

COUNTRY PROFILES

Malta

The Maltese Cultural Policy document of 2001 stresses a positive attitude towards cooperation with other EU members vis-à-vis other countries. The document talks about the need for Malta to take into consideration the trans-national bearings required by the new realities of the twenty-first century and clearly heralds the role of Malta in the Mediterranean as an interlocutor – especially in relations with Libya and the EU.

M i n i s t r y o f F o r e i g n a f f a i r s

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims to be committed to political activity that takes into account “the social and cultural enhancement of the Maltese nation”. At the same time, the Ministry also funds a radio station – VOM (Voice of the Mediterranean). This is a Maltese-Libyan joint venture claiming to “transmit the national aspirations of the republic of Malta in relation to the evolving scenario of the Euro-Mediterranean region” and to serve as a bridge between countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

M i n i s t r y o f E d u c a t i o n

The Ministry of Education is also responsible for cultural policy and again is concerned with the promotion of Maltese culture, this time with the emphasis on cultural industries. Laudable efforts are being made to bring Maltese products into the market and they have launched many initiatives internally to develop strategic marketing skills and business strategies in cultural industries. The realisation of these programs is most evident at the Centre for Creativity and the University of Malta. The St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity was opened in 2000 with a remit to democratise cultural events and provide opportunities for bilateral and multilateral projects.

M a l t a C o u n c i l f o r C u l t u r e a n d t h e A r t s

In 2001, the newly established Policy Unit of the Ministry published Malta’s first national cultural policy. This established a new arm’s-length organ to carry out the policy, the Malta Council for Culture and the Arts (MCCA). The MCCA was set up in 2002 to replace the former Department of Culture within the Ministry of Education. It is the main body conducting cultural matters in Malta, including international cooperation activities. Amongst other responsibilities, the MCCA has an obligation to create trans-national educational schemes and to devise and implement strategies for promoting Maltese identity overseas. Funds given to the MCCA include marked funds for the promotion of bilateral enterprise. Malta also favours music policy as a vehicle through which cultural exchanges can be met and as such has invested in the establishment of an Academy of Music. It also funds an international jazz festival.

H e r i t a g e M a l t a

Heritage Malta was established in 2001 with the remit to enhance Malta’s heritage “by trans-national initiatives in research methods and by programmes encouraging cultural tourism”. The Malta Tourist Authority also has a significant role to play in this small island’s external relations.

P o l i c y f o c u s

Maltese policy seems, on the one hand, to be very much centred on self-promotion i.e. the promotion of Maltese culture abroad and on the other, its role in Euro-Mediterranean development.

Malta claims to be taking full advantage of measures achieved out of connections with EU bodies and programmes – “thus affording new perspectives for the small island”.

G e o g r a p h i c a l f o c u s

Maltese foreign cultural policy has concentrated efforts on EU members and EU accession states (understandably given its efforts to join the EU). In particular, it highlights its relations with Libya and the Mediterranean basin. Repeatedly Malta’s statements discuss the development of the Barcelona process and the role that Malta plays as an interlocutor with Libya.

Other European neighbourhood cooperation includes agreements with the Ukraine, Armenia, Iceland, Switzerland, Turkey (cultural cooperation agreement waiting to be signed) and Russia (including Cooperation in Culture signed in 1994 and still operational).

Beyond Europe, Malta has bilateral relations with Australia, India (including a cultural agreement signed in 1992), Japan and the United States of America.

H i g h l y r e c o m m e n d e d r e a d i n g

Friggieri, J., (2003) Malta’s Foreign Cultural Policy,
E-Doc Link: http://www.ifa.de/europa-akp/konferenz/download/eu_friggieri.pdf
Maltese contribution to the conference “Europe-a Union of Culture?” of the German Institut fuer Auslandsbeziehungen, Berlin, October 2003. Includes English abstract.

Friggieri, Joe, (2005) Chairman’s statement - Malta Council for Culture and The Arts,
E-Doc Link: <http://www.maltaculture.com/page.asp?p=3780&l=1>
The function of the Council is twofold. First, it is there to promote the expression of personal artistic potential; secondly, it must make culture and the arts accessible to the widest possible cross-section of the population. It must also “devise and implement strategies which secure the identity of Maltese culture (including intellectual, linguistic and folkloristic features) both locally and abroad.”

Ministry of Education, (2005) EU Matters,
E-Doc Link: http://www.education.gov.mt/ministry/eu_affairs/eu_affairs.htm
Mission statement of the EU Affairs and Policy Development department of the Ministry of Education. “This office is responsible for implementing the EU-related priorities, liaising with the EU Negotiations Secretariat, the European Union Directorate and other line Ministries in the preparation of negotiation position papers, related documentation and other reports; assisting the EU Negotiations Secretariat in the identification of negotiation teams and acting as the coordinating point for ACT and the Regional Policy Directorate, OPM.2...”

Ministry of Education, (2002) Malta Council for Culture and the Arts,
E-Doc Link:
<http://www.mtac.gov.mt/filebank/pdfs/chapt444.pdf#search='Malta%20Council%20for%20Culture%20and%20the%20Arts'>
Act of parliament establishing the Malta Council for Culture and the Arts. “Article 4.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to promote Malta’s culture through all forms of creative expression and to increase the accessibility of the public to the arts, and enhance Malta’s cultural heritage locally and abroad.”

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Brief by country,
E-Doc Link: <http://www.foreign.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=46>
Malta has signed bilateral agreements with twenty countries. This website gives details of each agreement.

St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity, (2005) Mission statement,
E-Doc Link: <http://www.sjcav.org/page.asp?p=6380&l=1>
St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity will contribute to cultural well-being by - establishing itself as a centre for cultural exchange with other countries, thus cultivating a sense of cultural identity based on local dimensions and international diversity in the light of Malta’s development of cultural tourism.

G e n e r a l / b a c k g r o u n d r e a d i n g

Azzopardi, Mario, (2005) Chapter 2.4, International Cultural Cooperation, Malta:
Compendium of Cultural Policies,

E-Doc Link: www.culturalpolicies.net

Introduction to the main actors and principle institutions working in the field of international cultural cooperation in Malta.

EFAH, Interarts (2003) Study on cultural cooperation in Europe: Annex 1 - National reports – Malta,

E-Doc Link: http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/pdf-word/annex1national_reports3.pdf

Background to structures, competencies and institutes in the field of cultural cooperation.