



Better Advocacy, Better Inclusion

## **Social priorities, participation, and advocacy practices**

The experience of 15 Maltese antiracist realities

# NATIONAL REPORT Malta

Edited by



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## Introduction

The research carried out in this report was done to try and understand the situation in Malta with regards to the status of integration of various cultural aspects into local communities. This through understanding the various organizations and communities that work on the ground and offer services that help in the process of integration. This as seen from the various interviews carried out by this report proves it is unorganized at best.

Integration at a basic level is happening, yet this seems to be impeded severely by the governmental structures in place. With a large bureaucratic structure that is encompassed in Identity Malta, it shows the difficulties that migrants find in getting the appropriate papers and hence stability to start feeling part of the society they live in. Apart from this, there is also an element of disorganization that is felt within the civil society sector as a degree of overlap in the aims and objectives of various groups seems to result in the duplication of the same work they are doing and the waste of resources due to the lack of communication or perhaps due to the small size of Malta.

There are umbrella organizations that aim to solve this problem, yet their effectiveness seems to be quite low as the focus of the collective seems to be firefighting individual problems that crop up outside the advocacy cycles. This including situations with irregular migration, government and political maneuvers that impede or outright interfere with integration processes. This limits the extent of cooperation that can be achieved as well as causes much of the energy to be spent on firefighting.

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## Review of the Maltese Situation

# THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

The following section will be dedicated to establishing a background on the context of immigrant and racial dynamics in Malta. It will first address major demographic changes throughout Maltese history, as well as some more minor but still relevant demographic changes which apply to Malta's modern immigrant makeup. Next, it will briefly look at Malta's geographical placement in the Mediterranean, as well as its urban planning. Finally, it will address some important socio-cultural factors which may help explain some barriers to inclusion and integration.

Since EU membership, there have been several types of migration. The first is the rise of EU nationals in Malta, especially due to Malta's favorable tax laws. Next, is migration from Eastern Europe, and especially Serbia, due to previously established communities in Malta. Some of this migration is also seasonal due to demand for summer jobs during Malta's tourist season. Thirdly, there is a form of controlled migration whereby foreign workers are brought to Malta, often due to government and company agreements. This primarily concerns migration from the Indian Subcontinent, the Philippines, and to a lesser extent Turkey. Due to these contracts, racialised roles and stereotypes are easily applied to people having migrated from these countries. The final form is irregular migration. This primarily concerns people from Subsaharan Africa, especially Nigeria, Somalia and Eritrea. As will be discussed in the following section dedicated to statistics, this group of migrants experiences the most discrimination. Despite the relatively rich history of migration in Malta, which would presumably bring a more open society, racism and xenophobia remain rampant. This may best be explained by factors relating to religion. Malta is one of the most religious Catholic countries, with over 90% of the population identifying with this denomination. Religiosity has been attributed to high levels of charity and donations, some of which goes to assisting migrants, as well as many religious charities. However, Catholicism is an integral part of Maltese identity, and therefore people identifying with another religion face difficulties being accepted as Maltese.

As mentioned in the section about British colonization, Malta's geography has played a role in migration. In more recent times, Malta's proximity to North African migration routes has influenced the island's demographics. Many people who migrate through irregular means begin crossing the Mediterranean to Malta from Libya. As will be discussed later, the Maltese government has very often not taken the appropriate responsibility in these situations. Looking at Malta's urban geography, there are racially segregated neighborhoods. The south Grand Harbor area, including towns like Hamrun, have some of the highest non-white populations. Sliema and St Julians also have many foreign migrants living there, usually from European backgrounds.

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## STATE OF HATE SPEECH IN MALTA

Legally hate speech in Malta has changed a lot in the recent years due to the pressure mounted on the government to do something about the rising volumes of political and xenophobic hate that was occurring in Malta. As established in the Criminal code, Act No. VIII of 2012<sup>1</sup> with the latest updates to this being the addition of Articles 82A, 82C and 83B. These provisions provide further protections on the grounds of gender expression sex characteristics which were introduced through the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act of 2015.

That said the addition of these protections does not come with any added benefit to those who already enjoyed protections under this law. With the Amendment to Articles 222A, 251D and 325A of the Criminal Code (Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta) we have seen an increase in the punishment and severity of the offence for bias motivated crime, (hate crimes) with the charges also being relegated to Article 6 of the Press Act to regular hate speech.

What does this mean on the ground? The reality very little has changed, with the report of SOS Malta in the #STOPHATE campaign<sup>2</sup> it was noted that in previous reports such as the Emore report which tried to measure and quantify the hate speech situation in Malta. It showed the hate speech, hate crimes and lack of awareness about the two issues or even what differentiates the two from each other. With minorities not being represented in the media or if so, often it is in a very small content. What was clear however is the lack of data on hate speech and lack interest in the subject from authorities. The main difference since the report is the opening of what was meant to be a one stop shop hate crime unit. That as it is developing still is resulting in becoming more of a system of support to those who have been hit by hate crimes rather than a system that actively functions to combat it.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Numbers from 2019, show that Malta had a foreign population amounting to 21% of the total population. The majority of the foreign population in Malta is composed of British nationals, mostly settled in Sliema and the surrounding suburbs. Other significant foreign communities are French, Italians and Lebanese. In addition to the 'high net-worth individuals', the small country has become an increasingly more significant destination for immigrants from North and sub-Saharan Africa, often undocumented individuals. While some of them are to be considered refugees, others migrate with the hope of raising money for themselves and their family by working in Europe. For many, Malta is their first stop on their route to mainland Europe.

