group (PEG) Ltd. Malta.

MCAST and ITS have their own Guidance services which they offer also to secondary level students. Career guidance and support offered to job seekers and the unemployed is provided mainly by the ETC through its career advisors. In addition, one also finds a number of private recruitment agencies which help job seekers find the appropriate job. This provision is represented in the table overleaf.

Type of guidance service	Activities/ Guidance provided by	Clients/Target groups	Responsibility and administrative control
Information and guidance about career choices	Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	Primary and secondary school students	Directorate for Educational Services
Information and guidance about career choices	Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	Prospective, university students and alumni	University of Malta Students Advisory Services
Information and guidance about career choices	Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	Prospective students to MCAST	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology
Information and guidance about career choices	Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	Prospective students to ITS	Institute of Tourism Studies
Job placements and career planning	Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family	Job searchers	Employment and Training Corporation
Mostly job placements	Various small private employment agencies	Job searchers	

The career guidance policy has also led to projects such as the Vocational Qualification Package (VQPACK), also funded by European Social Funds, aimed as a career guidance tool for secondary students to give more visibility to Vocational Education and Training. The Competence Matrices developed through this project indicate the learning outcomes of qualifications in nine sectors offered by MCAST, ITS and ICMCH.

¹⁰⁷ Adapted from <http://www.euroguidance.net/GuidanceSystems/Malta/Overview.htm>

9.2 Target groups and modes of delivery

The main target groups of career guidance include: students within compulsory education; students at post-secondary education; and the unemployed.

In the case of compulsory education, career guidance takes place at different stages of secondary education. At secondary level, students are provided with guidance with respect to subject choice at the end of the second year due to the local education system allowing students a degree of specialisation mid-way through their secondary education. Subject choice at this stage will determine to a degree the potential career paths at post-secondary level. In the last two years of secondary education, career guidance focuses more on possible paths at post-secondary level. This guidance helps students make choices between post-secondary vocational education and general post-secondary education.

MCAST, as the main VET provider at post-secondary level, offers a variety of career guidance services to both prospective as well as to its current students. Its Career Guidance section liaises with secondary schools and also with Colleges¹⁰⁸ by making presentations to teachers (targeting guidance teachers within a College) when invited. It organises an open week for students to be able to visit the different institutes. MCAST offers tours to trainee guidance teachers and also goes to the different types of secondary schools (State, Church and Independent) to inform students about the different courses offered by its institutes. It also allows visits by students from other post-secondary institutions (usually general education).

With respect to students and staff within MCAST, the career guidance personnel provide in-service training to its staff in order to help them understand their role in influencing students' choices. It also offers students a one-to-one drop-in service where students can ask for advice, support and any other type of information which they may require.

MCAST guidance also offers a service to students with special needs. The programme *Pathway to Independence* allows students with special needs to have a work placement, one day a week, on the MCAST campus with the support of a job coach, that is, within a protected environment. In the second year, these students are provided with placements in industry, also one day a week, where students go to work on their own and have regular visits by MCAST staff. This programme helps students with special needs become independent and to be able to join working schemes by the ETC and hopefully eventually be able to join the labour market.

Likewise, the ITS also offers services to prospective students, mainly through visits through which secondary students can see what type of training the institute offers.

In the case of unemployed persons, career guidance is carried out by staff at the ETC. Career Advisors carry out a job profiling exercise for people seeking work in order to identify potential job matches as well as any further training that would be best tailored to them.

¹⁰⁸ A College involves a cluster of primary and secondary schools within a region.

