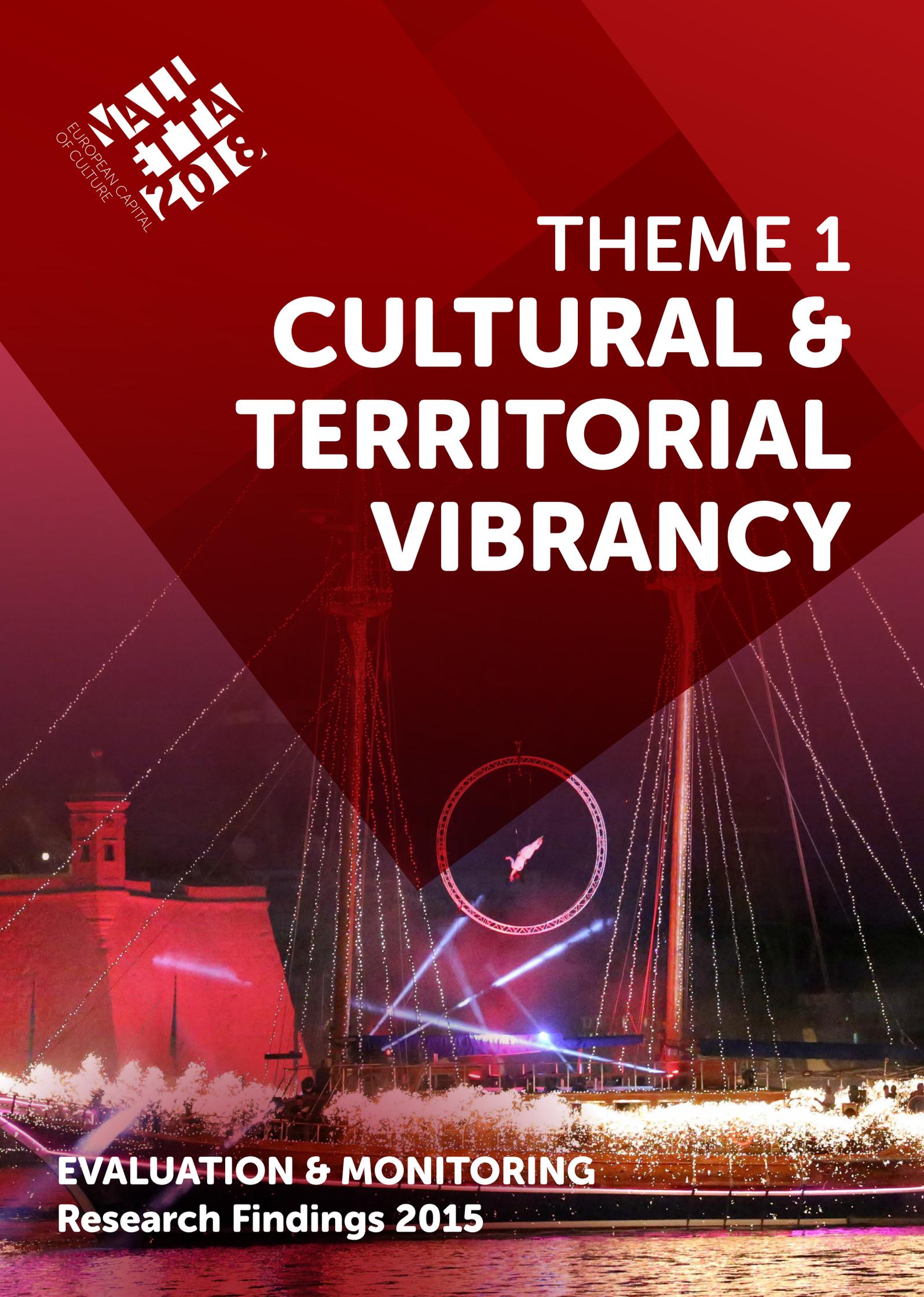


THEME 1 CULTURAL & TERRITORIAL VIBRANCY



EVALUATION & MONITORING
Research Findings 2015

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The Valletta 2018 Evaluation & Monitoring process is a means through which the Valletta 2018 Foundation gains a deeper insight into the various impacts of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title on different spheres of cultural, social and economic life. The goal of this process is twofold (i) To understand the changes brought about by the ECoC title, and (ii) To address any shortcomings and challenges faced by the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme throughout its implementation.

This process comprises a series of longitudinal studies commencing in January 2015, three full years before the European Capital of Culture year, and running through the ECoC, with results presented in 2019, thereby capturing data before, during, and in the immediate aftermath of Valletta holding the ECoC title.

This process is divided into five themes:

- 1. Cultural & Territorial Vibrancy**
- 2. Governance & Finance**
- 3. Community Inclusion & Space**
- 4. The Tourist Experience**
- 5. The Valletta Brand**

This research is a collaborative, mixed-methods process, involving a number of public entities, collecting and analysing data primarily of a quantitative nature, together with independent researchers working with data that is predominantly qualitative. These entities and researchers constitute the Valletta 2018 Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, that was set up to manage and implement this research process.

The public entities forming part of the Steering Committee are:

- National Statistics Office
- Malta Tourism Authority
- Employment & Training Corporation
- Economic Policy Department within the Ministry of Finance

The independent researchers participating within this process were selected according to their area of expertise. The areas covered are:

- Cultural Programme
- Branding
- Sociology
- Built Environment
- European Identity

Although each of these researchers, and their respective teams, are carrying out data collection and analysis specifically within their respective fields, various points of intersection and collaboration across the various areas have been established so far. The data being collected throughout each study is being shared with the Steering Committee in order to create synergies between the different fields being analysed.

The research methods adopted throughout the various studies that comprise this process vary greatly, ranging from quantitative surveys to in-depth interviews, focus groups and real-time experience tracking.

CULTURAL & TERRITORIAL VIBRANCY

THEME 1

Cultural and Territorial Vibrancy investigates the impacts of the ECoC title on the various forms of cultural participation within Malta, and the extent to which the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme is addressing issues related to cultural engagement, community involvement within cultural activities, and capacity building.

This strand is formed of three major studies. These are the Valletta Participation Survey, being carried out by the National Statistics Office, which provides crucial information on the degree to which various groups and individuals participate in cultural activity taking place in Valletta, and identifying the push and pull factors which encourage or discourage further participation.

A second, related study, being carried out by Daniela Vella, analyses the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme in detail, examining how this is devised and implemented, and reflecting upon its effectiveness in fostering international collaboration and community participation in cultural activity.

Finally, the study carried out by Dr Marcello Carammia examines individuals' sense of European identity throughout the Valletta 2018 process, looking into changes in the degree of trust and closeness to European and National institutions through a series of quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group sessions.

Together, these three studies present a comprehensive overview of the current cultural participation and the ways in which Valletta 2018 intends to influence and encourage further involvement within cultural activity and greater participation within artistic, social and civic processes. These studies will be further supplemented with other sources of data over the coming years, foremost amongst them being the upcoming Cultural Participation Survey which examines participation within culture on a national scale.



VALLETTA PARTICIPATION SURVEY

NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

ABSTRACT

The Valletta Participation Survey (VPS) is a population survey aimed at measuring the levels of participation of the Maltese population in many of the activities organised under the cap of the Valletta 2018 Strategy. This survey was carried out for the first time in November 2014 and repeated in November 2015. As from 2016, it is aimed that this respective survey will be held twice in a year. To ease comparisons between consecutive survey waves, it is important to note that the surveys are carried out in a harmonised and consistent manner. This project is the result of a fruitful collaboration between the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Valletta 2018 Group. It sets to provide Valletta 2018 with high quality statistical indicators which measure the effectiveness of the Valletta 2018. Information collected from these surveys shed light on policy areas where further action needs to be taken by the Valletta 2018 in order to meet better the expectations of the general public from this Strategy.

The target population of this survey includes persons aged 16 years and over, and residing in private households in Malta and Gozo. The sampling method adopted for this survey ensures that all the localities in Malta and Gozo are adequately represented in the sample. Nevertheless, oversampling is carried out amongst Valletta's residents so as to enable the collection of detailed information from the residents living in the capital city of Malta.

The survey seeks to tackle various topics that range from questions about visiting Valletta during the summer and winter seasons, to participation in cultural events organised under the umbrella of Valletta 2018. Respondents are also asked to provide their perceptions regarding Valletta as a European Capital of Culture and to provide their feedback regarding the ECoC Programme. These surveys are also used in order to assess the level of knowledge of the respondents on Valletta as the European Capital of Culture, and the media through which they prefer to learn about Valletta 2018 activities.

Scope and Relevance

The VPS provides an overview of the main characteristics associated with the demand for cultural activities organised or supported by Valletta 2018. In particular, the questionnaire deals with different aspects related to the strategy, as follows:

- General questions for persons living in Valletta (this section is addressed only to Valletta residents and targeted through the oversampling within Valletta)
- General questions about visiting Valletta (this section is addressed to non-Valletta residents)
- Attendance and participation in cultural events
- Awareness of the European Capital of Culture
- Background and demographic information on the respondents.

The majority of the questions remain unchanged between successive data collections, so as to ensure full consistency, and hence comparability of results across time.

Sampling and Population coverage

The target population of this survey consists of the Maltese population aged 16 years and over, who are living in households in the Maltese Islands. All localities in Malta and Gozo are equally covered in this survey, with the exception of Valletta, where over-sampling was implemented so as to ensure an adequate representation of results in the final sample.

For the purpose of this study, NSO uses an internal register of households and individuals to determine the respondents for this survey. Selection of individuals is carried out through stratified random sampling basing on the variables sex, age group and district. For the 2015 survey, the size of the target population was estimated to be 355,885. The following tables illustrate the distributions by sex, age group and district of all the persons in the target population:

Population distribution by sex and age group

Age Group	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
16-24	25,057	14.1	22,989	12.9	48,046	13.5
25-44	61,934	34.7	58,108	32.7	120,042	33.7
45-64	56,401	31.6	55,514	31.3	111,916	31.4
65+	34,859	19.6	41,023	23.1	75,881	21.3
Total	178,251	100.0	177,634	100.0	355,885	100.0

Population distribution by district or locality

District or locality	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Southern Harbour (excluding Valletta)	30,408	17.1	29,930	16.8	60,338	17.0
Valletta	2,325	1.3	2,459	1.4	4,784	1.3
Northern Harbour	53,214	29.9	53,835	30.3	107,049	30.1
South Eastern	27,127	15.2	26,761	15.1	53,888	15.1
Western	24,010	13.5	24,497	13.8	48,507	13.6
Northern	27,398	15.4	27,030	15.2	54,428	15.3
Gozo	13,769	7.7	13,122	7.4	26,891	7.6
Total	178,251	100.0	177,634	100.0	355,885	100.0

A net sample of 994 respondents was interviewed for November 2015 data collection. This comprised 800 residents who were selected randomly from all Malta and Gozo, excluding Valletta. The remaining 194 respondents were selected from Valletta. The over-sampling carried out in Valletta enabled the derivation of good quality statistics specifically for this locality. The differences in selection probabilities that resulted due to over-sampling were then compensated by the application of probabilistic weights, which were compiled during the data analysis stage.

Data collection (for the November 2015 wave)

The survey was launched on the 26th October 2015, with the data collection being finalised on the 13th November 2015. For the purpose of this survey, the NSO engaged a number of experienced part-time interviewers, who were trained specifically for this survey. Data collection was carried out by means of computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). The average interview duration for each successful interview, was estimated to be approximately 15 minutes.

A total of 1,796 contact attempts were made for the purpose of this survey. From these, 194 persons refused to provide information, while another 608 were ineligible. The following tables give the sample distribution by sex, age group and district:

Sample distribution by age group

Age Group	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
16-24	66	13.8	62	12.1	128	12.9
25-44	134	27.9	148	28.8	282	28.4
45-64	171	35.6	162	31.5	333	33.5
65+	109	22.7	142	27.6	251	25.3
Total	480	100.0	514	100.0	994	100.0

Sample distribution by district or locality

District or locality	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Southern Harbour (excluding Valletta)	69	14.4	71	13.8	140	14.1
Valletta	92	19.2	102	19.8	194	19.5
Northern Harbour	63	13.1	68	13.2	131	13.2
South Eastern	69	14.4	67	13.0	136	13.7
Western	67	14.0	75	14.6	142	14.3
Northern	58	12.1	65	12.6	123	12.4
Gozo	62	12.9	66	12.8	128	12.9
Total	480	100.0	514	100.0	994	100.0

Quality control

In order to ensure a high quality standard of data, the questionnaire was designed in a concise format suitable for CATI. The questionnaire was structured in collaboration with Valletta 2018. Interviewers conducting this survey were thoroughly briefed prior to the survey and made familiar with all the basic concepts and technical issues related to the questionnaire. The NSO also designed a CATI program specifically for this survey with a series of built-in validations, in order to eliminate misleading information during data collection.

