



NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

THE MINISTRY FOR YOUTH
AND THE ARTS



MALTA 1993

CONTENTS

1. Background.....	5
2. Aim.....	8
3. Strategy.....	9
4. General Principles.....	12
5. Specific Statements.....	13
6. Conclusion.....	25

1. Background

- 1.1 Youth affairs have been steadily gaining ground as an important sector for national attention, especially since Malta became independent in 1964.
- 1.2 The Youth Service Organisation was set up within the Ministry of Education mainly to cater for extracurricular activities. It is still in operation and organises cultural activities for primary and secondary school-children and is in charge of an ever-expanding range of exchange programmes with foreign scholastic institutions or non-university student organisations.
- 1.3 In 1990 a Parliamentary Secretariat, particularly directed at Youth, was set up within the Ministry of Education for the first time since Malta achieved sovereign statehood.
- 1.4 This Parliamentary Secretariat was transformed into a Ministry in 1992. The existing Youth Division in the Ministry is projected to become part of a new Department of Youth and Sport run by a Director of Youth and Sport directly responsible to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry.
- 1.5 A National Youth Council was set up in December 1991 after various consultations and meetings with youth associations during 1990/1991. The first elections for the NYC were held early in 1992. The National Youth Council is a full member of the Council of European National Youth Councils (CENYC).
- 1.6 In 1992 the University of Malta, following an approach from the Ministry for Youth and the Arts, set up an Institute of Youth Studies and appointed an Executive Director and an Assistant to run it.
- 1.7 The Ministry for Youth and the Arts has for the past three years been providing assistance to youth initiatives and to youth organisations and has been running various programmes for young



people including programmes such as: Youth for Culture, Youth for Europe, Youth for Enterprise, Youth Against Drugs, Maltafest Żghażaġh. It has served both as a catalyst for action in the youth field as well as a supporter of initiatives taken by non-governmental organisations and by young persons individually. It has also set up a framework for the National Youth Council and has instigated the creation of the Institute of Youth Studies at the University of Malta.

- 1.8 Activity in this field has followed a clear line of thinking. There is, however, a need to place it, and future developments, within a structured policy framework which can serve as a basis for Government action and as a guiding light for the National Youth Council and youth and other non-governmental organisations operating in this field.

2. Aim of a National Youth Policy

- 2.1 A National Youth Policy seeks to set out the objectives to be achieved for youth in Maltese society and to provide guidelines for the implementation of these objectives.
- 2.2 The Policy shall provide young people, and decision-makers, in the country with clear objectives to be achieved in the political, social and economic development of the nation.
- 2.3 The Policy shall be subject to constant assessment and to periodical revision in accordance with changing circumstances and visions for the future of youth, of society, and of the country in general.
- 2.4 This Policy may also serve as a guideline to Policy makers achieving intergenerational communication and integration in our society.
- 2.5 In the absence of a homogeneous international definition of youth, "youth" as considered in this policy shall mean young people between the ages of 16 and 30:

3. Strategy

- 3.1 The Ministry responsible for Youth shall have the primary task to see to the implementation of the National Youth Policy.
- 3.2 The Ministry shall constantly assess and periodically review this Policy, in consultation with the National Youth Council.
- 3.3 In the course of this assessment and review, the Ministry responsible for Youth shall, at least every three years, call a National Conference on Youth Policy and Youth Affairs. The National Youth Council shall be given the opportunity to be directly involved in the organisation and agenda-setting of the Conference.
- 3.4 In implementing this Youth Policy, the Ministry responsible for Youth shall seek not only to carry out its own activities and its various programmes for youth but also to act as a catalyst for action by the National Youth Council, youth organisations and young people in general and to assist and support the same in their activities. The Ministry shall seek to keep contact, offer direction and infrastructural and other support, creating opportunities and free choices which respect the sense of autonomy and responsibility of youth and their organisations.
- 3.5 The Ministry responsible for Youth shall work closely with other Ministries of Government and other public bodies such as those responsible for social policy, education and health in all issues concerning youth and which fall under the jurisdiction of the respective Ministries in the implementation of this youth policy.