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1

VIII of 2012 – Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2012 Government Gazette of Malta No. 18,936 - 26.06.2012

2

STOP HATE SOS Malta 2019 <http://www.sosmalta.org/file.aspx?f=1045>

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## MIGRATION PROCESS

Being a member of the European Union and the Schengen agreement, Malta is obligated to process all cases for asylum for individuals who enter EU territory for the first time upon their arrival in Malta.

All irregular immigrants who arrive in Malta will be taken to one of the camps run by the Armed Forces of Malta to do their compulsory detention policy. This is a detention for individuals subject to the suspicion of visa violations, as well as unauthorized arrival and deportation. The compulsory detention policy has been on the agenda for Maltese NGO's for a long time. In 2010, the European Court of Human Rights declared that the detention was incoherent with Malta's obligations according to the European Convention of Human Rights. Despite these accusations and the treatment of migrants, the number of individuals who migrate to Malta is consistently increasing.

## DISCRIMINATION

According to the EU-MIDIS report, FRA found that 63% of Africans experience discrimination, which is one of the highest levels found in the EU. Furthermore, the same report concluded that 29% of African migrants in Malta experienced racially motivated crime. The EU-MIDIS report found that there is a severe lack of knowledge among migrant communities in regards to laws against racially or ethnically motivated discrimination, and that as much as 57-74% of cases of discrimination suffered by minority or migrant groups have not been reported to the police. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) is responsible for ensuring equality in the access to and supply for goods and services. Any Maltese law which can be considered discriminatory should be challenged with referee to the Constitution. Despite this safeguard being in place, the general attitude and mistrust in authorities among minorities is preventing a more equal Maltese society. When NCPE conducted interviews with migrant and minority groups, it became evident that the majority of people who have not reported the assault they fell victim to, did so because they believed their situation would remain unchanged despite reporting it to the police.

Another challenge the NCPE is faced with is being more visible among minority and migrant societies. A study by the NCPE found that 70% of their interviewees were not aware of NCPE's role, or were not even aware of its existence. In the EU-MIDI report presented by the FRA, they found that only 11% of Africans in Malta knew about NCPE. The lack of awareness of the tools to fight discrimination in racism is leading underreporting of racially motivated discrimination.

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## **EXPRESSIONS OF ADVOCACY**

Advocacy can be defined as ‘public support for an idea, plan, or way of doing something’, and is performed by an individual or a group with the aim to influence decision-making within political, economic and social institutions. Expressions of advocacy have a wide range embodying everything from demonstrations and rallies to meetings with political or institutional actors, and campaigns taking place in a physical or virtual space. Advocacy can therefore happen on a bigger, public scale, as well as a more personal level such as the ‘Know Your Neighbor’ campaign, which was a door-to-door project.

### **CSO’s**

Civil society in Malta seems to be in a particularly strange place as there seems to be a lot of effort being placed into trying to help integration yet at the same time this effort is meeting a lot of unexpected and expected barriers. As discussed there is a level of discrimination that already is happening at all levels of the process of integration with the governmental employees making it harder for “non” Maltese Citizens or those who are people of color and other ethnicities from getting the paper work they would need. This paperwork acts as a barrier to the basic access towards education, health and voting rights. This lack of representation leads for these individuals to be closed off inside a very vulnerable state where they can easily be exploited and voicing their opinions or participating inside an advocacy group often times feels as if they would be subjected to withholding of their rights and or even further extension of the already laborious process of accessing their legal rights.

This results with the CSO’s being part of a specific branch of Maltese society often times sadly out of direct touch with each other and although coming from a good place would have to overcome barriers and start building rapport from the ground up with individuals that are discriminated against and or in situations of vulnerability.

This is of course not to say that every CSO is that case, yet those that are in contact with those on the ground and have a deep understanding of the needs and requirements of the process of integration are often times over worked, understaffed and do not have the necessary resources to use their knowledge to their maximum potential.

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## Methodology

The research methodology used was that of semi-structured interviews that were carried out with activists in Malta. The main aim of these interviews were to collect information on what is going on in the ground. The problem with Malta being so small we had to widen our research field and not just focus on the organizations which worked directly with integration of migrants and on anti-racists and hate speech movements but rather we took an approach of including other organizations whose work inevitably touches the lives of migrants and those discriminated against.

The main three priorities taken by this method were to:

- Understand the political agenda, and or motivation of the organizations that were interviewed for their goals towards their work.
- Understand the level of participation of migrants in the inner workings of the systems and how difficult it is in their specific field for migrants to be active or simply involved.
- Looking at the goals and aims of the advocacy groups carried out by these organizations on a national level.

The questions we approached the individual organizations were based on understanding their situation, their mission and political agenda and then how they functioned as per group of individuals and organizations. As part of our research we found it was important to also include the workers unions, especially the General Workers Union and the Malta's Teachers Union as these two represent two very large and important demographics in our population.

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## Discussion

### SITUATION OF ADVOCACY

The situation on the ground from the interviews shows a state of chaos, there are varying degrees of success in the relative fields that were discussed, however the one main feature that shined though is the extreme lack of organizations on the level of the government as well as the lack of coordination between the groups and NGOs themselves.

