

Corporate Services Directorate

CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services Directorate within the Ministry for Tourism covers the support function for the entire ministry and the various entities that fall within the remit of the Ministry. The Corporate Services Directorate within the Ministry is made up of a team of 14 people who are in charge of Finance, Budgeting, Travel, Human Resources, Registry and other Administrative functions of the ministry. The Corporate Services Directorate works in close collaboration with other Units such as the IT Section, the minister's and Parliamentary Secretary's Secretariats, and the representatives of the various entities that fall under the remit of the MOT.

Ministerial change of premises

The corporate service directorate has been involved in the taking over process of the premises of the Ministry for Energy and Conservation of Water (MECW) in Republic Street Valletta. Since this project was already ongoing, and at an advanced stage, the directorate became involved in the funding and payment process/verification of works carried out. Also the directorate was to find sources of additional funds for any modifications that were required by our ministry since the project was originally designed for another ministry with different requirements.

Finance

The Finance Unit is primarily responsible for the management and administration of the Ministry's budget, procurement, income and expenditure and also releasing of tranche payments to the various entities. The finance section is led by the Director Corporate Services who is directly supported by an Assistant Director, 1 assistant principal officer, 1 senior clerk and 1 clerk (who are responsible for the controlling of fuel for those officers who are entitled to receive these allowances, are in charge of making travel arrangements for all ministry representatives, liaising with other officers on financial matters etc). There are also 2 further clerks who along with the more senior officers is responsible for the issuing of Purchase orders, and also has the function to seek procure items necessary after having obtained the necessary approvals. The approved budget allocated to the 2014 is slightly above €115 million which covers both recurrent and capital costs.

During 2013 the Restoration Directorate, the Institute of Tourism Studies and the Local Government Department all became part of the ministry for Tourism, and therefore the additional staff that was given to the DCS was also utilised to meet the demands of these additional departments, including but not limited to budgets, income and expenditure, capital expenses payments etc.

Human Resources

The upkeep of the human resources management system is managed by a senior principal who leads a team of 3 people (namely 1 principal officer, and 2 clerical officers). This section falls

directly under the remit of the Director Corporate Services. The HR function is responsible for the maintaining of attendance sheets, issuing of payrolls, monitoring and reporting of sick-leave and also keeping hands-on records of the status of personnel who are engaged on a contractual basis. The section also issues calls for applications, receives applications, prepares letter of appointments (both for successful candidates, as well as for board and committee member).

Procurement

The Corporate Services Directorate is also responsible for the procurement of all items required for the day to day running of the ministry, as well as for the enforcement of procurement regulations for any supplies, works or services procured departmentally by the Ministry. Apart from this, the Director Corporate Services also acts as Chairperson on the Departmental Contracts Committee for the Ministry for Tourism, where there have been several meetings held during 2013 to award numerous departmental tenders where the most frequent procurers were the Malta Tourism Authority as well and Heritage Malta.

BERNARD BARTOLO

Director Corporate Services – MOT

Information Management Unit

Introduction

The Information Management Unit provides strategic direction and guidance related to information technology investment within the Ministry to ensure that data is translated into information as a resource. In today's dynamic society, information and systems have become important tools to support Ministry goals.

Financial Planning

Following feedback gathered from the Directors and Heads of Sections, the ICT Capital and Operational Budgeting Plan for 2014 was drawn up. A Ministry Service Contract which includes service categories and service levels pertaining to IT services was also devised.

Data Audit

During the third quarter, a 'Data Access Verification Analysis' exercise aimed to identify all the data folders that are accessed by Ministry employees was conducted. As part of this initiative, verification of user access rights to folders and data was cross-checked with the respective Departments and Sections, subsequently data was migrated to new repositories.

Implementation of ICT requests & services delivery strategy

With the aim to enhance IT leadership within the Ministry, a strategy was devised to establish Focal Points within the respective Departments and Entities. Focal Points are an essential element in the provision and delivery of IT services since they represent an extension of the unit. In collaboration with Focal Points, the unit undertook a Ministry-wide exercise to reorganise all the employees' e-mail aliases and properties to reflect the current Ministry's organisational structure. During 2013, the unit processed more than two thousand requests for services raised by Departments, Sections and Entities.

Ministry Portal

The Ministry did not have an online presence prior to 2013, thus a decision to develop an official Portal was taken. By the end of the second quarter the Portal framework was devised and content populated. Content residing in Departmental sites was migrated to the new Portal and sites decommissioned. The Information Management Unit heavily contributed to the implementation of the *myMalta* photo competition. The unit provided the necessary technical support which helped the *myMalta* initiative become a huge success.

Infrastructure

During 2013, the IMU commenced an exercise to upgrade the network infrastructure of the Ministry. The exercise involved the upgrading of a number of managed network switches and the installation of uninterrupted power supplies. The IMU was requested to coordinate the implementation and relocation of existing services during the set-up of new offices. Services such as Wifi, TV over Internet and Voice over Internet were introduced. The aim is to make use

of Internet technology as far as possible and to minimise telecommunication costs whilst providing the necessary flexibility to the end user.

ICT Awareness

A number of guidelines were issued during the year under review with the aim to create awareness amongst Ministry employees on fundamental ICT aspects. Awareness is a continuous process that the unit intends to maintain throughout the years that shall follow.

Green Initiatives

The unit continued to expand on the printing guidelines devised earlier during the year by conducting an internal exercise to assess the productivity of existing printing machines and recommend appropriate alternatives. The goal is to significantly reduce the total number of local desktop devices to reduce carbon footprint, meet sustainability initiatives, and significantly reduce printing costs. As a result of this exercise various printing machines were earmarked for decommission and new procurement methods established. After taking stock of all the printing devices, the IMU started to replace low volume desktop devices with multi-function printing devices, thus making better use of shared resources.

Setting up of the Information Management Unit

The IMU did not exist prior to 2013, this was due to the various changes in Ministries' portfolio. The Ministry had no fundamental ICT aspects in place. Documentation and basic processes were inexistent. A considerable effort was undertaken to establish the basics and collate information which is vital to the daily operations of the unit. With the support of the Permanent Secretary's Office, the office managed to bring onboard one ICT Officer. Generation of fundamental ICT aspects started to take shape.