4. General Principles

It shall be the policy of the Government to:

- (a) recognise the value of youth as a major human resource of Maltese society contributing to its cultural, economic and political development.
- (b) provide youth with equal opportunity to education, including education at tertiary level, and to a cultural formation directed at enhancing personal growth.
- (c) seek to understand the just aspirations of youth and to direct its resources to their fulfilment.
- (d) integrate youth in the mainstream of the political, social and economic life of the country, recognising them as a vital element of the future of the nation.
- (e) develop among youth a sense of solidarity and co-operation among themselves, with those with special needs in society and with other generations.
- (f) enable youth in Malta to develop a mature, world-vision that transcends insularity.
- (g) to assist young people in the further development of a European consciousness based on mutual respect and understanding through the creation of an awareness of a common European Culture emanating from differing traditions.
- (h) instil in Youth a spirit of self-confidence and a belief in their ability to realise their potential in society.
- (i) foster a spirit of self-reliance, leadership and enterprise among young people.
- (j) nurture young people's spirit of altruism and self-sacrifice and their attachment to ideals.

- (k) prepare youth to achieve objectives for themselves and for their country in a competitive international environment.
- (l) appreciate the importance of youth as a positive force for change and renewal.
- (m) enhance the creative and recreational talents of youth.
- (n) assist young people to overcome the inherent difficulties of adolescence.
- (o) encourage the appreciation of cultural diversity and assist youth mobility as a major tool in furthering first-hand knowledge of different cultures and ways of life.
- (p) endeavour to strengthen the moral and spiritual values of young people.
- (q) seek to create an awareness of their responsibilities towards the family and towards society.
- (r) respect the rights of young people as an integral part of Maltese society.

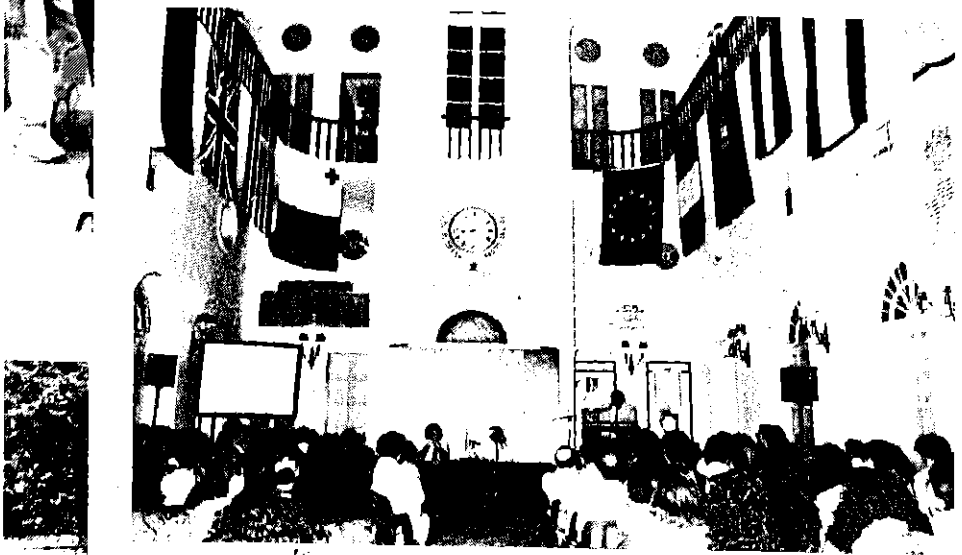
5. Specific Statements

5.1. National Youth Council

- 5.1.1 The National Youth Council is an autonomous entity enjoying a wide national representation of youth organisations set up by charter in December 1991 following national seminars directed at its formulation.
- 5.1.2 The NYC, whose first general meeting and elections took place on the 29th March 1992, provides a forum for overseeing and reviewing national policies in youth affairs and functions as a voluntary non-governmental organisation to represent the voice of Maltese youth and enable their effective participation in Maltese society. It serves as a co-ordinating body for all youth organisations and as a consultative body to Government on all matters relating to youth in Malta. The NYC represents Maltese youth in international fora.
- 5.1.3 Government shall provide premises and administrative back-up for the NYC. It shall also provide the NYC with financial support in a block vote to be autonomously administered by the NYC itself.