The concept of Advocacy in of itself is not ingrained in an academic sense as most individuals interviewed when asked on what they do for advocacy have discussed parts of the process yet lacked to provide a cohesive plan on what to do and how to achieve their goals. Often times this stops with the aims they would have for a specific project, and once the project ends, they would hop onto a new project and stall or even discard the work of advocacy carried out on the previous cause. This is a problem that seems to be endemic due to the lack of funding and an over reliance on the presence of projects for funding. Hence when projects end, so do the advocacy cycles. This is further pushed through how the funding is often set from a National and European level, not allowing for continuous and self-sustainable projects to be carried out.

This does not mean that some projects and advocacy campaigns do not shine through for their strength and length of time, especially the projects by the St Jeanne Antide foundation who have provided a shelter for abused women for the last decade and have continued to grow and provide shelter not just for the Maltese population but for everyone in Malta. Or the other small projects which functioning a on a very basic level. The issue then that comes to be very clear is the scale, there scale is very limited in Malta to provide a structure that would allow for large and wide scale change is very difficulty due to the fact there is only so much you can do in a country the size of Malta. The only organization, which is the General Workers Union, that seemed to have noticed the need for a specific individual role for just observing and addressing the needs of the migrants without having a project based for it, this of course from the individual NGOs that were communicated with for this project. The GWU realized the need to set up a permanent position to try and deal with the rising issues of various cultures and religions and try to bridge the gap created by varying cultures with often bureaucratic and misunderstanding systems, such as factories, governmental bodies and other such structures.

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## STATE OF NGOS

The NGO's Themselves are in a state of disarray with very little binding them together towards a common goal, there seem to be loose formations and "alliances" that their main goal is firefighting, rather than having time to set up proper planned advocacy campaigns the organizations that are united to help migrants for example spend most of their time fighting the governmental decisions on how migrants are treated. This especially so in the last few years due to the pushbacks, and covid treatment of migrants seen on a variety of levels in Malta. This means most of their energy is spent trying to keep problems from getting out of hand. With the government rather than being a helping force often time is seen as making things as hard as humanly possible for everyone involved. Meaning that individuals participating in the advocacy cycles would not have the energy needed to start planning long term.

Most of the NGOs that were spoken to have a very small formal structure and depend a lot on the flexibility of informal groups to function at capacity. That said the members are very often

Apart from this, there often seems to be duplication of efforts in terms of training the migrants, teaching of English and Maltese and of general integration efforts with very little organizations between the NGOs and groups. This was a point of contention in various interviews as the NGOs note in frustration that a lot of good work becomes duplicated as they often do not have the right communication with other organizations and or they would have no clue at all what is happening elsewhere.

From the NGOs interviewed it was clear that the participation of migrants at the civil society level is quite limited at best. With only two of the fifteen organizations interviewed having irregular migrants presented for the interview, further to that two more were European migrants who have been living in Malta for a significant amount of time to say that they have integrated and now find time to participate in what NGOs activities have to offer. This showing that the majority of those participating at an active level are locals who engage with the integration process from the perspective are mostly locals.

The gate for this seems to also come from the lack of first- and second-generation migrants, as discussed in the interviews, most of the migrants try to leave Malta as soon as possible as they feel the country and the people here do not want them. Hence showing a severe lack of effort in terms of integration. The lack of first-generation migrants being active in society is a very important indicator as it shows the lack of stability and the desire to move to somewhere else where they feel they would be far more respected than in Malta.

## STATE OF INTEGRATION

In terms of the process of integration this seems to be at various levels according to the different organizations, some of them would tell you that there is very little work and effort being carried out, while others tell you there is hope and it is working in certain localities. The main issue that is always omnipresent and this is not just with third country nationals, but also European migrants is the issue with the Maltese authorities making the system as difficult and bureaucratically impossible as possible. This hence makes it difficult for individuals to be able to even get the right paperwork and often as mentioned by those interviewed, end up entering as a legally allowed to stay in Malta and leaving as someone who is in Malta illegally due to how complicated and

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unnecessary the system is. Many of the NGOs and groups insisted this can be fixed if Identity Malta, the authority that deals with the paperwork for those residing in Malta streamlines the process, and that the individuals working there are given training on how to deal with other cultures as the feedback often time is they are very racists in their attitude towards “foreigners” or anyone who is not ethnically Maltese, with this becoming worse once you have colored skin.

However, it is not all doom and gloom as several organizations showed the positives of successful integration, with a number of them talking about successful cases where the community welcomed the individuals to their society after a short but stressful period of limitation. Once the people get to know each other and communicate with each other it seems to be universally accepted that integration then becomes very successful with very few people harboring feelings otherwise.

## EDUCATION

Since we carried out several interviews with organizations from University of Malta as well the Malta Teachers Union it should be noted that this important aspect shows the lack of advanced integration. For several reasons, when speaking with the National Youth Council, KNZ, it was noted that there was very limited involvement from immigrants in their system. Hence Migrant youths were not forming part of general youth organizations that would be an indicator of integration occurring at advanced levels. This would show second or even third generation individuals. They do appear here and there however they are the exception rather than the rule. It was also very disheartening to hear the lack of teachers who are from other nations. This means that even though there is a growing population of kids that are in schools from a variety of cultures and ethnicities there are very few teachers who they would be able to relate to and hence very little to help them feel part of the system. This was reassuring that there are measures in place to try and make them feel accepted and part of the community, but one can see how lacking the “role” model of someone that looks like you or has similar cultural backgrounds like you could impact kids to a certain extent.