Conclusion

The Information Management Unit will continue to be a strategic ICT partner in the Ministry's crucial decisions and will continue to provide leadership on ICT matters.

Ronald Psaila

Chief Information Officer

Ministry for Tourism – EU Affairs Unit

EU Affairs Unit

In 2013, the Unit's responsibilities changed given different legislatures. During the first three months of 2013, it was responsible for EU matters, the development of policies relating to tourism, environment and sustainable development – the unit was then known as the 'Tourism and Sustainable Development Unit'. During the first three months of 2013, the unit continued its work on assessing EU legislative proposals relating to tourism and environment for negotiation at EU level, reports were reviewed and submitted to the Commission in line with reporting obligations, legal notices were drawn up and reviewed to meet transposition requirements and EU Pilots and infringement procedures were addressed. It continued driving and monitoring the implementation of the national environment policy, promoting EU funding programmes for the two areas, including acting as the LIFE+ Focal Point, implementing the EU co-financed €10 million Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprises and other EU direct funded projects.

Following the election and the change in ministry portfolio, the unit was responsible for EU Affairs and Policy Development in relation to tourism, aviation, culture and audiovisuals – and carried the name of 'EU Affairs and Policy Development'. Towards the end of the year, following the setting up of a Policy Development and Programme Implementation Directorate and the appointment of a Director, the unit was responsible for EU Affairs for the areas falling under the ministry's remit.

The unit throughout 2013 continued to focus its efforts on EU Affairs, EU funding and Policy Development serving both the Ministry for Tourism and the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA). The Unit is composed of personnel employed directly by the Public Service, by the MTA and by persons employed for the purposes of the EU co-financed Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprises.

POLICY

Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (2012-2016)

In 2012, the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Environment launched the Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (2012-2016) which was formulated by the then TSDU and was launched in 14 June 2012. The Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (2012-2016) reflects a consolidated policy framework which stems from an extensive consultation process with the public and key tourism stakeholders and following an intensive research-based process on Malta's accessibility, our accommodation offering, Malta's gateway and international transport, international trends, social, economic and environmental impacts amongst others. In the new legislature, the Ministry for Tourism endorsed this Tourism Policy and requested an update of the policy document identifying some areas where the new government wanted to place more emphasis and attention. The draft update was formulated.

Sustainable Rural Tourism Policy in Malta and Gozo (draft)

TSDU had, formulated, following interministerial discussions, a draft Rural Tourism Policy which was superseded by MEPA's policy document entitled 'Outside Development Zone Policy and Design Guidance'.

Other Policies

The Unit throughout 2013 provided its inputs to various policy documents being formulated or revised by other ministries. These included the Research and Innovation Strategy, the Integrated Maritime Strategy, the review of the National Environment Policy and the Waste Management Plan. The Unit also reported on measures being implemented and co-ordinated inputs to the National Reform Programme. The Unit also drew up a number of Cabinet Memos.

Tourism Legal Notices

Legal Notices or amendments thereto relating to Tourism were published during 2013, following co-ordination and review by the Unit. These included:

1. Recreational Diving Services Regulations
2. Tourist Guides (Amendment) Regulations, 2013
3. Fees (Tourism) (Amendment) Regulations, 2013 for Holiday Furnished Premises
4. Fees (Tourism) (Amendment) Regulations, 2013 for Language Schools

EU AFFAIRS:

Legislative and non-legislative proposals

During 2013, the Unit assessed and provided positions on various legislative and non-legislative proposals which were discussed in various council formations and in working parties including the Competitiveness, Consumer Protection, Aviation, Culture Affairs Committee, Audiovisual Working Party. The EU Affairs and Policy Development Unit provided inputs to or formulated Malta positions in relation to these legislative and non-legislative proposals. These proposals included, amongst others, the airport package dealing with slots, noise and ground handling, the proposal for air passenger rights in connection with compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights, the reviewing of the existing package travel directive, the proposal for a Directive on greenhouse gas emission allowance trading for aviation (EU ETS), discussions on PNR agreements, the programme for the competitiveness of enterprise and SMEs (2014-2020) (COSME), the communication on the implementation and development of the common visa policy. It also provided inputs on state aid legislative proposals. Following discussions with the European Commission, it was agreed that in April 2014 the MTA together with the Ministry for Tourism in collaboration with the Greek Presidency will host a Ministerial Meeting for EU Mediterranean Member States in Malta to discuss how the EU can further facilitate tourism to the Mediterranean through visas. An afternoon seminar will be held for local stakeholders to sensitise the industry about EU measures that facilitate tourism to the Mediterranean.

Aviation proposals to which the Unit provided inputs included Single European Sky package, SESAR Joint Undertaking, occurrence reporting, a series of aviation agreements between the EU and third countries, ICAO and Eurocontrol discussions. The unit also worked on the BlueMed initiative.

Transpositions, reporting obligations and infringements

Throughout 2013, EU Pilot communications and infringement procedures relating to tourism, aviation and audiovisuals were addressed. These communications or infringements generally arose as a result of the European Commission's assessment of Maltese legislation vis-à-vis EU directives.

Tourism Advisory Committee

Malta is a member of the Tourism Advisory Committee and was attended by the Head of the Unit or her delegate. Several topics were discussed during these committee meetings, including updates on the implementation of the Communication on Tourism COM (2010)352, measures to promote the diversification of tourism products and services, to stimulate the competitiveness of the tourism sector, to encourage an extension of the tourist season, to enhance the visibility of Europe and to promote the development of sustainable tourism. Other important discussions took place on the revision of the Package Travel Directive, the Commission's Communication on visa policy. The Unit prepared Government positions on each and participated actively in such discussions with the other Member States and the European Commission.