Career guidance for disabled persons looking for work is even more important due to the higher rate of drop-outs by disabled students during compulsory education¹⁰⁹. The ETC provides special career guidance to persons with disabilities and special conditions within the Supported Employment Services Unit. This section has a register of persons registered with disabilities whom they call to help try and find employment. Applicants undergo a medical assessment to indicate what they can and cannot do, as well as an assessment by an occupational therapist who tries to identify what type of work they can perform. Following these two assessments the persons in charge within ETC interview the applicants to know more in detail about what the job preferences these persons might have. At times, even the social worker is consulted. Based on all this information, persons with disabilities are provided with guidance in respect to further training as well as try to match their competences to current job vacancies. ETC also has special schemes (Bridging the Gap and the Employment Aid programme – already described in earlier sections) which provide financial support to those employers who are ready to provide these persons with a chance to work.

9.3 Guidance and Counselling personnel

The training of career guidance teachers has been supported by the Career Guidance Capacity Building Scholarship scheme which allows persons in career guidance to invest in post-secondary studies. This was reflected in the University of Malta developing the Post-Graduate Diploma in Lifelong Career Guidance and Development which is funded under this scheme. This course has made it possible for a good number of career guidance teachers in secondary schools, but also others working in other sectors such as the ETC to professionalise themselves through further studies in the area. In addition, government has issued sponsorships to professionals wanting to carry out studies at Masters level in the area of career guidance.

In the state education system, secondary school career guidance teachers have regular meetings and training sessions during the year with the aim of helping them keep abreast with the changes in demand and opportunities within the labour market as well as the potential training paths which students can take, among them also within the vocational education track.

¹⁰⁹ Azzopardi, A., 2006, Career Guidance for Persons with Disability, Malta: Euroguidance.

Theme 10: Financing – Investment in Human Resources

10.1 VET funding Policy

IVET in Malta is funded directly by government which allocates a budget to cover the running of VET provision within MCAST, ITS and ICMCH. Government has repeatedly stated its commitment to the vocational education sector and has continued to allocate part of its budget to it. In the case of MCAST, ERDF funds have also been tapped in order to invest further in vocational education. The major funding obtained was mainly for the expansion of the MCAST campus which involves the building of an extension of the campus for some institutes in order to be able to increase the volume of students which can be accommodated as well as providing state of the art training. Further investment from ESF funds has been directed to the professional development of teaching staff through funding of studies at Masters level as well as pedagogical training for VET trainers.

Funding in CVET depends on the entity involved. In the case of the ETC, the main source of funding is through the use of European and Social Funds. In the case of the Directorate for Lifelong Learning, funding is provided directly from government, even if learners attending adult courses are usually charged a minimal fee, which is low and only covers part of the expenses involved. The CVET courses offered in the evening by MCAST are not free either and in many cases designed to be self-financing.

It must be noted that despite the financial crisis, government has maintained its commitment to VET and has continued to allocate substantial funds to VET.

10.2 Funding for initial vocational education and training

The Government of Malta is responsible for the financing of education in Malta. This is often presented as part of the budget votes for education. The expenditure for education for the years 2007-9 are presented in the table below.

Table 31: Government of Malta Budget allocation for Ministry of Education (2007-2010)¹¹⁰				
	2007	2008*	2009*	2010*
Personal Emoluments	2,600,939	2,556,000	3,706,090	3,713,000
Operational and Maintenance Expenses	547,939	540,000	1,406,099	1,323,000
Programmes and Initiatives	58,364,126	56,505,000	63,391,522	71,220,000
Contributions to Government entities	47,422,349	52,996,000	68,459,056	74,079,000
TOTAL VOTE	108,934,857	112,597,000	136,962,767	150,326,000

* estimates approved

In the case of compulsory education, government covers the funding required to run all state education provided to 60% of all the children in Malta and is free of charge. The state compulsory education system is managed from within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family. In the case of the 30% of student population which go to Church schools, government provides support and covers the salaries of teachers. Students attending these schools usually give an annual donation to the school. In the case of the 10% students who attend Independent schools, government provides tax rebates to parents for expenses on payment for schooling.

The University of Malta is also funded directly by government and government vote covers both expenses for running the University of Malta as well as the stipends given to students during their period of study. Tertiary education at the University of Malta is provided free of charge to all those who have the required entry qualifications.