After the data collection stage, audits were carried out to ensure that the work was conducted diligently by the interviewers. The editing stage of this survey consisted in the re-checking of all the inputted data and the identification and verification of all the logically misleading data.

Weights

Post stratification at one level was undertaken by means of these variables: sex, age group and district/locality. By means of this process, the NSO could produce estimates on all the parameters of the target population at district/locality levels categorised according to sex and age. Also, by implementing this technique, weighting serves to reduce the effect of non-response bias, which would tend to make estimates rather unreliable.

Errors

This survey was subject to two main sources of errors, which are technically referred to as sampling errors and bias. Sampling errors are those that occur as a consequence of the sampling procedure adopted in this survey. Sampling errors can be measured in order to provide an indication of the degree of accuracy of the indicator.

On the other hand, bias is another type of error attributable mainly to all human errors that have been committed during the interviewing process, errors during the editing stage and analysis as well as the weighting procedure applied. This error cannot be quantified and its presence should be borne in mind by users of this data.

Concepts and definitions

The district variable was classified according to the Malta Geographical Codes (MGC) developed by NSO:

Southern Harbour	Valletta, Vittoriosa, Senglea, Cospicua, Haż-Żabbar, Fgura, Floriana, Kalkara, Hał Luqa, Marsa, Paola, Santa Luċija, Hał Tarxien, Xgħajra.
Northern Harbour	Hał Qormi, Birkirkara, Gżira, Hamrun, Msida, Pembroke, Tał-Pieta' St Julian's, San Ġwann, Santa Venera, Tas-Sliema, Swieqi, Ta' Xbiex.
South Eastern	Żejtun, Birżebbuġa, Gudja, Hał Ghaxaq, Hał Kirkop, Marsaskala, Marsaxlokk, Mqabba, qrendi, Hał Safi, Żurrieq.
Western	Haż-Żebbuġ, Siggiewi, H'Attard, Hał Balzan, Hał-Dingli, Iklin, Hał Lija, Rabat, Mtarfa, Mdina.
Northern Gozo and Comino	Hał Gharghur, Mellieħa, Mgarr, Mosta, Naxxar, St Paul's Bay. Victoria, Fontana, Ghajnsielem and Comino, Għarb, Għasri, Ta' Kerċem, Munxar, Nadur, Qala, San Lawrenz, Ta' Sannat, Xagħra, Xewkija, Żebbuġ.

Note

Totals in tables may not add up exactly due to rounding.

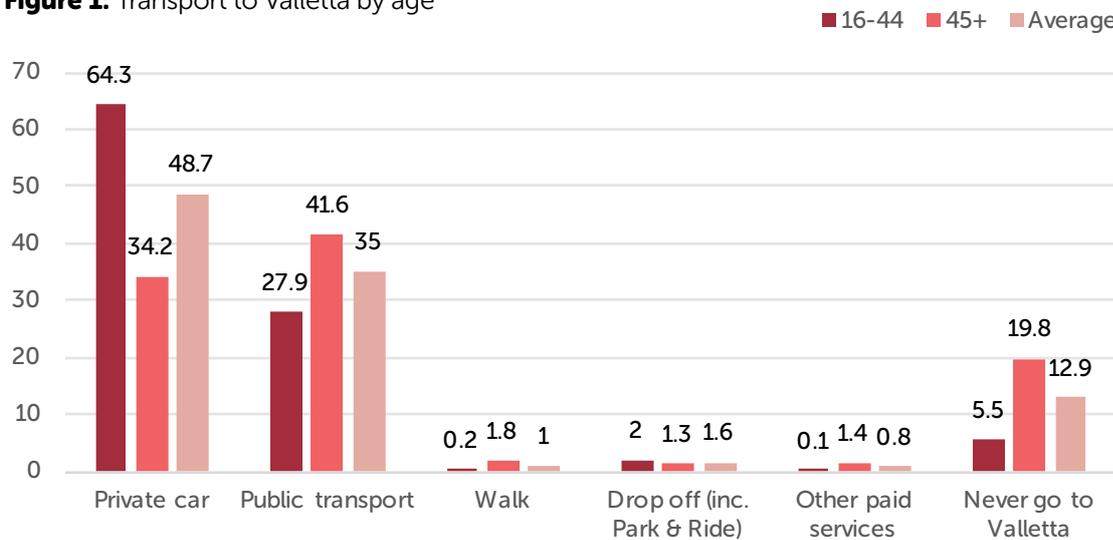
Findings

Some of the main findings of this survey are presented below:

Use of Space & Visiting Valletta

- 73.5% of Valletta residents use public spaces in Valletta for relaxation purposes
- 49% of all respondents travel to Valletta by car; 35% by public transport – more males (56%) than females (42%) travel by car; more females travel by public transport (41% vs 29%);
- 13% of non-Valletta residents never go to Valletta; almost 20% of persons over 45 claim to “never” visit Valletta
- Respondents over the age of 45 more likely to travel by public transport (42% vs 28%); under 45s more likely to travel by car (64% vs 34%).

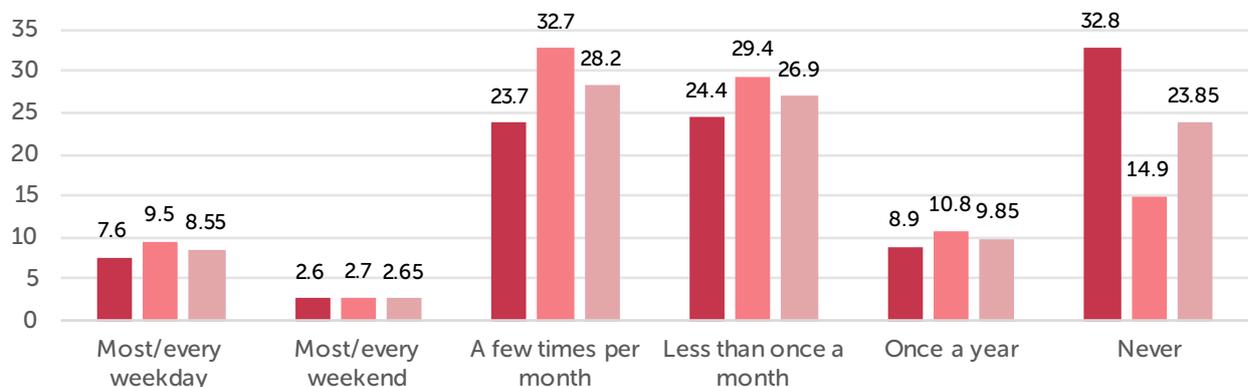
Figure 1: Transport to Valletta by age



Frequency of Visits

- 33% of non-Valletta residents visit Valletta a few times per month in winter;
- 33% of non-Valletta residents never visit Valletta in summer. This is over double the winter figure (15%).
- People under 45 generally visit Valletta more frequently than those over 45 in summer;

Figure 2: Travel to Valletta by season



Main Reasons for Visiting

■ Summer ■ Winter ■ Average

- The main reason for visiting Valletta is shopping for clothes (42%) followed by work/administration (24%) – 6% visit for “other activities”, whilst 3% “to go the theatre, cinema, or the National Library”
- More people over 45 visit Valletta for work/administration in winter (28% vs 21%); more people under 45 visit for shopping of clothes (46%) and dining (10%).
- People under 45 visit more regularly for recreational purposes in winter (e.g. dining, theatre, entertainment), whilst those over 45 attend more “other activities (Notte Bianca, Carnival, Religious events)” (8% vs 4%)

Figure 3: Reasons for visiting Valletta by season
Attendance & Participation in Cultural Activity

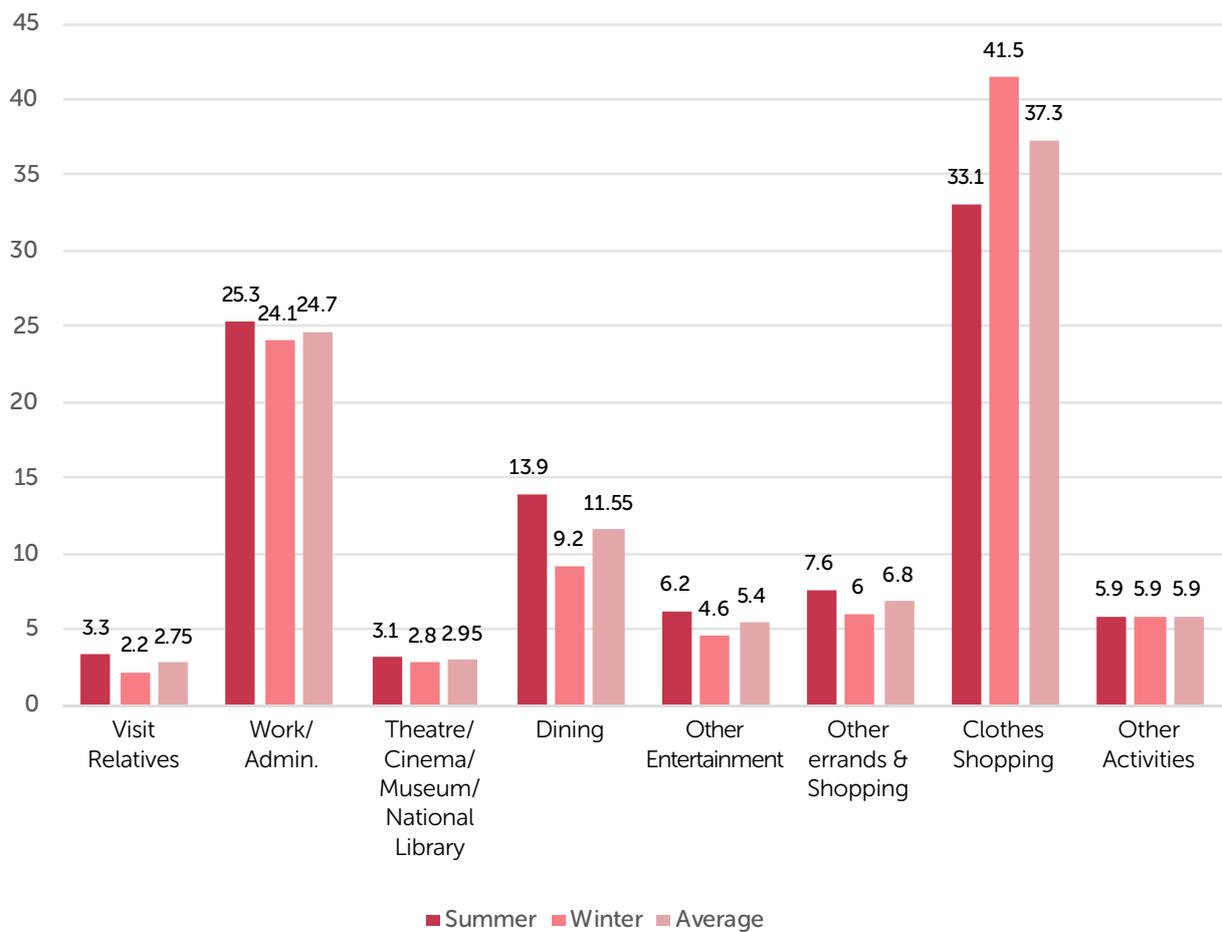
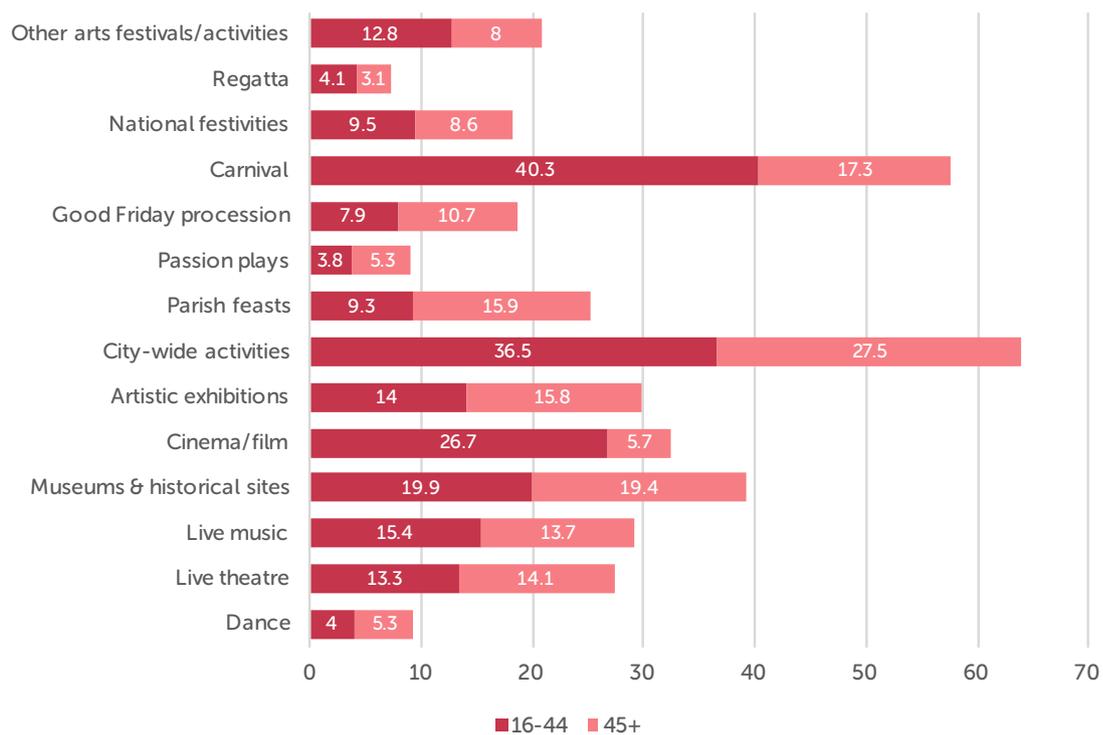
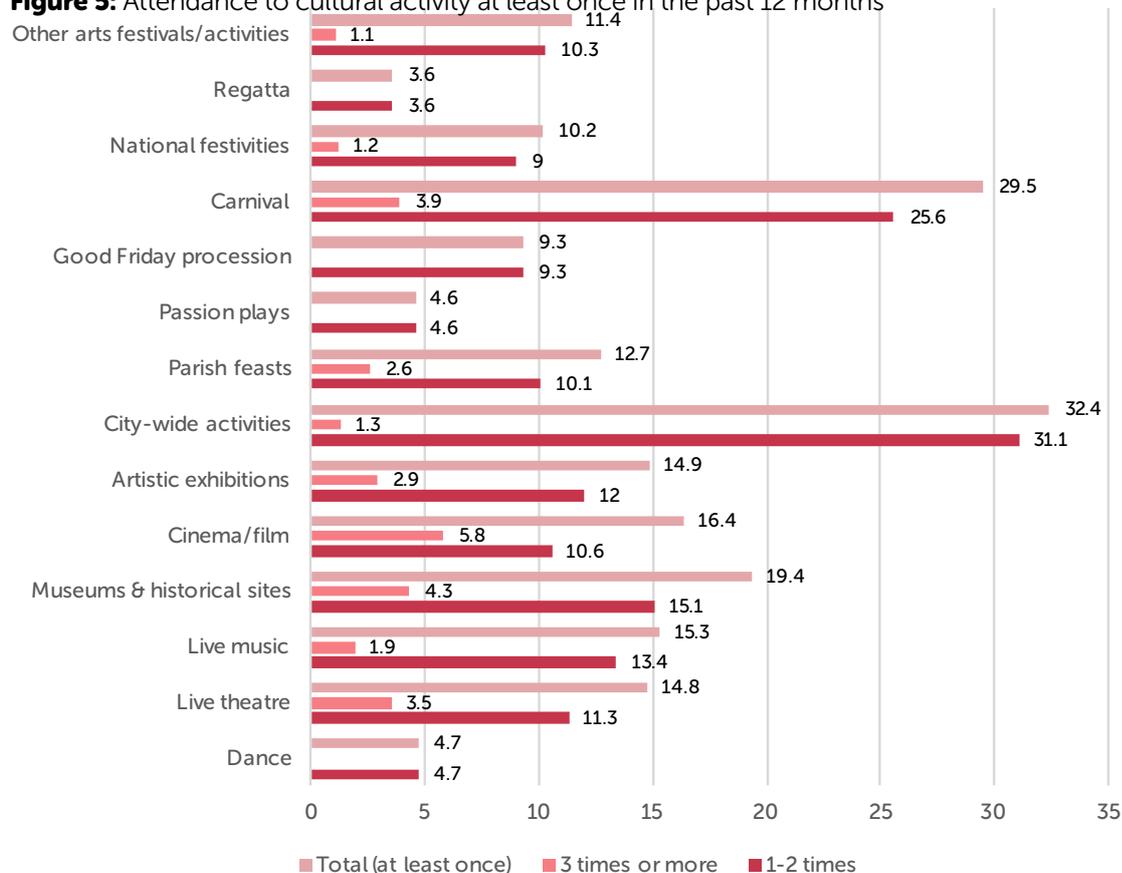