European Tourism Policy Framework actions - Europe, the world's No. 1 tourist destination – A new political framework for tourism in Europe, 2010 - EU COM(2010) 352:

The European Commission initiated a number of initiatives and actions under the European tourism policy framework. The Unit aims and seeks to participate fully in such initiatives and actions for the further development of tourism in Malta. The Unit monitors actions undertaken by the Commission to implement this action plan and is active in a number of these initiatives, including:

- the social tourism initiative through the Calypso projects
- the initiative relating to senior citizens
- the 50,000 initiative aimed at strengthening co-operation with South American source markets
- a strategy for coastal and maritime tourism
- the virtual tourism observatory
- indicators for the sustainable management of destinations

EU Presidency

Throughout 2013 preparations for Malta's Presidency of the Council commenced and the Unit provided its input to MEAIM, identifying the main EU related issues that are expected to be discussed over the next three or four years in the sectors covered by the Ministry and the priorities for Malta.

EU FUNDING

The Unit assisted entities falling under the Ministry and other organisations to tap EU funding programmes and develop projects accordingly. In addition, on behalf of the Ministry or on behalf of the MTA, the Unit developed and designed project ideas, applied for and was successful in obtaining funding for a number of projects, which it then implemented. These included ranging from the Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprises co-financed through European Structural Funds 2007-2013, to direct EU co-financed projects such as the Accessible Culture for All project, European Destination of Excellence projects and the Accessible Award for Accommodation and Catering Establishments project.

European Structural funds 2007-2013

Grant Scheme for Sustainable Tourism Projects by Enterprises

The Unit acts as the Intermediary Body (IB) for the implementation of a €10 million EU co-financed grant scheme for sustainable tourism projects by enterprises. The Scheme provides, following a call for projects and a thorough evaluation process, co-financing to enterprises for tourism projects which meet specified criteria.

100 projects were awarded co-financing through the first three calls for projects which were completed before or after December 2013, disbursing approximately €7.1 million and consequently instigating further private sector investment. In January 2013 a fourth call was launched with 18 March 2013 being the closing date for submission of projects. Following evaluation of the projects, 16 projects will be co-financed.

A control unit within the ministry is responsible for checking processes and documentation, for performing financial controls and checks on implementation and payments. Furthermore, the Control Unit carried out on-the-spot checks together with the IB following submission of payments by the beneficiaries.

European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020

The Unit was also involved in discussions and negotiations leading to the formulation of the Partnership Agreement for the ESI Funds 2014-2020. The Unit also proposed a series of projects, including a Grant Scheme for Tourism Projects, a number of projects aimed at investing in Malta's cultural infrastructure and a series of other projects aimed at investing in people working in or having the potential to work in tourism and/or creative industries, and which could be developed and eventually submitted for co-financing through these funds.

Projects submitted and/or implemented through EU Direct Funding Programmes

Calypso - Facilitating Transnational Low Season Exchanges in Europe through the development of Social Tourism – Accessible Culture for All

The Unit, on behalf of MTA, applied for EU co-financing under the Calypso call and was awarded funding. The project involved four partners with MTA being the lead partner. It started being implemented in 2012 and aimed at developing a culture that facilitates social tourism and accessibility for people with disabilities. The project was concluded in 2013 and the European Commission reimbursed all the eligible funding to the MTA.

European Destinations of Excellence Project (EDEN) and Accessible Tourism Award for Accommodation and Catering Establishments

As in previous years, the Unit also applied for and obtained funding under the EDEN call which in 2013 had the theme 'Accessible Tourism' and which it implemented. In 2013, it also implemented the project which was also approved for EU co-financing following the call for 'Accessible Tourism Award for Accommodation and Catering Establishments'.

Facilitating transnational low season tourism exchanges in Europe encouraging Senior Citizens to travel

In July 2013, the EU Commission issued a call for Proposals: "Facilitating transnational low season tourism exchanges in Europe encouraging Senior Citizens to travel". The Unit, on behalf of MTA as a lead partner, designed and developed a project idea, sought appropriate partners and applied for co-financing. The project aims at developing innovative transnational tourism packages for the low season, promoting cultural, rural and island tourism to European senior citizens. It also aims at establishing a sustainable public-private European partnership. The project aims at targeting primarily, though not exclusively, those senior citizens who face barriers to travel and those senior citizens who currently undertake solely domestic travel. The packages will aim at including facilities and services which overcome such barriers to travel and to promote travel to various European Member States in the low season. Basing on research and on private operators' experience, tourism packages will be developed specifically for senior citizens. This will be done through establishing a network platform for the six partners of the project consortium. Building on existing research and on primary research conducted with senior citizens and the trade, the consortium will formulate a profile of the European senior traveller and of the barriers to travel for senior citizens. The consortium will identify facilities and services to be included in a package to entice senior citizens to travel and to travel beyond domestic trips. Through research, senior citizens' willingness to pay for such additional package characteristics will be examined, leading to package development and pricing, complemented by a tailor-made phone application guide. Exchanges (a minimum of one set of exchanges between two destinations) will take place as senior citizens will be able to purchase the packages. Feedback will be requested through a diary log (providing expenditure data and experience analysis) for which a maximum of 40 participants will receive compensation. A senior citizens' travel day will be organised in each destination, whereby senior citizens will share their travel experience with potential travellers. Senior travel will be promoted and the finalised packages will be advertised to ensure continued exchanges and sustainability. The European Commission is currently evaluating the submitted 54 project applications.

Other Tourism Initiatives

European Maritime Day 2013

On 21st and 22nd May 2013 Malta hosted the annual European Maritime Day Conference, a conference which attracted around 1500 delegates and which was organised and led directly by the European Commission, specifically by DG Mare. High level persons including Commissioner Damanaki attended this conference. The Unit throughout 2012 and 2013 worked with another ministry and with the European Commission on the logistics for this conference and played a major role in formulating the theme and the programme of the conference. Dr Marie-Louise Mangion, Head of the Unit, addressed Plenary Session 1 on the topic of . "Investing in sustainable maritime and coastal tourism – on the path towards Blue Growth".

Tourism Education Campaign 'Apprezza'

In 2013, the Unit recommenced the Tourism Education Campaign entitled 'Apprezza' with children aged between 6 and 12 years. School visits as well as weekend activities started together with preparations for the development of additional Turu stories.