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## Summary Sheets

### Repubblika

Town: Valletta

Website (if available): <https://repubblika.org/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

The organisation is one based on the promotion of the rule of law and basic human rights. Taking the government and relevant authorities to task and often taken them to court to challenge decisions and actions taken.

The main social needs

The organisation is aimed at promoting Civic and Human rights while also keeping the Maltese government in check and responsible for its actions. Mostly the organisations focus on legal violations and rule of law infringements however, there have been cases where it has taken the government up to court over its treatment of irregular migrations as well.

The mission/political agenda

Protection of the Rule of Law and that of holding the Government Accountable.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They have worked on the national policy against discrimination and provided a variety of proposals and pledged to help achieve them. The main issue with this is that the government and relevant authorities have since stopped working on the project as there was never a response after the first few months that the project was set up. They proposed a variety of solutions to the issues they noted, notably the issue that individuals who arrive in Malta from any other country face problems with the bureaucratic process, with the system essentially telling them to not be in Malta. This is only made worse for those who arrive in Malta irregularly and hence their main proposal was to push towards giving voting rights to these members of society so as to not let an underclass of those who are less privileged, and hence alienation and eventual indoctrination of those who have been pushed to the fringes of society.

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## Malta Union of Teachers

Town:

Website (if available): <https://mut.org.mt/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

This organisation is set to protect the rights and workforce of professional teachers. Their organisation is a Union and hence follows a strict code which every member of the union has a say on.

The main social needs

The organisation is aimed at promoting the main needs of teachers and education officials in Malta. However they also look at the individuals who are being taught, that is the students and try to understand how best to equip the teachers to understand the new social needs of various cultures moving into Malta.

The mission/political agenda

Protect the rights of the teachers in Malta

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

The organisation is currently working on a project to try and promote inclusion at school and raising awareness of various cultures and the importance. Their current project aims to try and promote a more inclusive attitude at school by teachers and trying to welcome and celebrate the diversity in cultural backgrounds present in schools due to the large amounts of migration from other European States, from the far East, and as well from northern Africa.

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## African Media Association

Town: Rahal Gdid

Website (if available): <https://www.africanmediamalta.com/>

The main social needs

We identify special challenges of the African immigrants in Malta and lobby for positive changes by bringing them to the attention of Governments and other relevant authorities. We belong to and work with numerous advocacy groups active in Malta and abroad.

The mission/political agenda

African Media Association Malta is a media NGO that promotes The African Perspective with News - Empowerment – Advocacy

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

Ideal me, which is targeting migrants from Senegal, they are working with Italy Germany Spain Greece and Malta, where they focus on the routes taken by the Senegalese trying to enter Europe. They are trying to provide a narrative to tell them that the information taht they are getting is not tru and trying to use the diaspora community to reach back to the Senegalese communities and inform that they are being used by traffickers. This project has been running already and will keep running till May next year. They are using every possible means of communication and understanding that the lifestyle in Europe is not what is being described.

## GWU

Town: Valletta

Website (if available): <https://gwu.org.mt/en/home-4/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

The association is a trade union that deals with protecting workers rights in Malta. Their entire idea is to try and respect basic rights and protect workers from being abused by employers.

The main social needs

They address the individuals who need help and support in their workplace. This has of course extended to migration as they noticed a large number of migrants were being exploited as these would not know their rights.

The mission/political agenda

Represent the workers and make sure that they are protected from abuse.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They had issues with shifts at factories with migrants who arrived in Malta irregularly from especially the Saharan Africa, mostly southern Saharan countries who were having issues keeping personal hygiene in the bathrooms. The issue ended up becoming so big that the union was brought in as the factories, various companies, were letting a large number of people go as they could not understand how their facilities were not enough for the migrants who were misusing the toilets. The union realised that the individuals that were at the centre of the issue were never asked as to why they were causing problems, and eventually it was understood that they were used to a different type of hygiene which is not very popular in Malta. Hence with a simple fix that cost around 40 euros, the toilets were upgraded to include a small sanitation shower that allowed the people who were not local to keep to their usual traditions.

Further to this, the union noticed that a lot of the companies that provided food often did not bother to check about the dietary requirements of individuals working for them. This came to a head to head when workers were being given ham and cheese sandwiches. Since a large part of the factory workers in question were Muslim, there were issues and the union had to intervene and help set up a system that allowed for no change in expenses to the factory but a simpler and easier way to feed the workers without causing the issue.

Taking the opportunity of the new relationships they got with both the workers as well as the factories, the union then started providing training courses as well as offering advice on how to navigate the Maltese Beruorocratic system as they realised a large number of the irregular migrants were having a very difficult time to be regularised even if they were legally eligible for documentation they would not be able to navigate the difficult and often times overly complicated system. Currently, the Union is working on trying to standardise and simplify the procedure not just for irregular migrants but all those who move to make Malta their home as they brought up an argument that oftentimes the problem is the lack of information and lack of transparency. When there is a solid network for communication to take place, they argued they noticed an increase in both employers and employees quality of life, better wages given and higher productivity.