5.2 Youth Centres

- 5.2.1 The establishment of Youth Centres in the various towns and villages of Malta where these do not as yet exist shall be encouraged and supported both by Government and by local councils. These new centres and those already established shall constitute focal points for youth activities and programmes in the locality.
- 5.2.2 The Government shall seek to set up a National Youth Centre to incorporate NYC offices and meeting rooms for youth organisations and to offer other facilities for the holding of residential seminars, international meetings and sports and cultural activities.



5.3 National Youth Day

- 5.3.1 There shall be a National Youth Day to provide a focus on the role of youth in Maltese society and to convey to youth the nation's recognition and appreciation of their importance to the country's well-being.

5.4 Representation on Government Boards and Committees

- 5.4.1 Government shall endeavour to ensure that youths are represented on its Boards and Committees as well as on the boards of public corporations and companies in which Government has a majority shareholding. It shall also encourage private enterprise to give young people positions of responsibility and management.

5.5 Youth Information

- 5.5.1 Youth shall be provided with information services to offer guidance on employment as well as educational and training opportunities.
- 5.5.2 The Ministry responsible for Youth shall provide youth with information services regarding all youth-related activities falling within the jurisdiction of the said Ministry.
- 5.5.3 There shall also be a helpline service for young people in distress or seeking guidance and assistance at any time.
- 5.5.4 Local councils shall promote and support information and counselling centres for young people.

5.6 Youth Card

- 5.6.1 There shall be a National Youth Card, in line with the Lisbon Protocol on the European Youth Card, valid in all European countries. The card shall be primarily a means of encouraging young people to enhance their cultural, sport and educational formation but shall also serve them in their leisure and other requirements and assist them in their mobility in Europe and elsewhere.

5.7 Youth Employment

- 5.7.1 An employment service specifically directed at the needs of young people shall be established. Government should also encourage the creation of opportunities for further training among youth already gainfully employed.

5.8 Youth Working Conditions

- 5.8.1 There shall be special regulation of the working conditions of youth, including young people between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, to ensure that working young people retain a leisure, educational and cultural aspect to their life and that they are not exploited in any way.

5.9 Institute of Youth Studies

- 5.9.1 There shall be an Institute of Youth Studies in the University of Malta with the specific tasks of:
- (a) carrying out courses for the formation of qualified personnel to work among youth and in the youth field.
 - (b) carrying out research and analysis on the situation of young people in Malta.
 - (c) providing information as a basis for, and suggesting, new policies for youth in Malta.

- 5.9.2 The Institute shall also seek to develop an international dimension, operating in conjunction with other Universities and Institutes specialising in youth studies and youth formation.

5.10 Directory of Youth Organisations

- 5.10.1 A Directory of Youth Organisations shall be published at least every three years. The Directory shall be published in conjunction with the National Youth Council.

5.11 Housing

- 5.11.1 Government shall seek to adopt housing policies that assist young people to find decent housing without necessarily taking on burdensome long term financial commitments. Young people should be counselled on the implications of such long term financial commitments.

5.12 Europe

- 5.12.1 A better understanding of European culture shall be fostered among Maltese youth to encourage their participation in the creation of a post-cold war Europe and in the furtherance of the process of European integration. Youth exchange programmes shall also include this dimension and shall be directed at granting youth first-hand experience of the way of life in other European societies.
- 5.12.2 Seminars, discussions, and other information programmes for youth on Europe, the European Community, the Council of Europe, the Mediterranean and other geo-political realities shall be organised or supported.

5.13 Culture

- 5.13.1 Programmes aimed at increasing cultural understanding and

cultural participation among youth should be organised or supported.