Dr Marie-Louise Mangion

Head of Unit

Restoration Directorate

BACKGROUND

The Restoration Directorate within the Parliamentary Secretariat for Culture and Local Government in the Ministry for Tourism is the main government entity which implements and executes restoration works on public property. It is responsible for planning and drawing up restoration projects, preparing tenders, and supervising their execution. It also offers specialized assistance to various public entities and institutions, including ministries, departments, voluntary organizations, and local councils.

In all, the Restoration Directorate has a staff complement of 168 personnel and operates from its offices and workshops at the Ospizio compound in Floriana. The Restoration Directorate boasts a multi-disciplinary team of Professionals, technicians, and skilled workers specializing in restoration. The Directorate also has a Documentation Section with the required technical know-how to prepare rectified surveys and deterioration mapping and a pool of historians, archaeologists, and other technical staff trained in heritage skills. Over the years, the Restoration Directorate has carried out numerous restoration works on many historical buildings, and is currently also involved in the restoration implementation of a major restoration project on the historic fortifications of Valletta, Mdina, Vittoriosa and the Gozo Citadel as part of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF 0039).

Projects carried out

Restoration works on the fortifications which form part of the project co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development – a project with a total expenditure of 42 million Euro continued throughout 2013. All restoration and consolidation works in Mdina and Cittadella were completed during 2013, while most of the restoration works in Vittoriosa and Valletta were also completed. The Fortifications Interpretation Centre, also co-funded by the ERDF as part of the ERDF039 project was inaugurated in 2013 and is now regularly open to the public. In 2013, a total of Eur6.7 million (exc VAT) were disbursed on the ERDF039 project.

Tenders for the paving of the Collachio in Birgu (also part of the ERDF039 project) were awarded whilst tenders for the rehabilitation of the Vittoriosa Ditch and for the lighting of the intramural spaces and fortifications of Vittoriosa were also issued, and are presently in the final stages of adjudication. These three projects, involve a total investment of Eur 7.3 million.

During 2013 the Restoration Directorate also implemented other projects from local funds following the issuing and award of tenders. These include the hard landscaping of the Couvre Port area, the restoration of the external facades of the Spinola Palace in St. Julians, the rehabilitation of the Mdina ditch, and the continuation of works on St. Christopher's Bastion in Valletta.

Several other restoration projects were carried out in 2013 by direct labour. Works continued on the façades of the Auberge de Castille and the Presidential Palace. The following restoration projects were completed during 2013: the Annunciation Chapel in Kirkop, the restoration of a historic wall in the Dock 1 area, and the St. Martin Chapel in Bahrija. Projects which were started in 2013 and are still in hand include the restoration of the old Parish Church of St. Sebastian in Qormi, the St. Mary Chapel in Tarxien, the old Parish Church in Birzebugia, the Immaculate Conception Chapel in Naxxar, and the St. Lawrence Band Club in Vittoriosa. Several works at the Presidential Palaces in Valletta and San Anton were also carried out during 2013.

The Directorate was also responsible for site supervision of the restoration interventions being carried out on the Salina Salt Pans projects funded from the EARDF Funds as well as for restoration works of historic buildings being carried out at the Citadel in Gozo by the Ministry for Gozo.

During 2013 the Restoration Directorate also started implementing an in-house training programme entitled *Time to Consolidate*, which is being co-funded through ESF funds.

Architect Norbert Gatt

Director

Culture Directorate

Remit

In 2013, the Culture and Audiovisual Unit (now the Culture Directorate) functioned under the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Environment. This continued after the change of administration in March 2013 under the Parliamentary Secretariat for Culture and Local Government within the Ministry for Tourism. Preparations were under way in the latter part of the year to establish a Culture Directorate which would absorb the work of the Unit.

Policy

In terms of policy, the Unit contributed to the development and articulation of government's vision for the sector. This took a specific form after the change in administration where the Culture Chapter in the Electoral Manifesto was elaborated on a seven-point programme to deliver government's programme for the coming five years, under the heading "*Lejn Ekoloġija Kulturali u Kreattiva*". This brought together the Electoral Manifesto (Culture Chapter), the National Cultural Policy, the Creative Economy Strategy Draft, and the Bid Book of the Valletta 2018 Foundation. The seven headings for the deliverables under this programme are:

- Strengthening Cultural Governance
- Investing in Cultural and Creative Education
- Stimulating cultural and creative industries
- Promoting Malta as an international hub for creative exchange
- Preparing for 2018 European Capital of Culture
- Protecting our Cultural Heritage
- Placing Culture at the heart of the Community.

Regular updates on the progress made on all of these areas, especially in the area of the creative economy, was provided to the National Reform Programme team at MFIN.

Collaborations with the Valletta 2018 Foundation was central to enable the Unit to address its objectives. This included

- Launching and sustaining the work on the Cultural Mapping Project¹
- Establishing and supporting the Research Programme (also in collaboration with NSO)
- Establishing and launching the process for the Evaluation and Monitoring of the Cultural Programme
- Attending and contributing to European meetings related to ECOC, including the Network of ECOCs and the informal presentation of the first year of work of the Valletta 2018 Foundation to the Monitoring Committee in Brussels (October 2013).

¹ <http://www.valletta2018.org/about/v18-news-overview/v18-news/V-18-launches-Cultural-Mapping-Project>

Cultural Funding

During 2013, the Unit was responsible for the management and disbursement of a number of schemes targeting operators in the cultural sector. It was also directly or indirectly involved (through discussions, consultations, and feedback) with a number of other entities that manage other cultural funds. The table below provides a synoptic view of these funds and the role of the Unit in their management during 2013.