Figure 4: Attendance to cultural activity in the past 12 months

Figure 5: Attendance to cultural activity at least once in the past 12 months



Type of activity	Never attended (%)	1-2 times (%)	3 times or more (%)
Dance	94	5	N/A
Live theatre	85	11	4
Live music	85	13	2
Museums & historical sites	80	15	4
Cinema/films	83	11	6
Artistic exhibition & events	85	12	3
City wide activities	67	31	1
Parish feasts	87	10	3
Passion plays	95	5	N/A
Good Friday procession	90	9	N/A
Carnival	70	26	4
National festivities	90	9	1
Regatta	96	4	N/A
Other arts festivals or other activities	88	10	1

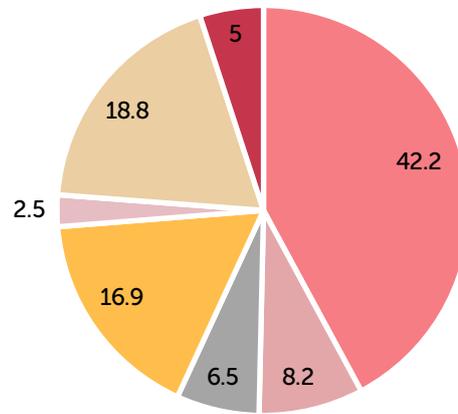
- Persons under 45 are more likely to have attended cinema/film screenings (16% vs 6%) at least 1-2 times in the past year; Valletta residents more likely to have attended (19% vs 11%) at least 1-2 times, compared to non-Valletta residents;
- Valletta residents more likely to have attended artistic exhibitions & events (18% vs 12%) at Passion plays are more highly attended by Valletta residents, compared to non-Valletta residents (20% vs 4%); this is also the case for Good Friday processions (44% vs 9%);
- Carnival is more popular amongst persons under the age of 45, compared to those over 45 (35% vs 17%), and Valletta residents compared to non-Valletta residents (36% vs 26%);
- Valletta residents more likely to attend national feasts than non-residents (22% vs 9%);
- On average 35% of residents of the Northern Harbour region have attended some form of cultural activity in Valletta, compared to an average of 15% from other regions.

Main reasons for attending

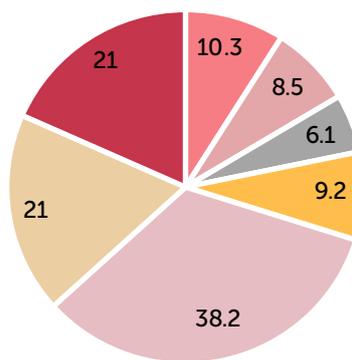
- The main reason given for attending a cultural activity in Valletta is "There is a nice atmosphere/sense of unity" (42%);
- 17% attended because it "serves a purpose of a different outing/activities for the whole family" (22% under the age of 45 vs 11% over 45); 8% attend because they are "reminded of Maltese traditions" (13% over the age of 45 vs 5% under 45);
- Main reason for not attending events is a lack of interest (38%), followed by "the event is too crowded/the atmosphere is not nice" (10%).

Figure 6: Reasons for attending cultural activities

Figure 7: Reasons for not attending cultural activities



- Nice atmosphere/sense of unity
- Well-organised
- Enjoying arts & culture
- Don't know
- National pride/tradition
- Different outing/whole family
- Other



- Too crowded/atmosphere not nice
- Location/accessibility
- Not interested
- No time
- Sickness
- Other

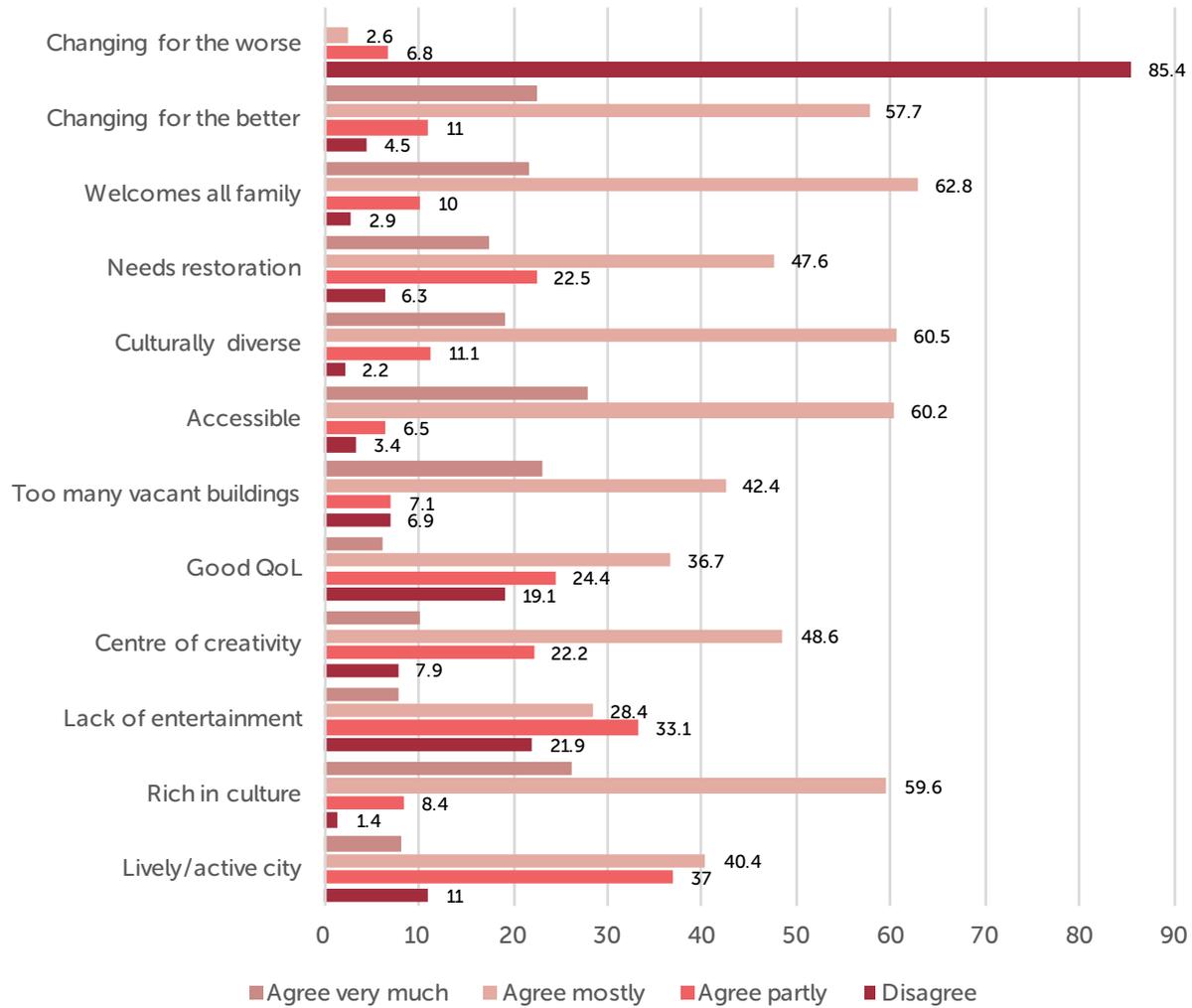
Perceptions of Valletta

Description	Do not agree at all (%)	Agree partly (%)	Agree mostly (%)	Agree very much (%)	Don't know (%)
Lively/active city	11	37	40	8	4
A city rich in culture	1	8	60	26	4
A city which does not offer enough choice for entertainment	22	33	28	8	9
Centre of creativity	8	22	49	10	11
A city which enjoys good quality of life	19	24	37	6	14
Has too many vacant buildings	7	7	42	23	21
A city which is accessible to everyone	3	7	60	28	2
A city which offers cultural diversity	2	11	61	19	7
Needs restoration	6	23	48	17	6
A city which welcomes all the family	3	10	63	22	3
Changing for the better	5	11	58	23	4
Changing for the worse	85	7	3	N/A	4

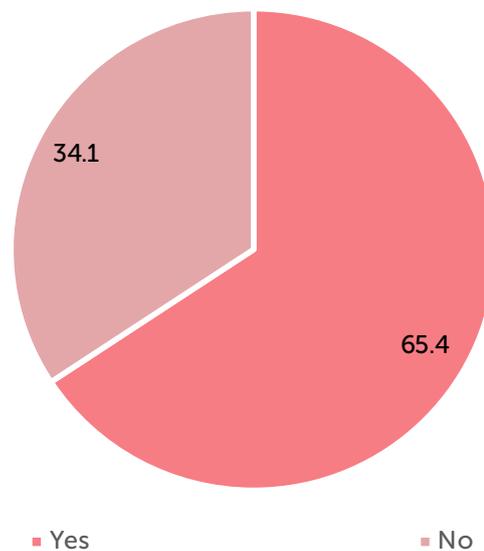
Perceptions of Valletta

- Persons over the age of 45 are more likely to “agree mostly” (43% vs 30%) that Valletta is a city which enjoys a good quality of life; Valletta residents more likely to “agree mostly” than non-residents (44% vs 37%);
- Valletta residents are almost twice as likely to “agree very much” that there are too many vacant buildings in Valletta, compared to non-residents (45% vs 23%);
- Persons over the age of 45 are more likely to “agree very much” that Valletta is a city which is accessible to everyone (31%);

Figure 8: Perceptions of Valletta
"Have you heard of the ECoC?"