- 5.13.2 Young people shall be provided with the opportunity to increase their understanding and appreciation of Malta's European and Mediterranean cultural heritage.
- 5.13.3 Young people shall be encouraged to take up artistic activities in their leisure time and to attend for cultural and artistic representations and activities.
- 5.13.4 The formulation of a Cultural Policy for Malta shall take into account the importance of youth in all aspects of cultural and artistic life.
- 5.13.5 Young people shall be provided with facilities and conditions in which to express themselves and their creative skills such as:
 - (a) by the promotion of training and creative expression in music, the media and the arts;
 - (b) by the promotion of the study of languages and of the correct expression in the national language and in the other official language;
 - (c) by bringing modern means of expression and communication and modern technologies within the reach of young people;
 - (d) by encouraging the participation of young people in the press and media.
- 5.13.6 Efforts shall be made to disseminate and strengthen among youth a culture of democracy, tolerance and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

5.14 Equal Opportunities

- 5.14.1 Government shall continue to optimise conditions for equal status for young men and women, promoting the increased participation of young women in positions of responsibility and in public life.

- 5.14.2 Government shall also continue to address and optimise the conditions for the integration of young people, particularly those coming from families with special needs, in the daily life of the country.

5.15 Health

- 5.15.1 Young people should be provided with all necessary data to further their healthy well-being and to draw their attention to the grave dangers of sexually-transmitted diseases such as AIDS.
- 5.15.2 Similarly the attention of young people should also be drawn to the dangers of smoking, alcoholism and drug-abuse. Tobacco and alcohol advertising directed at young people should be strictly regulated.
- 5.15.3 The importance of rest, leisure and sport, and of a healthy life style should be emphasised in all images directed at communication with young people.

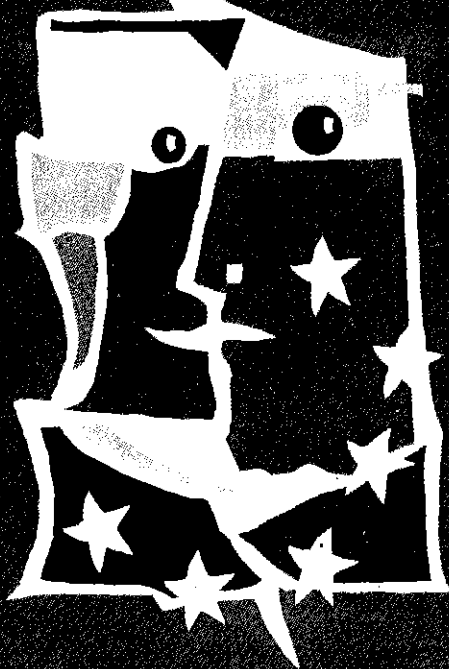
5.16 Participation

- 5.16.1 Youth should be encouraged to participate in society. Their opinions and views should be listened to and considered in the formulation of policies and in their implementation. The youth dimension should be considered at the outset in the formulation stage of all political activity.

5.17 Values

- 5.17.1 The strengthening of the values and character-formation of young people shall be an integral part of youth policy. This shall include the promotion of sporting and cultural activities.
- 5.17.2 Efforts shall be made to help young people avoid exploitation and to avoid being caught in the spiral of individualistic consumerism

KARTA ŻGHAZAGH



VANTAĠĠ F'ŻGHOŻITEKI!

IL-EURO - 28/KARTA ŻGHAZAGH TOFFNI AGĠZŻ BEK, AGĠZŻU
YAGĠRU, FAĠĠLITAJET TA' KULTURA, DIVERTIMENTI, SPORTI,
BAFAR U NAFFNA KONĠERŻANŻET F'MALTA U F'L-EWROPA LI
ŻGHAZAGH TA' 28.01 LERBATAX U 8-DITTA U OROĠRIN 87



and hedonism. On the other hand, the cultural values of solidarity in society shall be propagated.

- 5.17.3 Sport shall be utilised as a major tool in the strengthening of youth values. The values of sport such as fair play, team work, the ability to lose, the spirit to compete and win, the importance of good conduct and discipline, the need to prepare and to train, are useful tools in the character-formation of youth.
- 5.17.4 Government shall sustain its Youth Against Drugs campaign designed to show young people that they can themselves be a force against drugs, and to develop an anti-drug culture among youth.

5.18 Young People With Special Needs

- 5.18.1 Young people with special needs, emargined youth and youth at risk shall be helped to overcome their difficulties and recover their self-esteem.