Scheme	CAV Unit Responsibility during 2013	Annual Budget
Malta Arts Fund	co-management with MCCA	€430,000
Kreattiv	<p>Full management and administration (18 new project supported for the 2013-2014 scholastic year) – www.kreattiv.gov.mt.</p> <p>The KREATTIV funding programme is part of Government's commitment to engage educators and creative practitioners in dialogue and collaboration that encourage students and educators towards further engagement within the creative sector. KREATTIV supports school-led creativity projects which involve students, teachers and artists from all genres, namely: arts, heritage, media, and creative services. These projects seek to complement the curriculum, and strive to add value to the learning experience and to the school environment by bringing creative practitioners into schools to work with teachers and students to inspire, learn and create in a collaborative and innovative way. 18 projects were selected for funding, and these projects are currently being implemented within the schools.</p>	€80,000
President's Creativity Award	<p>Co-management with President of the Republic's Office, and administration; support to 16 projects targeting children, youths and community projects for 2013-2014.</p> <p>Il-Premju tal-President għall-Kreattivita` targets the development of young talent and the dissemination of arts-driven projects which engage with different groups within the community. The Award rewards emerging talent, provides basic mentoring support for young talent, and supports organisations that target the social needs of different communities through creativity and art.</p>	€70,000
Culture Card	<p>Management, coordination of administration in coordination with MEDE.</p> <p>In Scholastic Year 2013-14, approximately 11,500 students have access to the Culture Card. The Culture Card credits around 11,500 young people in the first three years of secondary school with a fixed amount of €15. The objectives of the Culture Card are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support young people to engage in cultural and artistic activities. • Incentivise cultural producers to commission new work and programme cultural and artistic activities devised specifically for young people. 	€120,000

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new audiences by investing in cultural demand, also with the aim of developing audiences for V18 and beyond. • Promote culture and the arts as an entertaining, fulfilling, challenging and exciting activity for young people. • Implement measures relating to the development of young audiences and the sustainability of operators in the sector in line with the Creative Economy Strategy. <p>In 2013 there were 2,828 culture card transactions using an amount of €13,452.50.</p> <p>The Card also supports the Cultural Mentors Network bringing educators from the secondary schools for workshops and sharing of information about how schools can support students to access and enjoy culture.</p>	
INVEX	Full management and administration – continued support to 5 start-up companies (funding period 2012-2014), both through direct support to implement business plans as well as through mentorship support.	€150,000
Malta Digital Games Fund	Full management and administration; launch and allocation of first batch of five successful projects, including mentorship support through dedicated international experts in the digital games sector.	€123,000
Cultural Diplomacy Fund	Co-management with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; support to embassies in developing cultural projects	€75,000

The Unit also hosted the information points of the two culture and media related European Programmes, namely the Culture Contact Point and the Media Desk. Apart from workshops and one-to-one meetings during the year, the focus of the work during 2013 addressed closure of the desks and the formal processes leading to the establishment of the new, consolidated Creative Europe Desk which will provide information about the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2014-2020.

EU Affairs

Throughout 2013, the Directorate coordinated the drafting of Malta positions for culture and audiovisual-related dossiers, namely:

- Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020-2033 (General approach)
- Proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken by the European Union within the Committee on Cultural Cooperation set up by the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Korea, of the other part, as regards the adoption of the rules of procedure of the Committee on Cultural Cooperation
- Recommendation for a Council Decision designating the European Capital of Culture for the year 2017 in Denmark and Cyprus and for the year 2018 in Malta

- Use of culture as a soft policy option in EU external relations (Policy debate)
 - Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a Member State (recast) (General approach)
 - Cultural diversity in the context of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (Exchange of views)
 - Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on media freedom and pluralism in the digital environment
 - Connected Citizens: changing behaviour of viewers in the converged media environment (Policy debate)
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Department for Local Government

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

In 2013, Local Councils received a direct allocation of € 31,000,000 from central government. This was apportioned to each Council on the basis of the funding formula found in the Eight Schedule of the Local Councils Act (Cap 363). Various financial schemes were again available to all Local Councils and in this respect an amount of € 700,000 was voted. The Public Private Partnership Scheme in connection with road resurfacing in localities was also continued and here an amount of € 1,100,000 was available for Local Councils.

Government also continued to assist Councils through the secondment of mainly IPSL workers. The salaries and wages of these workers are borne by central government and therefore Councils are making savings in this respect.

As in previous years, the Department for Local Government also provided financial assistance to the Local Councils Association (LCA) (€ 102,772.50) and to the Association of Local Council Executive Secretaries (ASKLM) (€ 9,318) as part of government's commitment to assist both associations.

The table below illustrates central government's direct financial allocation to Local Councils since the setting up of Local Councils in 1994.

Central Government's Direct Financial Allocation to Local Councils: 1994 - 2013

1. Direct Financial Allocation (Funding Formula):

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Lm mill.</i>	<i>Euro mill.</i>	<i>Euro mill.</i>
1994-95	4.5		10.48
1995-96	6.3		14.68
1996-97	6.25		14.56
1997-98	8.75		20.38
1998-99	5.831		13.58
1999-00	6.5	15.14	
2000-01	9.66		22.50
2001-02	10.24	23.85	
2002-03	10.54		24.55
2003-04	10.70		24.92
2004-05	10.686	24.89	
2005-06	10.200	23.75	
2006-07	10.250	23.88	
2007-08	10.270	23.92	
2008-09	-	26.97	
2009-10	-	27.01	
2010		30.01	
2011	-	30.01	
2012		31.50	
2013		31.00	
Total Direct Allocation			457.58

Other financial initiatives

Internet Banking

The use of Internet Banking was introduced in Local Councils. Besides facilitating the work of Local Councils it will serve for a more efficient service.

New Procedures for Bank Deposits

Various discussions and meeting were started between all stakeholders for the implementation of a new system regarding the deposit of LES fines.

Public Private Partnership Schemes

Other than PPP Schemes in connection with the resurfacing of roads, during 2013 the Department for Local Government received and processed two applications for Public Private Partnership Agreements. These were approved in February (Naxxar LC with Dar Sagra Familja) and November (Imgarr LC for a Developemnt of an observatory and interpreaton Centre).

Local Councils' Administrative Offices

The Department processed two applications for new administrative offices. These were from the Local Councils Association and Swieqi Local Council. Both were approved in November 2013.