- 86% of all respondents did not know (or did not answer) of any other city which has hosted the



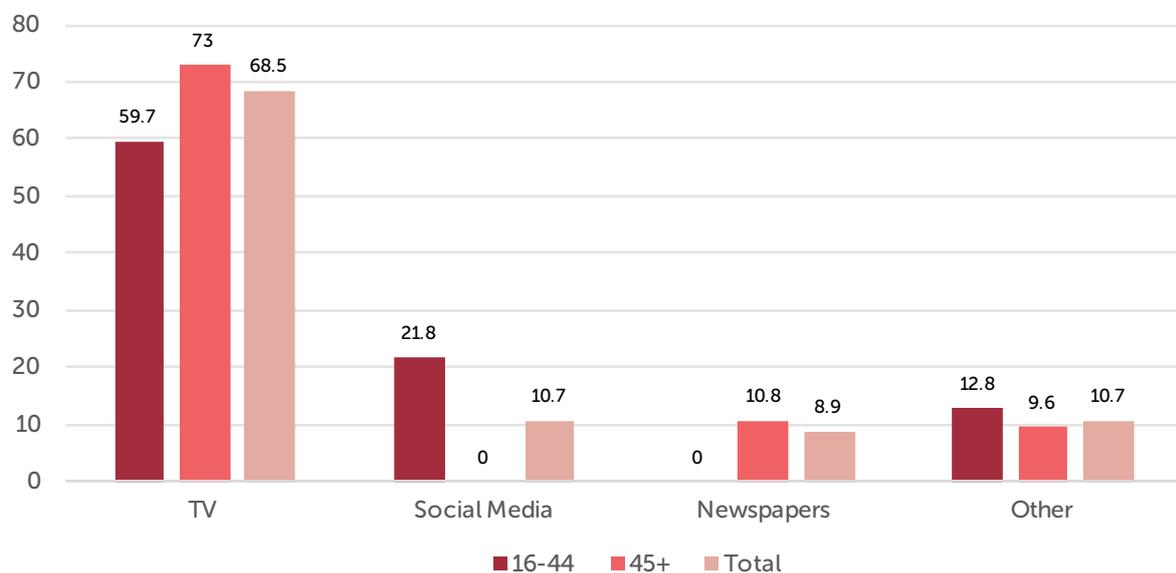
- ECOC title. 8% answered incorrectly; 7% answered correctly;
- Most of those who knew when Valletta would be hosting the ECOC title were Valletta residents (76% vs 58% for non-residents).

Sources of information

- Most people have heard about Valletta 2018 through TV (58%), followed by social media (7%) and newspapers (5%); 23% did not hear about it;
- Respondents over the age of 45 are more likely to have heard about Valletta 2018 from TV (63% vs 52% for persons under 45); Persons under 45 more likely to have heard through social media (12% vs 3% for those over 45).

Figure 9: From where did you hear about the European Capital of Culture?

- 42% are keeping themselves actively informed about Valletta 2018 and its activities; These are



more likely to be over the age of 45 and/or Valletta residents;

- The main source of information about Valletta 2018 is TV (69%), followed by social media (11%) and newspapers (9%);
- Persons over the age of 45 are more likely to use TV (73% vs 60% for those under 45) and newspapers (11% vs 0% for those under 45) to keep themselves informed about Valletta 2018;

Expectations of Valletta 2018

- When asked what type of cultural activities they expected in 2018, the most common response was "Dance, singing and music" (13%). This was mostly expected by respondents over the age of 45 (16% vs 9% for those under 45);
- This was followed by "events with a historical theme" (7%), which was almost twice as common amongst males (9% vs 5% for female respondents).

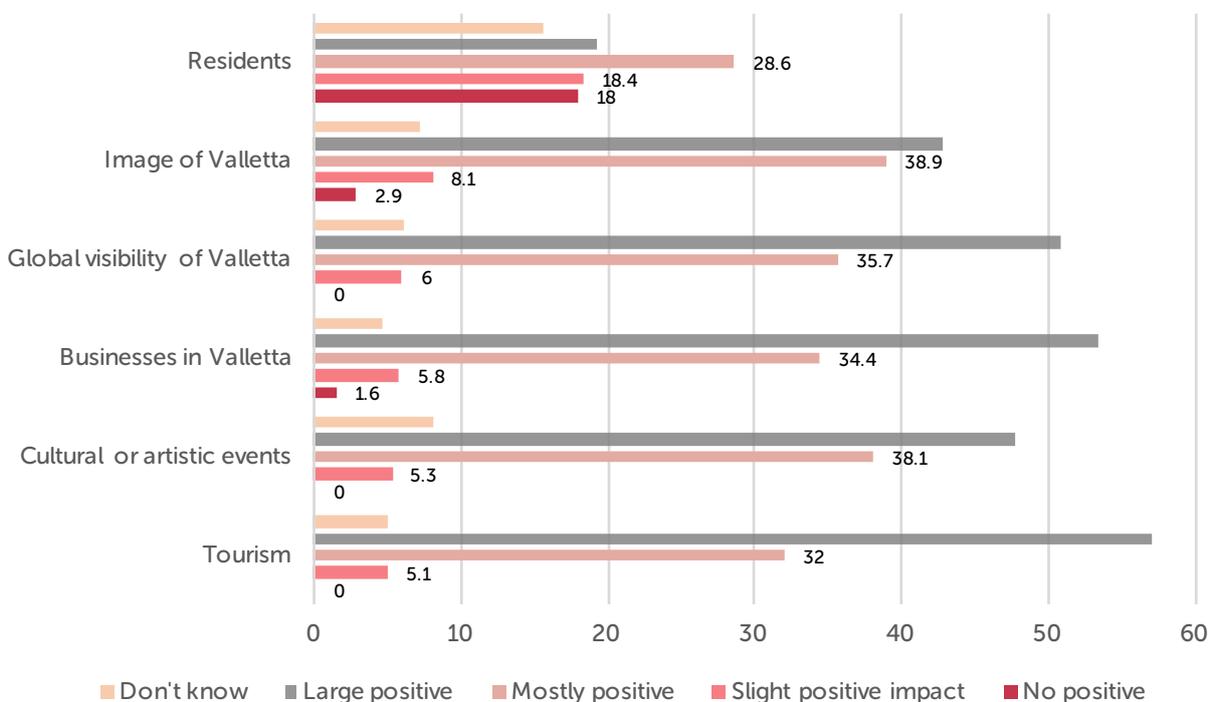
Benefits of Valletta 2018

- Valletta residents are more likely than non-residents to expect that Valletta 2018 will have a large positive impact on residents (29% vs 19%);
- Businesses in Valletta (65%) seen as the sector most likely to benefit from Valletta 2018, followed by the tourist sector (20%);
- Businesses in Valletta (36%) seen as the sector most likely to participate in Valletta 2018 followed by tourism (25%) and people who live outside Valletta (22%)

Figure 11: How likely are you to attend Valletta 2018 events? (by residence)

Sector	No positive (%)	Slight positive (%)	Mostly positive (%)	Large positive (%)	Don't know (%)
Tourism	N/A	5	32	57	5
Cultural or artistic	N/A	5	38	48	8
Businesses in Valletta	1.6	6	34	53	5
Visibility of Valletta	N/A	6	36	51	6
Image of Valletta	3	8	39	43	7
Residents	18	18	29	19	16

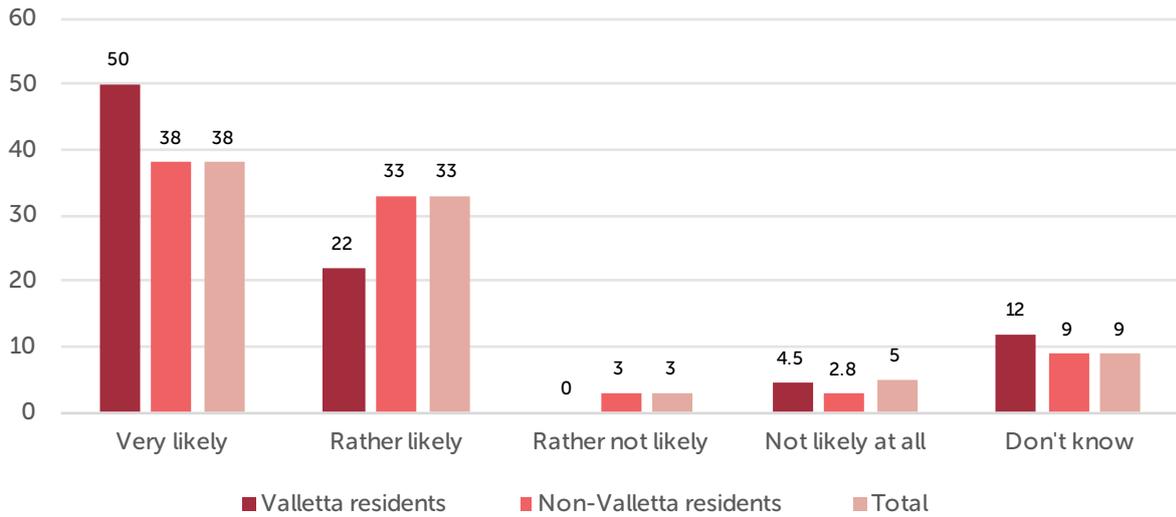
Attendance to Valletta 2018



- 38% of all respondents are "very likely" to attend Valletta 2018 events; 33% are "rather likely"
- Persons under the age of 45 are more likely to attend Valletta 2018 events (42% vs 34%), as are Valletta residents (50% vs 38% for non-residents);
- 49% of all respondents state that Valletta 2018 will increase their participation in cultural activities, whilst 41% state that it will not affect participation.

Figure 12: Attendance to Valletta 2018 events by residence

The Valletta Participation Survey is the first survey of its kind within the context of Valletta's nomination as



CONCLUSION

European Capital of Culture 2018. The survey provides insight into the relationship held with Valletta by both Valletta residents, as well as persons who live outside the city.

The results of the survey indicate that Valletta residents maintain a strong quotidian relationship with the city and carry out many of their daily activities (e.g. grocery shopping; shopping for clothes; relaxation in public spaces) within the city itself. Non-Valletta residents have a more sporadic relationship with the city, and mostly travel to Valletta a few times each month (at a higher frequency during winter).

Large-scale, city-wide activities (such as Notte Bianca and Carnival) are the most widely-attended cultural activities within Valletta, followed by visits to museums and historical sites. The various performing and visual arts disciplines all reported similar attendance figures (between 11-16% attended at least once), except for dance, which is the least popular form of cultural activity listed, together with the regatta and passion plays.

The most significant obstacle in increasing audiences for cultural activities is a general lack of interest, which was cited by 38% of respondents as the main reason for not attending. However, a significant portion of respondents cited the positive atmosphere and sense of unity brought about by cultural activities as their main motivation to attend. Nonetheless, a relatively small proportion of respondents listed an interest in arts and culture as a specific reason for attending cultural activities within Valletta.

An overwhelming number of respondents are in general agreement that Valletta is changing for the better. Respondents generally placed great value on Valletta's cultural and historic heritage, however many believe that the city does not offer a broad enough choice for entertainment.

Knowledge of the European Capital of Culture title, and the fact that Valletta will be hosting the title in 2018 is relatively high amongst respondents.

Valletta 2018 is still seen as an event which will primarily benefit the tourism industry, although it is perceived to have a strong positive impact on Valletta's business community and international image and visibility. The perceived impact on residents is less clear, with 18% of respondents believing that it will have no positive impact on residents.

Valletta 2018 is likely to increase participation in cultural activities over the upcoming years, particularly amongst Valletta residents and residents of the Northern Harbour region.