¹¹⁰ Source: <http://finance.gov.mt/image.aspx?site=MFIN&type=estimate&ref=567> and <http://finance.gov.mt/image.aspx?site=MFIN&type=estimate&ref=735>

Table 32: Funding to the different education institutions¹¹¹				
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Church Schools	32,028,884	29,816,000	33,000,000	38,500,00
University of Malta-UoM	27,486,606	30,049,000	39,574,948	41,000,000
Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology - MCAST	9,841,603	11,647,000	12,961,998	14,600,000
Institute of Tourism Studies - ITS	1,268,614	1,274,00	1,288,090	1,728,000
Employment and Training Corporation - ETC	2,493,594	3,014,000	3,014,000	3,251,000
	123,854,448	124,535,000	131,271,000	60,579,000

The MCAST is also funded directly by government and the vote covers the running of the institution as well as the stipends provided to students. The only contribution by students involves the examination registration which is to be paid by the students themselves in the case of courses leading to a BTEC, ITEC or a City & Guilds certification.

10.3 Funding for Continuing VET and Adult Learning

10.3.1 Public Funding Schemes and mechanisms to finance CVET

As already indicated, provision of publicly provided CVET is done mainly by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning within the Directorate of Educational Services as well as by state IVET institutions such as MCAST, ICMCH and ITS as evening courses.

CVET for adult education run by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning is funded directly by government. Funds also serve to subsidise the cost of the evening classes which are offered to adults as part of lifelong learning. Such courses are thus offered at a reduced cost.

In the case of MCAST, CVET is not fully covered by government expenses and this means that those following evening courses need to pay fees in order to cover the expenses for such courses. MCAST has also used European Social Funds to be able to carry out and offer CVET training in particular areas.

¹¹¹ Source: <http://finance.gov.mt/image.aspx?site=MFIN&type=estimate&ref=567> and <http://finance.gov.mt/image.aspx?site=MFIN&type=estimate&ref=735>

The provision of adult education courses by the Directorate for Lifelong learning is partially funded by government in that it subsidises the cost of provision of evening courses. The courses, however, are not free of charge and are provided at a cost. This cost is not usually high.

In the case of MCAST, ITS and ICMCH, there is no specific funding which covers the provision of evening courses. These are thus offered at a price which those attending the courses have to pay. None the less, these institutions have identified EU funding programmes which enable them to run CVET training which would be free of charge to learners. The main funding tool used is the European Social Fund. This opportunity was also taken up by particular government entities which managed to secure funding for CVET in their sector of industry.

A list of projects involving CVET are provided in the table below:

Table 33: List of ESF projects with elements of CVET¹¹²			
Institution	PROJECT DETAILS	Year of Project	EUROS
MCAST	ESF/11 : Preservation of Traditional Maltese Crafts	2004-6	241,193.12
MCAST	ESF/12 : Retraining and re-skilling of Workers for Engineering Industry	2004-6	109,167.68
MCAST	ESF/13 : Retraining and re-skilling of Workers for the Electronics Industry	2004-6	135,715.92
MCAST	ESF/15 : Retraining and re-skilling of Workers for the Building and Construction Industry	2004-6	127,572.28
MCAST	ESF/16 : Foundation Training for adults with no formal qualifications	2004-6	142,720.59
ITS	ESF/80 : Training for disadvantaged persons and persons with learning difficulties	2004-6	73,509.49
MCAST	ESF/81 : Enhancing Practical Skills in Engineering	2004-6	21,924.28
MTA	ESF/7 : Tourism and Support Services training programme	2004-6	612,973.14
WasteServ Malta Ltd.	ESF/25 : Training job seekers to assist in the implementation of waste separation at source	2004-6	197,389.65
Razzett tal-Hbiberija	ESF/62 : Inclusive ICT training and Development Programme	2004-6	52,334.73
Department of Further Studies and Adult Education	ESF/3 : Information & Communications Technology training programme -Training & Certification of Teachers in ICT skills	2004-6	110,194.88
UoM	ESF 1.22: Research Analysis and Training for Enhancing the University Library	2008-11	435,450.00