Twining Agreements

Two twinning applications were approved during the year – Birgu Local Council's twinning with the locality of Amalfi was approved in May while that of Mdina with the locality of Assisi was approved in October 2013

Other financial issues

The Department gives support to Local Councils on various financial matters. Besides processing the transfer of the quarterly financial allocation into the respective Local Councils' bank accounts, the Department is also responsible for the vetting and processing of all claims in connection with the various Local Councils grants' schemes. The Department also ensures that any devolution request by a Local Council would be financially sustainable before recommending its approval.

One other very important function of the Department is the continuous monitoring of Local Councils finances (see under separate heading). In this regard, the Department is in regular contact with the Auditor General in order to ensure that Local Councils retain a healthy financial position and are always operating within the law and regulations.

Co-operation with the National Audit Office is ongoing, particularly during the Local Councils' year end audits. Councils are informed about the proper procedures to be adopted in order to ensure that the auditing procedure is made in a smooth manner and all audited reports and financial statements are received by the due dates.

MONITORING UNIT

During the year 2013 a complete review of the work process of the Monitoring Unit was undertaken. The office of the Monitoring Unit was transferred to the main building of the Department for Local Government and the filing system was totally organised in a digital format. At the second quarter of the 2013, a senior monitoring officer was engaged to manage the Unit. Four monitoring officers were also engaged with the unit, each officer being assigned a particular area leading to specialisation in the same subject and a Principal Officer to manage the administration of the Unit. The Department's Customer Care Unit which deals with complaints regarding Local Councils was also incorporated within the Monitoring Unit.

The Monitoring Unit dealt with various cases reported by individuals and Councils' Members alleging that the Council breached the Law. Regular checks were also made on the schedule of payments, reports, minutes and other related documents. In this respect special attention was given to ensure that the Councils abided by the Local Councils Act, Regulations and Procedures as well as the instructions which are issued from time to time by the Department through various memos. The timely submission of reports was also scrutinized.

The Monitoring Unit also manages all the logistics in events and seminars organised for Local Councils by the Department and/or Secreteriat for Culture and Local Government.

The IT Section of the Department is also under the Monitoring Unit's responsibility. Monitoring Officers scrutinise the www.lc.gov.mt website and make sure that Local Councils are uploading their meetings documents and reports on time. The Unit offer support to those Councils who have difficulty in doing so. The IT Section is also responsible of all IT related projects of the Department, support DLG staff in various ICT issues and offer also support to Local Councils.

Apart from that, the unit continued scrutinizing the various functions of the Local Councils, with particular emphasis on the financial aspect. During this year members from this Unit were also asked to attend Council meetings and to submit reports on their findings.

During 2013, the Monitoring Unit reviewed around 780 cases. This is considered to have been a major improvement on previous years. In those cases where Councils were found to have irregularities, they were asked to take corrective measures.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION

During 2013 an Assistant Director Human Resources and Administration was appointed. A call for a new pool of Executive Secretaries was issued, the pool was selected, and new Executive Secretaries in Local Councils, Regional Committees and AKL, started being appointed.

DLG (Malta) is now in a single building, following a reorganisation of offices.

GRANT SCHEMES

SCHEMES LAUNCHED IN 2013

Since the inception of schemes from the financing of projects to cultural activities in 2009, the Department for Local Government has noted that the Councils are embarking on even more ambitious projects, and actively participating in each scheme launched. Administrative Committees and even Regional Committees are following suit. During 2013, 3 new schemes were launched

The Department was involved in the preparation, adjudication (through an official on the Adjudication Board) and payment of these schemes to the successful Councils. The schemes and the amounts allocated to each one are indicated in the table below.

List of Schemes Issued in 2013

Memo 9/2013 - Scheme for the financing of Lifelong Learning courses	€14,962.00
Memo 17/2013 - Scheme for the financing of Live Streaming	€158,700.00
Memo 25/2013 - Scheme for Cultural Activities 2013/14	€250,000.00

Schemes Awarded in 2013

In 2013, the Department for Local Government, following the adjudication of the various schemes each by their respective Adjudication Board, some even pertaining from 2012. This is the respective list :

	No of applications received	No of Councils which applied		No of Adm Comm which applied		Regional Committees	Total grant for each scheme	No of Councils which benefitted		No of Adm Comm which benefitted		Regional Committees
		Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo			Malta	Gozo	Malta	Gozo	
Memo 38/2012 - Scheme for Cultural Activities 2012/13*	89	67	15	4	2	1	€250,000.00	40	11	2	2	1
Memo 40/2012 -Scheme for Local Councils who have the responsibility of local libraries 2013	47	36	11	0	0	0	€36,500.00	36	11	0	0	0
Memo 45/2012 - Scheme for the financing of Special Initiatives	48	31	10	3	2	2	€105,000.00	8	2	0	1	0
Memo 49/2012 - Scheme for the financing of Sport Initiatives 2013/14	35	23	11	0	1	0	€60,000.00	24	11	0	1	0
Memo 56/2012 - Scheme for the financing of Pilot Project - Book Box	19	19	0	0	0	0	€4,800.00	7	0	0	0	0
Memo 9/2013 - Scheme for the financing of Lifelong Learning courses 2012/13	25	24	1	0	0	0	€14,962.00	23	0	0	0	0
Memo 17/2013 - Scheme for the financing of Live Streaming	69	51	14	0	0	4	€158,700.00	51	14	0	0	4
Memo 25/2013 - Scheme for Cultural Activities 2013/14**	95	69	17	4	3	2	€250,000.00	11	4	0	0	0

* Only the activities covering Part 2 of the call have been awarded.

** Only the activities covering Part 1 of the call have been awarded.

Follow ups in 2013

The Department has been following the Local Councils, Administrative Committees and Regional Committees in their progress, related to the schemes they have benefitted from. This has led to the schemes awarded in 2009, to be closed. Also schemes awarded in 2010/2011 are nearing final completion. The follow ups have resulted in a screening process of Councils carry on for the execution of such works. It is noted that all necessary tenders or quotations are issued, they are vetted and followed, to follow up each Council in the progress of such works.

DEVOLUTION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY TO LOCAL COUNCILS

During 2013, six public sites/properties have been devolved to Local Councils through the Government Property Division (GPD). Meanwhile the Department together with the GPD concluded a further three devolution requests, pending approval from the Parliamentary Secretariat for Planning and Simplification of Administrative Processes (OPM).