This study sets out to examine the life-cycle of the Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture (ECoC) cultural programme from development to production stage. It seeks to identify the effectiveness of the



A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VALLETTA 2018 CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Daniela Blagojevic Vella

ABSTRACT

programme in terms of the cultural offer, participation and European collaboration. It draws on to previous evaluations of ECoC programmes and the Bid Book objectives to establish elements and criteria against which to evaluate the programme. It takes a longitudinal and cultural production studies approach to examine the practices and decision-making processes from 2015 to 2018. The 2015 preliminary findings reveal the complexity of developing an ECoC programme and an ongoing refining of the vision and objectives by the Valletta 2018 Foundation. The interpretation of themes and orientations is flexible and used more for internal guidance rather than for external communication of projects. The programme is being further developed to include community based projects targeting specific groups as well as a number of large, special event projects targeting large audiences. The report further signals that the programming balance is currently in flux with a leaning towards a contemporary approach, a range of art forms and a focus on process-led projects rooted in Valletta and across Malta. Content programmers are intent on prioritising audience participation, European collaboration and legacy. The research needs to assess how this is translated into programming strategies and content over the next years leading up to the final 2018 cultural programme.

Keywords: Cultural programme; participation; European collaboration; cultural offer; programme development.

Introduction

THE VALLETTA 2018 CULTURAL PROGRAMME IN CONTEXT

The European Capital of Culture (ECoC) Programme is a much-coveted title that brings with it high expectations for multiple objectives. It offers unique opportunities for cultural visibility, vibrancy and participation. However, hosting cities are often overwhelmed by the range of goals they need to reach and the often contradictory choices that need to be made. Trevor Davis, the Director of Copenhagen ECoC 1996 and Director for Aarhus 2017 during its successful bidding phase, aptly captured this tension in the words “the ECoC model fascinates us, but it is also traumatic” (Palmer, Richards & Dodd, 2012).

This multi-faceted dimension of the ECoC has attracted a growing body of academic literature and commissioned reports on the subject. O’Callaghan (2012) reflects on the programme’s unrealistic expectations and deliverables that many cities do not achieve, resulting in alienation (p. 186). However, Garcia and Cox (2013) interpret this as an increase in the standard and ambition of the ECoC. These challenges make the research and evaluation of the programme’s objectives and effectiveness ever more pertinent. The Valletta 2018 ECoC offers a unique opportunity to design and conduct research in parallel with the development of the Cultural Programme.

The three main reports evaluating ECoCs, namely Myerscough (1994), Palmer/Rae (2004) and Garcia and Cox (2013), caution on the comparability of results and the heterogeneity of the ECoC. Cities vary in context, size and also in the programming approach. Moreover, investigating cultural outcomes requires a longitudinal approach as impacts often emerge after the event itself (Quinn & O’Halloran, 2006).

The Valletta 2018 Foundation will measure the ECoC objectives through five research themes¹. This study commissioned by the Foundation is being conducted over five years (2015-2019) and focuses on the creation and development of the Valletta 2018 cultural programme and the individual projects included in this programme. The study falls under the category Cultural and Territorial Vibrancy and covers aspects related to the cultural offer and participation in Valletta 2018 initiatives.

Scope of study

This qualitative study aims to examine the life-cycle of the Valletta 2018 cultural programme from the development to the production stage. In 2015, the focus was the analysis of the programme’s vision as articulated in the published material and as experienced by the content programmers.

More specifically, the study has 3 main objectives (i) to analyse how the cultural programme is developed, devised and implemented; (ii) to explore the factors that influence the creation of the cultural programme projects; (iii) to track the long term development of the programme’s effectiveness in terms of the cultural offer, participation and European collaboration.

The study sets out to investigate the following research questions:

¹ The Valletta 2018 Evaluation and Monitoring Research plan (2015-2019) has identified the following themes: Cultural and territorial vibrancy, Governance and finance, community inclusion and space, the tourist experience, the Valletta Brand.

1. What are the main aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme?
2. How is it developed and devised and how are projects/events selected?
3. What is the range and diversity of the cultural offer and programming balance?
4. How do the projects included in the Cultural Programme fulfil ECoC objectives on cultural participation? What strategies are being devised to engage audiences?
5. How do the project/events reflect the European Dimension?
6. What are the challenges encountered in the delivery of the Valletta 2018 Programme? What are the barriers to participation as perceived by the Cultural Programmers and creators?

Firstly there is a need to understand the objectives set by the 2006 Decision No 1622/2006/EC², in particular Article 4 and the emphasis that the ECoC should include two sets of criteria (i) European dimension and (ii) city and citizens. Secondly, the objectives set at application stage also need to be examined.

It should be emphasised from the outset that the 2015 findings are based on a Programme which is in progress and the full range of projects and events programme will take place in 2018. The focus throughout 2015 was therefore the planning stage and the projects which have been announced to date. Moreover, the study focuses on three aspects of the Cultural Programme in line with the Foundation's terms of reference. However, the effectiveness of the Cultural Programme is also dependent on various factors including governance and funding, infrastructure and communications.

Evaluating the ECoC Culture Programme

In recent years, the ECoC has developed to be more than a high-profile cultural festival. Nonetheless, the Cultural Programme and its projects are a main element and need to be assessed within the specific context of each city.

The extensive Palmer/Rae report (2004) documenting the impact of 21 ECoCs between 1996 and 2014 observes that the Cultural Programme represents around 63% of the operation expenditure of the ECoC. Furthermore, the study reflects on the scale of the Cultural Programme, the diversity of stakeholders targeted and the variety of elements required for programming balance (p.15).

Other more recent studies evaluating ECoC's overall impact, such as the ECORYS post-evaluation studies (2011-2014) also examine the various aspects of programming and effectiveness concerning objectives set by the European Commission. Innovative content and distinct programming are identified as key success strategies for ECoC (Garcia & Cox, 2013).

This study draws onto the elements identified by these authors and adapts these elements to analyse the Valletta 2018 Programme and its individual projects. Table 1 illustrates the relevant elements that need to be investigated in the analysis of a Cultural Programme. The studies use the European Commission terms of reference and similar terminology to refer to various components and categories: cultural participation, community development, inclusion engagement or outreach; cultural offer, programming processes or balancing; and European dimension and perspective.

² Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2017 to 2019.

Table 1

Elements to be analysed in the ECoC Cultural Programme

Elements for Evaluation	
Garcia & Cox (2013)	Palmer & Rae (2004)
1. Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aims and objectives 	1. Location and Timing 2. Programme themes and Orientation and Coherence 3. Project Selection 4. Scale of Programme 5. Programme Management 6. Programme Range 7. Art and Culture 8. Tradition and Innovation 9. Cultural Institution and Independent Groups 10. Public Space 11. Block Busters and International Stars 12. Community development, participation and Inclusion 13. Support for Local talent 14. Spin-off 15. Programme Expenditure 16. Event vs. Process
2. Programming Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Themes, Strands and Seasons b. Duration of Programme c. Location of the programme d. Art forms and activity genres e. New and additional programming f. Programme balance g. Programme consultation and funding processes 	
3. Programme size and scale	

Sources: ECORYS (2014); Garcia & Cox (2013) & Palmer/Rae (2004)

These categories can be further elaborated into success criteria as shown in Table 2. Participation goes beyond attendance of citizens to performances and includes co-creation strategies, approaches to audience development and volunteering programmes. The European Dimension includes cooperation with European artists and cities and promoting cultural diversity in Europe. These categories and criteria guide this research in analysing.

Table 2

Success Criteria to Evaluate ECoC Cultural Programme

ECORYS (2014)	
Category	Criteria
Cultural and Artistic Offer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear and coherent artistic vision for the cultural programme; 2. Involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme; 3. Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality; 4. Combination of local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.
European Dimension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding; 2. Scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history and European integration; 3. Scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, co-operation with operators or cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships; 4. Strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public.
Outreach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement of the local population and civil society in the application and implementation of the ECoC; 2. New and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, marginalised and disadvantaged people, and minorities; 3. Accessibility of activities to persons with disabilities and to the elderly; 4. Overall strategy for audience development, in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

Sources: ECORYS (2014); Garcia & Cox (2013)

Overview of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme

Valletta was selected as an ECoC on the 12th October 2012. The Valletta 2018 Foundation, which spearheaded the application process, is the entity responsible for the organisation of the ECoC and the creation and implementation of the cultural programme. The Cultural Programme at Bid Book stage focused on four main themes: Routes, Cities, Generations and Islands.

Access to culture and participation are main challenges being addressed by the ECoC programme. The Bid Book highlights the concerns on audience participation in the local cultural scene:

“Valletta 2018 also faces a key challenge in breaking down entrenched societal barriers to audience development. Culture Statistics issued by Eurostat indicate that we have among Europe’s lowest levels of audience participation in comparative cultural activities.”

(Bid Book, September 2012)

In recognising increased cultural participation as a key priority, there is a need to analyse the Cultural Programme’s effectiveness in engaging audiences. Quantitative studies provide valuable data on for example the frequency of attendance to cultural events. However, other insights on the meaning, motives and barriers to participation are useful in devising culture strategies and ensuring cultural vibrancy. Moreover, the role of producers in making culture accessible and encouraging participation is often overlooked. The following section explains the methodology used to conduct this analysis.

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

This qualitative study adopts a mixed method approach to reflect multi-dimensional dynamics of the programme and the developments unfolding over five years. Data is being gathered from primary and secondary sources as follows:

1. An institutional level analysis: An overview of Valletta 2018 and the ECoC is required to set the context of the wider institutional framework in which the Programme is drawn up. In this first year of analysis, the main focus was the collection of secondary data from Valletta 2018 documentation, European Commission selection panel reports and background literature, legal documents, academic literature, newsletters and websites, programme schedules and other relevant material. This was done to refine further the criteria by which to assess the programme effectiveness.
2. A mapping and surveying of projects to be fully produced by the Foundation: This is being carried out to understand the different types of projects and to establish criteria for the overall analysis of the programme. The official cultural programme starts in 2018. However, Valletta 2018 has 33 projects listed on its website as at December 2015 (with this number expected to grow exponentially as 2018 approaches) and, therefore, these serve as a ramp up for the ECoC year. The mapping helps establish categories and criteria such as themes, disciplines, genres, dimension and objectives. It should be emphasised that each project is unique and it is, therefore, problematic to use rigid categorisation. However, the mapping of all the projects will help to identify the long-term vision and evolution of the programme. Unlike most studies that are post evaluation (ECORYS 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), the ongoing evaluation implies that members of the research team can directly observe and survey the individual projects as they progress.
3. In-depth interviews: In 2015 primary data information was gathered through interviews or consultation meetings, primarily with those responsible for programming and relevant stakeholders. The participants' knowledge and experiences were used to gain an in-depth understanding on the subject. The interviews and focus group studies over the next years need to include:
 1. Valletta 2018 Foundation Programming team and Artistic Direction;
 2. Creators, Co-Creators and producers of projects in the cultural programme;
 3. Key persons from Public Cultural Organisations;
 4. Civil society organisations and NGOs;
 5. Independent artists and groups.

The study attempts to achieve reliability by triangulating the data collected from the institutional analysis, the mapping exercise and the semi-structured interviews and focus groups over the five-year period.

³ The Foundation supports and endorses a number of cultural events. The focus of this study is the main programme and fully supported projects.

Strengths and Weaknesses in methodology

The variety of projects makes it problematic to draw comparisons between the different events. The Programme is also organic and changes are constant. While acknowledging that there are time constraints, the research has to ensure that the data updates are frequent and that the methodology is flexible.

The proposed methodology is adequate to gain detailed and in-depth perspectives on the ECoC Cultural Programme. However, this approach is not an ideal methodology for making generalisations. Moreover in-depth interviews have their limitations particularly because of biases by both the interviewees and interviewers. Caution is needed so as not to take personal interpretations for granted what Tinic refers to as the "situatedness" (Caldwell, 2008, p.8). In personal interviews, it may sometimes be difficult to filter through the self-promotion. Caldwell (2008) invites production studies researchers to sift through the personal branding and industry parlance (p. 318). Also, studies on events commissioned by event organisers also tend to focus on positive aspects and neglect other critical aspects or do not focus sufficiently on social impact (Richards, 2013). In 2015, the data was gathered mainly from ECoC sources but in 2016, the study needs to widen its scope to include more critical perspectives.

Previous studies have noted the limitation of conducting interviews after the ECoC event as they were reliant on respondents' recollections and perceptions (ECORYS, 2014). This study has the advantage of analysing the Programme while it is still in progress.

As the Programme range continues to grow, particularly in 2018 when Valletta 2018 delivers the full official Programme, it may difficult to conduct project visits and in-person surveys of all the projects. Other studies (ECORYS 2011, 2012,2013,2014; Quinn & O'Halloran, 2006) have used online surveys. The online survey for project organisers can be considered as an additional method to ensure coverage of projects happening in 2018.

Based on this methodology, the preliminary observations follow in the next section.