5.19 Young Families/Parenthood

- 5.19 The special needs of young people carrying the responsibility of a family and single parenthood shall be recognised and addressed.

5.20 Intergenerational Communication

- 5.20.1 People of all ages should be encouraged to communicate with each other, increase awareness of each other's way of life and share in their diverse experiences, so as to achieve intergenerational integration in society.

5.21 Enterprise

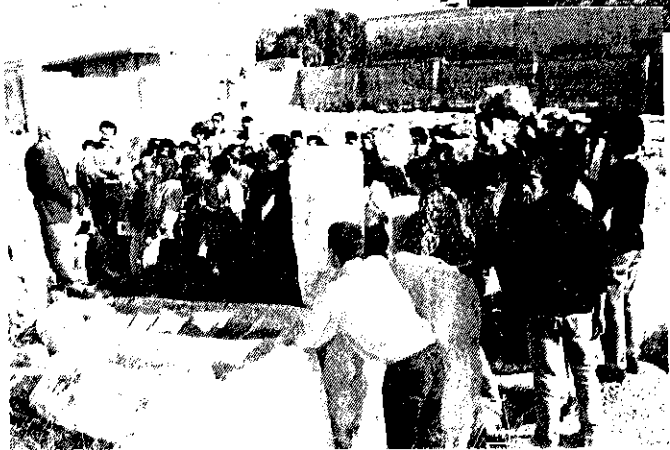
- 5.21.1 Young people shall be encouraged not to adapt a mentality of dependence but to seek to establish their independence and to develop an attitude of enterprise.
- 5.21.2 In the granting of assistance to young people and their organisations preference shall be given to those who show that they have made the effort to help themselves.
- 5.21.3 Government shall pursue its Youth for Enterprise programme whereby it assists with special terms young people setting up their own companies in a competitive market environment.

5.22 Youth Mobility

- 5.22.1 Government shall take measures to encourage youth mobility to enable young people to share in cultures abroad and to accumulate travel experience.
- 5.22.2 Youth Exchange programmes and attendance of young people at conferences abroad shall be organised or supported.
- 5.22.3 Care shall be taken to ensure that all categories of youth are able to benefit from these schemes of youth mobility.
- 5.22.4 The National Youth Card shall also help in the furtherance of youth mobility.
- 5.22.5 Youth mobility among Maltese youth shall be regarded as a major priority in view of the importance of young people developing a mature world-vision early in life while living in a small island territory.

5.23 A Positive Force for Change

- 5.23.1 Young people shall be encouraged to play the part of a critical conscience of society and to do their utmost to spread the awareness of the real possibilities of change. Society stands to gain from their fresh attitude at existing realities and from their deep commitment to the good of fellow men and women.
- 5.23.2 Young people shall be appreciated as an especially sensitive force in the search for new values in society, emphasising the values which are at the root of civilised social co-existence: the centrality of the individual person in all social institutions, solidarity with others, the equal dignity and reciprocal relationship between man and woman, the building of a rapport based on freedom, justice and respect for, and appreciation of, diversity.



6. Conclusion

- 6.1. Youth today have rights and duties that are more complex than those of many other previous generations. They live in a society which is beset by constant change, with shifting ground and an increasing number of variables. On the other hand, they have a higher level of education, greater opportunities for exposure to different cultures through the international media and the facility of overseas travel. They are more inquisitive, asking more questions and requiring more detailed and convincing answers. They need to search and to experience. They need to involve themselves more in society as it moves from one situation to another, feeling an integral part of the process of decision-making and social development. This Youth Policy document seeks to give this important space for Maltese youth in our society, to bolster their values, to strengthen their voice, to combat consumeristic approaches and develop greater knowledge and appreciation of the long lasting cultural and historic patrimony entrusted to their generation.
- 6.2. Government should not be the only actor in this field. The National Youth Council should be another pole of activity and initiative. Youth organisations, youth leaders, young people themselves should strive to make their mark. This policy document is intended to induce young people and their organisations, Government and other authorities in the country to take a more active role in the construction of the present and future of our society.