STREETLIGHTING

The Department is on discussions with the Local Councils Association (LCA) and Enemalta with regards to the devolution of the remaining street lighting. In view of this the Department is currently also involved in a EU funded ERDF project led by the Ministry for Energy and Conservation of Water (MECW), aiming at retrofitting street lighting by LED smart lighting in Gozo.

LOCAL-ENFORCEMENT-SYSTEM

The Department submitted its thoughts with regards to the new LES reform, to be considered for inclusion in the relevant new white paper being launched in 2014. Meanwhile the Department oversaw the smooth transition to the newly appointed LES Management Committee.

E-GOVERNMENT

The Department sustained its support to Local Councils in providing free wi-fi service in the localities' open spaces and in their offices. Local Councils were given financial assistance amounting to €33,360 by the DLG.

EU AND INTERNATIONAL UNIT

Since Malta has become a member state of the European Union new funding opportunities for local government projects have become available. In September 2013, the Unit was completely restructured in a way to be able to cater for its various responsibilities. New staff was assigned to the Unit.. The following is a list of the Unit's core business:

1. Application for funding of national projects and the implementation thereof projects that are selected under various programmes that provide
2. Become a National Contact Point for EU programmes
3. Express opinions on thematic developments in the European Union and the Council of Europe related to local government;
4. Assist other ministries and the EU Representation with feedback on EU legislation; and
5. Monitor the implementation of EU partly funded project by local councils.

Hereunder please find further details on the activities carried out by the Unit:

NATIONAL CONTACT POINT

The Department is the National Dissemination Point of the URBACT programme and the National Contact Point for the "Europe for Citizens" Programme. These programmes are designed to assist local government in the preparation of urban and community planning together with opportunities to implement activities aimed at enhancing the citizen's participation in public life.

As a National Contact Point for the "Europe for Citizens" programme the Department has been actively involved in the formulation of the opinion of Malta regarding the new programming period - 2014-2020. Furthermore, the Department has assisted local councils in various local meetings related to the project, wherever this was demanded.

PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Department represents Malta in the Regional and Local Development Committee of the Council of Europe. This committee provides the platform for the 47 Member countries to debate issues that are of general interest to local government as well serve as a bridge to other European institutions. However the main activity relates to the opinion expresses to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on various themes that will eventually shape local government policy throughout Europe.

MONITORING OF LOCAL COUNCILS PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Participation in bilateral meetings that are held between Managing Authorities of the ERDF, ESF, Malta-Italia and Measures 313 and 323 programmes and the Local Councils. The aim of this participation is twofold - to give advice to both the Managing Authorities and Locals Councils leading to facilitate a better implementation of projects and to monitor the Councils operation in project management in such a sensitive task dealing with public procurement and working with national and international partners.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DEPARTMENT'S EU PARTLY FUNDED PROJECTS

Project 1 - CERTESS

DLG is a partner in this EU co-funded as part of the INTERREG IVC programme. The programme supports projects that aim, through interregional exchange of experience at policy level, to improve regional and local policies addressing the selected sub-theme. CERTESS refers to Priority 2 and, in particular, to the sub-theme "Cultural Heritage and landscape"; some of the project objectives, results and activities, however, deal also with other subthemes of both priority areas, thus ensuring a cross-sector and integrated approach.

The specific field of action is related to the European cultural routes as defined by the Council of Europe (usually intended as a historical line interconnecting one or more regions and organised around topics whose historical, artistic or social interest proves to be European, either because of the geographical layout of the route, or due to its contents and significance).

The project aims at setting up a common methodological framework of policy and development instruments for the regions, elaborated through the sharing and transferring of best practices among the partner regions. The best practices shall tackle all aspects relevant the development of a sustainable cultural tourism, from the local micro level to higher decision making bodies, with reference to:

1. identification, interpretation and adding value to cultural heritage local assets
2. development & adoption of advanced governance systems
3. promotion of local economic enterprises & products along the routes, by adopting innovative immaterial services including ITC
4. attention to environmental issues such as:
 - reducing environmental impact & energy consumption of local socio-economic activities;
 - protection and valorisation of landscape, etc.

Most of the routes already identified, and regions intersected by them, indeed lack comprehensive methodologies, governance instruments, innovative ideas, etc. to implement effective strategies at regional level, the result being that there is a range of punctual, local and sometimes isolated initiatives that:

1. are casually scattered along the route and its associated territory,
2. have no critical mass and
3. do not generate or involve a systematic approach.

The 12 partners to this project are: European Institute of Cultural Routes, LU, Lazio Region, IT, Department of Local Government, MT, Salzburg Research, AT, Tourism Agency of the Balearic Islands (ATB), ES, Regional Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Sport, ES, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, DE, Zlin Region, CZ, Administrative District of Gorlice, PL, Ministry of Culture Luxembourg, LU, Sibiu County Tourism Association, RO and JAMK University of Applied Sciences, FI.

This project is enabling the Department to gain valuable experience in the project management cycles of an EU partly funded project whilst being able to recover all the costs involved including the staff costs.

Project 2 - Improving Public Management and Governance at Local Level

The Training Unit within the Department for Local Government was established in June 2011 so as to conduct training courses according to current and future local government needs. The Unit collaborates with other units within the Department such as the Human Resources and the EU and International Affairs with the main aim to co-ordinate and maximise the use of its own resources in developing a training programme for both the elected and the executive arms of local government. Furthermore, the main goal of the unit is to establish a **national training strategy**. The TNA provided a clear strategy that the Department needed to develop - to introduce a common training framework specifically designed to meet the needs of Executive Secretaries working in Local Councils/ Regional Committees and DLG staff with the aim of ensuring and improving Public Management and Governance at Local level.

The Department application under for funding under ESF was successful and since September 2012, the Unit was also engaged in the implementation process of a project that address various issues related to the Local Governance Policy. The relevance of the common training framework relates also to the increase of service to the public by means of a greater efficiency in Local Councils with better trained public serviced and public sector employees whilst installing related needs such as leadership and ownership. Therefore a common training framework within a national training strategy for local government shall increase the efficiency in local government in the sectors of public procurement, effective customer satisfaction to the community's needs and in particular in the management of public funds. The implementation of this project is expected to commence in 2014.