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## KNZ

Town: Floriana

Website (if available): <https://knz.org.mt/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

The association is a trade union that deals with protecting workers rights in Malta. Their entire idea is to try and respect basic rights and protect workers from being abused by employers.

The main social needs

Representing all the youth in Malta.

The mission/political agenda

To cultivate a society in which youth are motivated to take action ensuring their voice is heard, valued and pursued.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They advocated for the government to stop stopping migrants out at sea and holding them on boats outside the legal border of Malta. Doing this they worked with various other NGOs trying to make sure the government of Malta follow the rule of law and ensured everyone under its care enjoyed basic human rights. They also were part of a campaign to try and raise awareness about the issues caused by lack of education when it comes to other cultures. Their attitude to this was to try and reach out to the communities whenever possible and to raise awareness include them in their work as a rule.

## St Jeanne Antide

Town: Malta

Website (if available): <https://www.antidemalta.org/about-us.html>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

The St Jeanne Antide Foundation (SJAF) is a registered social purpose non-profit organisation. It is the social care services arm of the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide Thouret. Its overarching aim is to provide professional support services to very vulnerable individuals and families who are suffering due to very difficult life circumstances and those who are sliding into poverty and are socially excluded. SJAF is administered by a Governing Board with a Chief Executive Officer and is registered as an NGO with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (VO/0005) and as a Foundation with the Registry for Legal Persons (LPF-101).

Workers at the Foundation work in partnership systematically in teams for the support and self-empowerment of socially excluded persons, families and minority groups. The mission of the Foundation is to be present for individuals and families who need someone who can listen to them with compassion, link or guide them to appropriate existing support services, support them in the restoration of their dignity, and guide them towards self-reliance, resilience and fulfilment of their potential. Looking holistically at persons in need, the Foundation's mission is to give all-around support to such persons.

The main social needs

Fields of work

- Family support work: Family crisis and difficulties; financial problems and poverty; unemployment and under-employment; emotional distress; inherited culture of dependency on welfare benefits and opting for undeclared work; inadequate housing and eviction; loneliness; illiteracy.
- Mental Health: Support to family caregivers of mentally ill persons - family consultancies; support groups; social work; advocacy; tackling emotional distress; self-help literature in Maltese.
- Domestic Violence: Survivors of domestic violence supporting other survivors; a range of non-formal, group-based, educational and self-expressive arts opportunities; advocacy; risk assessment; peer mentoring; creating a national hub for survivor support initiatives; literature; research and publications.
- Education: Non-formal educational opportunities for vulnerable families – courses, learning support club for children, workshops on emotional freedom, self-esteem groups.

The mission/political agenda

Cultivated a space to support families who are finding themselves in distress, and are already poor or sliding into poverty.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

The process for organizing the domestic violence survivors started with them. A group of them met with the organizations and set up a structure over eight years ago which is still functioning today. They were leaving the shelters that they had been living in and needed help in rebuilding their lives, and in turn they wanted to share what they have learned and the strengths they have gained in trying to help others. This is the reality of domestic violence. With Mentorship from St' Jeanne Antide foundation a brochure was prepared and sent out to inform others of what was happening. After the initiative was launched it has been working for a number of years, finally they also managed to get money so that some of them would be

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able to be paid while they do the project coordinator. They set up an online platform and helped as many survivors as possible across Malta.

Their advocacy didn't stop with just the grassroots, they kept going up and working on a higher level. By speaking directly to politicians and producing policy papers that they researched together with other victims of violence. This resulted in a 35 policy recommendations that were presented to MPs and MEPs and they served to revise the Domestic Violence Act.

Now SOAR the name of the project, has been signed up with the government on a public social partnership which is receiving full funding for two full time employees that provide peer mentoring. This is a big issue as in Malta such mentoring is very limited. Since there isn't a culture that urges training and supporting of those who have passed through difficult times. This has led to the fact that now many migrants approach the organization asking for help as with all the trauma that irregular migrants pass through and the sexual abuse on women it is a point of assistance. Until covid hit the organization used to organise a Saturday Club where 30 women and their children used to help and take turns assisting each other. Here they used to teach each other skills and create community events. Many of them were migrants as well. In fact once we got a group of 22 migrant women and their children. They came from being suggested by the UNHCR Malta. We had invited them and we talked about domestic violence, violence in intimate relationships, about children being at risk when they are in a family where there is DV, so yes, its for everyone really.

## KOPIN

Town: Naxxar

Website (if available):

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

Kopin (Koperazzjoni Internazzjonali) stands for international development cooperation and works in tandem with civil society organisations and NGOs in Malta, Europe, and Africa, on various projects aimed at raising awareness about the role of each individual as a global citizen, as well as the intrinsic values of the role, and to contribute towards the empowerment of developing communities. Through its projects and initiatives, Kopin seeks to reach various members of society ranging from school children and their families to civil communities (including institutions within the respective communities) to national and international policy-makers. Kopin joins forces with its partners on different projects to connect people to each other, both directly and indirectly.