ANALYSING THE VALLETTA 2018 CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Vision and objectives

The Pre-Selection Report (2012) of the Valletta 2018 bid remarks that culture had never been a main focus in Malta's national budget and that this is a challenge for the long-term development of culture in Malta (p. 4). This observation is important in understanding the particular context of Valletta 2018. The bid entitled *Imagine 18* was the only one submitted and one which included all of Malta. The small size of the city with a population of some 6,000 residents and the inclusion of all other localities, are also distinguishing features of this ECoC.

Recent evaluations on ECoCs particularly after 2005 indicate that hosts are setting wider ambitions with cultural, economic and social objectives included and in most cases core objectives remain the same between the application stage and the implementation phase. However, the reworking of goals for practical reasons was also observed (Garcia & Cox 2013).

The analysis of secondary data sources shows that from the outset the Valletta 2018 ambition had broad objectives emphasising cultural regeneration and impact on various sectors including education, economy, social issues and the environment (Bid Book, 2012).

A reworking of the objectives can be observed from the first Bid Book's 8 objectives to the final Bid Book and later to the strategic plan published in 2013 (see Table 3). There are clear connections between all objectives but throughout the planning phase, these are being further clarified and refined.

Table 3

Reworking of objectives Valletta 2011-2013

Bid Book 17 October 2011	Bid Book September 2012	Strategic Plan March 2013
Supporting a European Vision for Democracy and Culture	Establishing Valletta as a creative city	To transform Valletta into a creative city
Ensuring Cultural Sustainability through the Reinvention of Cultural Education	Making careers of culture	To stimulate awareness of Malta's diverse cultural identities
Encouraging the Dynamic Flourishing of Diversity	Growing internationally from the world within us	To drive collaboration and excellence in culture and the arts in Malta

Interpreting and Developing Multifaceted Cultural Identities	Nurturing sustainable relationships with our environment	To improve the quality of life in Valletta through culture
Incentivising and Sustaining the Economy of Culture	-	-
Benefitting European Cooperation by Promoting International Networking	-	-
Contributing to the ECoC Legacy by Supporting Monitoring and Research	-	-
Nurturing a Sustainable Relationship to Our Environment	-	-

Sources: Valletta 2018 Foundation Bid Book 2011, Bid Book 2012, Strategic Plan 2013.

It is relevant to note the developments from Bid Book stage to implementation stage to understand how the Programme is devised. The Bid Book organisation structure originally proposes an artistic director responsible for the full Programme and artistic programme directors responsible for different areas. Respondents explained that the Artistic Director Special Events Mario Philip Azzopardi is responsible for a category of programming referred to as special events. These events include the opening ceremony; the Valletta Pageant of the Seas; a newly commissioned opera dealing with migration and entitled Refugjati, the production of four low budget films co-produced with the Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) and a visual arts exhibition which will seek cooperation of an internationally established organisation.

There are two distinct set-ups responsible for the Cultural Programme: the core programming led by the Foundation's Executive Team and the Artistic Direction Team. In his response, the Artistic Director Special Events was intent on emphasising that while his team focused on the large events, other Programme activities are being led and managed by the programming team.

The Artistic Director Special Events emphasised the importance of quality, professionalisation and particularly legacy. He summed up this vision in the guiding motto "mill-qiegh tal-imghoddi għall-quċcata tal-ġejjieni" (from the roots of our past to the heights of our future), acknowledging a focus on what is contemporary and innovative.

This contemporary approach is consistent with the Programme Coordinator's views that a focus on innovation is important and that quality is a priority. In Margerita Pulè's words "history always feeds into inspiration...but it's a nod to the past rather than a foot in the past." Palmer/Rae findings also show that designated cities focus on contemporary culture rather than tradition.

Themes and Orientation

Valletta 2018 developed four themes and orientations for the Cultural Programme: Generations, Cities, Routes and Islands. These themes were later further matched to areas, namely education, skills, community and events. However, respondents said that the themes are evolving continuously and are being used as guidance within the formation and structuring of the Cultural Programme. This finding is consistent with ECORYS post evaluation studies that note that the themes are mostly useful for internal organisation.

The Valletta 2018 website lists a number of projects and these are divided into categories (genre/type) and not under theme headings, unlike the Bid Book approach which included the four themes.

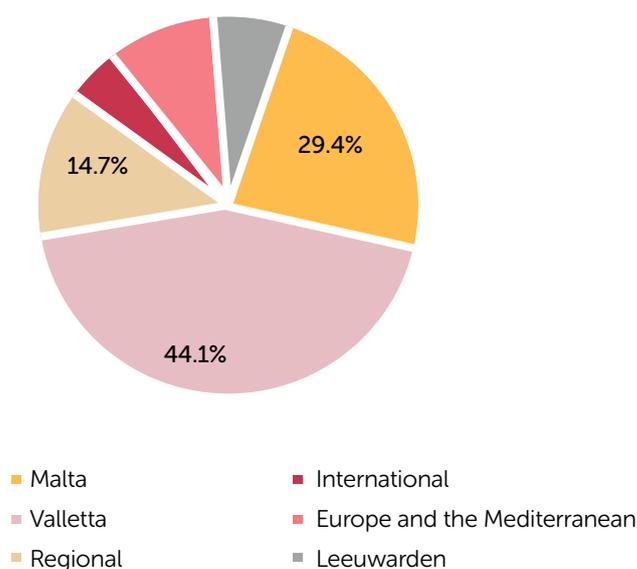
Timing and location

Palmer/Rae (2004) report that programme planning duration is usually between two to three years. In 2015, Valletta 2018 started its cultural activities with some 33 projects listed on its website under the heading Cultural Programme. Projects are in progress and the projects in the core programme are mainly perceived as process-led initiatives and not as one-off event. The run-up to 2018 therefore serves to consolidate and further develop these projects.

The planning for 2018 events also considers the timing of other long-standing activities such as the Malta Arts Festival, the Valletta International Baroque Festival, Carnival and Local Council activities. The equal distribution of projects across different months and seasons and other practical issues for open air events are being considered in devising the project timing.

In mapping the 33 projects, the study observes that each project is categorised by location with a list that includes Malta, Valletta, particular locality, Leeuwarden, International, European and Mediterranean. The majority of projects (44%) are linked to the Valletta location, 29% are being implemented across all of Malta while 15% are connected to particular localities, including two projects in Gozo (Figure 1). The projects to be implemented outside of Malta are significantly less in the current offer.

Figure 1: Cultural Programming project locations



Size, scale and range

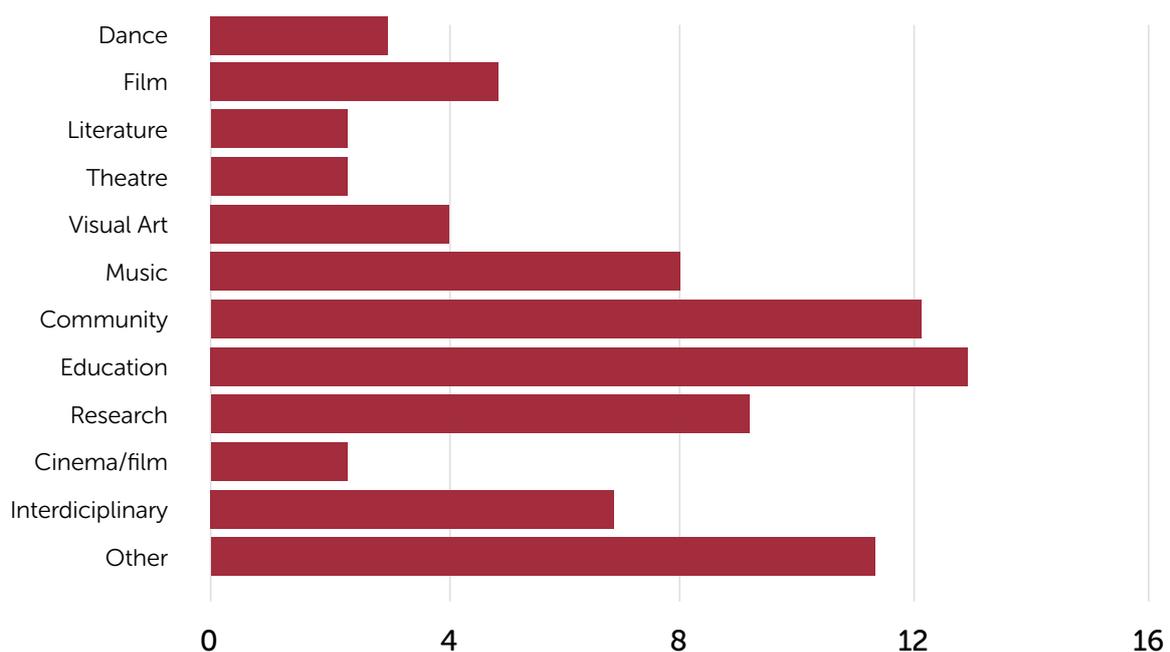
In assessing the size and magnitude of programmes, Garcia and Cox (2013) caution on the varying interpretations of what constitutes a project as opposed to an event. As suggested, this study focuses on the number of projects as defined by Valletta 2018.

The average number of projects included in the ECoC cultural programme is around 500 programmes (Palmer/Rae 2004) or 187 projects or 1,140 events per 100,000 population (Garcia and Cox, 2013). However, a large number of events are not necessarily a success indicator and past ECoCs have been criticised for including too many projects. On the other hand, having fewer projects was not identified as a weakness (ibid. 2004). The range of projects included in the Valletta 2018 Programme will continue to grow over the next two years, with the full range of events launched in 2018.

ECoC activities include different art forms namely dance, music, theatre, film, visual arts, literature, heritage and crafts. Some ECoCs choose to include a wider anthropological interpretation of culture and include food and sport as categories. Figure 2 shows the range of projects and categories covering the 33 Valletta 2018 projects which are already in development. This should not be interpreted as representative of the range of the 2018 Cultural Programme but as an initial mapping of the projects being piloted in 2015.

Most of the 33 projects are categorised both in terms of genre and type of activity (education, community). The focus on community projects is clear, with projects covering different art forms and genres. Literature and theatre are the least represented while elements of music and film/audiovisual are the most frequently represented in the projects listed. Nineteen projects are listed as interdisciplinary indicating artistic collaboration across sectors. The list of art forms included by ECoCs varies and it will be relevant to observe how the scale and range of the Programme and the range set in 2015 will evolve over the next three years. The diversity of projects across art forms, genres also indicates that different audience development strategies need to be devised as discussed in the next section.

Figure 2: Range of the Cultural Programme projects art forms and categories in 2015



Cultural Participation

The ECoC discourse is strongly characterised by participation, community outreach and public engagement. The study needs to acknowledge that participation is a wide-ranging term to define. Increasingly, the emphasis on participatory culture is to involve citizens not only as spectators but also as creators or co-creators (Jenkins, 2016).

Secondary data shows that Valletta 2018 places a strong focus on community engagement and the need to eliminate societal barriers to participation. The Programme Coordinator described public engagement as a long-term process where citizens are encouraged to participate throughout the run-up on to 2018. The ultimate aim is ownership of the Cultural Programme by different target groups.

The Programme includes projects targeting residents and projects like MUŻA and the Valletta Forum were highlighted as initiatives that strengthen community engagement in Valletta. The Foundation also recruited three Regional Coordinators, one of whom will focus on audience engagement initiatives with Valletta residents.

In particular, the participation of schools and migrants was emphasised and coordinators will be assigned to oversee projects with these target groups. The core programming approach is to focus on community engagement and to work with different target groups. Projects that adopt a grassroots approach include Haga u Taħdita, Recycled Percussion Workshop, l-Ikka t-Tajba, Darba Waħda, Valletta Forum, Minn Fomm il-Bormliżi, Belti, Il-Warda tar-Riħ, Move Week, Community Hip Hop, Qatt ma Ninsa and Pjazza f'Pjazza. Furthermore the volunteering programme in collaboration with SOS Malta is another initiative aimed at mobilising citizens and ensuring public engagement in the 2018 Cultural Programme. Capacity building projects such as Storyworks and the Curatorial School encourage the participation of artists and creative industry professionals.

For the special events, an audience centric approach and attracting new, large audiences is a priority. In the words of the Deputy Artistic Director Sean Buhagiar "everything is devised with the audience in mind". The use of public space and "free" events were strategies for audience participation in previous ECoCs (Palmer/Rae, 2004). Strategies are currently being discussed such as the use of public space for the closing exhibition event. Other possible strategies for the large events include a nominal fee for the opening ceremony for audience organisation purposes and pricing strategies such as tiered ticketing for the opera event.