Project 3 - Partnership for Creative Governance

The Department for Local Government has filed a project proposal - "A partnership for Creative Governance" under the Norwegian Grants that is structured under various programmes originated by the Council of Europe. This project shall create a set of initiatives that will research, examine, focus and create a number of measures to strengthen institutional capacity, strengthen people development within the respective departments responsible for local government, the elected and the executive arms of local and regional government, improve the quality and accessibility of services provided and create a professional programme for exchange of

personnel. The Head of the EU and International Unit within DLG attended for a Train the Trainer Seminar held in Switzerland organised in conjunction with the Council of Europe.

One of the main initiatives to be undertaken is the Leadership Academy programme. Good leadership can make a real difference to how well a local authority performs. There is growing consensus that it is the most important element in developing good local governance. Leadership is the capacity to formulate a vision for the future of the local community and to make it come true through the involvement of the community, the use of public authority and strategic management of public services. The main objectives of the ToT were (a) to enhance knowledge and skills of trainers in the field of leadership in local governments, based on concepts contained in the Centre's Manual on modern leadership; (b) to create a pool of trainers/experts that potentially would carry on Leadership Academy programme in their respective countries/local governments; (c) create a network of international trainers/experts that would continue to co-operate in the future with aim to exchange practices and experiences, and ultimately would conduct the Leadership Academy Programme in pairs.

During 2012, the Council of Europe, by means of an invitation informed the Department for Local Government of a meeting that was being organized in Oslo, Norway with KS - the Norwegian Association of Local Municipalities with the aim "... to discuss the implementation of the Partnership for Creative Governance Project, which is to be funded by the Norwegian Grants, as well as the role of each partner in this Project." The predefined project "Partnership for Creative Governance" was drafted in Malta between the Department for Local Government and the Local Councils Association and the assistance of the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform of the Council of Europe under the Programme Area 25: 'Capacity Building and Institutional Cooperation between Beneficiary State and Norwegian Public Institutions, Local and Regional Authorities' of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. The Head of Unit of EU & International Affairs with DLG attended this meeting and successfully concluded various pending issues regarding the project. The project is expected to commence in 2014.

BOARD OF PETITIONS

The Local Enforcement System entails a substantial devolution of power to local government authorities (Regional Committees and Local Councils) to enforce legislation scheduled in terms of Legal Notice 32 of 2000. This radical programme for Local Enforcement has helped the Local Government authorities to secure a high level of community discipline in terms of citizens' compliance through educational campaigns and also through enforcement initiatives. This has been realized through planned management via a tightly integrated solution based on the process rather than individual functions. This has been achieved by linking together all Local Councils, Regional Committees, Warden Services Contractors, Service Providers and Enforcement Officers.

The functions of the Board of Petitions are as follows:

- (a) to determine any petition submitted to it by any person who is charged or is about to be charged with any scheduled offence before a Commissioner;
- (b) to order the waiving or discontinuance of any proceedings before a Commissioner relating to any scheduled offence at the request of any person as mentioned in the preceding paragraph; and
- (c) to remit in whole or in part any financial penalty imposed by a Commissioner following proceedings for an infringement relating to a scheduled offence.

The Board receives petitions through letters (by post on PO Box 62, Victoria - Gozo), through emails (on petitions.dlg@gov.mt) and as from April 2012 the Government launched an online system (www.les.gov.mt) further facilitating accessibility. During 2013 the Board received through letters received by post and through emails 23,498 petitions, out of which 7,632 were received online. Whereas the number of petitions received kept in line with the previous years,

the Board however set up a more efficient processing system and decreased the number of petitions awaiting a decision by 67%.

Tourism Directorate

SECTION : TOURISM DIRECTORATE (PERMANENT SECRETARIAT – MTCE)

The Tourism Directorate within the Ministry for Tourism has a very specific role, and this is to provide support and assistance to enhance the coordination and communication between the Malta Tourism Authority and the Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Environment as well as to drive the strategy and policy for tourism. This role was implemented through a number of initiatives that have been undertaken over the past three years, including:

- A) The drafting of local tourism plans, particularly, the consideration of Mellieha as the pilot area for this process. A draft report will be prepared, in the near future, for public consultation before the implementation process.
- B) The proposal of innovative and new products and services that will enhance the tourist experience in Malta and Gozo. These proposals were discussed with Local Councils and other stakeholders related to the tourism industry so that the most feasible method of progression could be established. During 2013 another five local council itineraries were launched for Mqabba, Qrendi, Kirkop, Safi and Zurrieq. These itineraries are intended for the independent traveller or visitor or those groups of visitors who have a particular interest in the relational and cultural aspects of the host community. The itineraries have already been promoted on a number of websites including the Malta Tourism Authority web site as well as through a number of hotels and tour organizers.
- C) By managing the loan of props to NGOs, Local Councils and other organizations to assist in the coordination of events organised by these entities, the Secretariat or the Malta Tourism Authority ensuring that these are in line with tourism policy;
- D) Attended conferences and meetings organized during international tourism events and for Pan European Networks to establish a broader coordination in developing strategies and policies related to tourism.
- E) To maintain an efficient and effective communications process with the Malta Tourism Authority to ensure better implementation of the National Tourism Policy and to create an effective flow of feedback that could improve strategy and policy development .
- F) Developing and maintaining an effective tool for communicating strategies and policies both to internal and external stakeholders in the tourism industry.
- G) Direct participation in the ESCO project that was launched, through the ESCO Secretariat within the DG Employment, during the last quarter of 2011. As Chairperson of the Hospitality Reference Group the project will include five critical stages to develop a relevant, reliable and interactive database of skills matched to competencies and qualifications within the hospitality sector of the tourism industry across Europe. By developing this database it should improve the aspect of job satisfaction and career advancement within this important employment sector and create a better sense of vocation and professionalism within this service.

Julian Zarb

Director (Tourism)