¹¹² Extracted from www.ppcd.gov.mt/file.aspx?f=366

Ministry of Gozo	ESF 1.23: Higher Education Courses to address skills mismatches in Gozo	2008-13	222,744
ICMCH	ESF 1.31: Wood CPR: Education and Training on Wood Conservation Restoration	2008-11	541,427
MCAST	ESF 1.33: ICT Student Capacity in Malta	2008-12	4,962,642
MCAST	ESF 1.34: Addressing skills mismatches in the aviation maintenance industry	2008-11	2,382,872
MTA	ESF 2.11: Developing leaders for change and Innovation in Tourism	2008-13	4,120,396
MITA	ESF 2.12: Second STEP (Provision of Training in ICT)	2008-11	869,520
Ministry of Gozo	ESF 2.7: Training courses to enhance Employability of the workforce	2008-10	105,807
MCAST	Linking Industrial needs and VET to optimise Human Capital	2009-10	360,802.45
FES	ESF 3.48: Lifelong Learning for enhanced employability for parents (LLEEP)	2009-11	98,445
Kirkop Local Council	ESF 3.54: Reach: Opportunities close to home	2008-11	193,894
FSWS	ESF 3.61: Embark for life- labour market integration of socially excluded youth	2008-11	954,362
FSWS	ESF 3.62: ME2 (Training for integration of disabled persons in the labour market)	2008-11	1,298,591
Paolo Freire Institute	Ic-Cavetta –Maltese Literacy Toolkit for employment and education inclusion	2009-11	109,546

All these projects are opportunities for further training within CVET which are funded by the European Social Fund and from which a significant number of Maltese citizens are to benefit.

10.3.2 Public-private cost-sharing

The main funding scheme for CVET within enterprise is through the Training Aid Programme. This is an initiative funded under the European Social Fund and administered by the ETC .

Training Aid Programme¹¹³

The Training Aid Framework (TAF) is an effort to encourage and empower employers to train their workforce as a means of reaping positive benefits of increased competitiveness and innovation for the company itself. The programme offers part-refund of training costs, the amount of which depends on the size of the undertaking and the nature of the training provided to employees. This programme is open to all entities within the private sector except for companies operating in the agriculture and fisheries sector.

¹¹³ <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2304>

Enrolment into this project aims to reinforce the employability and productivity of all individuals receiving training, including also vulnerable workers. The project also aims to increase and improve the qualifications of persons in employment as a necessary means for retaining their employment and/or finding alternative job opportunities. It will also improve the adaptability of workers and undertakings and augment the flexibility of the labour market to respond to sudden changes in the demand for goods and services, and to technological changes.

Through the Training Aid Framework, ETC gives financial assistance to those companies that invest in the training of their workforce. This scheme is available for companies in the private sector and training can be in-house or out-sourced and can be given in Malta or abroad through distance learning. The training can be a course at the University of Malta or at a foreign university. The training can even lead to a PhD. Self-employed persons will also be eligible. Each company will be eligible for a maximum of €250,000 each year.

General training involves training which is not applicable only or principally to the employees' present and future position of the company, but which provides qualifications that are largely applicable to other companies or fields of work. Specific training involves tuition directly and principally applicable to the employees' present or future position in the company and providing qualifications which are not or only to a limited extent, transferable to other firms or fields of work.

Each trainee can be awarded to a maximum grant of €4,000 per annum. This ceiling increases to €10,000 where the training programme leads to an MQF Level 5 or higher. Each company may receive up to a total grant of €250,000 per year. The eligible costs that may be reimbursed under the Training Aid Framework include: trainers' fees (100%); travel expenses (excluding accommodation) (100%); cost of consultancy (Training Needs Analysis) (50%); and personnel costs relating to the employee during which the trainees actually participate in the training (after deduction of the day productive hours) (100%). VAT is not an eligible cost.