The mission/political agenda

Our mission is to contribute to the alleviation of global poverty and social injustice by:

- Engaging in sustainable projects with partners from the Majority World;
- Providing services to vulnerable populations in Malta with a particular focus on migrant women and children;
- Promoting and providing development education and increasing public awareness to mobilise citizens towards participating in the development debate;
- Building capacities of our members and partners;
- Monitoring political processes and engaging in policy dialogue with decision makers to influence the debate on Maltese and European policies related to development, migration and children's rights.

In our efforts, we adopt a human rights-based approach; we exchange ideas and experiences with local, European, and global partners, and seek to be innovative by identifying neglected areas of concern.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

Advocacy that was conducted over the past year by KOPIN was based on a global initiative on Children's rights. Here the Refugee Council helped significantly as they brought together key organizations in the process of advocating for child migrant rights. With the specific aid in terms of media campaigning were able to have conversations with people in New York and Geneva and with regional consultation processes for the global changes to immigration. They had specialists look at the policies we were producing to make sure they were of a quality and level that would result in positive change. The organizations also tried to change the wording to make them friendlier with the rights of children and youth who were migrating for whatever reason.

What was done in Malta is put the same or similar to what many other countries had done was receiving the input. Then previewing it and sharing it with the ministry for foreign and European affairs. These inputs allowed for the Maltese Government to push amendments in terms of getting children's rights and the rights of the child on the move outside of the footnotes and from text. The government created projects based on the proposals of KOPIN. The main issue is that the government did not make these documentation legally binding which saw that the projects eventually start to slow down.

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## KSU

Town: Msida

Website (if available): <https://www.ksu.org.mt/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

Albeit the fact that years have passed by since the day when KSU was founded in 1901, KSU's aims remain unaltered. Your contribution as a University student is undeniably fundamental for the betterment of the University and society in general. KSU is founded on the ideology that life at the University of Malta is much more than simply academia but is the ideal forum where students can engage in active participation. Students should be given the opportunity to express their ideas regarding pertinent issues.

The main social needs

Taking care of students education at a tertiary level.

The mission/political agenda

To Represent the students at the University of Malta in their educational, social and national contexts.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

Their main form of Advocacy is in the form of press releases and educational projects that they push through the year. They write policy papers which they then carry out their projects and programs. This allows them to then act as a lobby group along with their members who are the approximately twelve thousand students at the University of Malta

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## Migrants Commission

Town: Malta

Website (if available): <https://migrants.mt/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

In the 1950s, the Malta Catholic Action founded the Malta Emigrants Commission to assist the Maltese who were seeking a new life away from our shores in other countries. The Maltese Migrants Centre operated from Palazzo Caraffa from 1963.

In 1971, Dar l-Emigrant was inaugurated. A year later, Malta accepted her first refugees upon the request of the UNHCR: 362 persons from Uganda. In 1987, the Commission became an official Operational Partner of the UNHCR.

Dar l-Emigrant has housed migrant and refugee services since. In the 1990s, various waves of migrants sought asylum in Malta: from Albania, ex-Yugoslavia, North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Commission was crucial in offering aid and in some cases with helping in their relocation to other countries.

The Commission continues this work today by running 14 residences that welcome migrants, offering legal aid to asylum seekers, and social assistance to those most in need.

In 2021, the Commission has renamed the Migrants Commission and renewed its commitment to serving migrants. Through collaboration with state agencies and international and local NGOs, the Migrants Commission seeks to welcome, protect, to promote and to integrate all migrants in Malta.

The main social needs

Currently the organization has two branches, one which works with people who go to the office looking for assistance with any kind of immigration details. This from providing assistance to residents with money, medicine or assistance with documentation. The second function of the organization was to provide shelter for a few hundreds of people who need residence and this is done through the Migrant Comission.

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The mission/political agenda

Cultivated a space to support families who are finding themselves in distress, and are already poor or sliding into poverty.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They are working on a Know Your Neighbor campaign, which has the entire idea that through understanding comes better integration. The idea is try and find those individuals who arrived and settled in Malta and get an awareness campaign about their life in their neighbourhood. The idea is migrants have been in communities for decades but little has been done to understand their culture and welcome them to our own. Once you learn from someone and know who they are, what they do and where they come from it is easier to start accepting them for who they are rather than be scared due to ignorance and misunderstanding of who they are. The idea this project will continue for a long period of time as it needs to be a continuous active effort to try and help integration through communication.

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## JRS Malta

Town: Valletta

Website (if available): <http://www.jrsmalta.org/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

They try to work with migrants and communities to try and provide them with services to facilitate integration.

The main social needs

Lack of access

Cultural Divide

Service Providers are not equipped to work with migrants.

Lack of processing of the migrants put people in grey areas.

The mission/political agenda

Serve, accompany, advocate:

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

Regularisation in the form of THPN - Form of Regularisation for rejected asylum seekers who had arrived before 2013. This was meant allowed to let them work and not live in the open centre.

This was discontinued because it was an initiative by the refugee commissioner and hence the government stopped it as it felt it was too much. This eventually stopped entirely and did not renew it or replace it at all.

Regularisation channels need to be open so as these individuals should be involved in society. Showing how these individuals were part of our society and how the government was trying to remove them. This was carried out online so as to make sure it was public as possible.

This led to the development of SAR, which needs you to have worked for 5 years it is far more stringent than what was there before.

This was possible due to the heavy collaboration with the refugee council and the other NGOs who contributed their resources and efforts to try and make this happen as a joined front.