Respondents considered marketing and communications as playing a significant role in attracting participation. The use of social media and the posting of comments by users is also an aspect of participation that was acknowledged by respondents. The Programme Coordinator acknowledged that attracting participation was an ongoing challenge, as this is dependent on various factors including marketing, education, and awareness of the Cultural Programme as well as competing with other activities and priorities in people's hectic lives.

In the build up towards 2018, it will be pertinent to observe the audience development strategies that are used by co-organisers and collaborators of individual projects.

European Dimension

In November 2012, the selection panel observed that the Valletta 2018 bid needed improvement in highlighting the European dimension of the programme and that this should not be solely interpreted as a showcasing of Malta to Europe but rather raising awareness on Europe with Maltese citizens (Final Selection Report Valletta, 11 November 2012). The monitoring report (September 2015) recommends that the European dimension should be further emphasised.

For the special events, difficulties in attracting high profile European artists include budget constraints. On the participation of European Artists, the Artistic Director Special Events spoke about the importance and practicality of choosing those who are available and best suited for the particular work, whether Maltese or European, whether an independent group of artists or a public cultural organisation.

The European dimension is mostly interpreted as collaboration with or participation of European artists in Valletta 2018 projects. Specific projects like Modern Music Days and the Curatorial School are working with international collaborators and take an outward looking approach. Malta Showcase encourages Maltese performers to raise their profile internationally. The mobility fund in collaboration with the Roberto Cimetta Fund is another initiative that encourages mobility and collaboration with artists in the Euro-Arab region.

As 2018 approaches, the programming team is intent on encouraging project organisers to involve more artists from outside Malta. The study will need to analyse how this European perspective is further executed over time and how the individual projects include this perspective.

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

The preliminary findings show the complexity of developing an ECoC cultural programme and the practical, day-to-day challenges encountered by those developing the Programme. The core programming is managed by the Executive Team and the high profile large events are led by the Artistic Direction Team.

The main Programme includes community initiatives targeting different groups while the special events focus on an arts spectacle for large audiences. Participation is perceived as desirable and strategies for community engagement include the volunteering programme and projects targeting specific groups. To date the programming balance leans towards a more contemporary approach and a representation of various art forms with music topping the list. The European perspective is interpreted primarily as participation of international artists in Valletta 2018 projects.

As has been identified in various ECoC evaluations (ECORYS 2012, 2013, 2014; Palmer/Rae 2014a, 2014b) the Cultural Programme, is constantly in development and changes are frequent. The research, therefore, needs to be flexible and adapt to these changes to avoid inaccurate, outdated results and reporting.

The research conducted throughout 2015 took an introspective approach and focused mainly on information provided by the Valletta 2018 Foundation and direct collaborators of the Foundation. The researcher had complete access to data and the work was facilitated by the Foundation team members. In 2016, there is a need to include cultural stakeholders from the wider artistic sector, to keep track of new developments in the Programme and to follow the participation strategies of individual projects and events. The research design will be further fine-tuned to reflect the diversity of the Cultural Programme.

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APPENDIX

Annex 1

List of Projects

Project Titles	
Christmas 3D Architectural Mapping	Culture Mapping
Story Works	Valletta Green Festival
Tafal	Malta showcase
Haga u Tahdita	Recycle Percussion Workshop
Cultural mapping debating places and spaces	Malta Fashion Week
I-ikla t-tajba	Darba waħda
Modern music days	Valletta Forum
Minn Fomm il-Bormliżi	Belti
Qatt ma ninsa	Mobility fund
Curatorial School	Happy jam
Il-Warda tar-riħ	Kantakantun
Bewildered music festival	Discover Valletta
Pjazza f'Pjazza	Poerty in Potatoe Bags
Culture of Ageing	Move week
Jazz on the Fringe	Community Hip hop
Poetry on film	Qatt ma ninsa birgu
Prospettiva	-

Annex 2

Interview Guide

Aims and objectives of interviews with programming managers/key informants:

- Vision and objectives
- Range, timing and distribution
- Content of bid-book vs current programming
- Structure of foundation, roles and commissioning strategies
- Decision making processes and criteria for selection
- Participation of cultural sector, artists and community
- European and International dimension

Category	Guiding Questions
Background	Ask about confidentiality and recording
A. Cultural Offer and Programming Balance (RQ 1, 2,3)	
Objectives, vision and mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme? 2. What is the main motivation of the Cultural Programme?
Development process, Adhering to bid-book application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please explain the planning in place from bid-book stage to date. 2. How have the objectives changed since 2012? 3. What is the planning work currently in progress?
Selection and consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are projects selected/included? What are the selection criteria? 2. What is the involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the Cultural Programme?
Themes, Orientation, Coherence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main themes? how are they being used? 2. How are projects categorised according to theme?
Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality; Programming balance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many projects will be included? 2. What is the length of the Cultural Programme? 3. How are the locations of projects selected (Valletta vs. regional)? 4. How has the Cultural Programme tried to balance between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local and international inputs in such a way as to maximise synergy? - independent groups and public cultural organisations? - tradition and innovation? - different arts forms & genres? - public and private space? - culture and art? - process led and event led? - professionals vs. Amateurs

B. Cultural Participation (RQ 4)

Public engagement, outreach, audience development strategies, city and citizen;	How is the cultural sector engaging in the programme?
	What methods were used to encourage participation?
	How are young people and disadvantaged groups being encouraged to participate?
	What are the strategies being used for audience development? (volunteering programmes, calls, outreach, etc.)
	What kind of participation do you envisage/ are you planning?
	Who are your target groups?

C. European Dimension (RQ5)

European perspective, European collaboration, mobility, networking, cultural diversity.	How do the project/events reflect the European Dimension?
	How do projects promote cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding?
	How are projects engaging European artists/ collaborators/networks? what strategies are in place to encourage European collaboration?
	What strategies are being used to promote Europe and garner interest in European culture?

D. Challenges (RQ6)

	What are the challenges encountered in the delivery of the Valletta 2018 programme? What difficulties are/were encountered during the planning/ development phase and how are/were these overcome? General feedback, comments
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THE IMPACT OF VALLETTA 2018 ON THE EUROPEAN IDENTITY OF THE MALTESE POPULATION

Marcello Carammia
with **Dr Marie Briguglio**

ABSTRACT

The 'European dimension' is key to European Capital of Culture (ECoC) programmes. There is a general expectation that ECoCs will have an impact on the feeling of European-ness of the host societies. Yet whether and to what extent this is actually the case is unclear, for at least three reasons. First, the variable of interest – European identity – is an inherently elusive concept. Second, identity is by definition a relatively stable character, which hardly changes in the turn of a few years. Third, to capture the nuances and specificities of single environments, most studies of identity are strictly tailored to the context; which hinders systematic analysis, comparison, and replication.

This study aims to provide a systematic assessment of the impact of Valletta 2018 on the European identity of the Maltese society. In order to overcome the constraints to a comprehensive and reliable analysis, the study draws on advanced approaches to the study of European identity as developed in recent large-scale comparative research. In particular, the study builds on a multidimensional notion of 'European citizenship' based on three interrelated components: identity (the feeling of belonging to the European Union (EU)), representation (the extent to which actors perceive that the EU provides representation to their interests), and scope (the degree to which actors would like the EU to have jurisdiction on a wide range of policies). While the core identity component is more resistant to change, the representation and scope dimensions could instead be expected to change following exposure and participation to Valletta 2018 events.

This project applies a mixed methodology based on both quantitative and qualitative techniques. A panel study – that is, a study observing the same sample of population over time – will monitor European identity in the Maltese society, and the impact of Valletta 2018 on it, between 2015 and 2019. A desktop research exercise will form the basis of the study, capitalising on several European and National data sources followed by a quantitative large-scale survey will be carried out in the early and final years in order to obtain systematic comparable data, while intensive interviews with focus groups will be carried out in between to obtain a deeper insight on the nature, degree, and causes of identity change (if any).

Keywords: European Identity, European Citizenship, Cultural participation, European Capital of Culture, Malta

INTRODUCTION

Goals and scope

In October 2012, Valletta was selected as European Capital of Culture (ECoC) for 2018. While Valletta will be hosting the title, the initiative is set to include all the Maltese Islands, with a view to spreading the impacts throughout the whole Maltese territory. Participation of the citizens of Malta and Europe is a key goal of the initiative, considered integral and expected to be a sustainable aspect of the long-term social, economic and cultural development of Valletta itself. The Cultural Programme envisages community, educational, outreach and skills development components.

One of the requirements of hosting an ECoC, is to generate consistent, accessible and comparable research and evaluation directly linked to culture (Garcia and Cox 2013). This research study aims to contribute towards the analysis of the impact of Valletta 2018 and is expected to shed light on the aspects of 'European identity' that may have been affected by the Programme, to what extent, and among what segments of the population. It employs a mixed-method approach spread over a five year (2015-2019) period.

The "European dimension" is a key aspect of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) Programme. Programmes are to a) foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from the relevant Member States and other Member States in any cultural sector, b) highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe and c) bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore (European Parliament, 2006). The assumption is that by hosting an ECoC, feelings of "European-ness" will be enhanced among members of the host community.

But whether this is actually the case remains a question worthy of investigation. Indeed, the term "European identity" is itself an inherently elusive concept. Moreover, what we do know about it, suggests that that it is relatively stable in nature, and therefore unlikely to change markedly in the turn of few years or as a result of the ECoC. In addition, conducting a comparative study of the impact on European identity, capable of systematic analysis, comparison, and replication is complicated by the fact that identity is considered to be context-specific.

This study seeks to overcome these constraints by:

- a. providing a comprehensive and nuanced definition of European identity among people in Malta considering European identity, representation and scope;
- b. systematically documenting any changes therein which may have occurred over a period of five years during which the country hosted the ECoC;
- c. systematically documenting any determinants that may have contributed to the change in that sentiment;
- d. focusing on the extent to which the ECoC, knowledge thereof and participation therein may have contributed to such change, if any, once other factors are carefully controlled for; and
- e. conducting in-depth qualitative analysis to understand the nuances which the numbers may not reveal.

Relevant academic or non-academic issues related to the topic at hand

The study builds upon innovative approaches for the study of European identity as developed in recent, authoritative, large-scale comparative research (Bellucci and Sanders, 2012). Following this lead, we envisage identity to be complex in nature resulting from the interaction of three interrelated components: (i) identity, or the feeling of belonging to the EU; (ii) representation, or the extent to which actors perceive that the EU provides representation to their interests; and (iii) scope, or the degree to which actors would like the EU to have jurisdiction on a wide range of policies.

These three components together define the extent to which actors feel 'European'. Each component results in a different form of identification and is driven by distinct motivations. Identity captures the affective dimension of identification, resulting from long-term socialisation processes. Therefore, this core component of European-ness should be relatively more resistant to change. Representation and scope, in turn, capture respectively a rational/instrumental and a political form of identification. Since rational/instrumental and political judgements are relatively easier to change than affective judgements, the representation and scope dimensions of European-ness should be more likely to change following exposure and participation to Valletta 2018 events.

The question is, what do we know about ECoC, or more broadly, cultural participation and its effects on identity? This study is located at the intersection between different strands of literature that so far found little connection. Studies of European identity can be traced back to classic studies of European integration (e.g. Deutsch, 1953). The shift from economic to political integration, and the recent legitimacy crisis, revitalised this area of study and sparked a new wave of empirical analyses of European identity (Bellucci and Sanders, 2012; Cram, 2012; Duchesne and Frogner, 1995; Fligstein, 2008).

Although the development of a European (cultural) identity always was a clear goal of ECoC programmes, the analysis of their impact on identity was mostly neglected. While the study of the impact of cultural events became more sophisticated (Richards, 2000; Richards and Wilson, 2004) and multi-dimensional and longitudinal monitoring became increasingly the norm (Richards, 2015), the impact on identity also became the object of analyses. However, most such studies analysed identity in the repertoires of action, discourses, and frames in ECoC events (Sassatelli, 2002 and 2009). The actual impact of those events on the identity of the host societies was confined to in-depth studies of single events (Dragoman, 2008; Lähdesmäki, 2012; O'Callaghan and Linehan, 2007).

Social Context

The study takes a whole country approach in the context of Malta. Contemporary research on Malta's European identity focused on the impact of Europe on the complex, multidimensional identity of the country (Baldacchino, 2002; Cini, 2000). Some empirical studies focused on Malta's attitudes towards the EU. While the Maltese society was relatively lukewarm in comparison to other 'new' EU members (Pace, 2011), recent studies found evidence of an increased positive image of Europe (Carammia and Pace, 2015). However, the causes of this change have not been the object of systematic analysis.