10.3.3 Collective (employer/employee) Investment to finance CVET

The main example of collective investment other than those mentioned in other areas of the report one finds the Get Qualified Scheme. This is an initiative by Malta Enterprise that supports the personal development of individuals for the achievement of qualifications and certifications required by industry. The incentive is applicable to individuals following a course of studies leading to a certification, diploma, degree or post-graduate degree courses. Upon successful completion the student will benefit from a tax credit thus recovering part of the costs incurred.

Students following courses approved by Malta Enterprise are granted tax credits of up to 80% on the following costs: fees paid by the individual to the university, institution or other entity recognized by Malta Enterprise for the training and educational services leading to the approved qualification; and fees for sitting for examinations required to achieve the approved qualification. Many of the courses approved for funding under this scheme includes the ICT sector which is considered an important sector in the Maltese economy and in which there is great potential to invest in CVET.

10.3.4 Reaching the groups at risk through funding schemes and mechanisms

Many of the schemes offered by the ETC often target groups at risk such as youths, women returnees, workers over 40 etc. These schemes promote the employment of those who are hardest hit by changes in the country's economy and consequently in employment levels.

10.4 Funding for training for the unemployed

Training for the unemployed is offered by the ETC. Funding for training provided by ETC comes either directly from the budget vote allocated by government or else through the use of European Social funds. The management of European Social funds is coordinated by the Planning and Priorities Coordination Department (PPCD) within the Office of the Prime Minister. The projects funded during these past years from the European Social Fund are listed in the table overleaf.

Institution	PROJECT DETAILS	Year of Project	EUROS
ETC	ESF/17 : Training and Employment Exposure Scheme	2004-6	3,642,543.01
ETC	ESF/31 : Employment and Training Scheme	2004-6	529,822.65
ETC	ESF/73 : Addressing the demand and supply of e-skills through traineeships in ICT	2004-6	63,018.14
ETC	ESF/47 : Promoting the Women Entrepreneur Culture	2004-6	86,793.72
ETC	ESF/18 : Literacy programme for those seeking employment	2004-6	407,009.44
ETC	ESF/19 : Supported Employment Scheme for Persons with disability	2004-6	398,654.68
ETC	ESF/52 : Training programme for youths in institutional care	2004-6	51,389.59
ETC	ESF 2.4: Employability Programme	2008-11	5,253,211.00
ETC	ESF 3.60: Youth Employment Programme	2008-11	632,948.29

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Heritage Malta - <http://www.heritagemalta.org/icmch/index.html>

Institute of Agribusiness, MCAST - http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_agribusiness.asp

Institute of Art and Design, MCAST - http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_artanddesign.asp

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http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_buildingandconstructionengineering.asp

Institute of Business and Commerce, MCAST -

http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_businessandcommerce.asp

Institute of Community Services, MCAST - http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_communityservices.asp

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Malta Qualifications Council - <http://www.mqc.gov.mt/>

Maritime Institute, MCAST - http://www.mcast.edu.mt/institutes_maritimeinstitute.asp

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11.3 List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

DLLL	-	Directorate for Lifelong Learning
EQARF	-	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework
EQF	-	European Qualifications Framework
ERDF	-	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	-	European Social Fund
ETC	-	Employment and Training Corporation
ETF	-	European Training Foundation
FES	-	Foundation for Educational Services
FSWS	-	Foundation for Social Welfare Services
ICMCH	-	Institute for Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage
ITS	-	Institute of Tourism Studies
MCA	-	Malta Communications Authority
MCAST	-	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology
ME	-	Malta Enterprise
MQC	-	Malta Qualifications Council
MQF	-	Malta Qualifications Framework
MQRIC	-	Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre
NCHE	-	National Commission for Higher Education

SEC	-	Secondary Education Certificate
UoM	-	University of Malta
VTTU	-	Vocational Teacher Training Unit