## RAAH

Town: Gozo

Website (if available): <https://raahfamily.org/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

RAAH it is a UK based organisation that is currently caring out projects in Malta. Sahid started them in Gozo (who is an immigrant himself) mainly helping in terms of integration by allowing people who have been released from detention/ open centre. So as to allow them to integrate into society, find a job, get education and meet the community.

The main social needs

Collaboration with each other.

The mission/political agenda

Help in integration and address the issues of racism in Malta.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

Addressing the issue that migrants are not welcomed in society. The organisation is building a campaign to try and address the issues of lack of access to education, bureaucracy, segregation, lack of access to medication and access to proper documentation.

The campaign is to raise awareness on these issues by collecting various organisations and communities together to raise the issue of the disorganisation that is happening. The once the stakeholders get together they are planning to approach media houses and provide the facts as they are and lobby with the government for:

Access to Education

Access to Voting rights

Access to Health Care

Access to integration program.

Access to information

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## Write Deal Association

Town: Mosta

Website (if available): <https://www.animationmalta.org/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

The organisation is a structure with the president, treasurer, secretary and they function in bringing forward projects that they try to change social issues through education and stories.

The main social needs

The main targets are the use of the media to pass on social messages to the youth, specifically younger generations, children. "Changing society one child at a time".

Pushing the use of the Maltese Language, to try and promote the language and stopping it from dying.

The mission/political agenda

Social and Environmental Issues through the use of audiovisual projects

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They reproduced the classical fairy tale stories in Maltese. While doing so they made sure to be as multicultural as possible in doing these stories, bringing forward multiple types of cultures and stories together to try and normalise cultures and exposure to different cultures. This allows for children to start normalising the different cultures into their life.

Doing this we have also worked on a multitude of other projects with the idea of creating interactive media to try and promote various aspects. While doing this we make sure that we try and show the reality we live in that is a multicultural and multi-ethnic society not a uniform white society.

They interact with other NGOs according to the types of expertise they need to draw up their stories. They try to as much as possible approach individuals who have experience and knowledge to be able to carry out their projects in a manner that reach everyone.

When it comes to promoting their content they do so according to the type of content they make, for example when they printed books, they donated a book to each and every classroom in Malta allowing them to easily and quite fast spread the message. When they did animations they made a deal with the local cinemas to show the animations before the movies and allowing kids to see the animations and then find them online. Apart from this, they were also given to teachers to show them off in classes.

## VSM

Town: Valletta

Website (if available):

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

Victim Support Malta (VSM) is a registered Non-Governmental Organisation that provides support and assistance to victims of crime, such as theft, burglary, cybercrime, domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, physical assault and hate crime. The services provided by VSM include the provision of emotional support to assist victims in overcoming trauma following a crime; information and support pertaining to the relative criminal procedures (e.g. the victims' right to request compensation and to access forms of protection provided by the law); and practical assistance (e.g. liaison with the police, or other ancillary matters).

The main social needs

Providing emotional support sessions, (including therapy)

Spot Service to help those bereaved by suicide and assisting those who survived suicide. (Aid presented by therapists)

Planned victim assistance process.

The mission/political agenda

Help those who have been victims of a crime and provide emotional and clinical support to them.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

The project coming that is working on domestic violence that is part of SOS Malta, as part of the Criteria, this is going to be an educational program over 13 weeks for survivors of domestic violence. Out of every group of 10 we need 2 of the individuals who have come from a migrant background. This means we need to make sure that they have access to the program especially since this will be carried out online and they would need smartphones/computers to be able to join and participate in the project. Normally survivors join up together and work together so they are hoping there would be a sharing of resources between the participants.

The organisation networks and participates in as many conferences as possible so that it would allow them to be able to meet up with other NGOs and make contacts however they are careful not to bother others and set on other **people's** toes.

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## Richmond Foundation

Town: Santa Venera

Website (if available): <https://www.richmond.org.mt/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

We offer all-around support to anyone experiencing mental health problems and the people who live and work with them. We're determined to stamp out stigma through education and the promotion of mental wellbeing. Our goal is to ensure that those living with mental health problems live fulfilling lives in a community that accepts and understands them.

The main social needs

Promoting mental health

The mission/political agenda

The mission of the organisation is to assist and help the public to learn more about mental health while at the same time offering help and assistance to those that need it.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

They advocated for the government to stop stopping migrants out at sea and holding them on boats outside the legal border of Malta. Doing this they worked with various other NGOs trying to make sure the government of Malta follow the rule of law and ensured everyone under its care enjoyed basic human rights. They also were part of a campaign to try and raise awareness about the issues

## Integra

Town: Valletta

Website (if available): <https://www.facebook.com/integrafoundation/>

A short introduction of the association/campaign/informal group/movement:

Integra foundation was set up in 2004 with the aim of facilitating the integration of minority groups in Malta.

They provide community service, outreach and English classes, all provided to refugees and asylum seekers on a voluntary basis.

English and Maltese language lessons to sub-Saharan asylum seekers

The Dinja Wahda community centre in Valletta is a drop-in centre and library, which offers a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere and the opportunity to build relationships.

In the centre there is:

Free internet

Free onsite access to books in the library

English classes

English conversation

The main social needs

The organisation tries to attend to the needs of the individuals in need of integrating within the Maltese community providing projects and training that would facilitate this transition in living in Malta easier.