The study is also informed by recent research in Malta on the extent and nature of cultural participation in Malta. A recent study finds that three years ahead of hosting the ECoC, both active and passive participation were generally lower in Malta than in other EU countries (Briguglio and Sultana 2015). The study also documents evidence of higher levels of life-satisfaction among Maltese people with higher cultural participation, arguing that while this provides some basis for justification for interventions like

ECoC, it is important to conduct longitudinal studies to find causal effects. Meanwhile a recent pan-European study (Steiner et al., 2014) which did examine the effects of hosting ECoCs over time and across a number of ECoCs finds that this necessarily improves wellbeing in the host country. An ECoC, they argue, may well have beneficial impacts on culture, infrastructural improvements, the creation of additional jobs, tourism and economic turnover, but can also create environmental deterioration, crowding-out of public investments, mis-matched infrastructure, crime, and housing affordability (Steiner et al., 2014).

Hypotheses

On the basis of this, the main hypotheses which will be tested are:

H1. The impact of Valletta 2018 on the European-ness of Malta's society is conditional on the definition or dimensions of European-ness. Impact will be more visible on rational/instrumental and political dimensions rather than on affective dimensions of European-ness.

H2. The impact of Valletta 2018 on the European-ness of Malta's society depends on the type of participation and degree of involvement in the ECoC. More intense and active exposure to Valletta 2018 initiatives will have a stronger impact on the feeling of European-ness.

METHODOLOGY

Choice and rationale

The study aims to generate both quantitative and qualitative data over a five year span and, on this basis, to provide a critical analysis of impact of the ECoC initiative on European identity in Malta. The qualitative and quantitative original data generated by the study will permit mutual reliability verification and iterative fine-tuning.

Recent research on ECoC programmes and stock-taking exercises emphasised the need to provide replicable and comparable research frameworks to strengthen the legacy of single ECoC projects and to make the results capable of standardisation (European Capitals of Culture Policy Group, 2010). EU institutions have explicitly called for the development of a "far more robust and objective data collection mechanism" that goes beyond "anecdote and 'myth management' " and ensure that "the story of the next 30 years can be told with even greater confidence" (Garcia & Cox, 2013). Such standardisation, replication, comparability, and robustness, are best achieved with quantitative methodologies.

But while quantitative approaches are key to ensure standardisation, replication, comparability and robustness, a full understanding of the inherently complex nature of the feeling of being European requires the depth of analysis that only qualitative approaches grant. Moreover, replicating the survey exercise on an annual basis would be unlikely to tap significant yearly changes in the target population. For these reasons, the study will complement the quantitative panel survey with qualitative focus groups. By complementing the quantitative analysis with qualitative findings we provide the "further explanation, depth and texture", as recommended by ECoCs stock-taking documents (European Capitals of Culture Policy Group, 2010).

Both analyses follow a desktop research component. Commencing the study with desktop research has several advantages: it helps researchers to generate new ideas based on old data verify and improve existing research and analyse data through the use of a different methodology. Furthermore, it contributes to transparency and creditworthiness as it verifies and motivates new and original research.

Desktop Research

The Desktop Research component serves as an ex ante state of reference through an overview of what previous literature has found on the variables of interest and also as an ex post robustness check through which one can compare research findings with past literature. It draws insights from seminal comparative studies of European identity (Bellucci and Sanders, 2012). In turn, this allows us to contextualise the findings of the analysis.

Data sourced in our desktop research was classified into three main categories; the European identity (as the main dependent variable), the exposure to the European Capital of Culture (main independent variable) and controls (such as political preference, cultural behavior and lifestyle). This approach was adopted in order to better align a priori expectations with current existing research and use secondary data as a measuring rod with which to judge the representativeness of the sample. The appendix showcases the results on each all variables of interest where data is available.

As indicated by the literature, data on European Identity is captured by questions pertaining to (i) identity and belonging; (ii) representation; and (iii) scope. Data includes that on the degrees of attachment of people to their town or village, region, country, Europe, nationality and what it means to be of that nationality. Data also includes the degree of attachment to being European and what it means to be European, feeling European and voting in European elections. Data on representation and scope focuses on consequences of Europe on people, the benefit to the country and the individuals of being part of the EU, views on the extent of unification and roles of EU/National government in various domains. Further data sourced includes that on trust and political interest.

Data on cultural participation and the ECoC exposure includes awareness of the ECoC, participation and attendance of ECoC events and media exposure. Those on cultural participation include participation as audience in various cultural domains and active participation in key cultural domains. The data on Liverpool as the ECoC proves to be particularly rich as a benchmark.

A third component of the data collection seeks to capture the necessary demographics and preferences necessary to parse out the effects of the ECoC, net of confounding impacts from other sources. These include data on age, gender, locality of residence, number of persons and children in the household and educational level. They also include labour and marital status, income, self-assessed health, wellbeing, level of socialising and on religious affiliation and frequency of service attendance. They also include residing abroad for a continuous period of at least 12 months or having visited another EU country in the last 12 months.

Survey component

The quantitative data component also entails a survey instrument, designed to conform to the highest possible level of compatibility with such established survey exercises as Eurostat, European Social Survey, and World Value Survey. Like the desktop research, the instrument taps the relevant dimensions of both the dependent variable of interest (European-ness) as well as the possible explanatory variables, of which ECoC participation is the key variable of interest. The survey design therefore also contains three main data generation components, the key component being that which seeks to render operational the definition of the dependent (target) variable (on European-ness). A second component of the data collection seeks to operationalise the predictor variable (exposure to the ECoC/Valletta 2018 programme), and to contextualise this within the broader notion of cultural participation. A third component of the data collection seeks to capture the necessary demographics and preferences necessary. The wording of these questions replicates major sources (like the Malta Census) for the purpose of comparability.

Survey data collection process

The collection of data was outsourced to the National Statistics Office. It entailed the generation of a fully representative sample (n=1000). The baseline study started on 7th December 2015 and was concluded on 13th February 2016, providing the necessary data for comparison with the next wave at the end

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

of 2018/9. Sampling was based on stratified random strategy (fixed margin of error for each stratum). Stratification/cluster variables were sex, age group and district. Importantly, Valletta was over-represented in the sample, so that samples are effectively two: a nationally (including Valletta) representative sample of 800 individuals, plus a sample of 200 households from Valletta. This will allow the extensive analysis of the country as well as the intensive study of the capital, which seems appropriate considering the special nature of Valletta 2018 as an ECoC programme whose reach stretches to cover the whole country.

Based on the first deliverables of the project, the following are the results so far:

1. Identified authoritative, large-scale comparative research and defined the variable of interest "European identity". Although this is a relatively stable character, which is unlikely to change markedly in the turn of few years, a complex notion of identity also includes dimensions which can be assumed to vary in a relatively short term, also a result of cultural policies. Also specified (particularly cultural) determinants of identity that are capable of comparison and replication, despite the nuances and specificities of single environments (results described above).
2. Designed a detailed survey interview, translated, pilot tested and simplified and generated a sampling frame capable of generating the necessary nationally representative data. An extra subset of respondents was identified to obtain a sufficiently sized sample from Valletta (survey instrument available upon request).
3. Conducted extensive desktop research on all variables of interest contextualising Malta in 2015 in cross-sectional and time-series data, wherever this was available (full results and sources available upon request).
4. A cross-cutting finding that emerges is that Malta is missing from several European and international large data sets including various Eurobarometer datasets, the European Values Survey. This makes comparison difficult in this field.
5. Key findings in comparing Malta to EU counterparts on the European Identity front include the following:
 - a. There seems to be a stronger feeling of attachment among the Maltese relative to their European counterparts not only to their town/village and country but also to Europe itself.
 - b. The self-assessed factor which most influences identity is the country in which respondents are born, both in Malta and in the EU.
 - c. The factor which has strongly determined European Identity is the common currency in contrast with other determinants like a common culture or symbols.
 - d. More Maltese than Europeans tend to admit that being European matters a lot to them. In terms of Influence, they feel that their voice counts a lot in the EU – relative to their European counterparts.
 - e. The Maltese turn out in far higher numbers to European Parliament elections than do European counterparts.
 - f. The Maltese are more knowledgeable about their rights as citizens than EU counterparts.

Asked about further integration, the Maltese tend to be more confused than European counterparts.

- g. Only a minority of Maltese people feel that Malta's membership to the EU was a bad thing, and fewer than EU counterparts. The majority feel that EU membership was of benefit to Malta. They also feel that they benefitted personally.
 - h. In terms of domains of competence, the Maltese believe that national government should remain responsible for unemployment policy and for health and social policy (just like their EU counterparts). In contrast many more Maltese expect the EU to intervene on migration. On environmental and on urban crime matters, the Maltese expect joint responsibility. On agri-fish matters, the Maltese tend to expect sole representation.
 - i. The Maltese tend to trust the EC and the European Parliament more than their European counterparts. They also tend to trust Maltese Parliament and National Government to a higher degree than EU citizens trust their own.
 - j. In general, there tends to be higher levels of trust in people of the same nationality, followed by trust in Europeans and finally trust in people outside Europe.
6. Key findings on ECoC and cultural participation include the following:
- a. An analysis of Liverpool as the ECoC finds increased media exposure with increasingly positive articles closer to the year. Disinterest in each activity type declined around the ECoC and audiences vastly increased and audience satisfaction was high.
 - b. Active cultural participation in Malta tends to be lower than in EU countries in several domains. Over two thirds of the Maltese have never had any form of cultural participation (compared to around half in the EU). Malta also lags behind in using the internet for cultural purposes.
7. Key findings on the control variables include the following
- a. Malta is a highly politicised environment with a high voter turnout and highly divisive bi-polar politics.
 - b. Maltese people tend to trust other people less than their EU counterparts.
 - c. The Maltese report better self-assessed health status and life-satisfaction than their EU counterparts on average.
 - d. The Maltese are predominantly of Catholic faith with a high rate – albeit declining - of religious practise.
 - e. The majority of the Maltese – even more than Europeans – are unlikely to emigrate over the next 10 years. The Maltese also tend to travel less than Europeans.
 - f. The gender split in Malta is broadly balanced, but the Maltese population is an aging one.
 - g. Malta has a larger mean household size than the EU average but over 30 per cent of households are just 1 person households. There are more households with dependent children in Malta than in Europe, on average.
 - h. Over half of the Maltese are married, a third are single and the rest are widowed, separated or divorced.
 - i. The majority of households in Malta are located in the Northern Harbour area, which is expanding. Valletta forms part of the South Harbour area which is also expanding.
 - j. Our educational levels are lower than the EU average, though this is corrected in the younger generation.
 - k. Malta compares well in terms of unemployment but has a higher rate of inactivity among the working age population.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF RESEARCH

Plan for the next years leading up to 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Literature, method and research design	X	-	-	-	-
Desktop data collection	X	-	-	-	X
Quantitative data collection	-	X			X
Qualitative data collection	-	-	X	X	-
Analysis and report writing	X	X	X	X	X
Steering committee	X	X	X	X	X

Survey data collection commenced at the end of 2015 and was concluded by mid February 2016. The next clear milestone is mid 2016, by which time the following will have been carried out:

- a. undertake correlation analyses;
- b. perform a range of robustness tests to verify reliability;
- c. compare with available international datasets;
- d. model identity and undertake systematic regression analyses to investigate the causal relation and net effect between the two sets of factor.

Key changes envisaged and rationale

The research remains very much within the parameters of the original proposal.

- As envisaged in the brief, there will still be two focus group sets to further examine the nuances of both ECoC exposure and European-ness in Malta, and the relationship between the two;
- As envisaged, there will be three-waves of quantitative data. The two waves will take place as far apart as possible (early 2016 and early 2019), in response to the expectation that no significant changes in identity will be detected by a survey interview in the short term.

The changes are as follows:

- The 2015 data set sourced from desktop research, acting as the baseline to complement the focus groups and surveys.
- Greater emphasis on the respondent socio-demographics and preferences with a view to parsing out the effects of ECoC net of confounding impacts and to enable the analysis of sub-groups in the demographics.
- Less emphasis than originally envisaged on political preferences and fewer constructs on European identity given the necessity to limit the duration of the interview and avoid interviewee fatigue;
- The research team now includes a behavioural economist (Dr. Marie Briguglio) whose work on motives and cultural participation will be instrumental to the analysis.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

The studies forming part of this research strand seek to gain a deeper insight into how and why people participate in cultural activity, and what impact their participation may have on various forms of collective identity.

By gaining a holistic insight into broader cultural participation through the Valletta Participation Survey, this report allows researchers and cultural practitioners to benefit from a more thorough and evidence-based understanding of the factors influencing involvement in cultural activity, and the perceived influence of the European Capital of Culture title on these processes.

This is reflected in the subsequent two studies, whereby one can see that the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme is currently seeking to directly address lacunae related to cultural participation through a particular focus on community-related work with diverse communities across Malta and Gozo.

The Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme is also placing significant focus on the European Dimension of the ECoC title, encouraging international collaboration within the spheres of arts and culture. This is also reflected in the relatively high degree of trust placed in European institutions by the Maltese population, as evidenced by the final study listed in this report.



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