The mission/political agenda

Integra foundation was set up in 2004 with the aim of facilitating the integration of minority groups in Malta.

We provide community service, outreach and English classes, all provided to refugees and asylum seekers on a voluntary basis.

One exemplary policy advocacy initiative

The attitude towards advocacy that Integra takes is in itself sets up a small and effective network of NGOs which allow for fast-moving and cohesive processes to be set up. Mainly functioning in keeping the government in check, due to the covid crises their function of the organisation transformed into helping the firefighting of problems that kept cropping up. From combatting the government legally and through active advocacy to let migrants, these migrants were being kept on boats outside of our borders. In the same time period, a large effort was also organised to combat the government pushbacks through the third party.

Further to this, they were very heavily involved in trying to find food and shelter for the forced quarantine of everyone inside of the detention centres and open centres where the government did not provide the **necessities** for the migrants living in them. This includes food, **clothing**, and appliances to deal with the heat.

These were a long list of short-termed advocacy campaigns that were carried out ad-hoc due to the emergency situations that have occurred in the wake of covid.

They are also supporting the increasing number of youth leaders of people of colour and from communities of colour that **rise** and become part of the Maltese society.

## Conclusion

From the above from the above discussion, it can clearly be noted that the main issues that are being faced in Malta are racial discrimination within an institutionalized structure within the government and the general ignorance of other cultures. This can only be fixed if there is an overhaul from the governmental side with advanced advocacy being carried out on the United front by all NGOs and informal groups that function in this industry.

Suggestions towards improvement are:

- Creation of an independent structure that acts as a watchdog over the government as well as other structures in society
- Having a results first framework, that aims to achieve deliverables which would be binding
- Enforcing and equipping the public services and private employers with the tools needed to ensure racism and xenophobia are reduced wherever necessary.
- Independent watchdog funded by the government however the government will not have a say in how the funds are used.
  - o This will require yearly Auditing from third parties
  - o Pre- Defined structures
  - o Aim of this organization will be to monitor, collect data and establish problem criteria to help strengthen other sectors
  - o Aid Victims of Hate Crime
- Set out safe zones which are open and easy to access for migrants.
- Set out predefined mixing areas, such as communal outdoor areas, to stop the segregation of **communities**.
  - o Public Gardens
  - o Public Walking areas
  - o Reduce industrial infrastructure close to residential districts.
  - o Removing heavy police presence in specific areas which causes the mistrust of individuals from those regions.
- Having community leaders that are awarded by local councils for keeping activities occurring within the smaller communities, allowing for streets/areas of towns to have community events every so often that would include everyone, or at the least reach out to everyone. Such a small action could help the neighbors getting used to each other, especially so when there are international individuals who live in the area allowing for better and healthier social structures to grow.
- Provide support to local organisations/NGO/groups of individuals to have the power to organise themselves and get together.
- Streamline the process of allowing international community members to get residence and voting rights in Malta. The process stands to be bureaucratic and wastes everyone's time, it can be simplified and digitized to a much better system.
- Clear opportunities for migrants, especially those who are irregular migrants and hold certification of education from universities and higher education that is not recognized in Malta
- Flexible online education modules for those who work 1-2 jobs. Giving opportunity for social climbing.
- Stricter enforcement to reduce abuse carried out by employers who exploit individuals who are vulnerable and in need of work
- Easier application procedures and better trained authorities that would help migrants.
- This will help migrants to be able to understand what is required of them when they apply for government related documents.

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## Appendix

### Grid of Organizations

Organization	Name of Individual
Repubblika	Manuel Delia
Malta Union of Teachers	Mauro Bonnici
African Media Association	Ngetuny
General Workers Union	Josef Bugeja/ Kenny Muscat
KNZ	Nigel Caruana
St Jeanne Antide	Nora Macelli
KOPIN	Dominik Kalweit
KSU	Niel Zahra
Migrants Commission	Damato Anton Rev.
JRS Malta	Beth
RAAH	Jasminder Odusanya / Sahid Jalloh
Write Deal Association	Ruth Frendo
VSM	Charlotte
Richmond Foundation	Daniela Calleja Bitar
Integra	Maria Pisani

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## Grid for interviews

### DRAFT GRID FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

In output 1 we should focus our attention to **the process** followed by our stakeholders in order to define their **policy advocacy strategy**.

1. The political agenda

- The political agenda of organization/movements representatives interviewed
- The organizational structure (who, what professional profiles, activists' statutory positions are engaged in Policy Advocacy activities?)

2. The level of participation

- Level, role and methodologies of migrants/refugees/discriminated/racialized people participation to the advocacy process (formal and informal collaborative/participatory processes)
- Eventual obstacles faced in direct participation/leadership of immigrants/refugees/racialized people to the Policy Advocacy strategy designing and implementing

3. One or more examples of advocacy campaigns implemented

- Definition of the problem/s and of its/their causes (who, how, where)
- Possible solutions identified
- Context analysis and strategy: who can give an answer? What are the main targets of the Policy advocacy activities described? And the main allies?
- Short- and long-term objectives
- Typology of activities developed
- Preparation of topics and development of key messages
- Communication (lobbying, public campaign, media work)
- Success' indicators
- Networking
- Monitoring and evaluation activities



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